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JOSHUA 9:1-12:24

Today's lesson gives us yet another exciting glimpse in the ongoing effort by Israel to conquer the people who are living in the land of Canaan, and today we meet some folks from Gibeon.

Years ago, Pogo said, "We have met the enemy and he is us." Well, here, the children of Israel could say,
"We have met the enemy and he is our neighbor." ☺

Let's look at how the Gibeonites deceived the Israelites...
Joshua 9:1-15...

God had instructed the children of Israel to go into Canaan and to completely destroy all the inhabitants. Now, as we said last week, this may seem harsh...but we need to remember that God does all things well, and He does all things just right, even when we don't understand it.

So far, the children of Israel had destroyed Jericho and they had destroyed Ai and they were prepared to destroy everybody else. But, along came the Gibeonites...

Now, the Gibeonites had heard what had happened to Jericho and Ai and instead of sitting around and waiting for the same thing to happen to them, they had a plan. They were only about three days from where the Israelites were encamped and they knew it wouldn't be long before the Israelites would be marching around their city and blowing rams' horns and shouting and then **their walls would fall down flat. So, they hastily devised and carried out a crafty plan of deception...**

They put on old clothes and old shoes and they took old wineskins that had dried out and they gathered up old stale bread and they went on their three day journey to the camp of the Israelites, and they said,

"We've come from far, far away. We live so far away that you can't hardly get here from there. We live so far away that when we left,
we had on **brand new clothes**,
and we had on **brand new shoes**,
and we had **new wineskins**,
and we had **fresh, hot out of the oven bread**.

See, did we tell you...we're not from around here? We don't belong to the folks on your list to kill, because we're not from around here. By the way...since we're not from around here, why don't we just make a deal? Why don't you promise not to kill us and destroy our city and take all our belongings? Doesn't that sound like a good idea to you?"

And guess what? They did!! Wouldn't you have been just the least bit suspicious of this story? But...

They didn't pray about it!
They didn't check their story out!
They didn't examine the facts!
They didn't ask God if they should!
They simply made a covenant with these people...**they believed the lie of the enemy and they made a covenant with the enemy.**

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I want to ask you...has this ever happened too you?

Has the enemy ever come to you and lied to you and you believed him and before you knew it you were partners with him in some sort of sin?

Sometimes I believe we think the devil doesn't come looking for us. I mean, we're rocking along, doing pretty good and one day we forget to put on the armor of God that we're supposed to put on...

Our loins aren't girded with the **belt of truth**,
and our **breastplate of righteousness** isn't in place,
and **our feet** aren't shod with the **gospel of peace**,
and we've misplaced our **shield of faith**,
and **the helmet of salvation** has been left at home,
and we haven't picked up **the sword of the Spirit** in a long, long time and we just haven't had time **to pray...**

So the devil comes at us and tells us some lies and we believe him!!

Now, why does he come against you and me? Doesn't the devil know if we belong to Jesus that he cannot have us?

Oh, I believe he knows that...

But he also knows that he can rob us of our **joy**,
and he can rob us of our **victory**,
and he can rob us of our **witness**,
and he can make us **defeated** and **discouraged** and **downtrodden** and **depressed!**

Well, what can we do about it? When the enemy comes at us with his lies, how do we keep from being deceived?

Let me tell you what you can do...and then when he comes
at **me** with his lies...**you** can tell **me**...☺

We can do what Joshua did not do!
We can consult with the Lord!
We can pray and we can read God's Word
so we can use the sword of the Spirit against him!!

What did the Lord Jesus do when the devil came against Him? He said, "It is written...it is written...it is written..."

We don't have to listen to the devil...we don't have to be deceived by him... "Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."

Well, let's see what else happened because of this covenant that Joshua made with the Gibeonites.

Let me quickly set the scene here...

After this covenant was made with the Gibeonites, and after Joshua found out the Gibeonites had tricked the sons of Israel, Joshua asked them why in the world they had done this...why had they lied to him...so look at what they said...

