

THE FANTASTIC SIXTEEN

# UNLIKELY HEROES

THE TRUE STORIES OF BIBLICAL LEADERS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

**THE JOURNEY OF  
VISIONARY CALEB**

**Numbers  
13:25-33**

**WHAT MAKES A PERSON A GOOD LEADER?**

# WHAT MAKES A PERSON A GODLY LEADER?

# WHAT DOES AN OWL, A FRUIT BAT, AND A PIT VIPER HAVE IN COMMON?

## Night Vision

An owl can spot a mouse in a bush, one hundred yards away, on a moonless night.

Fruit bats are not blind like most other bats. They have highly developed retinas that help them find food.

Pit vipers, along with a handful of other snakes, have the ability to detect heat. The two pits on their faces sense heat and send the information to their brain where it is combined with their acute night vision into a single image they use to find prey. What does night vision allow these animals to do that their prey cannot?

# CALEB- THE VISIONARY MAN OF GOD

- Like with these animals, vision can be the key to survival. Leaders that have vision, the ability to see what is going on and what needs to be done, with the group they are leading will survive
- Caleb was that kind of leader. As we look at his story, we'll see that having the correct vision can be the difference between life and death.

# BACKDROP- PROMISED LAND

- Exodus 33:1-3 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’<sup>2</sup> I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.<sup>3</sup> Go up to the land flowing with milk and honey.

# BACKDROP- PROMISED LAND

Leviticus 19:22-24-

With the ram of the guilt offering the priest is to make atonement for him before the LORD for the sin he has committed, and his sin will be forgiven.

<sup>23</sup> “When you enter the land and plant any kind of fruit tree, regard its fruit as forbidden.<sup>[a]</sup> For three years you are to consider it forbidden<sup>[b]</sup>; it must not be eaten. <sup>24</sup> In the fourth year all its fruit will be holy, an offering of praise to the LORD.

## BACKDROP- PROMISED LAND

Numbers 13:1-2-The LORD spoke to Moses: <sup>2</sup> “Send men to scout out the land of Canaan I am giving to the Israelites. Send one man who is a leader among them from each of their ancestral tribes.”



# GRUMBLING WHILE WANDERING

- (about to cross the Red Sea)- Then the Israelites were terrified and cried out to the LORD for help. <sup>11</sup> They said to Moses: “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you took us to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? <sup>12</sup> Isn’t this what we told you in Egypt: Leave us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” Exodus 14:10-12

# GRUMBLING WHILE WANDERING

- Exodus 16:1-3-The entire Israelite community departed from Elim and came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left the land of Egypt. <sup>2</sup>The entire Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup>The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat and ate all the bread we wanted. Instead, you brought us into this wilderness to make this whole assembly die of hunger!”

# GRUMBLING WHILE WANDERING

- Numbers 11:1-2- Now the people began complaining openly before<sup>[a]</sup> the LORD about hardship. When the LORD heard, His anger burned, and fire from the LORD blazed among them and consumed the outskirts of the camp. <sup>2</sup> Then the people cried out to Moses, and he prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down.

# GRUMBLING WHILE WANDERING

- Numbers 11:4-6- Contemptible people<sup>[a]</sup> among them had a strong craving for other food. The Israelites cried again and said, “Who will feed us meat? <sup>5</sup> We remember the free fish we ate in Egypt, along with the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. <sup>6</sup> But now our appetite is gone;<sup>[b]</sup> there’s nothing to look at but this manna!”

# GRUMBLING WHILE WANDERING

- Numbers 12:1-3- **12** Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because of the Cushite<sup>[a]</sup><sup>[b]</sup> woman he married (for he had married a Cushite woman). <sup>2</sup> They said, “Does the LORD speak only through Moses? Does He not also speak through us?” And the LORD heard it. <sup>3</sup> Moses was a very humble man, more so than any man on the face of the earth.



## **THE UNLIKELY HERO:**

You've heard of Joshua and his walk around Jericho, but did you know that he began his ministry with a most important sidekick? Caleb, Joshua, and ten other men were sent to spy out the Promised Land and bring back the news of the people there. Read how Caleb had a proper view of God's plan in Numbers 13:25-33.

# 1. A VISION REQUIRES KNOWING GOD

## **Point to make:**

There are two perspectives that were obvious: 1) The ten saw that the giants were bigger than they were; 2) Caleb and Joshua saw that God was bigger than the giants. That's a major difference in vision.

- .What did the majority of the men say about going into the Promised Land? Why? THE BAD GUYS: Nephilim: literally, “fallen ones.” Genesis 6:4 tells us that these men were giants or “men of renown.” They lived in the Promised Land and wouldn't leave without a fight.

# CALEB HAD A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ABOUT THESE GIANTS. HERE ARE TWO COMPONENTS OF GODLY VISION:

- A. Knowing God's Plan (14:9).
  - This component helps give us the correct perspective. God's plan for Israel was to give them the Promised Land (13:1-2) and Caleb knew that.
- B. Knowing God's Promises (13:30). This component allows us to carry through our vision. Caleb knew what God had promised: "The Lord is with us." That promise gave Caleb courage
- Do you think the other ten spies did not believe God's promise, had forgotten it, or something else?



**“IN GOD, WHOSE WORD I PRAISE, IN GOD I TRUST; I SHALL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT CAN FLESH DO TO ME?” PSALM 56:4**

Can you name a promise of God that means a lot to you?

## 2. A VISION REQUIRES OBEYING GOD.

- A. Obedience involves sacrifice (14:10).
- Following God's plan requires us to give up our plan. Obeying God is not always popular with the crowd, and was not popular with these Israelites
- You probably won't have to fight against giants, but obedience to God is always costly.

**B.** Obedience involves trust  
(13:30-32).

*Why is it sometimes hard to trust God when He asks us to do difficult things?*

*What are some areas in which teenagers have a hard time trusting God?*

Luke 9:23

<sup>23</sup> Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.

## NUMBERS 14:30-35

- Caleb and Joshua had the correct vision and perspective. They knew God's plans and promises and obeyed Him. Because of that, they were the only two people alive that day that were allowed to go into the Promised Land (14:30-35)

## **MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

1. We cannot know all of the specific plans God has for us in the future. However, do you have an idea of what God may be calling you to do? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is there an area that God has placed you in leadership of? Do you know God's vision for that area? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Think about a time when you had to trust God because you didn't understand what He was doing in your life. Explain how you felt.  
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4. Spend time in prayer, asking God to give you His vision for your life and your ministries.