

The Kind of Old Guy I  
Want to Be—  
Caleb



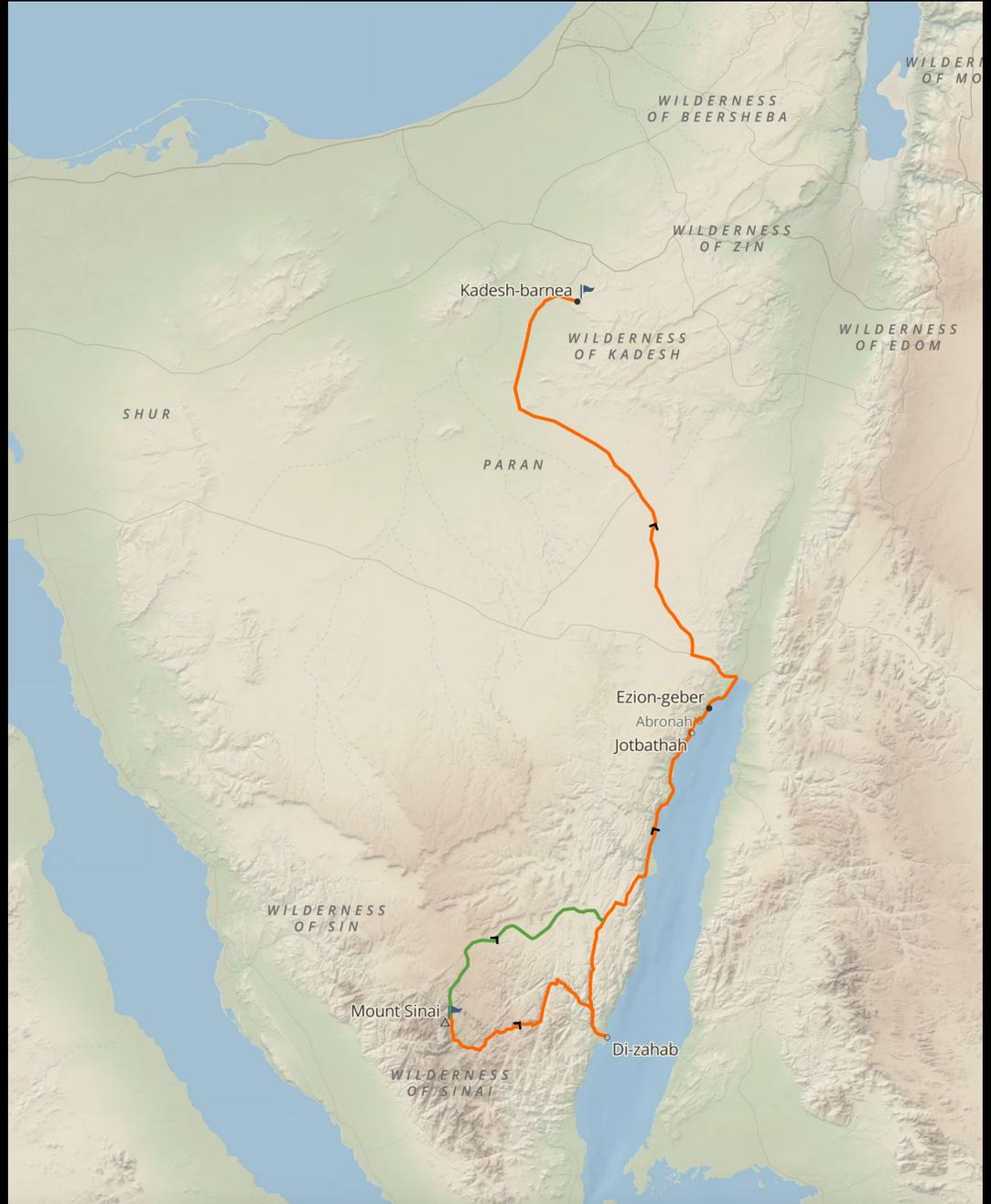
## Joshua 14:6-14

<sup>6</sup> Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. <sup>7</sup> I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. <sup>8</sup> But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the LORD my God. <sup>9</sup> And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.'

