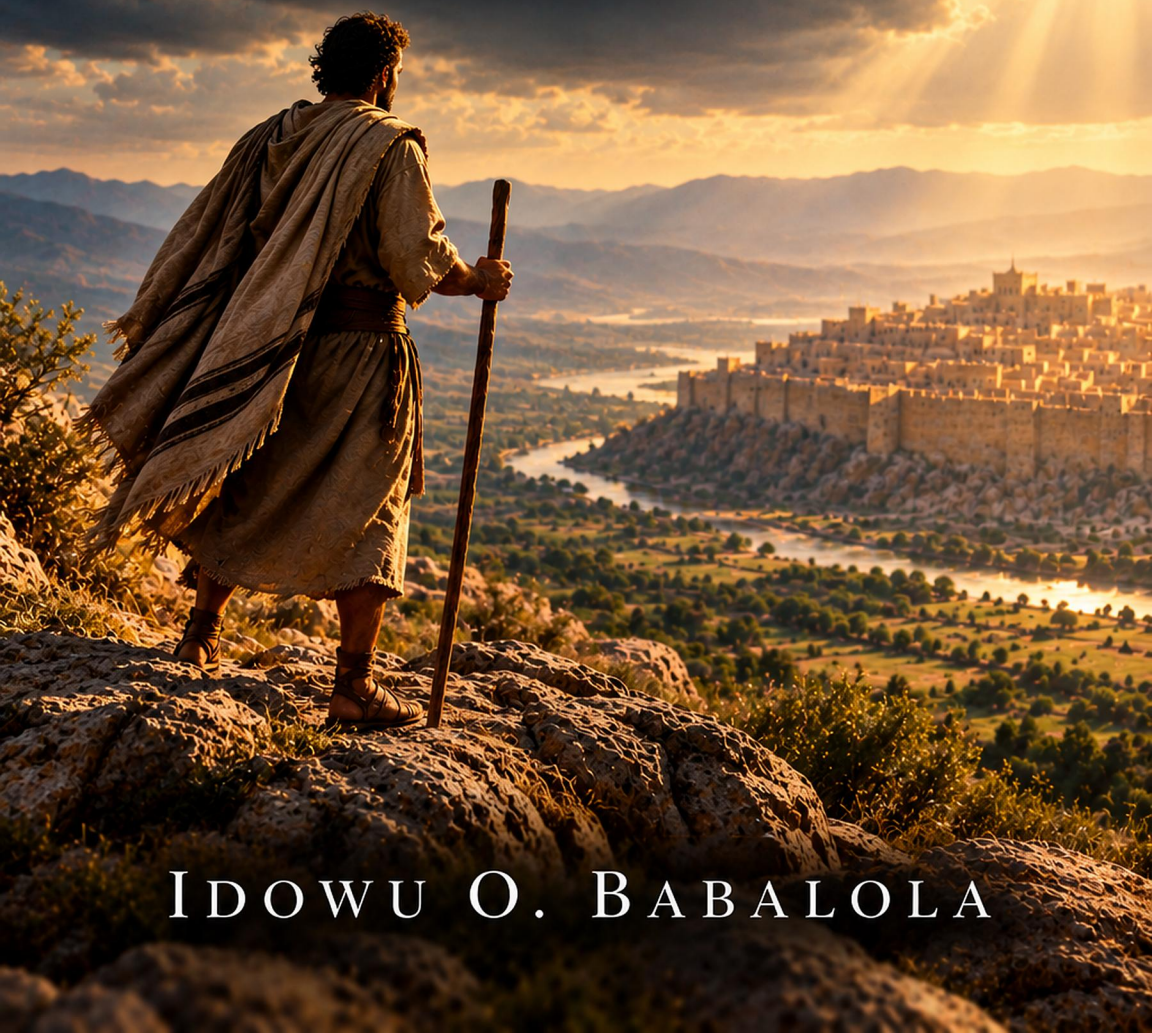


ANOTHER SPIRIT

Following God Fully When
the Evidence Says Otherwise



IDOWU O. BABALOLA

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This book is a work of biblical teaching and reflection. Its purpose is to help the reader examine, in the light of Scripture, what governs the heart's response when what God has said is confronted by what can be seen.

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Idowu O. Babalola

Dedication

To my beloved wife, Mrs. Babalola Adebusola Faith, thank you for your unwavering love, your constant prayers, your wise counsel, and your steadfast support throughout this journey. I am deeply grateful to the Lord for giving me a faithful partner who shares in His purpose and walks this journey beside me.

To my precious children, Babalola Tijesu Joshua and Babalola Eden Titoluwa, you are precious gifts from God and a constant reminder of His faithfulness. It is my prayer that you will follow the LORD fully all the days of your lives, and that His Word will always be the voice you trust above every circumstance.

Above all, I dedicate this book to the glory of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, whose Word is true, whose faithfulness never fails, and by whose grace we are able to hear Him and follow Him. To God alone be the glory.

Preface

There are stories in Scripture that we know so well that we stop asking what they are really teaching. The story of Caleb and the ten spies is one of them. We remember that ten men returned afraid and that Caleb returned confident, and we conclude that Caleb was simply braver.

But Scripture asks us to look more closely, because the LORD Himself gave a different explanation. Of Caleb He said that he had “a different spirit” in him and had followed Him fully (Numbers 14:24). This book follows that explanation. Caleb and the other spies went to the same land, saw the same giants, and heard the same promise from the same God.

The difference was not in what they saw. It was in what governed their response when what God had said met what could be seen. That question reaches every believer, because every believer will one day stand where those men stood, with a promise in one hand and a difficulty in the other.

The chapters that follow trace the story in order. They look at what Israel had already seen of God, at the two reports brought from the land, at what the LORD said of Caleb, and at what happened on the morning after the verdict.

They follow Caleb forty-five years later to the mountain he asked for, and they listen as Hebrews takes the wilderness story and speaks it into the present with the word “Today.” They then follow the pattern through Judges, to see what happens when a response becomes a way of life.