9:24-27...

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Now, **chapter 10** tells us that the king of Jerusalem, whose name is **Adoni-zedek** (or thereabouts) heard about Jericho and he heard about Ai and he also heard about the covenant between the Gibeonites and the Israelites.

Well, Adoni-zedek got scared...**verse 1-2**...

So he sent word to four other kings and said,
"Come help me attack Gibeon because they've made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel."

Well, these five kings...king of **Jerusalem** and the king of **Hebron** and the king of **Jarmuth** and the king of **Lachish** and the king **Eglon** all gathered together and went to Gibeon and camped there and began to fight against it.

It didn't take long for the men of Gibeon to realize they were greatly outnumbered...4 kings against one, and 4 armies against one, and so they sent word to Joshua to come help them...**verse 6**...

Because of the covenant Joshua had made with Gibeon, Joshua was obligated to help them in their battle against these five kings.

See, back then, a man's word meant something. I mean, even though Israel had been deceived and tricked into this covenant, they were still honor bound to live up to it.

Verses 7-8...

Now, let me give you the results of this battle and other battles and then we'll come back and pick up some of the details.

The result of the battle between Israel and these five kings is that Israel totally defeated them...they killed the kings...they destroyed their cities and all who dwelled there.

In fact, the five kings hid themselves in a cave...and Joshua found out about this and had his men roll a great stone in front of the mouth of the cave so they could not escape...

Verses 22-26...

Just remember this and we'll come back to it after awhile.

If you were to read down through this chapter you would see that he utterly destroyed these cities and he left no survivor in them...

Verse 28...they fought against Makkedah... "he utterly destroyed it and every person who was in it...he left no survivor"

Verse 30...they fought against Libnah... "he struck it and every person who was in it with the edge of the sword. He left no survivor in it."

Verse 32...they fought against Lachish... "he captured it on the second day, and struck it and every person who was in it with the edge of the sword..."

Verse 33...they fought against Horam... "Joshua defeated him and his people until he had left him no survivor."

Verse 35...they fought against Eglon... "they captured it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; and he utterly destroyed that day every person who was in it..."

Verse 37...they fought against Hebron... "they captured it and struck it and its king and all its cities and all the persons who were in it with the edge of the sword. He left no survivor..."

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Verse 39...they fought against Debir... “he captured it and its king and all its cities, and they struck them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed every person who was in it....he left no survivor.”

Verse 40...they fought against Negev... “he left no survivor, but he utterly destroyed all who breathed,

just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded.”

Don't forget...God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours...and He does all things according to His character and His character is one of perfect justice and perfect righteousness and perfect wisdom.

Chapter 11 tells us of more kings in the land of Canaan who also united against Israel and guess what...Joshua struck them and he hamstrung their horses and he burned their chariots with fire, (we'll get back to that in a moment), and they destroyed almost all their cities and took spoils of war and killed all the people.

11:15...

Chapter 12 gives a list of the people Israel defeated. Now, they haven't conquered the entire land at this point, but all they **have** come against **have** been conquered.

Now, I want us to spend the time we have left looking at how they were able to do this!!

The reason they were victorious was because God fought for Israel. They weren't in this alone. They didn't have to face the enemy in their own strength. How do we know this?

1) The Testimony of Scripture...

Scripture tells us...Look at **10:14** and **10:42**.

God doesn't stammer and He doesn't stutter. When the Holy Spirit inspired the writing of God's Word, He didn't hesitate or beat around the bush. He wrote it very plainly in little words that even I can understand.

“The LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.”

Another way we know God fought for Israel is

2) The Testimony of Miracles

There were at least three miracles and one of them is very obvious, but let's look at **10:9** and we'll see on that's not so obvious.

Now, these men marched 30 plus miles all night and then when they got there they didn't check into the nearest Holiday Inn, and they didn't even pitch their tents...they went into battle. **Where in the world did they get the strength?**

Well, God gave them supernatural strength to do it!!

