

Joshua 07-06-15a

This is Friday, the 10th of June 2007. We continue our study in the book of Joshua. We start a new chapter tonight, a chapter 10.

We have a couple of minor details to wrap up in the end of chapter 9. But let's begin, as we always do, by taking a moment to exercise the privilege of our priesthood. It's an opportunity to claim God's grace, which we have not earned and do not deserve. But nevertheless, it is there, and we are wise to avail ourselves of it, to let God cleanse us and renew us and purify us, so that his word will reside permanently within us and enable us to live a life that is beyond the ordinary and beyond that which can be achieved by the unbeliever.

Shall we pray? Father, we recognize what a blessing it is to be able to assemble and to spend time in fellowship with like-minded believers, particularly to be nourished and strengthened and built up through the truth of your word. We thank you for this book and the things that we are learning through the study of it. We ask that God the Holy Spirit will minister it to our hearts as we seek to discover not only the truth of history, but also the truth of application in our own lives.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. It is quite interesting because, of course, the section of Israelite history that we are studying is poo-hooed and dismissed and disregarded and thought of as nothing more than myth and fiction by a great many quote-unquote biblical scholars.

And yet, it is recorded in the word of God. It is true. It has meaning.

There is no reason to believe that the eyewitness accounts that are contained here are anything other than what they purport to be. The eyewitness accounts preserved under God's inspiring ministry through the Holy Spirit by the authors and editors and copyists who, in the earliest days, set down these things for future generations. In Joshua chapter 9, we have seen the clever deception of the Gibeonites.

They recognized that they were under sentence of death from God. And they didn't want to be under sentence of death from God. They did not want to be wiped out.

And they saw that the only way to preserve themselves was to obtain a covenant with Israel. And whatever it took, that's what they decided to do. And so, they contract with Israel under false pretenses.

And we saw last time what an irony this is because Israel, the chosen people of God, their namesake, Jacob, called Israel by God, did the very same thing. The reason they are a nation, the reason they have covenant promises and blessings is because Israel, Jacob, got himself into the contract of covenant blessing for the firstborn by illegitimate

and deceptive means. And yet the covenant, the contract, is honored nonetheless.

The same is true here. And honestly, the Israelites don't really have a leg to stand on in terms of getting upset with the Gibeonites. But the application is this.

Many times, people are going to tell you and tell me, you're not legitimate. You don't have a legitimate claim. You don't have a legitimate standing.

You're not really in a position to assert authority. Something in your past, something about how you arrived at where you are. They did this with President Bush, the whole hanging Chad thing.

He's not really the president because of the cloud of doubt that surrounded the counting of the ballots down in Florida and so on. All that counts is the result. And we as Gentiles, we as outcasts who were without hope and without God in the world from the Israelite standpoint, have been reconciled to God.

We have been brought in. We're the branch from the wild olive tree that's been grafted in. And that is a principle.

You look at it from the Israelite point of view. They've got hundreds and hundreds of years of history. They've got their legitimacy.

Paul talks about all of the things that Israelites like to claim, about being a Hebrew of the Hebrews and being a Pharisee and having this and having that and having a pedigree. The application for us, one of many, is don't let anyone shame you or belittle you or try to cast some sort of aspersion or cloud of doubt on you for anything. What is our identity? What first and foremost are we? We are, you are, I am, a child of God.

That's a fact. God has declared it. It is inviolable.

It is unalterable. You can't change it. Nobody else can change it.

God himself is not going to change it. All of the angels in heaven, all of the demons below, Satan himself, nobody can change that fact. You are a child of God, purchased, bought, redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

You are on an equal footing with every other believer that has ever lived. Paul the Apostle, Moses, Adam, Noah, name your believer. You are every bit as legitimate.

You are every bit as part of the plan and purpose of God as they are. Every bit. You are no less.

You are equally bought. You are equally loved. You are equally legitimate.

