



WEEKLY CELL GUIDE

16 MAY 2021 | LET'S WALK IN THE SPIRIT OF CALEB! | NUMBERS 13-14

Series : Journeying With God | Speaker : Pastor Lionel Goh



WELCOME

[15 MINS]

You may want to look up the following websites for icebreakers suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)



WORSHIP

[15 MINS]

You may select songs like

1. Complete
 2. God of Ages
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WORD

[45 MINS]

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Believe and trust that God will bring His promises to pass.
2. Be willing to pay the cost in fighting for our spiritual inheritance.

SERMON SUMMARY

Israel in the wilderness was a self-centred and complaining people with a superficial relationship with God. They knew God had promised them Canaan as their inheritance, yet when presented with the challenge to possess it, they cowered in fear. They were also unwilling to pay the cost of fighting the giants. So, they rejected God's offer of Canaan and wanted to turn back to Egypt. As a result, they forfeited their inheritance and were assigned to

wander for 40 years in the wilderness until that generation had passed on. But Caleb had a different spirit. He trusted God to give him the Promised Land, and he was willing to pay the cost in fighting for his inheritance. As a result, he received God's inheritance promised to him.

Similarly, God has given us personal promises to inherit. However, many people fail to receive them either because they don't have faith or are unwilling to pay the cost. We need to have Caleb's spirit of trusting in God's ability and be willing to pay the cost to fight for our spiritual inheritance!

SERMON RECAP

When God brought Israel out of Egypt, they spent one year at Mt. Sinai for God to prepare them to take possession of the Promised Land. They were training to be fighters for their conquest of Canaan. When they were ready, God brought them to Kadesh Barnea. However, at Kadesh Barnea, they were greatly discouraged and wanted to return to Egypt or they would rather die in the wilderness. What happened at Kadesh Barnea?

1) The Repiners (Numbers 11:1, 4-6; 12:1-2)

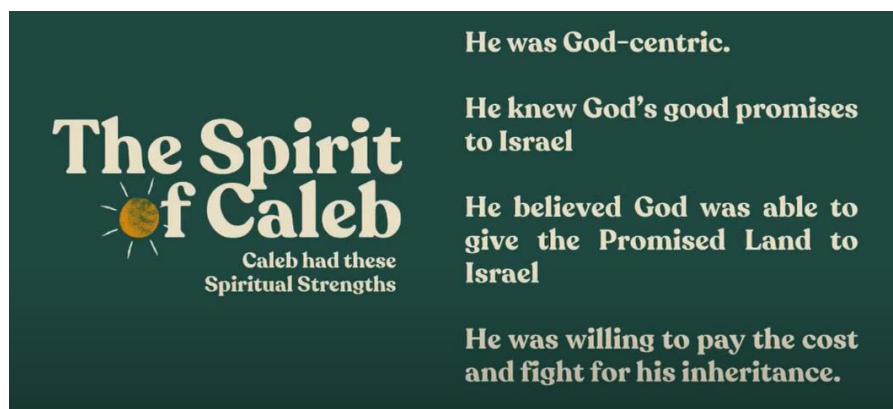
- Repine: feel or express discontent; fret.
- Israel is a nation of repiners ([Exodus 16-17](#)). They were always complaining and grumbling against God despite His deliverance from slavery and His provision for them in the wilderness.
- The people had bad attitudes, which led them to make bad decisions at Kadesh Barnea. They had a utilitarian relationship with God. They were dissatisfied, ungrateful and self-centred.
- Are we behaving like the Israelites? Paul says that we should, "*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*" (1 Thessalonians 16-18). We need to check our attitudes, or we will have a poor relationship with God.

2) The Recce (Numbers 13:1-3, Deuteronomy 1:19-25)

- God did not instruct the people to recce the land but to go and take it. But they decided to scout out the place first. The people did not trust God enough to take possession of the land immediately.
- When God calls us to do something, let us do it without hesitation. If we insist our ways with God, we may get second best instead of the best that God wants to give us.

3) The Reports

- When the 12 spies came back, they presented two reports. The majority said that the land was flowing with milk and honey, but they would be defeated by the giants living there ([Numbers 13:27-33](#)). Only Caleb and Joshua were confident that the people could take the land for God had promised it to them ([Numbers 13:30, 14:7-9](#)).
- Why is there such a difference in perspective? All 12 spies saw the same land and the same people living in it, yet they presented such different reports. The majority of spies saw everything through natural eyes, while Caleb and Joshua viewed it through God's eyes.
- It was here that we see Caleb's spirit ([Numbers 14:24, Joshua 14:7-9, 12](#)):



The Spirit of Caleb
Caleb had these Spiritual Strengths

- He was God-centric.
- He knew God's good promises to Israel
- He believed God was able to give the Promised Land to Israel
- He was willing to pay the cost and fight for his inheritance.

