

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Joshua 9

(Josh 9), “And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof; {2} That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord. {3} And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, {4} They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; {5} And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. {6} And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us. {7} And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you? {8} And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye? {9} And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt, {10} And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth. {11} Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us. {12} This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: {13} And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey. {14} And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD. {15} And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them. {16} And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them. {17} And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjathjearim. {18} And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes. {19} But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them. {20} This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. {21} And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be

hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them. {22} And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? {23} Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. {24} And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing. {25} And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. {26} And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. {27} And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose."



ISRAEL HAD LEARNED LESSONS AT EVERY TURN WHILE CONQUERING THE LAND OF CANAAN:

- (1) AT **JERICHO** Israel learned **GOD REWARDS FAITHFULNESS**.
- (2) AT **AI** they discovered that **YESTERDAY'S TRIUMPH OVER MIGHTY JERICHO DOES NOT GUARANTEE TODAY'S VICTORY OVER INSIGNIFICANT AI**.
- (3) AT **MOUNT EBAL** they learned that **WORSHIP OF GOD IS A MATTER OF GREAT PRIORITY**. They had traveled thirty miles through hostile territory to worship.
- (4) In today's text **ISRAEL LEARNED YET ANOTHER LESSON FROM THE GIBEONITES**.

GIBEON was the name of **A CITY** located **six miles** northwest of Jerusalem. Gibeon was known as "**AN IMPORTANT CITY**" (10:2). The name **GIBEON** meant "**HILL CITY**." As the crow flies, it was found only **sixteen miles** from Israel's chief military camp at **Gilgal**.

ALL THAT TO SAY that **GIBEON** was found **within the borders** of the land of Canaan. God referred to the Gibeonites in Scripture before Israel ever entered the promised land. They were called the **HIVITES**.

(Exo 3:17), "And I have said, **I WILL BRING YOU UP** out of

the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the **Canaanites**, and the **Hittites**, and the **Amorites**, and the **Perizzites**, and the **HIVITES**, and the **Jebusites**, unto a land flowing with milk and honey."

(Exo 23:23), "FOR MINE ANGEL shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the **Amorites**, and the **Hittites**, and the **Perizzites**, and the **Canaanites**, the **HIVITES**, and the **Jebusites**: and I WILL CUT THEM OFF." (Exo 3:8; Exo 3:17; Exo 13:5; Deu 7:1; Deu 20:17; Josh 3:10)

GIBEON WAS THE CHIEF CITY of the **HIVITES**. **THE GIBEONITES** were made up of **THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF GIBEON**. The citizens from **THREE** neighboring **TOWNS: Chephirah, Beeroth** and **Kirjath-jearim**, were likely a part of the union.

- S **THOSE CITIZENS** formed **AN ALLIANCE** that approached Joshua and SAID, "LET'S MAKE A DEAL."

- S **THE DEAL** the Gibeonites sealed with Joshua forms **THE HEART** of **JOSHUA 9**. The process that Joshua followed with the Gibeonites is **A GOOD EXAMPLE** of what it means to be **CAUGHT OFF GUARD**.

- S **CONSIDER FOUR TRUTHS** from this chapter:
 - I. **SATAN ALWAYS COMES DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION**
 - II. **NEGLECT OF PRAYER INEVITABLY LEADS TO ERROR**
 - III. **LIKE IT OR NOT, AGREEMENTS ARE TO BE KEPT**
 - IV. **DON'T QUIT JUST BECAUSE YOU FAILED**

I. SATAN ALWAYS COMES DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION (VV. 3-13)

(2 Cor 2:11), "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his **DEVICES**."

(Eph 6:11), "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the **WILES** of the devil."

A **COMMON FACTOR** BETWEEN **WILES** and **DEVICES** IS BOTH ARE **PLURAL**. Satan has many **schemes, tricks, strategies, tactics** and **methods** by which he seeks the downfall of God's people.

JOSHUA 9 PRESENTS TWO OF SATAN'S STRATEGIES:

**#1. ONE OF SATAN'S STRATEGIES IS TO ATTACK
LIKE A ROARING LION**

(1 Pet 5:8), "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil,
AS A ROARING LION, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

- S IN THE BEGINNING TWO VERSES OF JOSHUA 9**, Satan comes against Israel like a **ROARING LION**. **FIVE KINGS** in Canaan formed a **MILITARY ALLIANCE** to defeat **GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL**.