And that is the only standing and the only legitimacy that ultimately counts. It doesn't

matter what anybody says about anything that you have ever been or anything you have ever done or anything that is ever associated with you in any way. None of that matters.

It pales into insignificance compared to the single fact that you are body of Christ. You are bride of Christ. You are chosen, elect in him before the foundation of the world.

You share his sonship. You share his standing as an heir. You share his priesthood.

You share his destiny. You share an eternal future that cannot be changed. The momentary, wispy, little vicissitudes of this life are nothing compared to that eternal fact.

People say, well, I'm not sure you're in a real church. I'm not sure you had a real conversion. I'm not sure you're legitimate if you haven't tithed this or been dunked in that or have accomplished this or led someone to the Lord or have done this, that and the other.

You can put that in your garden to make your flowers grow. It is nonsense. God has decreed.

God has declared. The Gibeonites have entered into a contract with Israel and that contract is rock solid, inviolable, unalterable and it makes them just as good as the Israelites. Now, there is something of a penalty here because they obtained it by deception.

Look at the situation here. Joshua, in verse 15, made peace with them, made a covenant with them to let them live and the rulers of the congregation swore to them. This is a legitimate, binding, forever contract.

Now, it was unwise of Israel to make this contract in the sense that they did not ask counsel of the Lord, as it says in verse 14. But, God works all things together for good. Let me ask you this.

Was it the will of God that the Gibeonites live or that they die? What do you think? Did God want the Gibeonites to live and survive? Did He want this episode recorded in the book of Joshua for all time and eternity? Or did God actually want the Gibeonites to die, but the Gibeonites outwitted God? Which is it? Well, it's not hard to answer that question. This is something that God intended from the beginning. God didn't want the Gibeonites to die, but He used a lie, He used a deception, He used a failure on the part of the Israelite leadership to accomplish His purpose.

This is what it means in Romans 8.28 when it says, All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. God can work bad things together for good. We always think about Joseph and his brothers selling him into slavery, and he ultimately becomes their deliverer.

There are hosts of examples where David, being hounded by Saul, looks like a terrible curse, and yet what David learns during his time at the cave of Adullam and his wanderings and his living out among the people is essential and invaluable to him when he becomes king. In the same way, we look at things in our lives and we say, How could God let this happen to me? Why this? Why that? Woe is me. Back up a little bit.

Think about it. Pick the worst thing you can think of in your life, the thing that's the most regrettable, the thing that's the greatest hardship, the thing you wish you could change. If you had three wishes, genie pops out of the lamp, this is number one on your list.

Well, first of all, X. Whatever that is. Let me ask you something. Did God know about that before you did? Did God see it coming before you were ever born? Did God permit it? Did God not stand in the way of it? Doesn't matter how it got here, result of a failure, result of a mistake, yours or somebody else's, doesn't matter.

That thing exists and it's in your life. Did God see it coming or not? Could God have prevented it or not? The answer to all those questions is yes. God saw it, God knew about it, God could have prevented it and God did not.

Why? It is something that He is going to work together for good. Always. There is nothing that God cannot work together for good.

To say that there is something is to say that God is not God. God is not all-powerful, He's not omnipotent, He's not omniscient, He's not able to cope with certain things. He just throws up a hand and says, Well, I didn't know you were going to do that.

I mean, come on. The only thing that limits God is our decisions, our attitudes, our lack of faith. Remember when Jesus went to certain cities and He could do no great work there? Why? Was Jesus' power suddenly diminished? Did He get too close to the kryptonite and the rock or something? Why could Jesus not do miracles in some places? Why could He not do miracles in other places? Lack of faith.

God is not going to bless, He is not going to work things together for good for those who do not respond to the call, do not pursue the plan and purpose, do not walk the straight road, don't strive to enter by the narrow gate. Why should He? That's part of the discipline. God is going to withdraw that blessing and that fulfillment.

