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Joshua 10:15 – 11:23

~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God made a very short day out of a very long day in our previous report. Joshua made a treatise with the Gibeonites; which landed him in big trouble. The Gibeonites dealt wilily with the children of Israel; and, we all have to admit, those Gibeonites were clever liars, indeed. The Gibeonites represent Satan spiritually in the Word of God; and we need to be extremely aware and careful of the tactics the devil employs in our contemporary lives. The compact Joshua made should not have been made. Once that agreement was made, however, the children of Israel were bound by it.

When the other kings of the land heard about these things, they came against the Hivites – which are what the Gibeonites were – in an attempt to destroy them. The Gibeonites were fighting a losing battle against these other five kings, so they sent to Joshua to help them; and Joshua did help. I think there were two reasons Joshua helped them; one, Joshua felt that his word was worth something; and second, Joshua was told to exterminate the enemies in the land. But the Gibeonites had convinced Joshua with a lie that they were from some far-off place. That's the position Joshua found himself in at the time in which we are studying.

Well, it heats up to around one hundred twelve degrees in the shade in Israel in the desert – and there is no shade – but Joshua needed just a little bit more daylight. What Joshua didn't need was any more heat. Our best translations read "... sun, be thou silent." Joshua was entreating the sun to not send out any more rays – I am sure Joshua had had enough. We looked at several explanations from different men in our last report regarding this "long day of Joshua" and our reasonable conclusion is that God stopped the entire solar system in verse twelve; it seems as clear as the noonday sun this is what happened – at least, to me it's that clear. Well, the sun

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didn't go down for about a whole day before God blacked out the sun – made it silent – and the Berkley translation says, “.... oh, sun, wait in Gibeon.” That combination is the most satisfactory, as far as I can discern, because the whole miraculous incident is corroborated in time and space.

Some people insist it is perfectly ridiculous that God would stop the entire universe for one man. Well, I happen to agree that it IS ridiculous God would do this; interestingly, though, it's exactly what God did. God sent His Son into the world to die for our sins; and that, to me, is a whole lot more wonderful than simply stopping the sun. This sun experience is a powerful demonstration of His wisdom and power; but sending Christ into this world - among utterly sinful men - and dying on a criminal cross is just beyond asking a whole lot. Now, if YOU were the ONLY person on this earth, then Jesus would have still done the same thing. Most people want to call THAT ridiculous – and it is – but let's just say by faith are ye saved; and that is NOT of yourself, but it is the gift of God to you. Further, God so loved the world – and that's the basis of it all. Our only required response is faith that whosoever WILL believe on Him might not perish but have everlasting life. And, with that long day behind us, let's continue forward with Joshua....

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15 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

16 But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah.

18 And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them:

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19 And stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand.

~ Let's not put ourselves in the position of judging God, because the people ruled by these five kings had been given four and a half centuries to turn to Him – and they would not. The inhabitants of the land knew all about the report in which God said He would give the land over to the nation Israel; and, as we saw at Jericho – the Lord would have saved anyone who would have turned to Him – as Rahab the harlot did. Rahab had heard that God brought them across the Red Sea; and still, Moses was told he had to stay out of the land of the Amorites because their iniquity was not yet full. Well, Rahab believed; and if Rahab could believe, then ANYBODY can believe God. What we see are those who didn't believe; and now their judgment has come upon them. That message is still the same. God loves you and He gave His Son to die for you – but you're going to have to believe that in order to lay hold of the promises God has for you. These people are perishing for one reason and one reason only: they refused to believe God. That may not sound very nice, but that's the way it's written in the Word of God; and unbelief is certainly going to end badly for you, friend. The Bible just happens to be exactly accurate....

20 And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities.

21 And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

22 Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

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23 And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

24 And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

25 And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

~ The five kings were an impressive array of leadership who, forty years before this account, were the ones who had caused the spies to return to Moses and tell him there was no way to seize the land. Joshua does this to these kings to further strengthen the hearts of his own people. The children of Israel were still terrified of these kings at this time. I have heard some say these people were brave, but I don't see any bravery whatsoever. Any war hero who is honest will tell you they were scared to death in the heat of the battle they became a hero in. You may be sure that's the condition of these people at this time that we are studying....

26 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening.

27 And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day.

~ It was certainly more humane to slay them as opposed to leaving them to starve to death. God didn't build a prison to house them. This is the

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disposition God instructed Joshua to carry out. Today, we believe we are so civilized that all five of these kings would have ended up in a nice comfortable cell at the Hague. When you or your family is the victim of a bombing or gassing - as we see all over the world today - you will quickly discover that you are in no position to criticize what's happening here in the Bible. This is the only way to deal with a sinful and wicked race; and if these kings had been given half a chance they would have led another rebellion against Joshua faster than you could say "murder." These kings would have killed every single Israelite they could have gotten their hands on. The kings were hanged after stoning because that's how an example was set for the worst of the worst criminal in Israel. God says, "... cursed is every man that hangs upon a tree" - and the Lord Jesus was crucified on a tree – the cross. The nation had been instructed in the Mosaic Law to take down everyone who had been hanged on a tree; and never to leave a hanging body overnight. Well, they took Jesus down the same day because Jesus bore the curse for us....

