

Studies in Joshua
“Satan’s Devices”- Part 2
Joshua 9

In Part 1, our approach to the interpretation of Joshua, Chapter nine was governed by the following facts:

- **God is sovereign**
- **Some of God's creatures have questioned God's sovereignty and tried to test it**
- **Our greatest resource amidst the great cosmic conflict is to know about and trust in God's sovereignty**

Review of key points from Part 1

- 1. The entrance of Israel into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua to embark upon the conquest of that land is symbolic of the invasion of this world by the Kingdom of God under the leadership of Christ the King.**
 - The twofold response of the enemy**



Review of key points from Part 1

- 1. The entrance of Israel into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua to embark upon the conquest of that land is symbolic of the invasion of this world by the Kingdom of God under the leadership of Christ the King.**
 - The twofold response of the enemy**
 - God's sovereignty trumps each response [Psalm 2]**

2. Joshua's treaty with the Gibeonites represented a violation of James 4:4 - "... friendship with the world is hatred toward God ..."

3. The fundamental error of Joshua [Boice]:

- ✓ **Trusting in his natural understanding based on human observation**
- ✓ **Assuming that reality is nothing more than the material**

4. The lesson of “besetting” or “entangling” sin

5. The lesson of God’s ‘sovereign’ mercy and grace toward the Gibeonites

■ **Joshua 11:20**

■ **Romans 9:15-18**

■ **Ephesians 2:11-22**

II. Gullibility [Verses 14 & 15]

- *“The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD. Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by an oath.”*
- *“Joshua’s gullibility,” says Huffman, “involved self-deception, misplaced confidence and overconfidence.”*
- *At the root of Joshua’s gullibility was his failure to consult God and His Word!*
- *Josh. 9:14 says that Joshua and the other leaders, “... took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the LORD.”*

- **Phil. 1:10** - Paul says: *“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best ...”*
[*“test the things that differ”* - the idea of wise discernment! Detecting error and distinguishing it from the truth!]
- **Heb. 5:14** *“... solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”*

III. Integrity [verses 16-27]

- ***“But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. The whole assembly grumbled against the leaders, but all the leaders answered, ‘We have given them our oath by the LORD, the God of Israel, and we cannot touch them now.’” - verses 18-19***
- ***verse 20 - “... We will let them live, so that wrath will not fall on us for breaking the oath we swore to them.”***

Observe: "... the original and fundamental law concerning oaths" [A.W. Pink], and the fundamental significance of oaths to the Lord Himself:

- **Ex. 20:7 [the 3rd commandment]** - *"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord thy God will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."*
- **Deut. 6:12-13** *"... be careful that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name."*

Four important elements in an oath

- A.W. Pink

- **It represents a formal assertion of the truth (which should always be spoken anyway)**
- **An acknowledgment of the presence of the sovereign God as a witness to the truthfulness of our claim.**

- We invoke God Himself as our witness that our conscience is pure and sincere, and that what we are swearing to is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.
- We call upon God to be the avenger of all lies, binding Himself to Divine punishment if we swear falsely!

- **Unfortunately, we live in a fallen and sinful world in which people often violate oaths because of the hardness [i.e. Stubbornness/gullibility] of their hearts!**
- **When this happens, a "sub-ideal" situation is created [i.e. One which is not of God's making but which produces unpleasant results - the consequences of sin - with which we must live.]**
- **In His mercy, God has allowed men to provide 'legislation' or guidelines to help regulate in such cases [i.e. To guard the integrity of God's moral law from further degradation and to protect us, in some measure, from the consequences of our sin].**

- **“Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you, that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.”** - **Matt. 19:8**
- **Joshua’s oath with the Gibeonites, was displeasing to God because it violated God’s original command not to enter into treaties with the people of Canaan [Ex. 34:15,16; Deut. 7:2]. - Yet, to violate the oath they had entered into with the Gibeonites would constitute another offense against God.**

- The Apostle Paul also demonstrates the need to sometimes, and in some difficult situations, legislate on the subideal level, when he deals with the question of marriages between Christians and nonbelievers in **1 Cor. 7** [i.e. unequal yokes, which are forbidden by God].
- In **Ezra 10**, we read of yet another subideal situation which represents a conflict of one Biblical principle with another, because of man's sin and the hardness of his heart.

James Boice says:

We, the Gibeonites

- "They were liars, deceivers. They were under judgment and exposed to the severe wrath of God. So also have we been. We heard of the true God, as they did. True, at the beginning we did not know very much about him. Yet God used that small beginning to draw us into the company of His people, where we learned more and were eventually fully identified with those who have been saved by faith in Jesus Christ. We too believed. This is a great marvel, a tribute to God's grace."

- **"If you have not yet been drawn into the company of God's people, let what you know of the true God draw you. You need only know that He is the true God and that he has provided the way for you to be saved through Jesus' death. Come to Him and escape the judgment."**