Well, these Gibeonites read the message on the rock. They saw that they were under condemnation and they came down and they got themselves in. We have got to get a promise from these people that they won't kill us.

By hook or by crook. And what is this based on? There are mighty men in Gibeon. They are stronger than the people in Ai.

They are stronger than the people in Jericho. They are one of the pillars, one of the

centers of power in the whole middle of the land there. What are they convinced of? What are they sure of? The God of Israel is God indeed.

We don't stand a chance against Him. We can't beat Him, we have got to join Him. That's their motivation.

They believe. Just like Rahab believed. Just like the mixed multitude that came out from Egypt with Israel believed.

They believe and God honors their belief. And He allows their deception to work. A voice could have come out of heaven as Joshua was standing there looking at the moldy bread saying, They are not from far away.

Look over at the second ridge. It's only 18 miles. It didn't say that.

The man with the sword could have come up. Joshua, remember me? Watch out. A priest could have walked up.

Urim and Thummim could have dropped out of his vestments. Look, God is telling us something. It didn't happen.

So, what is the application? They have a covenant of life. You and I have a covenant of life. What is this going to mean for the Gibeonites? Well, it happened at the end of three days after they made a covenant with them.

They heard they were their neighbors. Children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now, there's some question here about the Gibeonites coming and then after three days they heard.

And then, is it another three days that it takes them to get to their city or not? How long does it take? Well, from Gilgal where the Israelites are encamped to Gibeon is 18 miles. These great old parties that went all around in the land we now call Israel back in the 1800s when it was largely unchanged used to get packed mules and things and they would try to follow these paths and make these journeys and time them and see how long it took and try to find the ancient sites. And there's a fellow who went and made this journey and found that he could do it by pushing hard with mules in 10 to 12 hours from Gilgal to Gibeon.

10 to 12 hours. So, when it says they journeyed and came to their cities on the third day, I suspect that perhaps early in the morning on the third day after they had made the covenant they found out. It's not clear.

It could also be that they found out on the third day and it took them three more days to get there. But here's my question for you. If it was after three days, there must have been a Sabbath somewhere in that first three, right? Because they wouldn't be

journeying on the Sabbath.

Or if there was a Sabbath, maybe that explains why it took three days to cover 18 miles. It doesn't really matter. We have two mentions here of the third day though.

And what does the third day always remind us of? How many different times? What does the third day remind us of? Renewal. New life. Jesus rose early in the morning on the third day, right? Jonah came out of the great fish on the third day.

It's a fresh start. It's a new chance. It's life after seeming death, right? So, they heard they were neighbors after three days.

They came to their cities on the third day. Either one of these occasions could have been a time when the Gibeonites died. But they didn't.

Israel honored their covenant when they found out these people had deceived them. They honored their covenant when they came to their cities. Both of these things are said to occur on the third day.

It doesn't matter if it's the same day or two separate third days. The point is, when they should have died, they didn't. When the jig is up now, they didn't die.

The children of Israel did not attack them because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel. And all the congregation complained against the rulers. How many times has this happened? How many times have you had people complaining and grouching about a decision? Oh, this is a terrible decision.

All the congregation complained against the rulers. I can't believe you made this rash promise. What were you thinking? Didn't you know that the Gibeonites didn't have weapons of mass destruction? And on and on and on.

All the rulers said, We have sworn we may not touch them. We will let them live lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them. Let them live, verse 21, but let them be hewers of wood and haulers of water for all the congregation as the rulers had promised them.

Joshua called for them, spoke to them, saying, Why have you deceived us, saying we are very far from you when you dwell near us? Now, therefore, you are cursed, and none of you shall be free from being slaves. Now, what does it mean, you are cursed? We tend to think, well, a curse, this is some awful evil cloud of benighted awfulness that just follows you around from now on. A better rendering of this would be, you are penalized.