The title, *Another Spirit*, comes from the older wording of Numbers 14:24. The New King James Version, which is used throughout this book, reads “a different spirit,” and both

wordings point to the same thing. The phrase is not treated here as a secret or as the mark of a special class of believers. It is treated as Scripture treats it: as something seen in a life that heard God and followed Him fully.

Throughout these pages, Scripture is allowed to explain Scripture. Where the text is silent about what Caleb felt or said, the book does not fill the silence. Where the text speaks, the aim is to listen carefully and to ask what it requires of those who read it today. This is not a book of techniques for becoming more courageous. It is an invitation to examine what governs our response when God speaks.

My prayer is that these pages will help you see where your own responses have been taking you, bring you back to the Word that God has spoken, and strengthen you to follow the LORD fully, whatever stands between you and what He has promised.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE SAME GOD

There is something about the story of Caleb that becomes more interesting the longer you look at it. At first, it seems like a simple story about one man who had faith while others were afraid. Ten spies saw giants and became discouraged, but Caleb saw the same giants and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession” (Numbers 13:30). It would be easy to read the story that way and move on.

But the biblical account does not allow us to move on so quickly. Caleb was not standing in a different place from the other spies. He did not have a different God, and no private set of circumstances made obedience easier for him. He went with the same men, saw the same land and the same inhabitants, and returned to the same congregation. The difference appeared when they had to decide what the things they had seen meant.

That is where the story becomes deeply relevant to us. The deeper question is not why Caleb was courageous. It is how people who had heard the same God, and who had experienced the same works of God, could respond so differently when they were confronted with the same situation.

The answer cannot be found merely in the size of the giants. The giants were real, the fortified cities were real, and the opposition was real, and Caleb did not deny any of it. The difference was found in what governed his response to those things.

Israel had already received a word from God concerning the land. They had not arrived at Canaan without direction, for God had brought them out of Egypt, carried them through the

wilderness, and brought them to the edge of what He had promised. When the spies entered the land, they were not trying to discover whether God had been telling the truth. They were being asked to respond to what God had already said.

Their report actually confirms that the land was good. They said that it truly flowed with milk and honey, and they brought back some of its fruit (Numbers 13:23-27). The goodness of the land was not imaginary. But after acknowledging what God had promised, they shifted their attention to the strength of the people, the fortifications of the cities, and the descendants of Anak. Then the conclusion changed.

“We are not able” (Numbers 13:31). Caleb heard the same report, and he did not respond by pretending the opposition did not exist. He responded differently because he brought another consideration into the situation: “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it” (Numbers 13:30).

Two reports came from the same land, two groups saw the same opposition, and two conclusions emerged. The difference between them is one of the central questions of this book. What happens when what God has said comes into conflict with what we can see? Every believer will meet that question in one form or another.

There are moments when the Word of God tells us one thing while circumstances appear to tell us something else. There are moments when obedience seems more difficult than disobedience, when God’s promise appears distant, and when the visible facts seem to demand a conclusion that does not agree with what God has said.

At such moments, something deeper than knowledge is being exposed. We may know what God has said and still respond contrary to it. We may have witnessed God’s faithfulness before

and still allow present circumstances to determine our response. We may know the story of God's power and yet, when our own difficulty arrives, behave as though the difficulty is the greatest reality in front of us.

The story of Caleb therefore deserves closer attention. Scripture says that God Himself later described Caleb as having "another spirit" (the New King James Version says "a different spirit") and as having followed Him fully (Numbers 14:24). That statement was not made because Caleb had experienced a different God from everyone else. The distinction became visible in the way Caleb responded to what God had said.

The difference was not what they had received. The difference was what that revelation had become within them. That is the question we will follow throughout this book. What happens when God speaks? What happens inside us when we hear Him? What does our response reveal about the condition of our heart?

What happens when that response is tested by time, and what can repeated responses eventually become? The story of Caleb gives us one answer, and the story of Israel gives us another. Both stories began with the same God. The difference appeared in what happened after He spoke.

Before we examine Caleb's response, we need to understand the weight of Israel's experience. The spies did not return from Canaan to a people who had no reason to trust God. They were speaking to people whose entire existence as a nation had already been marked by the intervention of God.

Israel had seen Him act, had experienced His deliverance, and had watched Him provide. They had followed His presence and lived through things that could not reasonably be explained as

ordinary human achievement. This matters because the problem at Kadesh was not lack of exposure to God.

Israel had seen the hand of God before the spies ever entered Canaan. They had seen the judgments that came upon Pharaoh and the deliverance that followed. They had stood before the Red Sea with the Egyptian army behind them and no visible human way of escape in front of them, and they had watched the sea open and walked through on dry ground (Exodus 14:21-22).

That experience belonged to the entire nation. Caleb was there, but he was not the only one who saw it, and Joshua was there, but he was not the only one who benefited from it. The same people who later trembled before the inhabitants of Canaan had stood on the other side of the Red Sea and watched God deliver them from an enemy they could not defeat by their own strength.

Then came the wilderness. It was not an interruption in God's relationship with Israel but another place in which they experienced His provision. They needed food, and God provided manna (Exodus 16:14-15). They needed direction, and God led them. They needed preservation, and God sustained them.

Years passed, and their survival itself testified to God's faithfulness. The wilderness was not naturally capable of sustaining a nation in the way Canaan could, yet Israel remained there for forty years. The provision of God was not a single dramatic event that happened once and disappeared. They experienced His care repeatedly.

The language God later uses in Numbers 14 makes this especially important. He says that these people had seen His glory and the signs He performed in Egypt and in the wilderness (Numbers 14:22). He was not speaking about something they had

heard from their parents. He was speaking about what they themselves had witnessed.

And yet, after seeing all of this, they still failed to heed His voice. That should make us pause. We often assume that if a person could only see more of God's power, his response would automatically change. If someone could witness a greater miracle, surely faith would become easier, and surely that person would never doubt Him again.

