

Studies in Joshua
“Satan’s Devices”
Joshua 9:1-27

- The ninth chapter of Joshua is a record of the enemies' reaction to the events which have transpired thus far in Israel's military campaign against the nations of Canaan.
- "The Holy Spirit's mention of this federating of Canaan's kings to fight against Joshua and Israel, immediately after describing what had taken place on the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim is obviously designed to supply us with a typical illustration and solemn exemplification of man's hostility to the Law of God." - A.W. Pink

What happened on this occasion represents the very essence of human depravity

- ***“... the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so ...” - Romans 8:7***
- **The moral law of God, which was inscribed on the rocks of the altar at Mt Ebal, is “a revelation of God’s character and an expression of His will” [Pink]. This coalition of these Canaanite nations was a demonstration that “... the will of the creature is opposed to the will of the Creator” [Pink].**

The ultimate demonstration of this was “... when the Lawgiver became incarnate and dwelt here upon earth ...” [Pink]

- ***“He was despised and rejected by men ...”*** [Isa. 53:3]
- ***“They hated me without a cause”*** [Jn. 15:25]
- ***“We will not have this man to rule over us!”***

- ***“Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. ‘Let us break their chains,’ they say, ‘and throw off their fetters’”***

[Psa. 2:1-4; cf. Peter and John, Acts 2:25-27]

But, behind the scenes, as these nations formed their coalitions against God, He was laughing at their puny efforts!

- ***“The one enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.” - Psa. 2:4***
- ***“Associate yourselves, O ye peoples [i.e. form your coalitions and your leagues of nations], and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces ... Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word and it shall not stand; for God is with us.” And Romans 8:31 says: “If God is for us, who can be against us?” - Isaiah 8:9-10 [NKJV]***

A Second response

- ***“However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they resorted to a ruse [i.e. a clever deception]- Josh. 9:3***
- **The Gibeonites disguised themselves as travelers from a distant land, in order to deceive Israel and trick them into signing a treaty to spare their lives.**

“... we are not ignorant of the devil’s devices” II Cor. 2:11

- **The roaring lion response uses force and terrorizes openly from without.**
- **The subtle serpent response is cunning and it corrupts secretly from within; it introduces leaven which permeates the loaf.**

I. *Deception* verses 1-13

- Joshua 10:2 also tells us that the men of Gibeon were “good fighters.”
- Nevertheless, they were afraid of Israel!
- The sovereignty of God seems to have been involved somehow because “*the terror of the Lord*” fell upon them in a unique way
cf. Gen. 35:5

- In Josh. 2:9-10, Rahab said to the spies: “... *I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone’s courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.”*
- “... *who makes you you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?*” - I Cor. 4:7

The downside of the Gibeonite deception

- **The Gibeonites entered into the Israelite's camp at Gilgal!**
- **I Peter 2:11 says they are to conduct themselves as “strangers and pilgrims” in this world.**
- **Jas. 4:4 “You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”**

- ***“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols?”***

For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people,' 'Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.' 'I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty'"

II Cor. 6:14-18

What the Gibeonites wanted was a suzerain treaty

- **Ex. 34:15-16** - *“Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land; for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to them, they will invite you and you will eat their sacrifices. And when you choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons and those daughters prostitute themselves to their gods, they will lead your sons to do the same.”*
- **Deut. 7:2** - *“and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy. ...”*

The fundamental error of Joshua

- He trusted in his natural understanding [common sense], based on human observation!
- “The great error here ... is assuming that reality is nothing more than the material” - James Boice

- **“But the difficulty with operating that way all the time is that reality does not consist only of the material. There is a spiritual world too, and in that spiritual world there is a powerful, crafty, and malicious being who is bent on our destruction. We cannot see the devil. We cannot handle, taste, or smell his stratagems. Therefore, in all spiritual (and all moral) areas, we need wisdom that goes beyond any we can derive from sense impressions.”**

- “Never, never, NEVER trust your own judgment in anything. When common sense says that a course is right, lift your heart to God, for the path of faith and the path of blessing may be in a direction completely opposite to that which you call common sense. When voices tell you that action is urgent, that something must be done immediately, refer everything to the tribunal in heaven.

Then, if you are still in doubt, dare to stand still. If you are called on to act and you have no time to pray, don't act. If you are called on to move in a certain direction and cannot wait until you have peace with God about it, don't move. Be strong enough and brave enough to dare to stand and wait on God, for none of them that wait on Him shall ever be ashamed. That is the only way to outmatch the devil.” - Alan Redpath

- **I Jn. 4:1** - *“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*
- **II Cor. 11:3** - *“...I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”*