You are penalized. You can go back to Genesis 9.25 after the viewing of Noah's nakedness and Ham went in and did something he should not have done, and when Noah found out about it, he said, Cursed be Canaan the fourth son of Ham, a servant of

servants, he shall be to his brethren. The penalty for Ham's sin is that Canaan will be a servant to his brethren.

Now, what kind of people are the Gibeonites? Canaanites, right? What did Noah say back in Genesis 9? Canaan will be a servant to his brethren. You are cursed, none of you shall be freed from being slaves, Joshua says in verse 23. Woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.

This is not abject whip, slash, beat, bruise, abuse, slavery. This is honorable service. But it is hard labor.

Woodcutters, water haulers. You know how heavy water is? You used to know that back in physics. What is it? A gallon of water weighs some amazing amount of pounds.

It's like 7 or 8 pounds for a single gallon of water. You remember how big the bronze basin is that they made for the tabernacle and so on? This is a lot of water to haul. It's a lot of wood to cut.

How many sacrifices are going on down there? The altar has to be kept burning. These people, there's two ways you can look at it. Well, I'd rather die than haul.

I'm a mighty warrior. I was a big man on campus there. And now I'm reduced to chopping wood and hauling water.

Why? That's women's work. I'm embarrassed and humiliated. Kill me now.

Or, do you say, this God of Israel is God indeed. He could have killed me. He could have prevented us making this covenant, but He didn't.

And now I can engage in service. I can support the worship of this God. I'm in a protected status.

It's all in how you look at it, isn't it? Is it an opportunity or is it a curse? What's the famous thing that God does? What does God do with cursing? God turns cursing to blessing, doesn't He? Who is going to be in a better position to learn about God than people who have a pass? They've got the badge. They've got the barcode. They've got the magic magnetic strip that lets them enter into the precincts of the tabernacle.

What Gentiles have the chance to go in and observe the rituals that God has prescribed for His people? None. It's inside the white curtains. If you're hewing wood and hauling water for the service of the house of God, where are you going to take that wood? Where are you going to haul that water? They have entree.

Granted, they are servants. Granted, it is a humble man who is going to subject himself to this. But, look at the opportunity.

The Gibeonites are the only people outside of the Levites who get to go in and be this close to the things of God. And they're rank Canaanites. God turns cursing to blessing.

But you've got to have the attitude to receive it. You've got to look at your glasses half full and not half empty or worse. So they answered Joshua.

And they said, Because you're servants. Now look at the attitude that the Gibeonites have. Do they get up on a huff and say, We didn't come down here and contract a covenant so that we could be your slaves.

Do I look like a slave to you? Look at my armor. Look at the silhouettes painted on my fuselage. Look at the mighty valiant exploits that I have accomplished in times past.

Why, I'm renowned. None of that. Look at what they say.

Because your servants were clearly told. Notice. Your servants were clearly told that the Lord your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you.

Now how do they know about Moses? How do they know Moses' name? How do they know what God commanded him? It's all written on the rocks up there on Mount Ebal, isn't it? That's where Moses' name is. That's where the commandments of God are. And they were clearly told.

And they listened and they responded. Therefore, we were very much afraid for our lives because of you and we have done this thing. And now, here we are.

We are in your hands. Do with us as it seems good and right to do to us. Notice carefully the wording.

These Gibeonites are no slouches when it comes to thinking and speaking. What do they say? Do what seems good and right to you. Are there provisions in the law for the stranger and the sojourner among you to look out for them, to do what is good and do what is right for them? They are still applying the Word of God which they read on the rock.

And they're saying, do what seems good and do what seems right to you. And good and right is defined in the law that your God gave you and it talks about looking out for us and extending your protection and your provision over us. So he, Joshua, did to them.

And he delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel so that they did not kill them. Notice, you have Joshua and you have the elders and leaders who made this covenant. And then you've got all the rest of the people and it's almost a mob scene.

The people want to strangle these guys, want to stone them, want to obliterate them because of the deception. Their blood is up. They've wiped out the people in Jericho.