THEY ARE AN EXAMPLE OF **PSALM 2**

(Psa 2:2-3), "The **KINGS** of the earth set themselves, and the **RULERS** take counsel together, **AGAINST THE LORD**, and against his anointed, saying, {3} Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

- S THAT MILITARY ALLIANCE** had **EVERY INTENTION** of destroying God's plans for Israel. Those kings could not have cared less whether God wanted Israel in the land or not. They did not want Israel in the land and that settled it for them.
- S WHAT THEY SHOULD HAVE DONE** was **BOWED** before the God of creation and **ASKED** God to reveal His will. That is what **RAHAB** had done in chapter 2. **I am convinced** God would have spared everyone in the land of Canaan had they simply humbled themselves before God. That was not something they had any intention of ever doing.

#1. SOMETIMES SATAN COMES LIKE A ROARING LION

**#2. ANOTHER OF SATAN'S STRATEGIES IS TO COME
DISGUISED LIKE AN ANGEL OF LIGHT**

(2 Cor 11:14), "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into **AN ANGEL** of light."

(Mat 7:15), "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in **SHEEP'S CLOTHING**, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

- S DECEPTION WAS SATAN'S METHOD OF CHOICE IN JOSHUA 9**. The Gibeonites came **PRETENDING** to be someone other than whom they were. Wearing their disguises and dressed for the occasion, they **MADE A DEAL WITH JOSHUA**. Israel and the Gibeonites made a treaty.

S **GOD HAD NOT ARRANGED FOR TREATIES** with people living within the land of Canaan. **GOD HAD SAID OF THE HIVITES:**

- **(Exo 23:23-24)**, “. . . I will **CUT THEM OFF**. {24}. . . thou shalt **UTTERLY OVERTHROW THEM**, . . . ”
- **(Exo 23:31-33 NIV)**, “I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert to the River. **I WILL HAND OVER TO YOU** the people who live in the land and you will **DRIVE THEM OUT** before you. {32} **DO NOT MAKE A COVENANT WITH THEM** or with their gods. {33} Do not let them live in your land, or they will **CAUSE YOU TO SIN** against me, because the worship of their gods will certainly be **A SNARE** to you.” (He restated that in Exodus 34:12 NIV, “**BE CAREFUL NOT TO MAKE A TREATY** with those who live in the land where you are going, or **THEY WILL BE A SNARE AMONG YOU**.”)

THE REASON THEY WERE TO BE REMOVED:

- **(Deu 9:4 NIV)**, “. . . It is on account of **THE WICKEDNESS** OF THESE NATIONS that the LORD is going to drive them out before you.”
- **ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES** have revealed the **perverse** and **immoral** practices that existed among the inhabitants of Canaan (e.g., the **Ras Shamra Tablets**).

GOD HAD SAID TO ABRAHAM

(Gen 15:16), “But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for **THE INIQUITY** of the Amorites is **NOT YET FULL**.”

GOD HAD NOT MADE PROVISION FOR TREATIES with people living within in the land of Canaan.

S **GOD HAD ARRANGED FOR TREATIES** related to people living outside the land of Canaan.

(Deu 20:10-11 NIV), “When you march up to attack a city, make its people an **OFFER** of **PEACE**. {11} **IF THEY ACCEPT** and open their gates, all the people in it shall be **SUBJECT TO FORCED LABOR** and shall work for you.”

S **SOMEHOW THE GIBEONITES KNEW** about that **PROVISION** in

O.T. *LAW*. **SPECULATION** LEADS ONE TO THINK infiltrators might have heard the law when read publicly at mount Ebal (chap 8). The Gibeonites might have read **THE STONE** inscribed with the *law* that was left standing in the valley near Shechem.

HAVING BEEN MADE AWARE of the **PROVISION** in the *law* for nations outside the land of Canaan, **THE ELDERS** of Gibeon met together in counsel. Through counsel they **DECIDED NOT TO FIGHT** a battle they knew they would never win. They devised A PLAN FOR THEIR SURVIVAL. Their plan was to **JOIN WITH ISRAEL** rather than fight against her.

THEIR PLAN FOR SURVIVAL **DIFFERED GREATLY** from that of **RAHAB** in Joshua 6. **RAHAB REPENTED** of her sins and became a believer in the Lord God. God would have saved all of Canaan had they come the way of Rahab. The Gibeonites' plan did **NOT INVOLVE** confessing belief in God, it involved **LIES** and **DECEIT** (VV. 3-13).