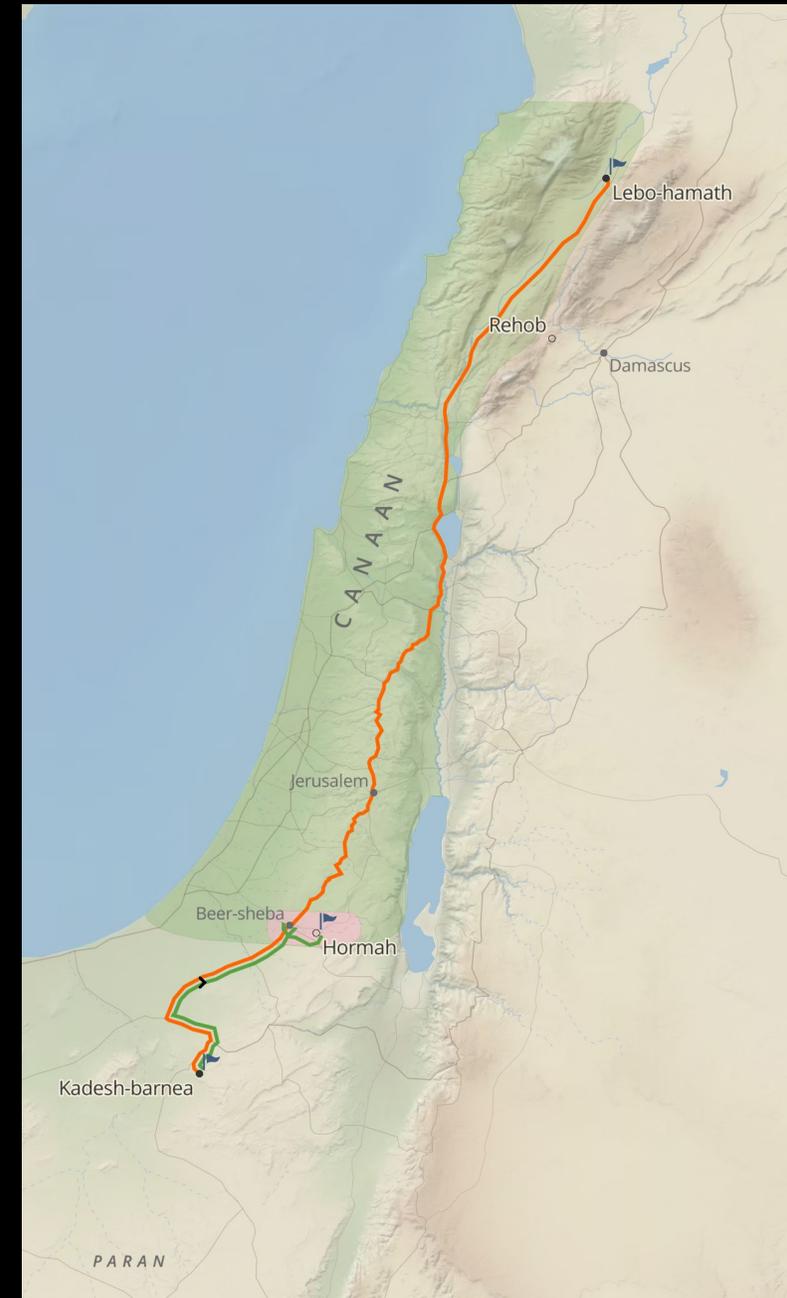
<sup>10</sup> And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. <sup>11</sup> I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. <sup>12</sup> So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. <sup>14</sup> Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel.

It took Israel only 10 months to go from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh-barnea.



Twelve spies scouted the land  
for 40 days.



On their return,  
they all agreed that  
the land flowed with  
milk and honey.

A single cluster of  
grapes was so heavy,  
two men had to carry  
it on a pole between  
them.



But only two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, were willing to go in and possess the land as God commanded.

The rest were afraid of the Canaanites—especially the Anakites, a giant race of warriors. The spies said “we are like grasshoppers in their eyes.”

The faithless spies spread a bad report among the Israelites about the land they had explored.

The people believed the bad report and refused to go in.



