

**Joshua #15**  
**Joshua 9**  
**Odd Faith, Strange Grace**  
**17071-A September 03, 2017**

- I. **Jesus did the unthinkable—healing a Gentile (Canaanite!) on Gentile land. Matt.15:21-28**
  - A. Why was this woman's faith great?
    - A.1. She believed that Jesus as Messiah could do this
    - A.2. She asked only for mercy, not congratulations (like many of the Jews)
      - A.2.a) John 6:37. I will never cast out one who comes to me.
    - A.3. She realized there is only one Source of life—the Master.
      - A.3.a) Even the dogs subsist on what the Master provides.
  - B. There are some Canaanites in the Joshua story that seemed to grasp at least some of this same shape of faith...
- II. **The Lord is taking his land. The Book of Joshua.**
  - A. YHWH is creating a place on earth where He will be worshipped.
    - A.1. The only geographical location at the time.
  - B. He has brought them across the river, through the victory over Jericho and Ai, into a recommitment to Him at Gerizim and Ebal and now into a strange experience of being conned...
- III. **Joshua Chapter 9.**
  - A. The Gathering War Clouds. 1-2
    - A.1. The Canaanite nations prepare to attack Joshua.
  - B. The Big Con. 3-15
    - B.1. The defectors from Canaan—Gibeonites/Hivites.
    - B.2. 4 cities in the central highlands, v.17
    - B.3. They want a covenant of peace (berit)
      - B.3.a) A legal loyalty promise, more than a contract.
  - C. The Frustrating Reveal. 16-21.
    - C.1. The Israelites are angry that their leaders made a covenant.
  - D. The Curse that was a blessing. 22-27
    - D.1. They become a servant class within Israel. But they live!!

IV. **Three practical (and surprising) observations.**

A. **Joshua had a lot of nerve. 14**

A.1. **Making a big decision like this without asking the Lord.**

A.2. *Discernment is better than decisiveness.*

A.2.a) Waiting on the Lord, being patient, trusting His process and His Spirit.

B. **God had a lot of patience.**

B.1. Does the Lord let us make bad decisions? Absolutely.

B.2. True, Joshua didn't ask the Lord, and he was tricked, but

B.2.a) He did not warn him. (and He certainly could have)

B.2.b) He did not rebuke him. (He had not been reticent about Achan)

B.2.c) He did not treat this action as a sin.

(B.2.c.1) Achan's deceit was a sin and Israel was disciplined for it. But not here.

(B.2.c.2) *There is no such thing as the "sin of being deceived"*

B.2.d) He made them honor the deal with the Gibeonites.

(B.2.d.1) An oath in the name of the Lord is a promise, not to the people, but to the Lord. It must be kept no matter what.

(B.2.d.2) They remained within Israel for about 400 years. (2 Sam 21)

(B.2.d.3) Gibeon is not listed as a "snare" to Israel like other Canaanite tribes which were not subdued.

B.3. So, basically, the Lord adopted the Gibeonites into Israel

B.3.a) *Could the Lord have let this go by because these people were actually trusting Him – like Rahab?*

C. **The Gibeonites had a lot of faith. Rudimentary, but Real. 24**

C.1. They truly believed that YHWH was going to win this war.

C.1.a) Why else would they give up their sovereignty to be servants in Israel? That is a desperate decision.

C.2. They trusted that a covenant made in YHWH's name would hold no matter what (Joshua spoke for YHWH).

C.2.a) YHWH had commanded Israel not to ever mistreat the "sojourners" in their midst (Ex.22:21. The Gibeonites were betting everything on YHWH's trustworthiness and mercy.

C.2.b) *There are many in our own era who do not trust the Lord this much!*

C.3. They were offering to convert to the worship of YHWH.

C.3.a) The Gibeonites were actually converting, though not out of love for YHWH in the sentimental sense.

C.3.b) As sojourners among Israel, they were required to be loyal to YHWH and to defect from their previous idols.

(C.3.b.1) Lev.24:16; Ex.12:19

C.4. They would rather be servants in YHWH's kingdom than die in the illusion of their own sovereignty. 25

C.4.a) Many an Israelite could learn from this example.

C.4.b) *These tricky Gibeonites were more faithful than Achan!*

V. **Three closing thoughts:**

A. The Lord's coming wrath focuses us. Matt.10:28

A.1. The fear of the Lord is a clarifying experience. Prov.1:7

A.1.a) The illusion that humans should not fear God if they are unrepentant in sin is a form of deadly blindness. Matt.10:28

A.1.b) The judgment of God is not all we need to know, but it is a beginning...

A.2. If you don't understand this you will not

A.2.a) Convert; Appreciate; Serve; Witness

B. The Lord's careful providence comforts us. Rom.8:28

B.1. He uses our mistakes and others' as well, to bring about a better thing than would have occurred otherwise.

B.2. Joshua and the other leaders did make a mistake. They did not do "due diligence" by asking the Lord. And yet...

B.3. The Gibeonite Covenant is the mechanism by which the Lord leads Israel into the miraculous and victorious southern campaign against the Canaanites. (Chapters 10)

C. The Lord's gracious adoption rescues us. John 1:12-13.

C.1. There are two groups here and only one of them belongs to God.

C.1.a) Israel belongs to God and the Canaanites belong to their demon gods.

C.1.b) Gibeon is defecting from the demon gods and believes that YHWH is the one to serve. The rest of the Canaanites continued to rely on their demon gods and they fell.

C.2. We come from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of His Beloved Son. Col.1:13

C.2.a) Kingdom/Family metaphor

C.3. We come from Adam's doomed race into Christ's new destiny. Romans 5:12-21

C.3.a) You are either in the body of Christ or you are not. If you have not defected and come into the people of God through faith in Christ, then you are not in the family of God. Rom.10:9-10

**D. How? By becoming herem for us—total dedication to God on our behalf, absorbing the wrath of God and giving us His Life.**