

# *The Encouragement Newsletter*

## We Are Able...

## God Is Able!!

### We Are Able

In Numbers 13, we see where Moses sent 12 individuals who were leaders within the tribes of Israel to check out the land promised to them. Reading Numbers 13:30-31, we see Caleb refute the report of his peers. Caleb was very excited and knew Israel would not be defeated if they went in to take the land. He had this unshakeable confidence that the others did not have. Confidence set him apart. This confidence was not in himself, but in the God that promised. This confidence caused him to speak up as the doubters provided their fearful assessment of the situation. He proclaimed “God is Able”. Not only did Caleb possess this unshakeable faith, but Joshua was just as resilient in his faith in God’s ability. Numbers 14 opens with the congregation crying and full of fear because of the report of the 10 fearful leader spies. The Israelites complained and wanted to return to Egypt. They could not see through their own fear and could not believe that God had great things in store for them if they only believed. Joshua speaks up along with Caleb in verses 6-9 of Numbers 14, admonishing them not to rebel against the Lord nor be fearful of the people in the land because the Lord was with them.

Let me put a plug in here on leadership. Leaders, it matters how we portray God’s ability to the people of God. I am not just speaking to leaders of an entire congregation, but to those selected to work along side them in “any” leadership capacity (i.e., elders, deacons, prophets, music ministers, choir directors, children’s church leaders, etc.). In the study Bible called the “*Spirit Led Bible*”, there is a section called Kingdom Dynamics with the title, “Resisting Popular Opinion – Leader Traits”. It states this very phenomenal statement – “Spiritual advance requires faith and unbelief will never see beyond the difficulties. Unbelief sees “walled cities and giants” rather than the presence and power of God. Unbelief looks at obstacles; faith looks at God. Joshua and Caleb



were willing to do the unpopular thing and call the people to positive faith. They led the way into the future by confronting a negative report and helping a new generation rise to serve God in faith”. I am a leader and this is such a powerful statement and something actuate. What do we say when it looks like the giants are going to defeat us when all we have the word of the Lord? How do we portray God’s ability vs. the ability of our foes? In these trying times, do we say “...We are well **ABLE** to overcome it”.

***And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. Numbers 13:30 (NKJV)***

Just something to dwell on as we seek to lead God’s people.

What is the meaning of this word **ABLE**?

#### **Merriam-Webster Definition**

- Having sufficient power, skill, or resources to do something; having the freedom or opportunity to do something; having a quality or nature that makes something possible

**Biblical Definition**

- From *BLB.org* - Able in this passage comes from the Hebrew word Yakol (Strong's #3201) and it means – To prevail, Overcome, Endure, Have power; To be able, Be able to gain or accomplish, Be able to endure, Be able to reach; To prevail, Prevail over or against, Be victor; To have ability, have strength.

Using some of these definitions, it is safe to say that Caleb was essentially saying, “We can Prevail, Overcome, Endure, and together we have the Strength to take this land. Caleb was assured, the Lord who brought them out of Egypt would take them to the land promised. Let take this further. In verse 8 of chapter 14, Joshua and Caleb spoke and said “if the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us...”. The key phrase I want to highlight is “delights in us”. This phrase is saying, “If God is pleased with us as His chosen people and our behavior, He will bring us into this land and give it to us. Most importantly, God will accomplish the great feat by His Might and His Power working through us.

But, when would the promise of God be fulfill? In what generation? The word “if” shows there is a condition. We have to be “his” delight. He has to be pleased with us. However, as we read on in scripture, we see that only two people in this group Caleb and Joshua addressed went into the promised land. Scripture tells us in I Corinthians 10:5 that “with most of them, God was not well pleased”. Hebrews 3:19 adds “they could not enter in because of unbelief”. They only believed that they were not able (Numbers 13:31). This was the level of their believe. They did not acknowledge the overcoming and prevailing power of the One who gave the promise.

To close out this section, we must understand, we are only able when He delights in us and we believe. Greater is He who is within us, than he who is in the world. **We are ABLE.**

**God Is Able**

Lets look at Daniel.

In Daniel 3:17, the Word of God says...

*If it be so, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. (KJV)***

In this verse, Able means — To be able, To prevail, To be powerful, and to overcome.