4) The Rebellion

- The people were unwilling to trust God and were reluctant to pay the cost to claim their inheritance.

- However, the people not only refused to take possession of the land, but they also accused God of bringing them out of Egypt to kill them in the wilderness! ([Deuteronomy 1:26-27](#))
- Then they wanted to find another leader to bring them back to Egypt, back into the slavery that God has freed them from ([Numbers 14:1-4](#)).

5) The Rebuke

- God was angry with the rebellious generation, and wanted to kill them all. But after Moses interceded for them, God punished them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years and die there without entering the Promised Land ([Numbers 14:20-25, 34-35](#)).
- God also killed the ten faithless spies by plague ([Numbers 14:36-38](#)).

6) The Rewards ([Deuteronomy 31:1-8, Joshua 14:13-14](#))

- God honoured Joshua and Caleb for their faith. They were the only ones who entered the Promise Land with the new generation.

7) Application

- How do we walk in the spirit of Caleb?

Israel	Caleb
Self centred and complaining	God-centric and obedient
Could only see challenges with physical eyes	Saw challenges through the eyes of faith
Not willing to pay the cost of obedience	Willing to obey God wholeheartedly
Ended up wandering for 40 years	Had a fulfilled life fighting for his inheritance
Forfeited God's promises through unbelief	Inherited the Promised Land through faith

- Caleb had been contending for his inheritance for 45 years. Even at 85 years old, he was willing to fight for his inheritance ([Joshua 14:10-14](#)).
- What are the promises of God that you want to lay hold of? Are you willing to fight for them? Contend with God for them? And keep the faith and obey Him wholeheartedly?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When the Israelites heard the reports of Canaan, they centred upon the challenges and were immediately stricken with fear. Why do we tend to focus on the negative/challenges instead of trusting in Him in our various situations? [10 Mins]

Leader's Notes

Reflect why we tend to mainly focus on the negative and not on the character of God and His promises. God has promised Canaan to the Israelites, yet despite His promise (and the multitude of miracles and signs they witnessed), they were struck with fear. Perhaps God has called you in a new direction, in which you obeyed in faith, only to be discouraged before fully reaping the rewards because you heard negative things or encountered difficulties. Wanting to 'escape' and retreat to our comfort zone is an instinct. We want to be safe; we don't want to suffer; we want to cut our losses. Are we any different from the Israelites? Do we react to bad news in fear (despite knowing that God is with us and all His plans for us are good) and turn around and

grumble against Him? Repent, “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Often, we tend to focus on the negative because we allow our situations to be bigger than who God is. We are overwhelmed with the challenges that we forget who God is. Faith is not the absence of fear but the confidence in who God is – He is good and faithful. Therefore, although things seem impossible and challenging, we can take heart that God is still sovereign, and He is good towards us.

Transition

It is only when we know why we react the way the Israelites did that we can take steps to mitigate our reaction (lack of faith, fear, grumbling, accusations). Let us all repent of our faithlessness and commit to trusting Him completely.

- 2. If we are honest with ourselves, we are like the Israelites – repiners. We complain a lot, and we tend to think of ourselves first. Why do they – and we – have such an attitude? How can we stop grumbling? [10 Mins]**

Leader’s Notes

The Israelites were too self-focused on their situations that they had forgotten all that God had done and was doing for them in the wilderness. They only looked at the situation in front of them, which was not what they expected, and they became unhappy. Then they grumbled at God, questioned His motives and His goodness, and when they still did not get what they expected, they rebelled. The greatest tragedy is this: Blinded by their dissatisfaction and complaints, they have taken for granted who was in their midst – the Almighty God Himself!

Similarly, in Singapore, many of us grumble, and are dissatisfied with our circumstances. Reports and videos of self-entitled behaviour on social media are viral, and complaints against the government are rampant. Although we live in one of the best and safest countries in the world, we are not happy, as surveys have shown (e.g. Singapore is placed at 31st in terms of happiness by the World Happiness Report 2020). But as believers of Christ, we are to live in gratitude to God – whom we can always trust – and to stop our grumbling – which betrays that trust. Paul says we are to “*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*” (1 Thessalonians 16-18).