28 And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho.

29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah:

30 And the LORD delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho.

31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it:

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32 And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it:

35 And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it:

37 And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein.

38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought against it:

39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40 So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining,

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but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded.

41 And Joshua smote them from Kadeshbarnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon.

42 And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

43 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

~ Here, we see Joshua way down south on the coast; but it is still God Who is giving him the victory and it is God Who is still giving Joshua possession of the land. Our victory can only be attained through Christ. I don't buy the "victorious life" cliché, because the "victorious life" is the life Christ lives through us. What we receive are all spiritual blessings in the Heavens. When God gets the victory, then we get those spiritual possessions. Interestingly, God is going to get the victory - with or without us....

XI

1 And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph,

~ Now we come to the final campaign in the north by Joshua; and this will mark the end of his conquests of leadership in war. Jabin seems to be the ringleader, sending word out to all the other kings in the area to come together against Joshua and the princes of Israel. They all knew what happened down south; and they knew the next move was to the north. As we have already seen, the tactic was to divide the land; and that wedge is exactly what Joshua did. This strategy was a good one; Alexander the Great did it this way. Napoleon used the same method; and Nathan Bedford said, "... the one who gets there the firstest with the mostest wins." Well, that's

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the way Joshua was leading the children of Israel. As we move on, we learn the campaign in the north was much longer and more challenging than that of the south. So, just like that, we have covered the entire account of the forty years Joshua led Israel....

2 And to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west,

3 And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh.

4 And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

5 And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

6 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.

7 So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them.

8 And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephothmaim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining.

9 And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.

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10 And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms.

11 And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire.

12 And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded.

13 But as for the cities that stood still in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn.

14 And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe.

15 As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

16 So Joshua took all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same;

17 Even from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them.

18 Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

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19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle.

20 For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

21 And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities.

22 There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.

23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.

~ This concluding verse in our Spiritual Safari should be read and understood very carefully. Compare this to verse one of chapter thirteen. Here, we read Joshua took ALL of the land; but chapter thirteen verse one says there was much more to be possessed. So, it seems we have found that all elusive contradiction in the Bible. I know of a book called a thousand and one contradictions of the Bible – but that book missed this one. This seems to put our backs against the wall as Christians, but it really contains one of the greatest spiritual truths we will ever learn.

Israel never did entirely exterminate the enemies in the Promised Land as they had been instructed to by God. Israel was, actually, plagued with the enemy from this time forward. Even in the days of David, the Philistines were still in the land. Joshua took Gaza – as we have just read – but that is a

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completely Philistine city. They just didn't get rid of the Philistines, friends. Disobedience has consequences with God. This myriad mixture of different people were a plague to Israel during the entire historical period covered in the books of the Bible; and they are the primary reason Israel could never lay hold of the expanse of territory God gave them.

Well, at the time in which we are studying, Joshua took the victory over Gaza and other areas in the land, like Hazor; and the fairly recent excavation of Hazor has revealed that Joshua did a pretty good job destroying the city. Even so, many of the inhabitants of those cities remained in the land. The children of Israel never possessed the full geographical area God gave them. Joshua took the land and gave it to the people, but the people didn't move in and lay hold of it in faith.

There are at least thirty-three – maybe more – spiritual blessings made over to us. How many of them do YOU possess? Do you enjoy them? Paul said we have been justified by faith, so we have peace with God. Do you enjoy peace that says everything is alright between you and the Lord? Do you have a relationship that is such so that you can look up at any particular time and say, "... Lord Jesus, I love You." What about the fruit of the Holy Spirit that constitutes joy? Do you have fruit in your life? I've noticed that Christians can look miserable. Some look so unhappy it frightens me. Those are usually the ones who are busy as termites in what they think is their Christian service. There are many different reasons this happens, such as a bad love affair or a broken home – and these people are literally robbed of the joy of the Lord. It COULD be theirs, but they have not possessed it. How many of us truly have love in our hearts? We hear so much about love, but do we REALLY have love for others naturally in our hearts and minds? Are you appropriating all – or ANY – of these spiritual blessings? Paul did, and I am sure he is one of very few who ever has.

Well, the nation Israel never appropriated the full extent of the possessions they could have had; and the same could be said of the church today. The modern church is just as much of a dismal failure in the spiritual realm as

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Israel was in the physical realm. I'm sure there are MANY – MANY blessings that you and I are utterly missing. What a tremendous spiritual message Joshua gives us in this section of Scripture; and the message is that the problem we experience with God is the result of lies and hypocrisy in our own heart, mind and lives ~

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