- **THEY PRETENDED** to be a **DELEGATION** from A FAR AWAY LAND outside Canaan proper.
- They loaded their **donkeys** down with **worn-out SACKS** and **old WINESKINS**, cracked and mended.
- They put on worn out **SANDALS** and wore **OLD CLOTHES**.
- They loaded down with old and moldy **BREAD** to suggest an extended passage of time.

- **THEY MET WITH JOSHUA** at **GILGAL** only **16 miles** from GIBEON and **PRETENDED** to be people from a far away land. HERE IS THEIR WORDING:

(V. 6 NIV), “. . . ‘We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us.’”

(V. 13 NIV), “. . . Our **clothes** and **sandals** are worn out by the very long journey.’”

IT WAS ALL A BIG LIE! The words they spoke were **NOT TRUE**. Their lies should not have surprised Israel. Satan is a liar (John 8:44). When he lies, he is simply doing what he always does.

GOD HAS REVEALED SATAN'S TACTICS SO THAT we will **not be ignorant** of his devices and **be CAUGHT OFF GUARD**. **HORRIBLE THINGS** can happen to people when they are caught off guard.

S AMERICA WAS CAUGHT OFF GUARD AT **PEARL HARBOR**

early **Sunday** morning, **December 7, 1941**. **JAPANESE WAR PLANES** attacked Pearl Harbor without warning damaging or destroying **19 naval vessels** and some **200 aircraft**. The destruction was so great because we were not prepared for the attack.

- S **IT IS IMPORTANT TO LEARN THE TACTICS OF SATAN SO THAT** we do not get caught off guard. **ONE REASON** many folks get caught off guard is they do not recognize Satan when he is in their midst. They are looking for someone in **red PAJAMAS** with a **pointed tail, horns** and a **pitch fork**. They fail to realize that he comes disguised as an **ANGEL**. Sometimes he is dressed like a **LAMB**. As angelic and as meek as he may appear on the surface, he is **A WOLF** on the inside.

I. **SATAN ALWAYS COMES DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION**

II. NEGLECT OF PRAYER INEVITABLY LEADS TO ERROR

(V. 15-17 NIV), "Then Joshua **MADE A TREATY OF PEACE** with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath. {16} **THREE DAYS AFTER** they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were **NEIGHBORS**, living near them. {17} So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim."

- S **(Prov 12:19)**, "The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment."

- S **THREE DAYS LATER** Joshua made the **GUT-WRENCHING DISCOVERY**. He had made a treaty outside the will of God. **ANYTIME** you make a deal with Satan, you find **"EGG ON YOUR FACE."**

- S **SATAN IS LIKE THE MAN** who lived in a large city where the garbage collectors were on strike. The trash in this man's house was piling up. He thought of a way to get rid of it. He got a big box and dumped some of the stinking trash into it. He closed the lid and wrapped it in red wrapping paper. He put beautiful ribbon around it and topped it off with a pretty bow. He carried it outside and left it sitting on the sidewalk. Thirty minutes had passed when a passing truck slammed on its breaks and pulled over to the **BIG RED BOX**. The driver looked around and saw no one. He jumped out and threw the box in the back of his truck. Can you imagine the expression on

that man's face when he got home and opened that box only to find garbage?

- S **JOSHUA HAD MADE AN ALLIANCE** that God had forbidden. He had **AGREED** to a **TREATY THAT WENT AGAINST** God's command.
- S **HOW** could they have made such a grievous mistake? **WHY** didn't they know? We are not left to speculation, our text tells us why.

(V. 14 NIV), "The men of Israel sampled their provisions but **DID NOT INQUIRE OF THE LORD.**"

- S Israel had already fought against the city of **Ai** without first praying. As a result, they had experienced **humiliating defeat**. Ai had taught them that without prayer, any "Ai" is too big for us! It appears that Joshua had forgotten the lessons from Ai.
- S **PERHAPS** Joshua considered the Gibeonites **TOO ROUTINE** to stop for prayer. **PERHAPS** Joshua felt he had too many **OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS** on his agenda to stop and pray.
- S **THE PROBLEM WITH PRAYERLESSNESS IS IT ALWAYS OPENS THE DOOR TO DEFEAT.**
 - Prayerlessness **WALKS** by **sight** and not by **faith**.
 - **IT USES THE "SCIENTIFIC APPROACH"** rather than **THE "SPIRITUAL APPROACH"** (Warren Wiersbe).
 - **PRAYERLESSNESS** is **ROOTED IN PRIDE** and as a result obstructs spiritual **discernment**.