The people who believed the bad report and refused to go in said they would rather have died in the desert than be slain with the sword in Canaan.

They got what they asked for.

They were turned back to wander in the desert for 40 years where every Israelite above the age of 20 died.

Their children went in to possess the land.



But Caleb and Joshua  
were the two exceptions.

They believed God and  
urged the people to go in  
and take the land as God  
had said.



*What kind of old guy (or gal) do you want to be?*

The question isn't intended to define the *professional pinnacle* you achieve by the end of your career.

Or *where* you want to retire.

Or what your *financial situation* will be.

But what kind of *character, personality, and style of being* will you possess.



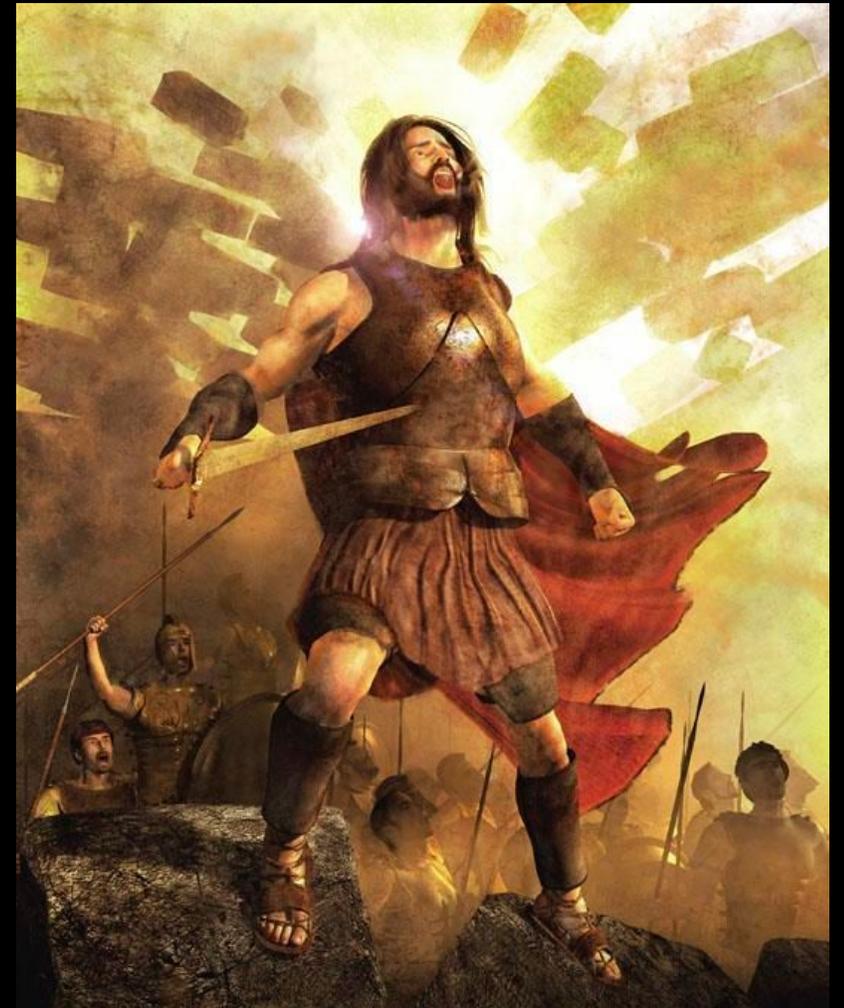
# 1. One who follows the Lord fully.

Six times the Bible says that Caleb **followed the Lord *wholly* or *fully***.

That phrase "*wholly followed the Lord*" is a rare expression in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

It *occurs only one other time*, in 1 Kings 11:6 in the judgment against **Solomon** when "he did not wholly follow the LORD, as his father David had done."

But it is used *six times* of Caleb.



The first time those words are used of Caleb was *when God turned the Israelites back into the desert.*

Numbers 14:20-24

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said, "I have pardoned, according to your word. <sup>21</sup> But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD, <sup>22</sup> none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, <sup>23</sup> shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it. <sup>24</sup> But *my servant Caleb*, because he has a different spirit and *has followed me fully*, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.



