

## THE DIFFERENT SPIRIT OF CALEB AND JOSHUA

Numbers 11 – 17

Key Verse 14:24

“But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.”

We thank God that he has blessed our Junior Leadership Camp this weekend and has used our Next Generation as messengers and speakers. By studying the book of Nehemiah, we were encouraged to start rebuilding the broken spiritual walls in Germany and Europe. May God bless and use our one-to-one Bible study teams precious to share our spiritual heritage with young people and to establish the sanctification of Sabbath, the offering of the tithe and the biblical view of marriage in the church of God.

In today's text, the people of Israel are before the Promised Land. But just at this time, the people of God fell into disbelief. As a result, they could not enter Canaan and a whole generation had to die in the desert. Only Caleb and Joshua had a different spirit and they would take the promised land by faith. In this hour, we also want to get to know God's faithfulness, who carried the repeated murmurings and rebellion of his people again and again and did not give up his promise. This faithful God also fulfills His promise today with those who live with His promise. Let us get to know today what serious consequences unbelief has and which spiritual fighters God blesses and through them fulfills His promise for world mission.

### 1. The repeated grumbling of the Israelites (11:1 -14:45)

First: The lustful people (Chapter 11)  
After the people of Israel had set out from Sinai, they set out on their daily journeys in

the direction of the Promised Land under the guidance of the Cloud of the Lord. But it was not long before the people complained in the ears of the LORD that they were not well. Chapter 11,1b says, "[...] and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp." The Israelites complained that they were miserable, and they murmured in the ears of God. They denied all the grace of God that they had experienced and thereby aroused God's wrath. When the fire of the LORD burned and devoured them, the people cried out to Moses. And Moses prayed to the LORD so that the plague would end. Why did the LORD have to strike his people so hard? He had to strike them because they were God's people. God had led them out of slavery in Egypt with a mighty hand. They were even God's army, called by him for his holy war. God had provided them with everything they needed. God himself went before them on the way to the Promised Land. Their lamentation was totally inappropriate for God's army.

Then where did their grumble come from? Let us read verses 4 to 6: "The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!" The Israelites had become lecherous among the foreign people who dwelt among them. "Lust" means

that they act according to their lust, their whim, even their sinful greed. As God's people, they were called to proclaim God's good works. But because of their lust for the food of Egypt, they grumbled and said that their soul had become weak. God had so faithfully provided them with heavenly manna. The manna came in such abundance and was so versatile to use. But they grumbled about this faithful blessing of God. It is a grave sin to grumble about God's blessing or to despise God's blessing. God has given each of us great blessings. He has called us out of sinful and worldly life and called us for His great mission as shepherds and Bible teachers. He also prepares his spiritual manna, the daily bread, for us every morning. But whoever despises the blessing of early morning prayer and the daily bread and grumbles like the Israelites against it, attracts the wrath of God. Then we cannot be used as a kingdom of priests and a holy people of God. To grumble is not a problem of conditions, but a serious trial of sin. And our murmuring is not only against people, but against God. God the Lord heard exactly what the lecherous people murmured. God had given them everything in abundance. But they did not give thanks, but acted according to their desire. As God's people we must repent of lust and desire and live a separate life in obedience to God's Word and God's promise.

Let's look at verse 10: "Moses heard the people of every family wailing at the entrance to their tents. The LORD became exceedingly angry, and Moses was troubled." The wrath of God was kindled against them because they muttered. And Moses choked it. God saw Moses' burden of leadership and appointed 70 elders to work closely with him as close associates, who were to share his burden with the same Spirit. God also announced that he would give flesh to the people. For Moses it was not only a great challenge, but an impossibility to feed 600,000 men with meat. But God reminded him that his hand was not too short. He let a wind come up that brought quails up from the sea and dropped them on the camp. Thousands of quails lay around the camp,

two cubits high on the ground. The Israelites gathered them together, day and night, for several days, in spite of the Word of God that He would give them a month's supply of meat to eat (11:31). They did not thank God, but acted according to their desire. God sent a great plague and they died while the flesh was still in their teeth (11:33). This place was called "Kibroth Hattaavah" because the lustful people were buried there.