They've wiped out the people in Ai and so forth. And now they want to take care of the Gibeonites. And Joshua has to preserve the Gibeonites from his own people.

Well, this is provision. This is blessing. It is cursing turned to blessing.

That day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord in the place which he would choose even unto this day. And at the time that this account was set down, the Gibeonites were still serving in this capacity and would for many generations to come. So again, the application for us, you can look at it and say, well, this slavery thing stinks.

Or you can say it's a wonderful thing to not only be alive but to be serving the God who graciously gave me back my life when I was under sentence of death. It's the same decision we make day by day. What do we think? How do we view God's grace? Chapter 10.

Now it came to pass when Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it. That utterly destroyed it there, that's our old friend Charim. He Charimized it.

As he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king. And how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them. They have been embraced.

They have been enfolded. They have been taken in to the congregation of Israel. They feared greatly.

Now, as an English major, subject-verb agreement is one of my sort of pet peeves. Who's the subject here? Who heard how Joshua had taken? Adonai Zedek. He's a singular guy, right? But then it says, they feared greatly.

Who's they? Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had taken Ai. They feared greatly because Gibeon was a great city. Therefore, Adonai Zedek sent to these other kings in verse 3. This is a feature of Hebrew literature.

And it's not well known. And people who like to play games with trying to be literal and trying to push weird meanings in and out of scripture, this is an anticipation. The they in verse 2 anticipates the kings that are about to be mentioned.

They feared greatly. That is, these kings to whom Adonai Zedek is going to send. Those kings are already in the mind of the writer.

When he's talking about how Adonai Zedek heard this, he's the initiator. Everybody's afraid. All of these kings are afraid.

And they feared greatly because Gibeon, nobody thought Gibeon would fall. Well, Ai is

not that big. And they got fooled.

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. And then when Gibeon, Gibeon is a big power center.

They've got mighty warriors. They were renowned throughout the region. They said, my goodness, Gibeon didn't want to fight Israel.

They caved. Everybody is afraid. Plus, the armory, the weapons, now that the Gibeonites are allied, suddenly who they thought was going to be fighting for them is going to be fighting against them.

The next time Israel goes into battle, there's likely to be Gibeonites swinging swords right beside the Israelites. So, not good. They feared greatly.

Gibeon was a great city like one of the royal cities. And because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty. Therefore, Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem.

By the way, when it says king of Jerusalem, this is an interesting feature of the narrative because it tells us that there has been an editing process that has taken place on the text. The town is not known as Jerusalem at this time. We know this from other scriptures.

The town was originally called Salem in the time of Abraham, Genesis 14, when Melchizedek was there. It was also called Jebus, even down into the time of the judges, which follows Joshua's day, down in Judges chapter 19, verses 10 and 11. And the man with the concubine, remember that whole story in Judges 19, the concubine eventually gets all chopped up, it's kind of hard to forget.

Well, when the man is traveling and the concubine is still alive, he was not willing to spend the night, so he rose and departed and came opposite Jebus, parentheses, that is Jerusalem, with him were the two saddle donkeys, his concubine was also with him. Still known as Jebus down in the time of the judges. First Chronicles chapter 11.

Chronicles, clear down now, recording the history of David and so on. David and all Israel, First Chronicles 11.4, David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus, where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. It's also called the city of the Jebusites, in Judges 19.11, the first after the one I read.

Later on in Joshua, Joshua chapter 18, when he's describing the borders, it is called Jebusi. Also in 2 Samuel 5.8, David, when he's going to attack and claim the city, it is still the city of the Jebusites. That's the whole thing, the blind and the lame, we've covered that in our study of 2 Samuel.

This land where Jerusalem will eventually be sited by David, was originally allotted to the

tribe of Benjamin. If you look at the borders given in Joshua 18, it's actually in the territory belonging to Benjamin. Benjamin, son of my right hand.

It's significant that it's in the territory of Benjamin. Son of my right hand. And that is significant.