The next time was *when the Israelites reached the east side of the Jordan River, just before they were to cross over.*

Two of the tribes Reuben and Gad wanted to stay there in the transjordan.

Moses became angry with them and said that's exactly what their fathers did 40 years ago.

Numbers 32:11-12

<sup>11</sup> 'Surely none of the men who came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, because they have not wholly followed me, <sup>12</sup> none except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, **for they have wholly followed the LORD.**'

The matter was resolved when Reuben and Gad pledged to go with the other tribes across the Jordan to help them conquer the land.



**Caleb's wholeheartedness is mentioned again in *Moses' great speech* to the nation just before they entered the Promised Land.**



Deuteronomy 1:32-36

<sup>32</sup> Yet in spite of this word you did not believe the LORD your God, <sup>33</sup> who went before you in the way to seek you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night and in the cloud by day, to show you by what way you should go.

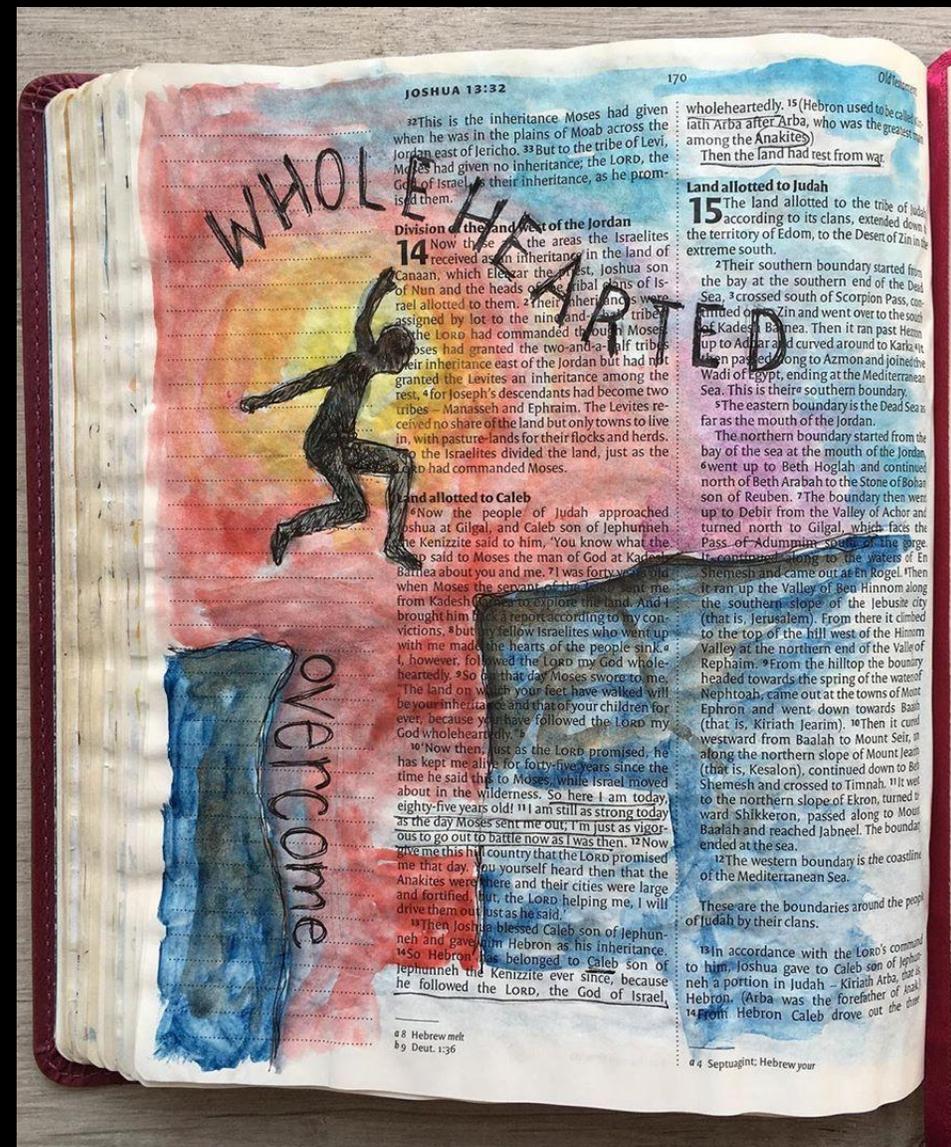
<sup>34</sup> "And the LORD heard your words and was angered, and he swore, <sup>35</sup> 'Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land that I swore to give to your fathers, <sup>36</sup> except **Caleb** the son of Jephunneh. He shall see it, and to him and to his children I will give the land on which he has trodden, **because he has wholly followed the LORD!**'

Then our passage says **three times** that Caleb followed the Lord wholeheartedly.

