

*(So the Sun Stood Still)*

*Joshua 8:3 – 10:14*

~ Joshua has now led the children of Israel to a victory at Ai; and we learned that Ai represents the flesh in Scripture. In the last leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, we read how Joshua was initially defeated at Ai. We considered a tremendous spiritual lesson in our last report. A complete recognition of the enemy and the potential of the enemy must be acknowledged and accounted for if you ever hope to have victory over the flesh. Until we recognize our greatest enemy is right here in our own flesh, we will constantly suffer defeat. Many people want to blame the devil for their fleshly failures; and the old saying is, "... the devil made me do it." No, the devil doesn't make you do anything – your flesh is the problem, and your flesh is responsible for your failures. We choose to sin by our own free will.

Likewise, we need to understand how and why we become defeated. Most people are simply not willing to admit defeat. I recognize the admission is shameful, ignoble, humiliating - and easily ignored when it comes time to acknowledge to God the problems we have created. The primary reason we all suffer this humiliation is because we have become used to depending on our own ability. The spies told Joshua that Ai would be an easy win; and we think our flesh is easy to overcome for us, too. As soon as we depend on ourselves to conquer the flesh we have failed before we even begin. Before we can really move out and serve the Lord we must come to the place where, as Paul said, "... oh, wretched man I am!" Have you figured out that you are losing to destruction yet? Paul figured it out; and that's when Paul cried out to God.

Alright, we saw defection in the camp of Israel in our previous report, and how everyone suffered for the disobedience of just one man. Well, prayer has its place – but – when you and I come to God constantly whining and complaining – that's when we are headed for defeat. Are you filled, led and taught by the Spirit of God, friends? Do you have the fruits of the Holy Spirit

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in your life; or are you just a basket of rotten apples? Some people insist they are "separated" Christians – but what about the fire that flames from the tip of your tongue? What about the jealousy, strife and division you cause; and the envy you harbor in your heart – and the constant wanting of covetousness – in your life? Some people insist they would never wear lipstick, for example – but their lips are already stained red with gossip. Every single one of us are nothing but shoddy and shabby saints. Most of us put up a holy front that masks a filthy dirty face.

I realize most people don't care for the manner in which I teach the Bible. Candidly, it will amaze me if anyone really reads these reports. What I have to say isn't popular, friends. Love and prophecy is very popular. Talking about how great we are and how blessed we are or are going to be is an attractive, money-making theology. Well, the spirit warreth against the flesh and the flesh warreth against the spirit. The only way to overcome all of this is in the Spirit of God. That means we're going to have to actually learn the Bible properly, correctly and completely, my beloved. Christ died a judgmental death adjudged against our sinful nature. They who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, as Paul said in Galatians chapter five verse twenty-four. That happened two thousand years ago plus when Christ died. That is the basis for overcoming the flesh....

## VIII

***3 So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night.***

***4 And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready:***

***5 And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them,***

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**6 (For they will come out after us) till we have drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them.**

**7 Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.**

**8 And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. See, I have commanded you.**

**9 Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to lie in ambush, and abode between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people.**

**10 And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.**

**11 And all the people, even the people of war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between them and Ai.**

**12 And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city.**

**13 And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.**

**14 And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that they hasted and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but he wist not that there were liers in ambush against him behind the city.**

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**15 And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.**

**16 And all the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city.**

**17 And there was not a man left in Ai or Bethel, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.**

**18 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city.**

**19 And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire.**

**20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.**

**21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.**

**22 And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape.**

**23 And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.**

**24 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were**

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***consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword.***

***25 And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai.***

***26 For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.***

***27 Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded Joshua.***

***28 And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day.***

***29 And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.***

***30 Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal,***

***31 As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.***

***32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the Law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.***

***33 And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of***

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***them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.***

***34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.***

***35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.***

~ So, we see the children of Israel doing what Moses commanded them to do: reading the Book of the Law. That means they were studying the Bible. Both the cursing's and the blessings were read. Anyone who could understand the Hebrew language was read to. This means they had their own Spiritual Safari reading program and they never deviated or missed a single report Moses had written for them. And they didn't read parts of it – they read ALL of it....

## ***IX***

***1 And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof;***

***2 That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord.***

***3 And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai,***

~ Here come the Gibeonites and the record of the league the children of Israel made with them. Gibeon is south of Jerusalem, so we are obviously considering the southern campaign Joshua waged in the land at this time. Well, one group was rather smart, and their idea was not to fight Joshua, but to attempt to negotiate a compact. When the Gibeonites heard what

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had happened at Ai, they weren't about to fight the children of Israel. Of course, they were next in line for the slaughter, so they worked wilily....