What does Jacob do when he blesses the sons of Joseph? He crosses his hands, there's a lot going on here. But, it was right on the border of Judah, and Benjamin didn't do anything with it, and it's a big stronghold of the Jebusites, so the Judahites went and attacked it. And in Judges 1.8, right after Joshua dies, the men of Judah say, we can't have this big festering sore right on our border, we've got to go do something about it.

So they went, and they fought against it, and they took it. They struck it with the edge of the sword, and they set the city on fire. However, they couldn't hang on to it.

It's one of these things, it's kind of poignant, if you go back to sites of great battles, where it was a terrific bone of contention, and people bled and died to defend a hill, and now, there's nothing going on there. And you think it was important at the time, but it has reverted back. You look at Gettysburg, I got this feeling when I went down the Bataan Peninsula to Corregidor.

Fierce, vicious, bloody defense put up. Thousands of men captured and marched up the peninsula, and now you go there, and it's overgrown, and it's disused, and there's rusty, bent guns pointed every which way, and the Malenta Tunnel, where MacArthur and all those people stayed, is dark and unlit, and there's just trash and stuff blowing around in there, and it's the base theater that used to be full of men before the Japanese came down, and it was a thriving base. There's trees growing up through where the screen was, and the ticket booth is there, and you go down, and there's still these folding seats, it's just spooky.

The barracks is there, there's still light switches, and lime green paint, and everything you would expect from a military barracks, and it's disused, it's overgrown, it's being reclaimed by the jungle. And you think, this at one time was such a point of contention. Well, the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it, but they couldn't hold it, and it's going to go back to the Jebusites.

They're going to reclaim it. And so it was a temporary victory. Later on, and of course it tells us this back in Judges chapter 15, and in Judges 19.

1912, for example, when the fellow is traveling, he says, We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners who are not of the children of Israel. We will go on to Gibeah. We can't turn in at Jebus or Jerusalem, because it's back in the hands of the foreigners.

So it was a fortification of the Jebusites all the way down until 2 Samuel 5, when David conquered it. That was the time when it finally became an Israelite possession. 400

years after Joshua originally assigned it to Benjamin, and it's on the border of Judah.

It takes him four centuries before it finally becomes an Israelite city on a permanent basis. Well, I say permanent. Permanent until 586.

So, this is the king. Adonizedek is, of course, a title. It's not the man's actual name.

As much as Melchizedek was not the name, but the title of the ruler of that city back in Abram's day. They're basically synonymous. Melech or Melchi means king.

Adon or Adoni means lord. Lord and king are virtually synonymous back during this time. But obviously in the 400 odd years since Abram's day, the terminology had changed, and he's not called Melchizedek anymore.

So he goes and sends to these other kings. Hoham, king of Hebron. Now, Hebron is also not known as Hebron at this time.

It is originally the town of Arba. Arba, A-R-B-A. And if you look at the consonants, you can see how R-B is at the heart of Arba and Hebron.

But it was originally Kiriath Arba. Kiriath simply means city or city of. The city of Arba, according to Joshua 14.15, the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath Arba.

Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. Arba was actually one of the sons of Anak. Who are the sons of Anak? Giants.

The Anakim, this is where you get your giants. Hebron or Kiriath Arba was 22 miles south of Jerusalem. 22 Roman miles south of Jerusalem.

It's in a deep, narrow valley in the mountains of Judah. It is a very, very old town. It was encountered when the Israelites were wandering at Numbers 13.22. It talks about the spies who came up originally into the land.

They went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehov, near the entrance of Hamath. And they went up through the south and came to Hebron. Ahimon, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there.

Remember what the spies came back and told Israel? We're little old grasshoppers. They're big. Look at these grapes.

We can't take the land. Now, who's afraid? Who's afraid now? Hoham, king of Hebron. This is Hoham, the king of Kiriath Arba, the dwelling place of the Anakim.