Joshua 14:8-9, 14

<sup>8</sup> But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; **yet I wholly followed the Lord my God.** <sup>9</sup> And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, **because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.**' . . .

<sup>14</sup> Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, **because he wholly followed the LORD,** the God of Israel.



Do you remember the great deeds  
of the Old Testament hero  
Shammua?

Shaphat?

Igal?

Palti?

Gaddiel?

Gaddi?

Ammiel?

Sethur?

Nahbi?

Geuel?



No one remembers the ten **fearful, faithless spies** who brought the bad report to Moses.

But all of us remember **Joshua and Caleb.**



2. One who organizes his life around God's promises.

Caleb was a man who *took God at his word* and *acted on God's promises*.



## Joshua 14:10-11

<sup>10</sup> And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, **just as he said**, these forty-five years **since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses**, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. <sup>11</sup> I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.



Joshua 14:11

as I was...

The Bible is full of wonderful promises that God will fulfill for those who trust him and take him at his word.

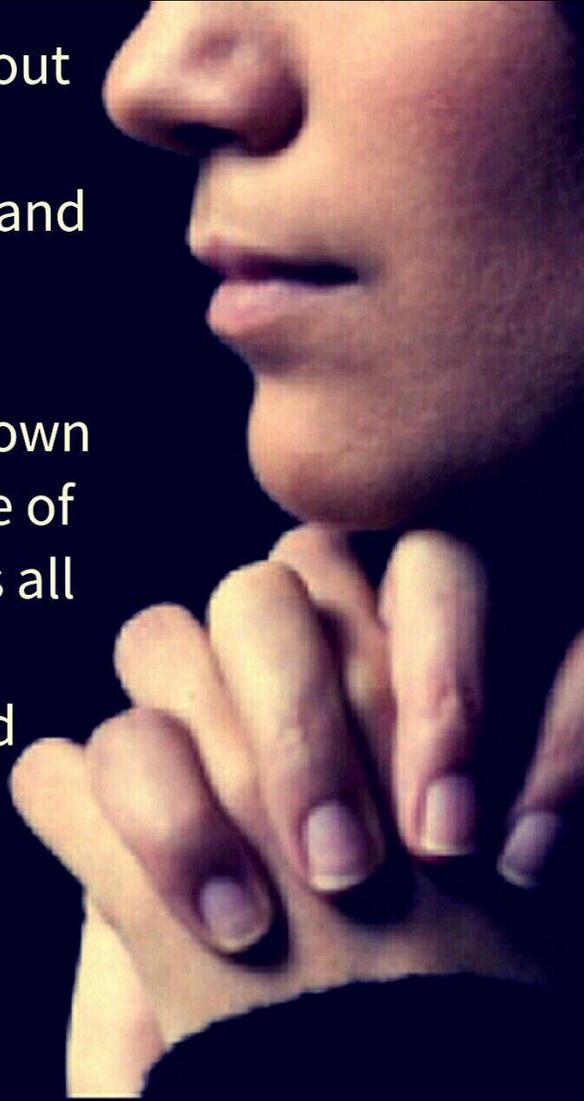


“Let God’s promises shine on your problems.”