***4 They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up;***

***5 And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.***

***6 And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us.***

***7 And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you?***

***8 And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye?***

***9 And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,***

***10 And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.***

***11 Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us.***

***12 This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy:***

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**13 And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.**

~ The Gibeonite's knew how to tell an almighty lie. So, they act as if they came from very far away. And they acted as if they truly wanted to worship the True and Living God. Well, Joshua fell for it, and made a treatise; and Joshua's word was pretty important to him, apparently. Joshua was told to make no treatise with the people in the land – and the Gibeonites knew that – so, they acted as if they were strangers in the land. You must admit it was a clever ruse. Joshua overcame Jericho by faith; but he won't defeat the flesh by faith – we overcome our flesh by recognizing its weaknesses. Going to God in confession is the only way He will ever bring you victory over the flesh. Remember, God had already told Joshua that it was He Who would bring victory at Ai to the children of Israel - not Joshua.

The Gibeonites represent Satan in Scripture. This is how the devil works. The only way to defeat Satan is found in Ephesians chapter six where we are told to put on the whole armor of God. That means learning the whole Bible. Little pieces of knowledge will not enable you in His service. Remember, the Book of Joshua is the Ephesians of the Old Testament. Putting on our spiritual armor is the only way to stand against the wiles of the devil. Here, Israel needed to beware of the wiles of the Gibeonites. Unfortunately, that didn't happen.

Naturally, Joshua's response was physical warfare, but ours is to be a spiritual warfare. Our enemy today is spiritual wickedness in high places. Most Christians simply do not even recognize the devil as their spiritual enemy. Satan isn't interested if you do drugs or drink alcohol – not even close – the devil doesn't even go to the bar because those people are ALREADY his. Satan is ashamed of those people, and he knows they will destroy their lives all by themselves. He doesn't waste his time with them. No, friends, Satan is at church – in his office at the church – performing his destructive actions in the pew you sit in.

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The devil desires to be very, very religious. Satan isn't going to attack you – not yet – as long as you are falling for his lies. We need to be very careful about that. The utter gullibility and naivety concerning our enemy most Christians possess is frightfully alarming. Multitudes are easily taken in by every religious fraud they are confronted by. Any man who genuinely believes God and stands for Him will be constantly questioned. No one supports this so-called safari because they are too busy supporting Satan – yes, I mean exactly that. The religious racketeer – who would be charged with fraud in the secular business world – thrives in religion. They say anything for whatever reason with no factual basis and label it "scriptural." Apostate programs are supported fully and without questioning. Those who do support them can never support sound doctrine. I hope you are enjoying your free safari, by the way.

I am fully aware of how the Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God is doubted, questioned and ridiculed. Do you investigate the ministry you send money to? Well, all I am doing is trying to teach the Word of God in the sound doctrine of the apostles to a world that has NO EARTHLY IDEA what is really inside the covers of a Bible most claim to believe. Well, if we don't understand it, then we don't know if we believe it, because that would be impossible. See, friends, the devil has sung this world a quasi-scriptural lullaby and has put it down for a nap sucking a bottle full of poison.

Are you submitting yourself to God Almighty? How close are you REALLY to the Lord – be honest with yourself for a change. You are commanded to have NOTHING to do with that which you know nothing about. Now I'm talking about starving children organizations that are corrupt puppet government fronts – and animal shelters where the portion of the donations that actually go to the cause is less than five percent. It's dangerous linking up with their father the devil. Most of them give Satan a free ride to church every Sunday, too. Many don't go and never support anything. This is another area in which the average child of God is totally defeated...

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**14 And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD.**

**15 And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them.**

**16 And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.**

**17 And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjathjearim.**

**18 And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.**

**19 But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.**

**20 This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swore unto them.**

**21 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them.**

**22 And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?**

**23 Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.**

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**24 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.**

**25 And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.**

**26 And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.**

**27 And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.**

**X**

**1 Now it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;**

**2 That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.**

**3 Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,**

**4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.**

**5 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon,**

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***gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.***

***6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.***

***7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.***

***8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.***

***9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.***

***10 And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.***

***11 And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.***

***12 Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.***

***13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.***

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**14 And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.**

~ So, we end this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God with Joshua using good military tactics; but this is going to be a very long day for Joshua. There have been many questions and explanations about this day in the life of Joshua. Some avoid giving ANY interpretation of this account. Some want to relegate it to poetic language and a simple expression of poetry. Many say this isn't literal and they point to the "... stars that fought against Siserá" - mentioned in Judges in chapter five verse twenty. Well, we'll see in Judges that the stars did fight, and this is all very literal. Others still want to call this a miracle of refraction, and that the sun didn't really stand still, and it was an illusion perceived in error by unsophisticated bronze-age goat herders - and all that.

Well, if we believe the Bible is the Word of God, we are going to have to accept the explanation is that God stopped the entire solar system. God blackened out the sun. The American Standard Version said, "... the sun became silent." What Joshua wanted was NOT more sunshine – Joshua wanted LESS sunshine, my beloved. Another version says, "... oh, sun, wait in Gibeon!" Remember, the heat would have been around one hundred ten degrees Fahrenheit in this desert at the time of the year in which we are studying. Joshua didn't want more sun; you may be sure. God stopped the entire solar system - and I believe He also cut down some of the heat of the sun. We'll examine that incident carefully in our next report ~

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