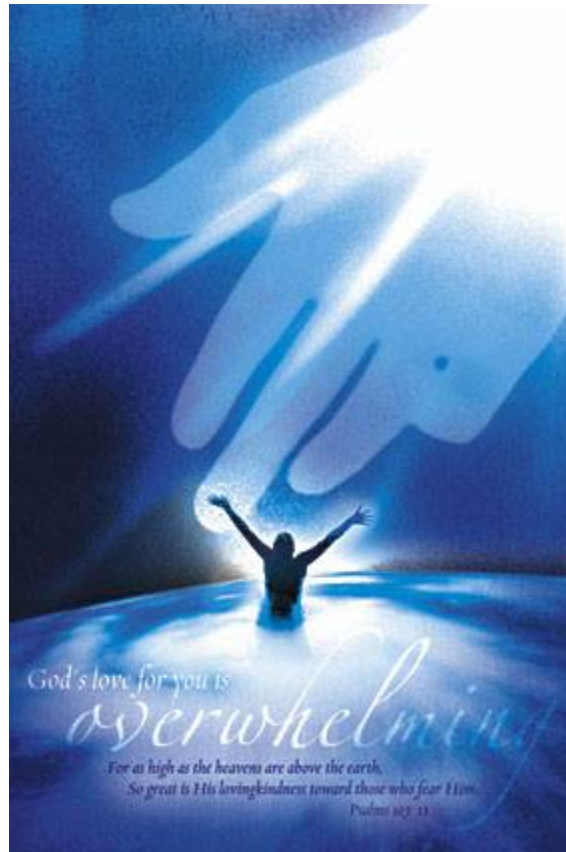


The Writer's Spirit

The Spirit of Creation Moving in You...



Welcome to our Fall 2007 Edition!

Time to return from our brief hiatus to focus back on Caleb! During my studies of this hero, my curiosity drove me to want to know what his name meant.

Giving the gift of identity, names are serious business. From the beginning of time, names have carried great importance. Many believe that a person becomes what they are called. A person's name associates them to their destiny. Each time that a person is called, it reminds them of the destiny that God intends for their lives.

In the Bible, *Jeremiah 29:11* reminds us, "I know the plans that I have for you, says the LORD, 'plans of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.'"

From the very beginning of our lives, one way that God communicates His plans for us-His future and hope-is by the name He whispers in the hearts and ears of our parents. He literally etches our character and expected destiny through our names.

It was with these thoughts that I joyfully anticipated learning the meaning of Caleb's name. "Brave, strong, bold, warrior" popped into my mind.

Shocked at my discovery, I stared in disbelief and bewilderment at "dog; attack; yelp." This had to be a mistake. Why would such a phenomenal leader be given such an unfitting name?

The more I studied our hero, the clearer the answer became. Caleb was not an Israelite by birth. He was not a pureblood because he was a descendant of Esau instead of Jacob, who God later named Israel. All of the Israelites were of Jacob's lineage. Although a member of the tribe of Judah, the Kenizzite and Hittite blood that ran through Caleb's veins rendered him an outsider. (*Genesis 15:19; Numbers 13:6*)

Like many of us, by virtue of lineage, ethnic origin or some other distinguishing factor, from the onset, the deck was already stacked against Caleb. His family tree was littered with less than stellar characters.

Esau, also known as Edom, Caleb's ancestral grandfather, strapped him with a heritage of disregard of familial and spiritual blessings to the point of lunacy. Today, anyone who would trade a family inheritance worth millions for a bowl of stew would most likely be locked away. (*Genesis 27*)

Esau's wife, Adah the Hittite, contributed a legacy of idolatry to her future grandson. Her idolatrous worship was so bad that it made Esau's parents, Isaac and Rebecca, miserable. Adah also bestowed Caleb with the heritage of dark skin from the ancestry of Ham. (*Genesis 10:6-8; 27:46; 1 Chronicles 1: 1-8*)

To add fuel to the fire, both the Edomites and Hittites, more often than not, were sworn enemies of the Israelites. So to say that Caleb was from the wrong side of the tracks is an understatement. He was born with a bone to pick in his mouth rather than the proverbial silver spoon.

Despite the insurmountable circumstances heaped upon him by his ancestors, Caleb was undeterred. "Dog" gives us a unique perspective of the character that allowed Caleb to scale the walls of impossibilities.

In Biblical days, dogs were not the docile creatures that we know them as today. Instead, they were vicious; known more for their ferocity than for being man's best friend.

In light of these facts, in order for Caleb to rise up the ladder of success, he had some things to prove. From the connotation of his name, it looks like he chose to do so by his might and maybe even his bite.

A widely known fact about dogs is their faithfulness to their master. Caleb was in no short supply of this trait. His remarkable faithfulness was in full display as he boldly declared that they could take the Promised Land. Unflinchingly, he stood his ground against millions of angry and fearful Israelites who threatened to stone him to death.

Forty-five years later, his faithfulness was rewarded by God. During this long wait to receive God's promise, Caleb never once lost faith. (*Numbers 13 and 14*)

In those forty-five years, Caleb rose from spy to leader over the tribe of Judah—the largest tribe by far of the Israelites. Indeed, this was a miraculous showing of God's favor to allow a non-Israelite to rise to leader over the most prominent tribe of the nation. (*Joshua 14:10-12*)

But God just wasn't finished showing out. Guess who became leader over the entire nation of Israel after Joshua's death? You got it—Caleb!

Talk about a God of impossibilities. Who would have ever imagined that a lowly outsider of impure blood with a name like dog, and the personality to match, could ever rise to the ultimate position of power over the most powerful nation of his time?

What a commanding reminder that "God's thoughts are not our thoughts, His ways are higher than the heavens above." (*Judges 1:1-2; Isaiah 55:8-9*)

On the surface, the meaning of Caleb's name leaves much to be desired. Caleb could have easily stayed stuck in the undesirables of his nature and circumstances. He could have used his family history and his gruff personality as excuses to stay in his place—an outsider of impure blood.

Instead Caleb chose to dig beneath the surface. He found a treasure chest heaping with faithfulness. I picture him gleefully wallowing around in that faithfulness until it had soaked into every fiber of his being.

Digging deeper unfolded God's providential hand in Caleb's remarkable life. Like Caleb, our names on the surface may be hiding the true treasure underneath.

What can you tell about your destiny by your name? Do you even know the meaning of your name?

I'm amazed at the number of people who have no clue what their name means. I wish I could say that I'm different. Over the years, I've looked it up many times. It's only been recently that I have been able to remember it.

Meanings for traditional names can be found easily in many available resources--books, web sites, etc. Unfortunately, the same is not true for the growing numbers of ethnically unique names. Resources to find meanings for these names are limited and in many cases non-existent.

To fill this void, MyFirstChapter.com has launched Ghetto-FabulousNames.com. This web site houses over 2,400 names that may be considered unique, exotic or just plain "[Ghetto-Fabulous](http://Ghetto-Fabulous.com)."

We pray that you will utilize Ghetto-FabulousNames.com or some other resource to discover the meaning of your name.

Don't stop there. Let our Biblical hero, Caleb, serve as an example. Dig for the true treasure of your name. Walk in it to fulfill God's preordained destiny in your life. Watch God rain down the favor that He has already set aside just for you for this time in history.

Please visit Ghetto-FabulousNames.com and share our latest venture with your friends and family.

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