Israel challenges that assumption. They had seen more than many of us could imagine seeing, yet seeing did not automatically determine their response. The problem was not that God had failed to reveal Himself. The problem was what they did with what He had revealed.

The psalmist describes it plainly: "Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe His word, but complained in their tents, and did not heed the voice of the LORD" (Psalm 106:24-25). Experience can introduce us to God's faithfulness, but experience alone does not decide how we will respond to God's Word.

This distinction matters throughout the Christian life. There is a difference between being exposed to the works of God and allowing what God has revealed to govern our response. A person can hear many sermons, read many Scriptures, witness answers to prayer, and remain largely unchanged in the way he responds when pressure arrives.

Israel's story therefore forces us to look beyond experience. What had they heard, and what did they do with what they heard? God had shown them what He could do, and He had also told them what He intended to do. The land of Canaan was not an accidental destination. It was the land God had promised.

When the spies entered it, they discovered that the land really was as good as God had said. The fruit in their hands confirmed part of the promise, and the goodness was visible. But the opposition was visible too. That is often where our difficulty begins.

We can be comfortable believing God when what He has said agrees with what we can see. The real test comes when both realities are standing before us at the same time. God says, “Go,” and the circumstances say, “You cannot.” God says, “I have given you this,” and the visible situation says, “There are obstacles here.”

God’s Word remains the same, but another voice begins competing for authority in our response. At Kadesh, Israel had both realities in front of them: the land was good and the people were strong, and the promise was real and the opposition was real.

Caleb did not remove the opposition from the story. He simply refused to allow it to have the final word. That is why we need to look carefully at what happened when the reports were given. They had all seen, but they did not all see the same meaning in what they saw.

CHAPTER TWO

TWO REPORTS

After forty days, the spies returned from Canaan. They came before Moses, Aaron, and the entire congregation and reported what they had seen. Their first words are striking because they did not begin by denying the goodness of the land: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit” (Numbers 13:27).

The land was good, the promise had substance, and the spies had seen the evidence. Then the report changed direction: “Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there” (Numbers 13:28). Nothing in that statement needed to be fabricated. The opposition was real.

Then Caleb interrupted. He quieted the people and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it” (Numbers 13:30). This is the moment around which the entire story turns. The ten spies and Caleb were not disagreeing about whether giants existed. They were disagreeing about what the existence of the giants meant.

The ten said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we” (Numbers 13:31), while Caleb said, “Let us go up.” The circumstances had not changed between those two statements. The people had not become smaller, the cities had not become less fortified, and the descendants of Anak had not disappeared. The difference was in the conclusion.

This does not mean Caleb was blind to reality. In fact, his response is more powerful precisely because the reality was difficult, for courage has little meaning when there is nothing to

confront. Caleb did not say that the people were weak when they were strong, and he did not claim that the cities were undefended when they were fortified.

He did not pretend that the challenge was easy. He saw the facts, but he did not begin with Israel's strength. He began with what God had said, and he interpreted the facts in the light of that word.

The ten spies did something different. They did more than report facts, for their interpretation of those facts shaped the whole congregation. They said they were like grasshoppers in their own sight, and they assumed that was how the inhabitants saw them too (Numbers 13:33).

Notice the movement. They looked at the inhabitants, then they looked at themselves, and then they reached a conclusion about what was possible. The problem was not that they saw something Caleb failed to see. The problem was that what they saw became more decisive than what God had said.

That is why a giant can be real without becoming greater than God's promise. A fortified city can be real without becoming proof that God cannot fulfill what He has said, and a long delay can be real without becoming evidence that God's Word has lost its authority.

Caleb did not need the giant to become small before he could believe God. He needed God to remain God while the giant remained a giant. We sometimes imagine that faith means arriving at a place where the problem no longer looks serious. Caleb's story gives us another picture. The problem remained serious, and what changed was the conclusion drawn from it.

This is not a call to positive thinking. Positive thinking can simply teach a person to replace a negative thought with a

positive one, and Caleb was not doing that. He was not looking at a terrible situation and choosing a pleasant sentence. His confidence was rooted in what God had said.

The power was not in his ability to think well of the giants. The power was in the authority he gave to God's Word. Nor can the difference be reduced to personality. Some people are naturally bold and some are naturally cautious, and the Bible does not tell us that Caleb's temperament made him superior. It tells us that he followed the LORD fully (Numbers 14:24).

There are times when a believer knows what Scripture says and still responds as though circumstances have greater authority. The Word says one thing, but fear says another. The Word says one thing, but disappointment says another. The Word says one thing, but the length of the wait says another.

At such moments the important question is not whether the circumstances are real, for they may be completely real. The question is: Which reality governs your response? Two people can stand before the same facts and arrive at different conclusions, because information by itself does not determine response. The question that matters is not only, "What do you see?" It is, "What do you allow what you see to mean?"

The report of the ten spies did not remain a report. It entered the congregation. The people cried through the night and complained against Moses and Aaron. They began to speak as though Egypt had been better than the wilderness, and they questioned why God had brought them into the land if the result would be death (Numbers 14:1-3).

They had not yet been attacked, they had not yet entered the land, and they had not yet faced the inhabitants. Yet they were already imagining the outcome. Our response to circumstances can carry us beyond the circumstance itself. What begins with

something we see can become a conclusion about what will happen next, and that conclusion can begin governing our emotions, our words, and eventually our decisions.

It is important to see that Caleb did not stand alone. Joshua stood with him, and the two of them answered the congregation together. They said that the land was exceedingly good and that if the LORD delighted in them, He would bring them into it.

Then they said, “Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us” (Numbers 14:7-9). It was ten voices against two, and the larger number was wrong.

The congregation did not answer with agreement. They talked of stoning Caleb and Joshua, and at that moment the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel (Numbers 14:10). Truth is not decided by how many people repeat a report. It is decided by what God has said.