Murmuring against God and God's servants is not a "trivial offence". Murmuring is a serious sin that must be spiritually treated and solved through repentance. Apostle Paul exhorts us in Romans 6:12,13: "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace." God hears exactly what we say. Let's look at 14:26-28: "The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: "How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. So tell them, 'As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very thing I heard you say.'" Whether we win or lose depends on it, what testimony we're about to give. May God help us not to be tempted by the lies of the spirit of the times, but to repent of the greed and to live a separate life as His holy people in obedience to His promise.

Second: Satan tempts Miriam and Aaron (chapter 12)

The Israelites were about to take the Promised Land. But now Satan needed the human ambition of Miriam and Aaron to rebel against the servant of God, Moses. Let us look at chapter 12:1,2: "Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the LORD heard this." Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses about his Cushitian

wife. But really, it wasn't about Moses' marriage, it was about their own ambition. They questioned Moses' leadership and challenged the sovereignty of God and wanted to be leaders themselves. God heard this and it displeased him. He challenged them and rebuked them for their lack of fear of God (8). Verse 9 says, "The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them." And Miriam became leprous as snow. Aaron repented and asked Moses for forgiveness. And Moses cried unto the LORD for them. For seven days Miriam had to remain outside the camp, sowing leprosy, and then she was taken back. This vicious circle was repeated again and again among the Israelites, so that the journey to the Promised Land was delayed again and again.

Through this event we learn that lack of fear of God and rebellion against God's servants is a serious sin that God does not overlook. In the past weeks we have unfortunately also experienced the spiritual reality among ourselves that Satan has blown the whistle on the work of God, especially in the time of blessing that we may celebrate the 40th anniversary of the work of God this year. We experienced how the Sunday worship service was defiled by the lack of fear of God and how, as a consequence, even house bans had to be issued. During this time, let us be spiritually vigilant against all attacks of Satan by working together with God's servants, building spiritual unity and preparing heartily together for the 40th anniversary service so that we can thank God, honor Him, and renew God's vision and hope in our hearts.

Third: The sending of explorers (chapter 13) The Israelites had gone as far as Hazeroth and were encamped at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, not far from the border of the Promised Land. There God gave Moses the direction to send men to explore the land of Canaan, one elder from each tribe. Let's read Chapter 13:17-20: "When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, "Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong

or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees in it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)"

In verses 21 to 26 we learn how they spent forty days exploring the Promised Land, the strength of the Canaanites and the nature of the land, its people and cities, and the fruits of the land. From the wilderness of Zin they went as far as Rehob, then into the south country as far as Hebron, where the Anakites dwelt. From there they crossed the whole country up to the brook Eshkol. After forty days they returned back to the desert in Kadesh. When the scouts returned, they reported and said (13:27), "They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit." And further they said (13,28.29): "But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan."

As soon as these words were spoken, the people began to grumble against Moses. Caleb tried to appease the people and encouraged them, saying (13:30b), "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it." Caleb and Joshua had seen exactly the same what the other explorers had seen. But while Caleb and Joshua held the promise of God in their hearts, the rest of the spies saw only with human eyes. Moreover, the other spies disobeyed Moses' clear orders: 1) to explore the strength of the Canaanites and 2) to determine the fertility of the land. But the ten spies simply reversed the order, saying first: "The land flows over with milk and honey. At this point, Caleb clearly saw that their interest was to gain material advantage in the conquest of Canaan. They did not see that God wanted to use them as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. They looked to

see if and how they could improve their material conditions in the new land. Here we also see what a strong influence a little "but" can have. When the spies emphasized how strong the inhabitants were, the positive was forgotten. Belief or disbelief make a big difference like day and night. Faith builds up. The unbelief breaks down.

Let's look at verse 32 and 33: "And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them." They even went so far as to start an evil rumor that the promised land would devour its inhabitants. With this lie they contradicted what God had promised. God had already promised Abraham this land for his possession, for him and his descendants. God had also promised them six times in the Book of Exodus to drive out the people of the land before them (Exodus 3:8; 3:17; 23:23; 23:28; 33:2; 34:11). God had said to them that He would work through them and make His glory manifest. But they said, "No!" Chapter 14,1.2 say: "That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness!" The unbelieving words of the spies drove the whole people into disbelief, so that they cried and wept all night, talking about raising a captain and going back to Egypt.

Fourth: The other spirit of Caleb and Joshua Joshua and Caleb had seen the same as the other spies. But their report was quite different. Let us read chap. 14,7b-9: "... "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their

protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them." Caleb and Joshua could tell this story because they saw the land with the eyes of faith. They were able to report in faith because they saw the land with their eyes of faith. They could report in faith since they lived with God's promise. Faith is not a question of external circumstances, but a question of whether we live with God's promise or not.

