

Abide in Me

John 15:4
*Bible studies for disciples
who make disciples*



Volume 7 - Number 3

The week of November 7, 2021

A New Beginning
The War Room
Joshua 9-10

THE BIG PICTURE

As news of Israel's victory in Ai spreads, the peoples of the surrounding region brace themselves for the coming battles. Israel has proven to be not only a formidable fighting force, but under Joshua's leadership and their devotion to God, they seem unstoppable. Kings of the region band together to form an alliance for their mutual protection, but the Gibeonites try a different tactic: deception. The narrative of how the Gibeonites use deception to save themselves and form an alliance with Israel teaches us many lessons that we will discuss. Chapter 10 gives an account of the places that the Israelites conquered in these early stages of moving forward into the Holy Land. This is not just a study in military tactics and an account of the brutality of war, but it has application and meaning in our lives as well.

Warm-up: What spiritual battles do you face in your life or can you recall from your past? What tactics have you seen our spiritual enemies (Satan and his demonic forces) use against you?

READ THE STORY

- Read Joshua chapters 9 and 10.
- Underline Joshua 9:14.
- Underline Joshua 10:8 and 19.

DISCUSSING THE STORY TOGETHER

1. The Gibeonites took a different approach to the coming battle from Israel. They deceived Joshua and the leaders of Israel into a peace treaty. Are there any parallels here to the account of Rahab's story in Chapter 2? If so, what are they and was their deception justified?

2. What does the text in chapter 9 tell us about why Israel did not count the Gibeonite treaty as null and void given the means by which it came about? Why was this significant for Israel's success in continued conquest?

3. In chapter 10, verses 1-5, we see that Adoni-zedek, King of Jerusalem, gathered other kings around him and they decide to attack Gibeon as a first strike against the new alliance that city made with Israel. From a military strategy point of view, why do you think they decided to make this move?

4. In chapter 10, verses 12-14, we read the words of Joshua calling out to God and calling on the sun and moon to stand still. Verse 14 specifies that “There has been no day like it before or since, when the Lord heeded the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel.” Do you believe that this literally happened or is Joshua using figurative language? For further study, research Galileo and the heliocentric controversy surrounding this passage in the early 1600s...thank me later!

5. Chapter 10 describes the fall of the five kings who fled in the cave at Makkedah. Why did Joshua make a spectacle of them and what message do you think that sent to the people of Israel?

6. As God leads Israel into the region of the Southern Caanan, we see a repetition of annihilation of various cities and their inhabitants. Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, Debir, and other outlying cities all fell and were destroyed by Joshua and the Israelites. Read the descriptions of how these cities were conquered, and talk about the theological implications of this and what it reveals about God’s character. Was Israel justified in their actions in conquest of the Promised Land?

APPLYING THE STORY CORPORATELY AND PERSONALLY

1. Looking at the narrative of chapters 9 and 10 through a lens of spiritual warfare in our own lives personally and corporately, are there any parallels contained in these verses to spiritual warfare tactics that you’ve seen in your life or the life of the church?

2. In Chapter 9, verse 14, we see that the leaders of Israel did not seek God’s counsel before entering into the peace agreement with the deceptive Gibeonites. Can you recall a time when you made a poor decision in life because you failed to seek God’s direction? What happened as a result and how has God redeemed that situation in your life?

3. Chapter 10, verses 8 and 19, show that Joshua knew that God was with him and would deliver Israel's enemies into their hands. What kind of confidence and assurance do we have in our lives because of the Holy Spirit's power in us? Describe how this reality of the Holy Spirit's power changes a person and emboldens churches.

4. Read Colossians 3:1-17 and discuss any spiritual warfare tactics that are highlighted in that passage that are helpful in our "conquest" battles against the enemies of God.

5. In your opinion, do we recognize and act on the power of God in our lives as much as we should? If so, what evidence do you see? If not, what are the personal and corporate barriers that prevent us from having the Lord fight for us as is chronicled in Joshua 10?

GLIMPING THE GOSPEL-STORY IN THIS STORY

Even in military conquests, we see God's presence powerfully with the people of Israel. In Chapters 9 and 10, where do you see the gospel message revealed?

PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we seek you in all things, recognizing the spiritual battles that rage around us. May your presence continue to guide us, may your protection be over and around us, and may you fight for us in spiritual battles as you did with the Israelites in their conquest. Give us the courage to go where you lead us. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