Caleb’s later statement in Joshua 14 is significant. Looking back forty-five years, he says that when Moses sent him to spy out the land, he brought back his report “as it was in my heart” (Joshua 14:7). That statement helps us understand that Caleb’s report was more than a speech given because he wanted to sound optimistic.

He was expressing what he genuinely believed, and his words came from what had become established within him. That does not mean Caleb never felt fear or pressure. Scripture does not tell us everything he felt internally, and we should not invent what the text does not reveal. What Scripture does reveal is his response. When the situation demanded a conclusion, his heart supplied one that agreed with God’s Word.

The heart is not exposed only in peaceful moments when everything is going well. It becomes visible when pressure arrives. For one person, difficulty becomes a reason to retreat. For another, it becomes an occasion to continue trusting God.

The difference is not necessarily that one person feels nothing and the other feels everything. The difference is what the person does with what he feels in the presence of God's Word. Israel's response showed what their circumstances had become to them, and Caleb's response showed what God's Word had become to him. That distinction is at the heart of this book.

CHAPTER THREE

ANOTHER SPIRIT

God's assessment of Caleb appears in one of the most important statements in the entire story. After Israel's rebellion, the LORD speaks about Caleb: "But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully..." (Numbers 14:24). The phrase is striking.

A note on wording is needed here. The King James Version reads "another spirit," and the New King James Version reads "a different spirit." The Hebrew word means "another" or "different," so both translations point to the same thing. This book uses "another spirit" because it is the older wording and the title of the book. When the verse is quoted in full, the New King James wording is used.

What was different about Caleb? The text itself gives us the answer: he had another spirit, and he followed God fully. We should resist the temptation to make the phrase mysterious when Scripture has already given us its context. The passage is not introducing Caleb as someone with access to a secret spiritual realm that the rest of Israel did not know. The difference had become visible in his response to God.

He followed, and he followed fully. That is what the story demonstrates. Caleb was not given a different set of experiences, for the entire nation had experienced God's power and provision. He had not attended a special class or received a private version of God's revelation. The entire nation experienced the same broad works of God.

That makes Caleb's example both challenging and hopeful. It means the distinction Scripture makes between Caleb and the

rest of Israel is not presented as though God had arbitrarily chosen a few people to respond rightly while everyone else had been denied what they needed.

Caleb had received what the nation had received. Then he responded, and the difference became visible in what he did with God's Word. This brings the phrase "another spirit" closer to the ground. It is possible for a person to hear God's Word and then organize his response around something else.

It is also possible to hear God's Word and allow that Word to remain the governing reference point when circumstances challenge it. Caleb's life shows the second possibility. The words "another spirit" and "followed Me fully" belong together, and his difference was more than saying something positive at a difficult moment. His later life demonstrated continuity with that response.

We must be careful not to turn this into a story about merit, as though Caleb earned God's favor by performing better than everyone else. The text does not say that. God calls him "My servant" in the same sentence, and He says that the different spirit was "in him" (Numbers 14:24).

Whatever made Caleb different was present within him. It was not something he produced to impress God. His following was the evidence of what was in him, not the price he paid to be accepted. Faith is not a rival to grace. It is the way a person receives what God has said.

The New Testament keeps the same balance when it tells believers to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" and then gives the reason: "for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13). Our response is real, and it matters, but God is the One at work within the person who responds.

This does not mean Caleb never had a human limitation. Scripture does not require us to turn him into a flawless hero. It simply gives us the testimony that, in this matter, he followed the LORD fully. That is enough. The question for us is therefore not, “How can I become a special kind of Christian?”

The better question is: What happens when I decide that God’s Word will have authority over my response? The answer is not always immediate comfort. Sometimes God’s Word calls us forward while circumstances tell us to retreat. Sometimes it calls us to wait, sometimes it corrects us, and sometimes it exposes an attitude we would rather protect.

Following God fully means that we do not create private territories where His Word is welcome only when it agrees with our preferences. Caleb’s response to God was not selective. He did not receive God’s Word concerning Canaan and then reserve the right to reject it when the circumstances became difficult. He followed, and that is how the passage connects his different spirit with wholehearted following.

God’s verdict at Kadesh did not end with the praise of Caleb. The same word that named him also judged the people. The LORD said that none of the men who had seen His glory and His signs, and who had tested Him so many times, would see the land He had promised to their fathers (Numbers 14:22-23).

The generation that said, “We are not able,” would not enter. They would wander in the wilderness for forty years, one year for each of the forty days the spies had searched the land (Numbers 14:33-34). Their little ones, whom they had said would become victims, were the ones God would bring in (Numbers 14:31).

The men who brought the evil report died by the plague before the LORD, and of all the men who went to spy out the

land, only Joshua and Caleb remained alive (Numbers 14:36-38). What happened next is easy to overlook, because it is told so briefly.

Moses spoke these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. Then they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain. They said, “Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised, for we have sinned!” (Numbers 14:39-40).

At first glance this looks like repentance. They admitted their sin, they spoke about the promise, and they were willing to go up into the very land they had refused the day before. If we judge only by their words, it seems that Israel had finally changed.

But Moses answered with a question that exposes the whole problem: “Now why do you transgress the command of the LORD?” They spoke as though they were obeying, yet Moses called it transgression. The LORD had already given a command for that very season. The Amalekites and the Canaanites lived in the valley, and the people were to turn and move out into the wilderness (Numbers 14:25).

Israel was now trying to obey the word they had refused yesterday while disobeying the word God was speaking today. Moses warned them not to go up, because the LORD was not among them, but they went up anyway. The text uses a hard word for what they did: they presumed (Numbers 14:44). Neither the ark of the covenant nor Moses left the camp.

The result was exactly what Moses had said. The Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that mountain came down, attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah (Numbers 14:45). The same people who had said, “We are not able,” now went up without the presence of the LORD and were defeated.