Resource: Doing Everything Without Grumbling (<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/do-everything-without-grumbling>)

Transition

It is a good time for us to remember all that we have, all the blessings that God has given. We already have the greatest gift given to humankind – the Gospel of Jesus Christ – which leads to a personal relationship with God. What could be more precious than that? So rejoice, and look upon your trials with thanksgiving, continue to be faithful to God because “... *we count as blessed those who have persevered*” (James 5:11a).

- 3. Is there anything that you feel God has put into your heart that you are escaping from (or refuse to acknowledge) because you are unwilling to pay the cost? How can you adopt the spirit of Caleb and go boldly with God? [15 Mins]**

Leader’s Notes

In Ps Lionel’s sermon, he mentioned about Caleb’s spirit:

- To believe in God’s ability to fulfil His promise and
- To be willing to pay the cost in fighting for our spiritual inheritance.

This question focuses on the second point of Caleb’s spirit: willingness to pay the cost.

Sometimes we feel God calling us in a new direction, to step into unknown territory, but we are afraid of losing everything that we have built so far. We are comfortable where we are, and we have enough to get us by. We would rather ‘die in the wilderness’ than lose what we have accumulated or start from ground zero. We also don’t want to encounter difficulties or struggle in a new area. Familiarity breeds comfort, even in a less-than-ideal situation, because we have been in it for so long that we have adapted to it. It is challenging to step out

of familiarity and comfort, just like the Israelites who would prefer to return to slavery in Egypt or die in the wilderness. We want things to remain at status quo.

Here are more questions to go deeper:

- Which aspect of God do you struggle to trust amid your challenges? (e.g., His faithfulness, His providence, etc.).
- What is it that God is calling you to do?
- What do we have to sacrifice? Money? Comfort? Time?
- Why do you think God called you to it?
- What do you think the reward would be if you follow God and walk in the path that He has set out for you?

Closing

Let us be like Caleb and walk in the full belief that God will fulfil His promise and be willing to pay the cost in fighting for our spiritual inheritance. God's promises are already ours; we just have to take the first step of faith to lay claim to them! God is with us, and He ensures that victory is ours!



Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. Sermon Application

- We always have a heart of thankfulness for what God has done by delivering us from the domain of darkness so that we have a living hope in Jesus Christ.
- Through Jesus Christ, we have the strength to keep God's covenant and obey Him wholeheartedly.
- In response to God, we would say yes to greater intimacy with Him and that we will love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, loving our neighbours as ourselves.

2. COVID-19 in Singapore

- The COVID-19 situation in Singapore would be under control, and that we would revert to having low or no infection in the community and dormitories.
- Continued progress in Singapore to overcome the negative economic and social impact of the current crisis.

3. COVID-19 in South Asia

- A swift end to the COVID-19 crisis in the world, especially in India and the rest of South Asia.
 - Healing and comfort for those who are sick and suffering.
 - Protection and guidance for healthcare professionals at the front line; give them wisdom, courage, and strength to confront this crisis.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

[5 MINS]

1. **Bible Reading Plan.** You can access our 2-Year Bible Reading Plan 2021-2022 by visiting <https://rlc.sg/brp2021>.
2. **Becoming 30.** With the rising number of new COVID-19 cases in Singapore, we will be shifting all Consecrate Nights online. You may join us at this link – rlc.sg/consecrate-nights. All info and links relating to Becoming 30 can also be found at our Becoming 30 mini site rlc.sg/becoming30.

3. **Water Baptism.** We will be having our Water Baptism Class on 29 May 2021. Do note that instead of an in-person session, the class will now be shifted online via a zoom session. The timing of the class has also changed. It will now run from 9AM - 1PM instead of 9AM - 3PM.
4. **SPYCES.** Span of 5 Sunday afternoons from 27 June, 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm. rlc.sg/baptism-class



"HONOUR GOD WITH EVERYTHING YOU OWN;
GIVE HIM THE FIRST AND THE BEST."
PROVERBS 3:9 (MSG)

Give Digitally

Here are two cashless ways to give your tithes and offering.

1. PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app.
Scan this QR code on the right.

SCAN ME



2. Interbank Transfer

RiverLife Church Bank Account:
DBS Autosave 029-902431-0
Bank Code: 7171
Branch Code: 029

