

## Lesson 4 – Joshua 9-10

Text: Joshua 9-10

Key Passages:

- Joshua 9:14 – The Israelites made a terrible decision because they had not consulted the Lord.
- Joshua 10:10-14 – God won the battle for the Israelites with hailstones and by stopping the sun.
- Joshua 10:40-42 – Israel was victorious over the southern kings because God fought for them.

Main Storyline:

After the Israelites had defeated Ai, many of the other nations in Canaan decided that they would become allies and try to defeat Israel together. However, a group of people from the area around the city of Gibeon (a nearby Hivite city) decided to try a different strategy to save themselves from Israel's conquest. They put on old clothing and put old, moldy food in their bags to try to make it look like they had been on a long journey and had come from a distant land.

The deceitful Gibeonites approached Joshua and other men of Israel and lied to them, saying that they had come from a great distance and that they wanted to make a covenant with Israel. Knowing that they were not to make covenants or have association with the nearby Canaanites (see Deuteronomy 20:10-18), some of the men of Israel were skeptical, pointing out that they might actually live nearby. Joshua then pointedly asked them about their origin, and the Gibeonites said that they they had come from a distant land because they had heard about the God of Israel, Jehovah, and what He had done in Egypt and to the kings of the Amorites. They even showed the men their moldy bread and worn out clothes as evidence to support their story. Seeing and hearing this evidence, without asking the Lord for any advice, the Israelites believed the Gibeonites and made a peace agreement with them.

Three days later, Israel found out that the Gibeonites had lied to them. Many of the Israelites were furious with their leaders for making the covenant with the Gibeonites. However, nothing could be done because of the oath that they had made with the Gibeonites. The rulers decided that the Gibeonites would serve as woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation. When Joshua confronted the Gibeonites regarding the lie, they explained that they only did this because they knew that God had truly given the Israelites the land of Canaan so that they feared for their own lives.

Later, Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard about how the Gibeonites had allied with the Israelites. He became very afraid, because he knew Gibeon was a powerful city as well. He decided to send word to four other kings in the southern region of Canaan, telling them to join him in a united attack against the Gibeonites. The other kings decided to comply, and, together, they attacked Gibeon.

When they learned of the attack, the Gibeonites asked Joshua for help against these other groups. Joshua agreed to help, and God assured that they would be victorious. Joshua and his army left their camp in the middle of the night and marched through the night to reach Gibeon and ambush the attackers. God gave Israel an overwhelming victory; He sent large hailstones down on the Canaanites (killing more than Israel did with their swords) and stopped the sun to prevent them from escaping.

In the meantime, the five kings that had attacked snuck away and hid in the cave of Makkedah. When Joshua found out, he had the cave barricaded by a huge stone and put under guard until they had finished the battle. When the battle was done, the kings were taken out, killed, and replaced in the cave under a pile of stones. God continued to grant Israel victories as they defeated all of kings of the south.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) Trying to make decisions without consulting God is foolish; God gives wisdom to those who ask.
- 2.) It is important to make only promises we can keep and to keep the ones that we do make.
- 3.) God is able to do far more than we can on our own; we must trust Him (Ephesians 3:20-21).