PETER IS A GOOD EXAMPLE of a spiritual leader who failed to pray because of pride. Remember **PETER'S GETHSEMANE EXPERIENCE?** Peter fell asleep in Gethsemane even after Jesus had clearly told him to pray:

(Mat 26:41), "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

JESUS HAD WARNED PETER in the **UPPER ROOM** that he was going to deny Jesus three times. **PETER FLATLY REJECTED** even the remotest possibility that such an act was possible. Peter exclaimed:

- **(Mat 26:33)**, "... Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended."

- **(Mat 26:35)**, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. . . "

S **ON THE SURFACE, THAT SOUNDED SO SPIRITUAL.** Yet Jesus was **NOT IMPRESSED** because Peter's boast was rooted in the flesh rather than in the Spirit. Jesus told him:

(Mat 26:34 NIV), "'I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "**THIS VERY NIGHT**, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.'"

S **PETER DID WHAT JOSHUA DID — HE FAILED TO PRAY.**

That very night Peter fell **FAST ASLEEP** and had to be **AWAKENED THREE TIMES**. Jesus asked, ". . . 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour?'" (Mat 26:40).

S **PETER MUST HAVE PRESUMED** that he was **SO SPIRITUALLY MATURE** that **HE COULD NEGLECT PRAYER** and **still get along**. Peter **MUST HAVE THOUGHT**, "I won't deny Jesus, I love Him too much."

S **THE BIBLE WARNS**, "Wherefore let him that **THINKETH HE STANDETH** take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12).

S **HOW OFTEN DO WE PRESUME THAT WE CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT PRAYER? IT IS SO EASY** to feel that we **DON'T NEED TO PRAY**. We think we do not need **A DAILY TIME** alone with God. **WE THINK:**

- 1). I'll **never deny** Jesus like **PETER** (not me!)
- 2). I'll **never desert** Jesus like **DEMAS**
- 3). I'll **never murder** like **DAVID** (a man after God's own heart)
- 4). I'll **never get angry** like **MOSES**
- 5). I'll **never make a DEAL** like **JOSHUA**

S **THE TRUTH IS** if mighty men like these can fail, then anyone can fail. The Scripture tells us why **JOSHUA** failed:

(V. 14 NIV), "The men of Israel sampled their provisions **but DID NOT INQUIRE OF THE LORD.**"

S **CAN THAT STATEMENT BE WRITTEN OVER OUR PRAYER LIFE? How was our prayer life THIS PAST WEEK? Have we PRESUMED we CAN HANDLE the GIBEONITES WITHOUT PRAYER?**

S **WHEN WE REPLACE OUR PRAYER** with anything other than prayer, we become **more susceptible** to Satan's deceptive ways. **WHEN WE FAIL TO PRAY, WE OPEN THE DOOR** to **DEFEAT**.

S **JESUS SAID**
(**Luke 18:1**), "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that **MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY, AND NOT TO FAINT;**"

- I. **SATAN ALWAYS COMES DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION**
- II. **NEGLECT OF PRAYER INEVITABLY LEADS TO ERROR**

III. LIKE IT OR NOT, AGREEMENTS ARE TO BE KEPT

AFTER THEY HAD UNCOVERED THE DECEPTION, HERE IS WHAT HAPPENED:

(**V. 18 NIV**), "... **THE ISRAELITES DID NOT ATTACK THEM, ...**"

S **HOW COME? WHY** didn't they attack them? Wasn't God's earlier Word clear regarding what they were suppose to do?

S **OUR TEXT TELLS US WHY THEY DIDN'T ATTACK**

(**V. 18-20 NIV**), "... **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, {19} but all the leaders answered, "**WE HAVE GIVEN THEM OUR OATH BY THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, AND WE CANNOT TOUCH THEM NOW.** {20} This is what we will do to them: We will **LET THEM LIVE, SO THAT WRATH WILL NOT FALL ON US FOR BREAKING THE OATH WE SWORE TO THEM.**"

S You have to **ADMIRE THE INTEGRITY** of those men. They **WERE MEN OF THEIR WORD**. Even when the people **grumbled** against them, they stood true to their promise. In spite of the pressure, they chose to do the right thing.