–Corrie ten Boom

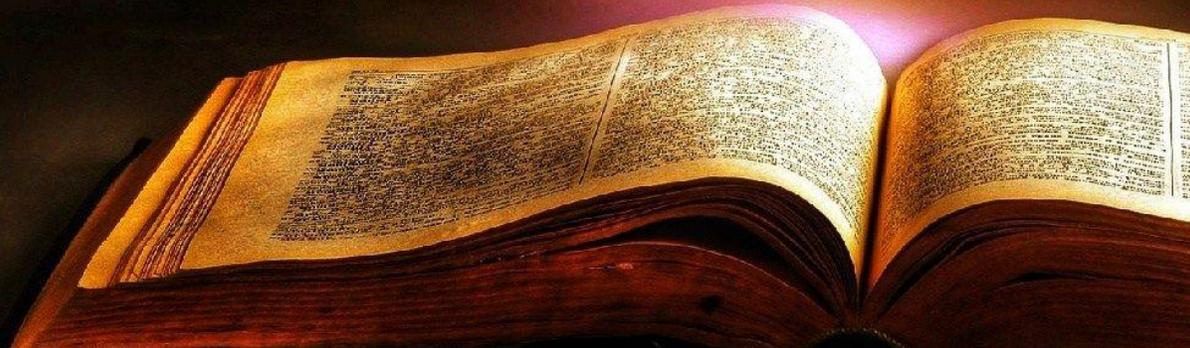
do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