When missionary Peter and missionary Sarah started this pioneering work 40 years ago, the campus mission in Europe looked like an impossible task. The universities resembled impregnable fortresses of relativism and pride. The students were so strong in their relativistic opinions. But the missionaries had God's promise (Mark 11:22): "Have faith in God!"

For years they experienced discouragement. But they believed in God. And the sovereign God blessed their faith. He moved the stone-hard hearts and made the mightiest fortresses collapse, set up shepherds and Bible teachers and used our work as a spiritual headquarter for the European mission. God does his wonderful work independently of external circumstances through faith.

Consider verse 10: Joshua and Caleb testified to their faith that the protection of the Canaanites had been removed because Almighty God Himself is leading His people Israel and fighting for them. But the people said that they should be stoned to death. Then the glory of the Lord appeared over the tabernacle. Let us read verses 11 and 12: "The LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them? I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they." God's wrath was kindled. He wanted to destroy all the people and make a new beginning with Moses.

Let us read verse 11 again and think about the seriousness of unbelief and its consequences. "The LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?" God calls unbelief blasphemy. The 10 spies blasphemed God by speaking against His word. It was not that the enemy was so strong, but that they had no word of God in their hearts. They lived without the Word of God's promise, so such blasphemous words came out of their mouths. God said that despite all His glorious signs, they did not want to believe. God does not get angry when we make mistakes. But God gets angry when we deliberately reject His Word despite His wonderful work of salvation.

Consider verses 13-19: Moses made burning intercession for the people before the Lord. It was a temptation for Moses that God wanted to make him a great people. But Moses knew God's heart and fought before God for the people, reminding God of his great power and omnipotence in bringing the Israelites out of Egypt and walking before them in the desert with the pillar of cloud and fire day and night. If God were to destroy his people now, the surrounding peoples would despise the name of God. He asked for God's mercy and grace to forgive their iniquity and transgressions so that God's name might be great!

God heard Moses' intercession. Consider verses 20-23: The LORD replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times—not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it." God made it clear that they were still His people, but no longer His host. They had lost the blessing of taking the promised land. God punished them with 40 years of wandering in the desert, until they were

completely worn out, until the first generation that God had led out of Egypt would have died in the desert. But the generation of their children, of whom they had said that they would become a prey, would take the Promised Land. Some of the Israelites wanted to forget their sin and go up and fight without repentance and follow God's instruction. Moses urged them not to transgress the word of the LORD and not to go up because the LORD was not among them. But instead of repenting, they refused to listen and went up by their own strength. And the Amalekites and the Canaanites came to meet them, and smote them, and scattered them.

God in his great grace has promised us to take the 1700 universities in Germany and Europe, even in the Muslim world as a promised land. But we can never achieve this with our own strength. What is decisive is whether we see our campus / our university with the eyes of faith and with the vision and hope of God. If we believe God's words of promise, especially 1 Peter 2:9 and Ezekiel 37:10, and live practically with this promise, then we will experience God's mighty work. Do you see Germany on the basis of 1 Peter 2:9 as a kingdom of priests and as a holy nation? Can you see, on the basis of Ezk 37:10, that Europe is being brought to life by a spiritual field of the dead and is being raised as a vast army for world mission? God has already done great and unbelievable things that no one could have imagined beforehand. The fact that Germany was reunited peacefully and without bloodshed is a miracle work of God. This was not the achievement of politicians, but of Christians who faithfully gathered for prayer and prayed for a peaceful change. In our time, godless humanism, relativism, genderism, materialism seem to be too powerful and too loud to see God's work in Germany and Europe. But with the eyes of faith and with the other spirit of Caleb and Joshua we see that Germany and Europe are ripe for a spiritual renewal and recovery! We see that the young people are waiting for Bible teachers who prophesy the Word of

God to them, who invite them to take part in the work of educating young people.