Moses later reminded the next generation of that day. He said that they had put on their weapons of war and were ready to go up, that the LORD had said, “Do not go up nor fight, for I am not among you,” and that they would not listen but went up presumptuously. The people of that hill country chased them like bees (Deuteronomy 1:41-44).

Then they returned and wept before the LORD, but He would not listen to their voice (Deuteronomy 1:45). We must read this carefully. It does not teach that God turns away every sorrowful heart. Scripture is full of invitations to return, and this book will come to them.

What the passage shows is that sorrow is not the same as submission, and that obedience cannot be delayed until the moment is convenient and then performed on our own terms. Israel's grief was loud, but their action was not governed by what God was saying. A person can feel sorry and still be moving by his own impulse. Real repentance listens for the word of the LORD before it moves.

This helps us see Caleb again. His difference was never only a burst of courage at the right moment. Israel was afraid when God said go, and bold when God said turn back, and in both cases their response was governed by something other than the word of the LORD.

Scripture does not describe what Caleb and Joshua did that morning, and we should not invent it. What it tells us is how God later described them: they had wholly followed the LORD (Numbers 32:12). That description is not about one brave moment. It is about a life that stays under the word of the LORD.

CHAPTER FOUR

FORTY-FIVE YEARS

Forty-five years is a long time. It is long enough for circumstances to change, for people to die, and for an entire generation to disappear. It is long enough for a person to wonder whether something he once believed still matters.

Between Kadesh and Hebron, the wilderness generation that stood with Caleb did not remain. A new generation entered the land, and Joshua led Israel into the conquest. Yet when Caleb appears before Joshua in Joshua 14, he remembers. He remembers the word spoken by the LORD, the day Moses sent him to spy out the land, what he reported, and what was in his heart.

Notice how he begins. He does not ask for anything yet. He reminds Joshua of a word that belonged to both of them: “You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea” (Joshua 14:6).

Joshua was not a stranger to this promise. He had stood with Caleb at Kadesh and had heard the same verdict. Caleb is not claiming a private revelation. He is appealing to a word that both men knew and that the LORD had spoken.

Then he says something that makes the passage especially powerful: “The LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years...” (Joshua 14:10). The forty-five years are not incidental. They are evidence. At forty, Caleb had responded to God’s Word in the face of opposition, and at eighty-five he was still speaking in continuity with that response.

Time had tested the word he had received, and it had not erased it. Caleb does not speak as a man who forgot the promise

and rediscovered it after the land became easier. He reminds Joshua that the Anakim were there and that the cities were great and fortified.

Nothing in his request pretends that the problem has gone. Yet he says, “Give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day” (Joshua 14:12). He is not asking because he has suddenly become optimistic at eighty-five. He is asking because the LORD spoke.

Listen also to how he ends: “It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said” (Joshua 14:12). This is not the language of presumption. Israel went up the mountain at Kadesh without the LORD and was driven back.

Caleb asks for a mountain full of giants, and his confidence rests on one thing: that the LORD will be with him. At Kadesh, God’s Word governed his response to the land. Forty-five years later, God’s Word still governs his request concerning the land.

Caleb also says that he is eighty-five and still strong for war (Joshua 14:10-11). The greater point for this book is not that he escaped the passage of time. It is that time did not displace his conviction concerning God’s Word. A response can be genuine in the moment and still fail to endure.

We cannot always know the difference immediately, but time reveals it. At Kadesh, Caleb’s response was visible. In Joshua 14, its endurance becomes visible. The speech mattered, but the forty-five years mattered too. They showed that what Caleb said at forty was more than a temporary reaction to a particular meeting.

There is something deeply instructive here. We often measure a promise by how quickly circumstances change. If we

pray and the situation changes quickly, it is easy to continue believing. If the answer delays, the delay itself can begin to interpret the promise for us.

We begin to ask whether we heard correctly, whether the word still matters, and whether enough time has passed that we should stop expecting anything. Caleb did not use the passage of time as a reason to reinterpret what God had said. This does not mean he thought about the mountain every minute of every day; Scripture does not tell us that, and we should not invent it.

It means that when the moment came to claim what had been promised, he remembered. The subject is not only waiting but what happens to our response while we wait. Time exposes what is durable. It shows whether our confidence was attached to God or merely to the speed with which circumstances changed.

Scripture does not leave Caleb's request hanging. Joshua blessed him and gave him Hebron as an inheritance (Joshua 14:13). The same chapter tells us what kind of place it was: Hebron was formerly called Kirjath Arba, named for Arba, the greatest man among the Anakim (Joshua 14:15).

Long before, when the spies went up through the South, they came to Hebron, and Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there (Numbers 13:22). Then Joshua 15:13-14 tells us that Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. The same three names stand at the beginning of the story and at the end.

Moses had sworn that the land where Caleb's foot had trodden would be his inheritance, "because you have wholly followed the LORD my God" (Joshua 14:9). The LORD's word at Kadesh, as Moses later recounted it, said the same: He would give Caleb "the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the LORD" (Deuteronomy 1:36).

The promise was kept to the letter, and Joshua 14:15 closes with a simple sentence: “Then the land had rest from war.” The mountain therefore carries significance beyond its geography. It became the place where time was tested and the word was proved.

At forty, Caleb said, “Let us go up.” At eighty-five, he said, “Give me this mountain.” The second statement gives evidence concerning the first. Over time, repeated responses become visible, and what was once a response can become a way of life. That is where the warning of Hebrews becomes important. Scripture shows us what enduring faithfulness looks like, and it also warns us about what repeated resistance can produce.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHEN HEARING BECOMES UNBELIEF

Hebrews does something important with the wilderness story. It does more than retell what happened. It interprets it. The writer begins by quoting Psalm 95: “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...” (Hebrews 3:7-8; Psalm 95:7-8). The quotation immediately changes the way we read the wilderness.

The wilderness was an event that happened to another generation, but Hebrews refuses to leave it there. The Holy Spirit speaks about it to people who are hearing the Word of God now. “Today.” That word brings the ancient account into the present. Hebrews is therefore not interested in allowing its readers to stand safely outside Israel’s story and condemn the people who failed.