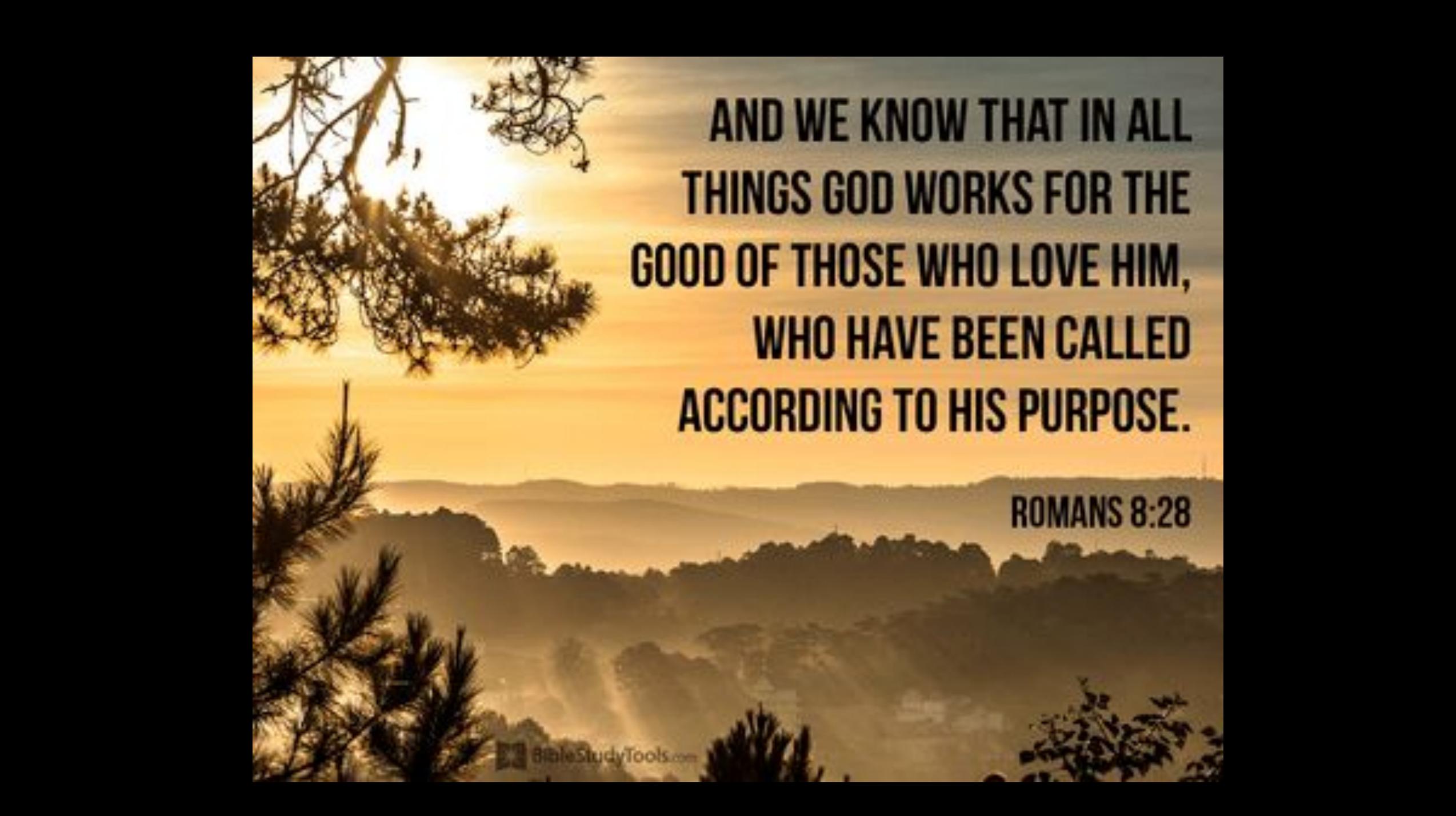
Philippians 4:6-7 ESV



If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask  
GOD, who gives generously to all without  
reproach, and it will be given him.

*James 1:5 ESV*





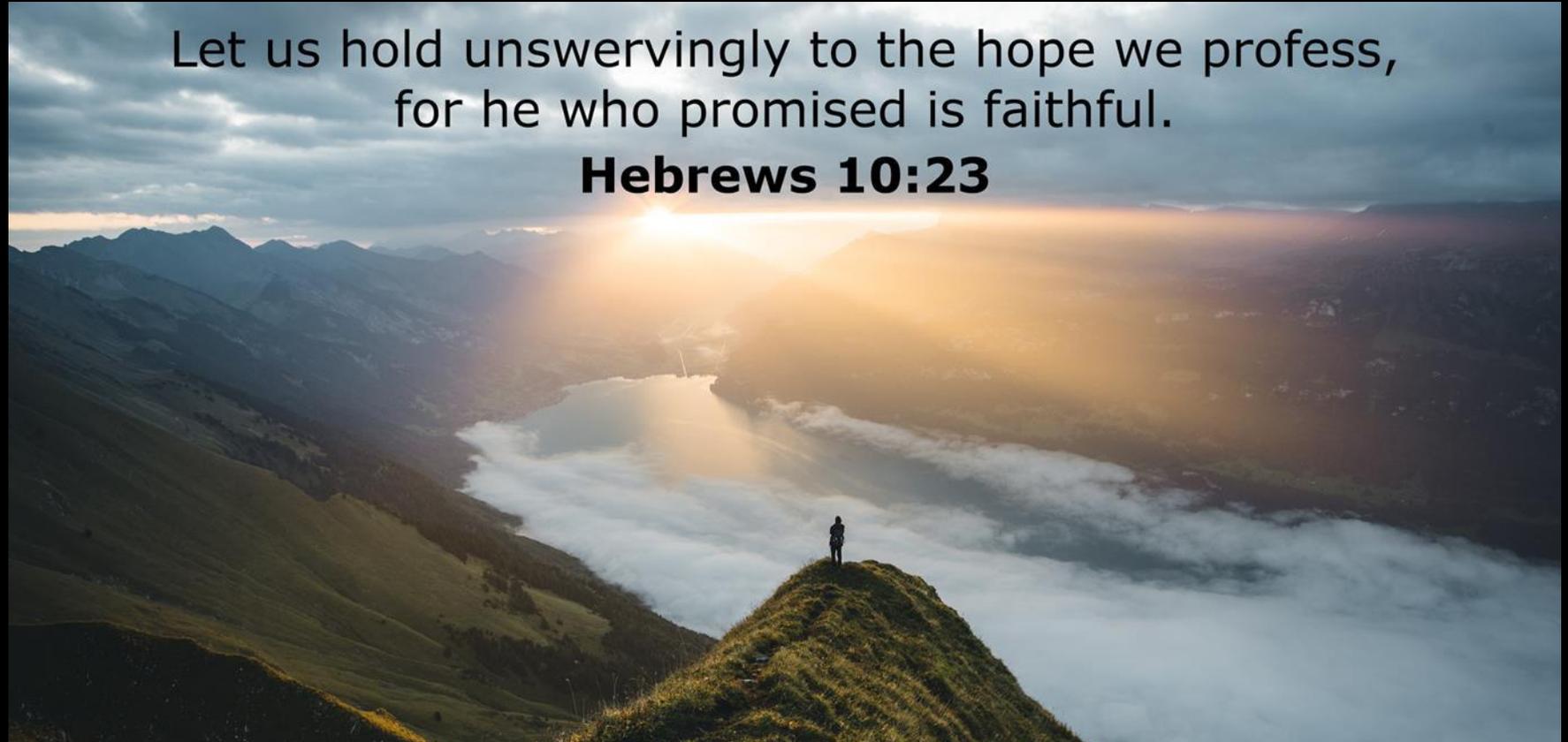
**AND WE KNOW THAT IN ALL  
THINGS GOD WORKS FOR THE  
GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM,  
WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED  
ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.**