Not only that, but we see another miracle in **verse 11...**

Who got hit and killed by the hailstones? The hailstones fell only on the enemy, didn't they? A selective hailstorm!! Have you ever been out in a bad hailstorm?

Bill and I were going over to our cabin one day, and we had just gotten over the bridge at Newport, and a huge wind came up and hail began to fall...we learned later the winds were 80 mph. It was scary!!

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I cannot imagine the kind of hailstorm that killed all these men. **These were divinely inspired hailstones, folks...**they had been given an assignment from God before they ever fell from the sky, and the Bible said more died from the hail than from the sword...

There was one more miracle...the miracle of the sun and the moon.
Verses 12-14...

I want to tell you...folks can dream up a lot of ways to deal with this passage of Scripture...

- ~~ Some folks treat this as poetic language...and not to be taken literally...
- ~~ Some say what Joshua was actually asking for and what God actually did was bring a cloud over the sun to merely give the Israelites some relief from the heat...
- ~~ Some just don't explain it at all...they can't so they just avoid it altogether. They just skip over it.
- ~~ And some folks say this day was 23 hour and 20 minute day and the other 40 minutes are found in **2 Kings 20** when the sun went 10 degrees backward for a sign to Hezekiah that his life would be extended...

I don't know how God did this, and I don't know how long it lasted, but I don't have a problem believing the One who created the day and the night and the sun and the moon can shorten a day or lengthen a day, do you!

God fought for Israel...I believe the Bible is very clear on this...but WHY did God fight for Israel?

1) They were His people...

God had made a covenant with the ancestors of these folks and they belonged to Him. He chose them to be His own peculiar people and He is faithful to take care of His own.

2) They were obedient...

11:15...God won't fight for His people when they are living in disobedience...and we'll see this as we get

Judges.

a day when God fought for America...but we're living in such disobedience that I don't know if He would fight for us today or not.

into the book of
You know...there was

What about you? Are you living in obedience or disobedience?
When the enemy comes against you, do you have the Lord fighting for you?

3) They were fully trusting in God...

Remember when we said God told Joshua to hamstring the horses and burn the chariots of the enemy? **11:4-6**

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Don't you think the Israelites could have used these horses and chariots? Well, they didn't really need them, because, you see, they were trusting in God!!

Psalm 20:7... "Some boast in horses and some in chariots, but we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God."

God doesn't want His children to fight with the weapons of the world. We said earlier that the weapons of our warfare are the **belt of truth**, the **breastplate of righteousness**, the **shoes of the gospel of peace**, and the **shield of faith**, and the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit** and **prayer**...Those are our weapons, and we're not to fight spiritual warfare with fleshly weapons!

"Have faith in God, He's on His throne,
Have faith in God, He watches o'er His own.
He cannot fail, He must prevail,
Have faith in God, have faith in God."

One last thing, and we'll be through...

God told Joshua to destroy the enemy. The victory was not complete until the kings on the other side had been destroyed. **Chapter 13** tells us 31 kings in all were destroyed. In **Chapter 10**, we saw five of them hid themselves in a cave...but Joshua brought them out and killed them.

Joshua is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave his people victory over their enemies and the Lord Jesus gives us victory over our enemies.

I want to ask you today... do you have any enemy kings hiding in cave of your heart?

What about a king like **pride**, or **jealousy**, or **bitterness**, or **resentment**, or **unforgiveness**, or a **critical spirit**, or a **harsh tongue** or **gossip**...God wants us to bring out all those enemy kings that might be hiding in the recesses of our heart...

Just bring them out into the open...that means confess them before God and allow God to give you victory over them!

It doesn't matter if there is one or 31 or 131...God will fight for you and give you victory over the enemy kings of your heart! Jesus made it possible for us to have the victory...Now, may we do just that!!