S **THE SCRIPTURE TEACHES** that **IT IS BETTER NOT TO MAKE AN OATH**, than to make an oath and then break it. Oaths and contracts are binding because **GOD IS A GOD OF TRUTH** and He expects His children to be examples of His truth. When we begin to break our commitments, we **BECOME LIKE SATAN** who is the

great liar. Our agreements are sacred because they involve God.

S **SOMEONE MIGHT ASK, "WHAT IF** the oath was made contrary to God's will? **OUR TEXT** answers that question. **YEARS LATER** something came up related to Joshua's treaty with the Gibeonites. It is **A PERFECT ILLUSTRATION** to show how serious God takes our commitments (2 Sam 21).

S **AFTER THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES, SAUL** was anointed **KING** of Israel. He broke this covenant with the Gibeonites. He spilt their blood. Saul eventually died and was replaced by King David. During the days of David the land was stricken with **A THREE-YEAR FAMINE**. **GOD REVEALED THE REASON** for the famine was that King Saul had broken the treaty with the Gibeonites. Perhaps Israel thought **THE PASSING OF SO MANY YEARS** nullified the treaty. That is not what God thought.

S DOES THAT NOT **SAY SOMETHING** ABOUT OUR COMMITMENTS?

- **FINANCIAL**
- **LABOR**
- **MARRIAGE**
- **ETC.**

S **JOSHUA DID ADD STIPULATIONS** to the treaty with the Gibeonites that were in accord with God's Word (Deut 20:10-11). Joshua said:

- **(V. 21 NIV)**, "... "Let them live, but let them be **WOODCUTTERS** and **WATER CARRIERS** for the entire community."
- **THEY MADE THE GIBEONITES WOODCUTTERS** and **WATER CARRIERS** for the Israelites. They carried their labor out at **THE TABERNACLE WHERE THEY WERE EXPOSED** to the worship of the **ONE TRUE GOD**. (We will say more about this later)

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IV. DON'T QUIT JUST BECAUSE YOU FAILED

S Joshua had **FAILED HORRIBLY**. The mistake he had made must

have **HUMILIATED** him. Not only that, he had failed **TWICE** for the same reason. He had failed to pray concerning both **AI** and the **GIBEONITES**.

S WHAT DID JOSHUA DO? HE KEPT RIGHT ON LEADING just as God had called him to do (VV. 22-27). Even when Israel was so upset with him that they **MURMURED** (v. 18) against him, he refused to quit. It **MIGHT HAVE BEEN EASY** for him to have thrown his arms up and said, "I have had it with you people — I quit!" Joshua was **DETERMINED** that with God's help, his failures would not be final.

S JOSHUA UNDERSTOOD that when **THE DECEIVER DECEIVES**, he is simply doing what he always does. God's Word says Satan is:

- **"YOUR ADVERSARY"** (1 Pet 5:8)
- **"LIAR"**
- **"MURDERER"** (John 8:44)

S JOSHUA WAS NOT GOING TO GIVE SATAN THE PLEASURE of seeing him quit. In fact, Satan's attack against Joshua was proof that Joshua's service to God was so effective that it threatened the kingdom of Satan. Since Satan was taking the time to defeat Joshua, Joshua must have been doing something right.

S WHEN JOSHUA FAILED, HE REFUSED TO QUIT.

CONSIDER FOUR THINGS THAT WILL HELP YOU KEEP ON GOING WHEN YOU FAIL:

#1. REALIZE GOD HAS OFFERED FORGIVENESS FOR OUR SIN

S Remember the ALTAR OF BURNT SACRIFICE ON MOUNT EBAL? (Jos 8:30). That altar spoke of God's way to cleanse our sins from the mountain of cursing. Not only that, it was followed by a **FELLOWSHIP OFFERING**.

S GOD HAS MADE FORGIVENESS AVAILABLE

- **(1 Pet 2:24)**, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
- **(1 John 1:9)**, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and

just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

S Dr. GEORGE SWEETING

"Suppose God were to let us fall but would not lift us up. Suppose we were able to wander far away but could not return. Suppose we were able to sin but could not repent. If that were true, we would have no hope. We would forever be enslaved to sin. The message of repentance makes the Bible a book of hope and gladness" (MOODY MONTHLY MAGAZINE titled *REPENT, AND DO IT DAILY* pg. 35, January 1983).