**ROMANS 8:28**

If, like Caleb, you want to go from strength to strength even in old age, make *God's promises the organizing principles of your life.*

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess,  
for he who promised is faithful.

**Hebrews 10:23**



3. One who survives the tough challenges.



Caleb was one of only two survivors of the Israelites who were permitted to enter the Promised Land.

He had what it took to survive being a **slave in Egypt**.

He survived wandering for 40 years in **the desert**.

And he still had the vitality and vision to **take possession** of the Promised Land.



## Joshua 14:12

Caleb *did more than merely survive* the tough challenges.

He never grew tired *conquering giants* and *capturing mountains*.

The hill country of Judea was the very place where the Anakites lived—the giants who had frightened the other spies 45 years before.

<sup>12</sup> So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.”



## 5. One who lives with God's blessing.

In the end, Caleb received the blessings of the Promise Land because he *refused to ever give up on God.*

***Hebron***, the ***highest town in Canaan***, became Caleb's inheritance.



Hebron is twenty miles south-southwest of Jerusalem, situated on the central mountainous ridge 3,000 feet above sea level.

It is in an area with an abundant water supply in the form of wells and springs and is a regional center of grape and olive production.

This was where Abraham and the Old Testament patriarchs were buried.

This was the place where Israel's greatest king, David, would one day be crowned.



# Conclusion

In 1904 **William Borden**, heir to the Borden Dairy Estate, graduated from a Chicago high school a millionaire.

As a graduation present his parents gave him a *trip around the world*. Traveling through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe gave Borden a burden for the world's hurting people.

Writing home, he said, "*I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field.*"



When he made this decision, he wrote in the back of his Bible two words: "**No Reserves.**"

After graduating from *Yale University* he continued to turn down high-paying job offers, entering two more words in his Bible: "**No Retreats.**"



## MILLIONAIRE TO BE MISSIONARY

Mother of William Whiting Borden Was Society Belle in Detroit Years Ago.

Detroit society heard with no little interest Saturday of the decision of William Whiting Borden, of Chicago, son of the late William Borden and Mrs. Mary Borden, to enter the foreign missionary field in China.

Young Borden is said to have received \$5,000,000 as his share of his father's estate.

The young millionaire's mother was Miss Mary Whiting, of Detroit. She is a sister of F. W. Whiting and J. Hill Whiting, who are now located in New York and Chicago.

Before her marriage to William Borden and subsequent removal to Chicago, Miss Whiting was one of the leading society belles of Detroit and the Whiting family was one of the most prominent in the city.

Borden will begin his life's work at Kan Su, China, as soon as his preparatory studies are completed. He was ordained a foreign missionary by the China Inland Missionary society, Chicago, Saturday night.

Completing studies at *Princeton Seminary*, Borden sailed for *China* to work with Muslims, by way of *Egypt*. While on the mission field, Borden was stricken with *cerebral meningitis* and died within a month.

Many of his family and friends thought "What a tragedy! For such a promising young man to die in a foreign place so far from home."



But shortly before he died, underneath the words "No Reserves" and "No Retreats," Borden had written in his Bible the words "**No Regrets.**"

No matter what obstacles or hardships we may face, we must serve Christ with no reserves, no retreats, and no regrets.





No reserves. No retreats. No  
regrets.

— *William Whiting Borden* —

AZ QUOTES

Will you, like Caleb, be faithful to God with all your heart for all of your life?

Will you, like William Borden, serve him with no reserves, no retreats, and no regrets?