The warning is directed toward those who are listening: hear His voice, and do not harden your heart. That connection between hearing and the heart is central. Numbers showed us a people who had heard God’s instruction and then responded against it. Hebrews now identifies the deeper danger in the process. The writer warns against an evil heart of unbelief and speaks about departing from the living God.

This gives us a clearer understanding of what happened in the wilderness. The problem went deeper than Israel becoming frightened. Fear may be present without becoming rebellion. A person may be afraid and still obey God, may have questions and still continue walking with Him, and may struggle and honestly bring that struggle before God.

The warning of Hebrews concerns something deeper: a heart that refuses God’s voice and moves away from Him. That is why

the language of hardening matters. The Bible does not present hardening as a mechanical process in which every wrong response automatically produces a hardened heart. Hebrews looks back at a people whose repeated response to God had become a pattern of resistance.

They heard, they tested, they resisted, and they went astray. The heart was involved, time was involved, and repetition was involved. That is why the warning remains relevant. A person should not assume that because he heard God's Word once, everything has been settled forever. Scripture calls us to continue hearing, to continue in faith, and to continue responding to God.

Hebrews says, "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12). The language is direct. The danger goes beyond making one wrong decision. The danger is allowing unbelief to become a direction.

Then Hebrews says something else: "Exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13). The warning is connected with daily life. The Christian life is lived in repeated responses to God's voice. That is why the wilderness account remains relevant.

The question reaches beyond whether Israel believed at some point. The question is what happened when God continued to speak and they continued to respond. Eventually, Hebrews says, "they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19). Hebrews adds one more reason.

The gospel was preached to them as it is to us, "but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it" (Hebrews 4:2). The message was not the

problem. The word was good, but it was not met with faith. The wilderness story therefore becomes a warning about what repeated response can produce.

And this takes us back to Caleb. His response at Kadesh did not remain isolated, for forty-five years later his words and actions still reflected the same basic confidence in what the LORD had said. Israel gives us a pattern of resistance, and Caleb gives us a pattern of wholehearted following.

Hebrews does not mention Caleb as the main subject of its warning, but it gives us the language by which we can understand the seriousness of the contrast. Hearing matters. The heart matters. Response matters. What happens after hearing matters. And because the Christian life is lived over time, the responses we repeatedly make matter too.

There is a word in Hebrews 3 that is easy to read quickly: “Today.” It is only one word, but it carries the urgency of the entire passage. The wilderness generation lived yesterday, and their failure happened in another period of Israel’s history. Yet the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you will hear His voice...” (Hebrews 3:7).

The warning is present tense. God’s Word is not being given merely to help us understand ancient Israel. It is confronting us. The question is not only what God said to them. The question is what happens when we hear His voice.

This gives time another dimension. We have already seen that Caleb’s forty-five years reveal the endurance of a response. Hebrews now reminds us that those years are made up of individual moments in which people respond to God. Every “Today” matters. A person’s life is not usually shaped by one dramatic decision alone. It is shaped through repeated responses.

What do I do when God corrects me? What do I do when His Word confronts what I prefer? What do I do when obedience costs me something? What do I do when circumstances appear to disagree with what God has said? What do I do when I am waiting? These are not separate from the Christian life. They are the Christian life.

“Today” carries more than a call to urgency. It reminds us that hearing God always brings us into a moment of response. We cannot respond tomorrow to a word God is addressing today. We cannot keep postponing obedience while telling ourselves that we will eventually become the kind of person who responds differently.

The heart is being shaped in the responses we make now. This does not mean that every failure permanently defines us. The gospel gives room for repentance. A person can recognize that he has responded wrongly and turn back to God. The warning is not designed to make sincere believers live in constant fear that one mistake has hardened their hearts beyond recovery.

It is designed to prevent us from treating resistance to God as harmless. Hebrews says, “Do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:8). The warning is an invitation to remain responsive. That is why the Christian response to conviction should not be pretense. If we are struggling to believe, we should not manufacture a religious appearance.

If we recognize that we do not truly believe, we should be honest before God and seek Him instead of pretending. God does not need our performance. He calls us to hear, to respond, and, when our response is wrong, to return. “Today” means that the opportunity to respond is present.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PATTERN

There is a difference between an event and a pattern. An event happens, but a pattern repeats. The story of Israel in the wilderness contains events, but Hebrews helps us see that the deeper problem was not limited to one event. The people repeatedly tested God and repeatedly failed to heed His voice.

That repetition matters. God's statement in Numbers 14 refers to their repeated testing: they had put Him to the test "now these ten times" (Numbers 14:22). Hebrews describes their hearts as hardened and says that they went astray. The problem had become recognizable. This is how a response can become a pattern.

One response does not necessarily tell us everything about a person, for human beings can fail, repent, learn, and respond differently the next time. But when a response is repeatedly chosen, it begins to reveal direction. That is why the Bible's warning deserves attention. If a person repeatedly hears God's Word and repeatedly chooses resistance, the issue is becoming deeper than a momentary disagreement.

The response is beginning to establish something. The same principle appears positively in Caleb's story. His response at Kadesh did not remain a single event, and his later testimony demonstrates continuity. He still spoke according to the word, he still followed the LORD, and he still asked for the mountain.

The difference between Caleb and Israel can therefore be described as two trajectories. Israel's trajectory moved from hearing to resistance, from resistance to repetition, and from repetition into the condition Hebrews describes as unbelief and

hardening. Caleb's trajectory moved from hearing to agreement, from agreement to wholehearted following, and from wholehearted following into enduring conviction.

Neither pattern was formed in a single afternoon. Time revealed them. We should therefore be careful about the language we use concerning people. We should not take one fearful moment in someone's life and declare that person an unbeliever, and we should not take one failure and assume we know the condition of the heart.