What was going on here? Three men’s refusal to bow before the image landed them in trouble with the authorities— the government, if you please. In Daniel 3, King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold. He gathered all of the people he ruled together for a dedication. At the dedication, the people were instructed to “fall down and worship” the image when they heard the trumpet sound. Anyone who did not fall down, would be placed in the fiery furnace. This is where it gets hot...literally. It was observed and reported three Jews



did not do as the king had ordered. It was Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These three men refused to bow to the image and worship. How would you respond in this type of situation? Well, in reality we are faced with this type of decision in many ways today. Compromising holiness and sanctification to fit into cultural norms is bowing and worshipping. The edict of the day was if you do not bow, you will be burned to death. These three stood on their faith in God. They were confident that—He was ABLE – Powerful Enough - to deliver them from the fiery furnace AND if He did not deliver them...that was fine too. At the end of the day, they were not going to bow and worship the image. These men had a deep conviction about their faith and were not going to violate it to save

**<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that ask or think, according to the power that works in us,**

**<sup>21</sup> To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen**

**Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV)**

their lives. We have to understand that God is ABLE to do what is necessary in every situation and circumstance of our life and then maintain such an honor of Him that we do not bow and worship another god. Bow and worship what? Bow and worship -

- The culture,
- The systems of the world,
- Fear of repercussions because of our faith in Jesus Christ
- Fame, and selfish ambition to be somebody.

They were not trying to fit in. They were willing to stick out like a sore thumb, look foolish all the while maintaining faith and confidence that God was Able to deliver.

**S**aints, we are in the day that we have to believe God is able, even if we have to look like a fool because of our faith. Have you ever noticed that believing in Jesus Christ has been met with so much mockery and opposition. Because the core value of being a Christian means believing in Jesus Christ, who the world hates, there is an onslaught against Christianity. People want anything that has any reference to Jesus Christ, His standard, and His ways removed from every place in society. Yet, they do not mock or ridicule any other religion. Oh why do you think this is so?? It is because God is Able. Jesus said in John 10:30 - I and the Father are one. Since they are one, God is Able is the same as saying Jesus is Able. God is the God of all gods in the earth. All other gods are below and beneath Him. So, we must stand in our faith in Jesus Christ and know that in every circumstance He is Able to deliver. We do not have to bow to fear and the pressures of man and the systems of this world. We must settle in our hearts that we will only bow to only wise God.

Building upon John 10:30, let us go up a few verses and begin at John 10:25—

***25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. 26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one."***

**T**o give you the back drop, the earlier verse in this chapter is about Jesus being the True shepherd (verses 1-6), the Good Shepherd (versus 7-21) and the Shepherd that Knows His sheep (versus 22 - 30). In the natural, the Shepherd is the guardian, protector and guide of the sheep. And, the sheep, in the natural, know the voice of the shepherd. This is the relationship we as the people of God have with Jesus Christ. He is the Shepherd and we are the sheep. As sheep, we know his voice and as our Shepherd, He will take care of us and No one is Able - No one has the power - to take us out of His hands.

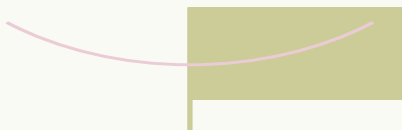
**I**n this verse, Able comes from the Greek word - Dynamia, which means have power whether by virtue of one's own ability and resources or of a state of mind, or through favorable circumstances, or by permission of law or custom; to be able to do something; and to be capable, strong and powerful.

**T**herefore, we can be confident, the Good Shepherd has our best interest at heart. We may be in strange, precarious and uncomfortable situations, but we can be assured that no one is "able" to pluck "us out of His hands. He holds us tightly and securely. **SELAH....**



**I Thessalonians 5:11**

**Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.**



*I completed writing this newsletter as the country and world is coming out of the horrendous affects of the COVID-19 outbreak. Not only are we coming out of this outbreak, we are now seeing a new outbreak of protests and violence as a consequence of the brutal murder of George Floyd. It is such a time that brings a heavy burden upon and in the soul. It looks like the God we serve is not in control. From a human perspective things appear to be totally out of control. Be at peace, He is in control. We must arise in our faith and trust in God as well as renew our minds and not lose heart. Remain confident that He is in control. Let us continue to pray for our nation, leaders on all levels (natural & spiritual), and our brothers and sisters (natural & spiritual).  
**We Are Able!..God Is Able!***

***I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Psalm 25:13 (NKJV)***

**Jesus Christ is the Author & Finisher of My Faith  
Veronica B. McCray, Co-Author  
Fred McCray, Sr. Editor**