Let's look at the main verse 14:24: "But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it." Instead of speaking disbelieving, discouraging and destructive words like the ten remaining spies, we may speak believing words based on God's promise. It is easy to enter into the unbelieving, pessimistic and visible circumstances dependent way of thinking. But we are allowed to have eyes of faith and a different spirit like Caleb and Joshua. With the other spirit we may believe in the promise of God's word Ezekiel 37:10 absolutely, to take the promised land at our school, college and university, in Germany, Europe and even in the Muslim world. With their spirit, we may serve the young people until the end, to establish them as disciples and spiritual leaders. By forming the one-to-one Bible study teams, we raise up the faith as Caleb and Joshua had it. God's miraculous work of salvation is done through those who, like Caleb and Joshua, testify: "Do not fall away from the LORD, nor fear the people of this land, for we will devour them like bread. Their protection is gone from them, but the LORD is with us.

## 2. The Rebellion of the Korah (15:1-17:15)

In chapter 15 God established obedience to the sacrifice and the absoluteness of His commandments. God also taught them that there should be one law between Israelites and foreigners.

In chapters 16 and 17 we learn what evil fruit Israel's rebellion produced. Korah, one of the Kohathites, Dathan, Abiram and On from the tribe of RUBEN, and 250 Israelites openly rebelled against Moses. They were all leaders, well-known people and leaders of the congregation. They grumbled about it and accused Moses and Aaron of rising above the whole congregation to be their leaders. Korah, as a Kohathite, had the

privilege of taking care of the holy things of the sanctuary, but he and the others now also desired the priesthood. Moses did not discuss with them. Let us read Chapter 16:11: "It is against the LORD that you and all your followers have banded together. Who is Aaron that you should grumble against him?" Moses clearly said this was a rebellion against God. But Korah and his men were already too deep in their sin to listen to Moses. Datan and Abiram even went so far that they did not want to come to Moses but stayed at home and mocked him via WhatsApp. Moses was very angry, but he put the answer to their rebellion in God's hand. The rebels were to appear before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and Aaron, each with his pan and incense. And Korah brought the whole congregation to his side, so that all the people stood against Moses and Aaron.

What did Moses do when the wrath of God was kindled and he asked Moses and Aaron to separate from the people and destroy them? Moses again interceded for the people. Verse 22: "But Moses and Aaron fell facedown and cried out, "O God, the God who gives breath to all living things, will you be angry with the entire assembly when only one man sins?" Moses stood before God so that he saw the people as sheep who had been deceived by a single rebel. The rebels met a terrible end. They were swallowed up by the ground (16:31). 250 leaders were consumed by fire (16:35). In the following, God instructed Eleazar the priest to smash the pans of these sinners with which they had smoked into wide sheets and cover the altar with them. This was to be a warning to Israel in the future, a clear warning not to rebel against God or question God's sovereignty. In this way, God protected the holy priesthood among them; let us consider Chapter 17:6: "So Moses spoke to the Israelites, and their leaders gave him twelve staffs, one for the leader of each of their ancestral tribes, and Aaron's staff was among them." Moses had interceded for the people with all his might and turned away the wrath of God. God had responded to the rebellion of the Korah and judged them. But

most of the Israelites remained blind to the truth. Again they grumbled against Moses and Aaron. Then the LORD himself came down, and the cloud covered the tabernacle of the congregation. God's wrath was so great that he wanted to destroy the whole congregation by a plague. Then Moses sent Aaron from the altar with incense, to make atonement for the people in the congregation. The plague was already in full swing. Aaron ran among the people and burned incense, standing between the dead and the living, until the plague was finally repelled. Through Moses we see that the Israelites had a shepherd who prayed for them even in the midst of the spiritual darkness. In today's passage alone, we find five steles where Moses interceded for the rebellious and unrepentant people. Moses' intercession is the expression of his faith in the God who faithfully fulfills his promise. Our early morning prayer is also the expression of faith and sweet incense. When we come to God from the early morning, our prayer for our Bible students and for the young people of this generation is like the prayer of Moses and like the incense of Aaron, that God may turn away his wrath and raise them up again as his people. Because God is faithful to His promise, we may also intercede for the young people of Europe and experience the true joy and comfort of God. Let us read the key verse (Chapter 14:24) together: "But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it." Today's text has taught us that lust, desire, unbelief, disobedience and murmurings are serious sins that incur the wrath of God. Let us renew our minds through repentance and live a changed life with the Word of God and the promise of God with the other spirit of Caleb and Joshua. With the promise of Ezekiel 37:10 we want to conquer the land promised by God, the 1700 universities in Germany and Europe up to the Muslim world and be used as God's holy people and as royal priesthood for the spiritual revival of this generation.