Scripture itself gives room for growth, repentance, and restoration. The warning concerns direction. Where are repeated responses taking you? What happens when the same kind of pressure comes again? Do you repeatedly move toward God or away from Him? Do you repeatedly submit to His Word or find reasons to dismiss it?

Do you repeatedly allow circumstances to overrule what He has said? These questions are more important than whether we can identify ourselves with Caleb in a flattering way. The purpose of Caleb's story is not to help us admire Caleb. It is to help us examine ourselves.

The book of Judges takes the story further, allowing us to see what happened in Israel after the generation that had known Joshua and the elders who had seen the works of the LORD. Judges 2 gives us a sobering transition. Israel served the LORD during the days of Joshua and the elders who outlived him, who had seen the great works of the LORD (Judges 2:7).

Then another generation arose after them that did not know the LORD nor the work He had done for Israel (Judges 2:10). The contrast is striking. One generation had seen, and another generation arose without the same knowledge of the LORD and His works.

We should be careful not to fill in details the text does not provide. Judges does not give us enough information to say exactly how the previous generation failed to pass on what it knew. What the text does tell us is that a generational transition occurred, and the next generation did not possess the same recognition of the LORD and His works.

Then the pattern of Judges begins (Judges 2:11-19). Israel turns away, oppression comes, Israel cries out, God raises a deliverer, and deliverance comes. Then Israel turns away again, and the cycle repeats. This is important for our argument because it shows what happens when response becomes pattern.

The issue is no longer one person's reaction to one circumstance. A recurring direction has developed within the life of a people. This also protects us from reducing Caleb's story to personal courage. The Bible is showing us something larger: how people respond to God matters, and how a generation responds matters.

What a people repeatedly does with God's revelation matters, and the consequences do not always appear immediately. That is one of the sobering realities of Scripture. Caleb's forty-five years showed endurance, while Judges shows recurrence. Time can reveal both. It can show that a right response has become established, and it can show that resistance has become habitual.

That is why our responses deserve attention even when they seem small. A person's life is being shaped through them, and a community can be shaped through them. A generation can inherit the consequences of patterns that began before it was born. We should not use this to create a doctrine of automatic inherited guilt.

The biblical point is not that children are condemned for the sins of their parents without regard to their own response. What

Scripture shows is that patterns have consequences, and what one generation does with God can affect the environment and testimony received by the next. Judges makes that visible.

Near the end of Judges, Scripture gives us a phrase that captures the condition of the period: “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6; 21:25). The phrase appears more than once, including at the close of the book. It is a powerful description because it brings us back to the question of reference point.

Judges does not directly explain Numbers 13, and we should not pretend that it does. The events are separated by time and belong to different contexts. But there is a broader connection across Scripture. In Numbers, human assessment competed with God’s Word. In Hebrews, that wilderness response is interpreted through unbelief, hardened hearts, and going astray.

In Judges, the repeated condition is summarized in the words, “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” The movement is significant. When God’s Word is no longer the governing reference point, something else takes its place, and Judges gives us a picture of the disorder that follows.

Judges does not begin in darkness. Before it describes the failures of Israel, it first repeats the outcome of Caleb’s request: “And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said. Then he expelled from there the three sons of Anak” (Judges 1:20). The book that will later describe an age of everyone doing what was right in his own eyes opens by reminding us that God’s word to Moses was kept.

Hebron went to Caleb “as Moses had said.” The reference point was still the word of the LORD, and the word held. Then Judges repeats a short scene from Joshua. Caleb says that whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it will receive his

daughter Achsah as wife, and Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, takes it (Judges 1:11-13).

The story is small, and we should not make it carry more than it says. It does not record Caleb preaching to his family, and we should not invent a speech for him. But it does show us that the man who asked for a mountain full of giants was still pressing forward in what God had given, and that his own household was moving with him.

The most important connection comes a little later. In Judges 3, Israel does what the book describes so often. They do evil in the sight of the LORD, forget the LORD their God, and serve the Baals. The LORD sells them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, and they serve him eight years.

Then they cry out to the LORD, and “the LORD raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother.” The text goes on: “The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel.” The LORD delivered Cushan-Rishathaim into his hand, and “the land had rest for forty years” (Judges 3:7-11).

Judges does not say why the LORD raised up Othniel, and it does not say that Caleb taught him. We should not add that to the text. But we may notice what the text itself places side by side. In the book where everyone did what was right in his own eyes, the first deliverer God raises up is introduced by his connection to Caleb, and the Spirit of the LORD comes upon him.

The cycle of Judges is dark, but it was never a story in which God had no one left. When Israel cried out, the LORD answered, and He answered through a man from the house of the one who had followed Him fully.

Caleb stands on the other side of that line. He did not make his own assessment the highest authority. He had heard God's Word, and that Word remained authoritative. His story and the story of Othniel do not remove the darkness of Judges, but they show that a different way was always open.

This is not a call to stop thinking or to ignore circumstances, for God does not ask us to become irrational. The question is whether our judgment remains submitted to God's revelation. That is the question we must now bring home to ourselves.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FOLLOW HIM FULLY

The story of Caleb is ancient. The question it raises is not. Every day, we respond to something. Sometimes the circumstances are simple, and sometimes they are overwhelming. Sometimes God's Word seems easy to obey, and sometimes obedience brings us into tension with what we can see.

This is where the lesson of Caleb becomes personal. The question is not whether you have ever experienced God, because Israel had experienced Him. The question is not whether you know Scripture, because the ten spies had received the same word concerning the land. The question is not whether you have ever believed God. The deeper question is what happens when belief is tested.

Fear may be present. What do you do with it? Disappointment may be present, and so may delay and opposition. What do you do with each of them? The issue is not pretending that these things do not exist, for Caleb did not pretend. The issue is whether they are allowed to become greater authorities than God's Word.

There will be moments when you cannot explain everything, and moments when obedience makes no sense from the perspective of circumstances alone. The question is whether God's Word remains trustworthy to you when you do not have every answer. That is why honest struggle is different from deliberate resistance.