#1. REALIZE GOD HAS OFFERED **FORGIVENESS** FOR OUR SIN

#2. KEEP LISTENING TO AND OBEYING GOD'S COMMANDS

S LISTEN TO GOD'S COMMANDS to Joshua when he was **COMMISSIONED** to lead Israel (Jos 1):

(1) **3X's** Joshua was told to "**BE STRONG**" (VV 6, 7, 9)

(2) **3X's** Joshua was told to "**BE COURAGEOUS**" (VV 6, 7, 9)

S WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE God went to so much trouble to emphasize those two words in advance? God knew **TIMES OF WEAKNESS** would come, therefore He told him to be strong. God knew **TIMES OF FEAR** would come, therefore He told him to be courageous.

S WHEN YOU ARE WEAK AND AFRAID and you don't know what to do, **KEEP ON** doing whatever it is God told you to do. If He tells you something new to do, then do that. But whatever you do, **DO NOT QUIT!**

#1. REALIZE GOD HAS OFFERED **FORGIVENESS** FOR OUR SIN

#2. KEEP **LISTENING TO AND OBEYING** GOD'S COMMANDS

#3. REMEMBER THAT GOD'S PROMISE STILL APPLIES
(Josh 1:5), "... I WILL BE WITH THEE: I WILL NOT FAIL THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE."

S JUST SUPPOSE God had broken His promise to Joshua because Joshua had failed? Then God would have been **UNTRUTHFUL**. We know that God is not untruthful.

S **GOD HAS MADE PROMISES TO YOU, AND GOD WILL NEVER BREAK HIS PROMISES:**

- **(Heb 13:5)**, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, **I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE.**"
- **(Phil 1:6)**, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

S IF YOU HAVE FAILED, **APPLY** those verses to your life.

- #1. REALIZE GOD HAS OFFERED **FORGIVENESS** FOR OUR SIN
- #2. KEEP **LISTENING TO AND OBEYING** GOD'S COMMANDS
- #3. REMEMBER THAT GOD'S **PROMISE** STILL APPLIES

#4. REMEMBER THAT GOD HAS THE ABILITY TO BRING GOOD OUT OF A BAD SITUATION

(Rom 8:28-29), "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. {29} For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

S **THE GIBEONITES ARE A WONDERFUL EXAMPLE OF ROMANS 8:28. They put those schemers TO WORK** carrying water and wood for the services at the tabernacle. At some point **MANY OF THEM** placed their faith in God.

S **THE EVIDENCE** suggests this to be the case. **MANY YEARS LATER** the Gibeonites were called the **NETHINIM**. The **NETHINIM** were servants in the temple (1 Chron. 9:2; Ezra 2:43, 58; Neh. 3:26). When **THE CAPTIVES** began to return from Babylonian captivity, there were **OVER 500 HUNDRED NEPHILIM** who made the journey to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:43-58; 8:20).

S **SOME GIBEONITES** helped **NEHEMIAH** rebuild Jerusalem's wall:

(Neh 3:7), "And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this side the

river."

S GOD TURNED THE CURSE INTO A BLESSING. That is the **WONDER OF GOD'S AMAZING GRACE.** GOD TOOK JOSHUA'S MISTAKE and made **SOMETHING GOOD OUT OF IT.** NEITHER JOSHUA, NOR ISRAEL, had to live the rest of their lives on mount **EBAL**, the mountain of the curse. God showed them how to get to mount Gerizim.

S SONG

"Something beautiful, something good.
All my confusion, He understood.
All I had to offer Him was brokenness and strife,
And He made something beautiful of my life."

SOMETHING ELSE

S THE TABERNACLE was eventually pitched at **GIBEON** (2 Chron. 1:3) and remained there until the building of the Temple (1 Kin. 3:4-5; 1 Chr. 16:39; 2 Chr. 1:3,13).

S Gibeon was the place where **SOLOMON** had his **FAMOUS DREAM** (1 Kin 3:4; 9:2).

S FROM JER. 41:16 it seems that **GIBEON BECAME THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT** after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

- I. SATAN ALWAYS COMES DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION**
- II. NEGLECT OF PRAYER INEVITABLY LEADS TO ERROR**
- III. LIKE IT OR NOT, AGREEMENTS ARE TO BE KEPT**
- IV. DON'T QUIT JUST BECAUSE YOU FAILED**

YOU MAY HAVE FAILED. DON'T GIVE UP ON GOD. He is not finished with you yet. **THE WAY TO TELL** that God is finished with you on earth is when you wake up in heaven.

IF YOU HAVE FAILED, REPENT, CONFESS AND GET BACK TO SERVING GOD!