Only 40 years before, this is what cowed the Israelites from coming into the land. Piram, king of Yarmuth. Yarmuth is in the lowlands of Judah.

We know this from Joshua 15. And also it's mentioned in Nehemiah 11.29. It was termed

a hamlet by the Romans. It was situated on a lofty hill.

There are still some archaeological remains there of walls and cisterns. It's called Tel Armuth by the Arabs. Lachish, Japhia, king of Lachish.

If you want to get an idea of where these places are, please take a look at the handout that I gave you earlier. And you can see, particularly on the lower of those two diagrams, if you're watching remotely, this handout is in the folder of handouts under the Joshua thing on the FTP site. But if you look there, that lower map is situated where north is to your upper left and south is to the lower right.

And you can see in the lower right of the map there, and to the right center, Hebron, Lachish, and so forth. All of these are in the south. All of these are the southern kings.

Why is it only the southern kings to whom Adonai Zedek sends his message? Why is that? Because the strategic wedge has been driven into the land by the victories at Jericho and Ai. So that's all he can talk to. He can't get to any of the people up north.

And so the land has been divided. There's going to be a southern campaign first, then a northern campaign. And divide and conquer is the idea here.

Of course, you can also see these cities up on the map above. And you'll notice that there is some doubt about Eglon in particular. The upper map shows it west and a little south of Lachish.

The lower map shows Eglon sort of further south. Archeologists have not been able to figure out where all these places are. But here's the point.

These kings are going to confederate. How many of them are there? Adonai Zedek, Hoham, Piram, Japhia, and Debir. We like to note these little symmetries in the Word of God.

Abram used to be in this area. Abram met Melchizedek. Now the Israelites, his descendants, are meeting Adonai Zedek.

How many kings were confederated and Abram had to go fight them when Lach got captured? How many? There were five, right? Remember the five kings? Five-king confederation that came down and attacked Sodom and Gomorrah. Then Abram took his servants and went and attacked them. Shades of the past here.

They once again faced five kings. Only this time, Adonai Zedek is leader of the opposition instead of greeting them upon their successful victory. So he says to them, he says, Come up, help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, king of Hebron, king of

Yarmouth, king of Lachish, king of Eglon, gathered together and went up. They and all their armies encamped before Gibeon and made war against it. Now, this attack is a threat directly against this new ally of Israel.

It would have been easy for the Israelites to say, Well, we didn't know that we were going to be getting into a battle over you all and instigate an attack. But instead, they respond. The men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, Do not forsake your servants.

Of course, there is quite a lot of pregnant meaning in that. They truly are their servants. Come up to us quickly.

Save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us. They can immediately call upon Israel for help. This is a firm, binding covenant.

Notice, by the way, the men of Gibeon are still living in Gibeon. They haven't abandoned their city. The Israelites have not occupied it and driven them out and made them live in the slums or something.

They're still in their city. Come up to us quickly. Save us and help us, all the kings of the Amorites.

So Joshua ascended from Gilgal. He and all the people of war are with him, all the mighty men of valor. The Lord said to Joshua, Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand.

Not a man of them shall stand before you. Not a man of them shall stand before you. The Gibeonites had faith in the word of God, put their trust in the word of God, that covenants would be binding, that the destruction was certain and that they had to get into that covenant.

Joshua is equally certain that the word of God is valid. When God says not to be afraid, I have delivered them into your hand, Joshua takes him at his word. He says, well, let's go get them.

So they're going to do an all-night forced march, 18 miles, in the dark. They catch these confederated armies by surprise, and the Lord routes their armies before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Bethhoron, and struck them down as far as Ezekiah and Makeda. Well, we're going to get the overview of this battle, which is what we just got.

We're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back, the narrator is going to give us some more detail on exactly how this route was accomplished. And why this battle turns out to be such a success.

We're going to see some real interesting artillery and fire support given by God in connection with this battle. But let's pause here and take our break.