A person can say, "Lord, I am struggling." A person can say, "I do not understand." A person can say, "Help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24). There is honesty in that. The danger begins when we

decide that our inability to understand gives us permission to reject God's voice.

God does not demand that we pretend. He calls us to respond, and our responses matter because they do not always disappear when the moment ends. They can become patterns. The simplest description of Caleb may also be the deepest. He followed the LORD fully.

The statement appears in Numbers and again in Joshua (Numbers 14:24; Joshua 14:8-9, 14). It is not a description of one speech. It is a description of direction. Caleb heard God and followed. When the report of the spies created fear, he followed. When the congregation rejected his report, he followed.

When forty-five years passed, he followed, and when the mountain still contained opposition, he followed. This is what makes his story so compelling. Following God fully does not mean that every day feels equally easy. It does not mean that a believer never struggles, and it does not mean that circumstances disappear.

It means that God's Word is not given a restricted area of authority. The temptation to selective obedience is real. We may gladly accept God's direction in one area and resist Him in another. We may trust Him with our future but refuse His correction in our present.

We may want His promises while resisting His instructions, and we may say we want His will while quietly reserving certain parts of our lives for ourselves. Caleb's example challenges that divided posture. He followed, and he followed fully. That is why the phrase "another spirit" cannot be separated from obedience.

The difference was demonstrated in the direction of his life. This is not about trying to become impressive. It is about

becoming responsive to God. There is a great difference between appearing spiritual and actually responding to God. The former can be performed, but the latter is revealed when God's Word confronts us.

That is why the Christian life cannot be sustained by religious language alone. We can say the right things and still resist God, and we can know the right Scriptures and still refuse their authority. We can admire Caleb and still respond like the ten spies when circumstances become difficult.

The answer is not greater performance. The answer is a heart that remains open to God's voice. That is why Hebrews says, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7-8). The call is simple: hear God, respond to Him, continue with Him, and follow Him fully.

Conclusion

We began with a question. How could people who experienced the same God respond so differently? We have followed the story from the land of Canaan to the heart, from the heart to time, and from time to pattern. Israel and Caleb had both seen God's works, they had both heard God's Word, and they had both stood at the same place.

But they responded differently. God Himself said that Caleb had another spirit and had followed Him fully. Joshua later showed us Caleb forty-five years after Kadesh. He was eighty-five, the mountain was still there, and the word of the LORD was still the reference point of his request.

Then Hebrews takes the wilderness story and places it before us: "Today, if you will hear His voice..." (Hebrews 3:7). The story is no longer merely about them. It is about us. God still speaks through His Word. The question is what happens when we hear.

A person can hear and resist. A person can hear and obey. A person can hear and delay. A person can hear and continue. The response matters, the heart matters, time matters, and patterns matter. The title of this book therefore does not call us to seek some mysterious spiritual experience.

Another spirit is seen in another response. Caleb's difference became visible because he followed the LORD fully. He did not have a different God, a different wilderness, or a different Canaan. He responded differently to the God who had spoken.

That is where the challenge reaches us. What has God's Word become within you? Is it something you hear, something you admire, or something you quote? Or has it become authoritative enough to govern your response when circumstances challenge

it? The answer will not be found merely in what we say about ourselves.

It will become visible in how we respond, and time will reveal what those responses become. A single response does not tell the whole story of a person, but repeated responses matter, and they form direction. That is why Hebrews says, “Today.” There is always a present moment in which we can respond to God.

If we have resisted, we can repent. If we have become afraid, we can return our attention to what He has said. If we have allowed circumstances to become greater than His Word, we can turn again. If we have delayed obedience, we can obey. The purpose of the warning is not despair. It is responsiveness.

“Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7-8). The invitation is still open. Hear His voice, let His Word have its proper place, respond to Him, and keep following. That is how a response becomes a way of life, and that is how time reveals what has taken root.

That is how a life can bear witness to another spirit. And perhaps, after everything else has been said, this is the simplest question we can carry away from Caleb’s story: When God speaks, what happens in you?

About the Author

Idowu O. Babalola is a bondservant and Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, a Bible teacher, preacher, and Christian author with a passion for helping people understand Scripture and grow in Christ. For more than a decade, he has been actively engaged in cross-cultural missions and Christian ministry across Nigeria, particularly in the Northern and Eastern regions.

He has laboured alongside the United Missionary Church of Africa (UMCA), Ilorin, and other mission organizations in the advancement of the Gospel. His ministry is marked by a commitment to sound biblical doctrine, discipleship, and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, with a passion for seeing believers established in God's Word and growing toward spiritual maturity.

In *Another Spirit*, he follows Caleb through the wilderness story to show what it means to follow God fully when the evidence says otherwise, and what the responses we repeatedly make can eventually become. His desire is to help readers hear God's Word and respond to it faithfully.

He has written a growing catalog of works, including *The Beast and the Lamb*, *Faith, Hope, and Love*, *The Mandate of Transformation*, *The New Testament Secret*, *The Ultimate Father*, *Unveiling the Sons of God*, *Beyond Songs: The Worshipper God Seeks*, *When Prayer Becomes Communion*, and *What Happened to Us?*

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He is married to Mrs. Babalola Adebisola Faith, and they are blessed with two children, Babalola Tijesu Joshua and Babalola Eden Titoluwa. His desire is to know Christ more deeply, make Him known among the nations, and see believers established in God's Word and growing toward spiritual maturity.

Connect with the Author

Thank you for reading Another Spirit. It is my sincere prayer that this book has helped you see more clearly what governs your response when God speaks, and has encouraged you to follow the LORD fully, whatever the circumstances may say.

My desire is not merely to share biblical knowledge, but to see believers established in the truth of God's Word, formed in Christ, and equipped to live faithfully before God. I would be delighted to hear how this book has encouraged your walk with the Lord. You are also invited to connect with me for updates on future books, biblical teachings, ministry resources, and speaking engagements.

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May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always. To God alone be the glory.