

Joshua - Gibeon: Spiritual Warfare

by Stephen Kaung

The story of Gibeon teaches us the importance of spiritual discernment and the need to bring everything to God in prayer to avoid being deceived.

Duration: 52:47

Scripture: Joshua 9:1-4, Joshua 9:15-21, Joshua 9:23, Joshua 9:27

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of the children of Israel being deceived by the Gibeonites. The enemy sometimes tries to hinder our relationship with Christ by building strongholds in our minds, such as prejudice and pride. The preacher emphasizes the need to recognize the disciplinary hand of the Lord and submit ourselves to His guidance. He also warns against trying to right a wrong with another wrong, as it only makes the situation worse. The sermon concludes by mentioning the reign of David and how Saul's jealousy led to the killing of the Gibeonites.

Transcript

May you please turn to the book of Joshua chapter 9. Joshua chapter 9. We'll read from the first verse.

And it came to pass when all the kings who were on this side the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland and along all the coast of the great sea as far as opposite to Lebanon the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hittite and the Jebusite heard of it that they assembled together to fight with Joshua and with Israel with one accord.

And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai then they also acted with craft and they went prepared as on a journey and took all sacks upon their asses and wine flasks old and rent and tied up and old and patched sandals upon their feet and old garments upon them and all the bread of their provision was dry and moldy and they went to Joshua and to the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the man of Israel from a far country are we come and now make a covenant with us and a man of Israel said to the Hittite perhaps I dwelleth in the midst of us and how should I make a covenant with thee and they say unto Joshua we are thy servants and Joshua said to them who are ye and from whence come ye and they say to him from a very far country are thy servants

come because of the name of Jehovah thy God for we have heard the fame of him and all that he did in Egypt and all that he did to the two kings of the Emirates that were beyond Jordan to Sihon the king of

Heshbon and to all the king of Bashan who was at Ashteroth and our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us saying take victuals in your hand for the way and go to meet them and say to them we are your servants and now make a covenant with us this our bread we took warm for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you and now behold it is dry and it's become moldy and these flasks of wine which we feel new behold they are rent and these our garments and our sandals are become old by reason of the very long journey and the man took of their

victuals but they did not inquire at the mouth of Jehovah and Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live and the princes of the assembly swore unto them and it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them that they heard that they were their neighbors and that they dwelt in their midst verse 22 and Joshua called for them and he spoke to them saying why have he deceived us saying we are very far from you where is he dwell in our midst and now you are cursed and you shall never cease to be born man and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God and they answered Joshua and said behold because it was certainly told by servants how that Jehovah thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land and to

destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you and we fear greatly for our lives because of you and did this thing and now behold we are in thy hand as it is good and right in thine eyes to do to us do and he did so to them and deliver them out of the hand of the children of Israel and they did not slay them and Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the assembly and for the altar of Jehovah to this day in the place which he should choose let's have a word of prayer our father we do ask thee to bless thy word that it may become life and spirit to us we ask thee Lord whatever lesson thou does desire us to learn that we may learn it with humbleness of heart we ask in thy precious name amen lately we have been fellowshiping on the book of Joshua it is a

book which is centered upon the one great thing that is possessing our possession God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham and now the children of Israel under the leadership of Joshua cross over the Jordan to possess the possession that God have long promised to them but of course we notice that in order to possess their possession they had to destroy the enemies who occupied the land the seven nations of Canaan therefore you find they were immediately involved in warfare and we have already the fellowship on the first stage of the war that is the war against Jericho and the war against Ai and after these two cities were taken then the children of Israel came to a temporary rest and after that you'll find the war will be continued now of course we fellowship on the book of Joshua not just

because we are interested in past history we fellowship on it because it has its application to us today in other words today we are in the process of possessing our possession God has given his son our Lord Jesus to us as our possession we are in Christ by God we are in Christ and all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily and we are to possess our possession this is God's will for us not just that we are saved we know him as our Savior but we are to possess our possession fully all the riches of Christ belong to us and it is God's purpose God's will that we should enter into all the riches of Christ and enjoy them for the glory of God but in possessing Christ we are also faced with a very formidable enemy and that is Satan and his evil forces in the heavenlies that's the

reason why you find in Ephesians in chapter 1 God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus and then you find in chapter 6 we are to fight against principalities and authorities power of darkness evil spirit of the air in the heavenlies because there the enemy try to withstand to block to hinder us from fully possess Christ so in the possessing of Christ there is spiritual

conflict involved but as we have mentioned again and again that the battle is the Lord's there is nothing for us to be afraid of because he that is in us is greater than he that is in the world that is to say Christ is the captain of the army of the Lord and he has already won the victory on Calvary's cross and we are just following in the train of his victory so in the two wars two

battles against Jericho and against Ai we see the vows of the enemy in the case of Jericho you find the enemy hit themselves behind strong walls and these strongholds represent reasonings high things which the enemy try to build in our minds to hinder us from the knowledge of God but thank God through the finished work of Christ every thought shall be led into captivity and to the obedience of Christ now in the case of Ai we find the enemy open the door and came out to fight against the children of Israel it speaks of temptation how the enemy will tempt God's people with the things of the world and unless we are cleared we will not be able to overcome our enemies so in these two instances we find that how through the ark and by the gaveling which represents the energy of the Holy Spirit

how the enemies were defeated now after a short period of rest you find great campaigns were ahead of them why because all the inhabitants of the land they heard what had happened to Jericho and to Ai therefore all the inhabitants of the land the the seven nations the seven tribes of the land of Canaan they all joined together with one accord to fight against the children of Israel and if you read later on you will find actually the battles were divided into two campaigns one campaign against the southern confederacy and the other campaign against the northern confederacy so you find forces were being formed and campaigns were to come but before the campaign against the southern confederacy started something in between happened and that's something we would like to fellowship for this

evening the inhabitants of Gibeon they heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai and they were afraid they heard that God commanded the children of Israel to destroy all the inhabitants of the land and not one was to be spared and they saw what had happened in Jericho and in Ai it happened as God had commanded so they were afraid they knew that they could not fight against the children of Israel because God was with them and no one was able to stand before them therefore they acted with craft they sent messengers to the temple of the children of Israel at Gilgal and these messengers they took old sacks upon their asses and carried wine flasks that were old and rent and tied up and they carried old and patched sandals upon their feet and old garments upon them and bread dried and

molded as if they came from a far far country so they came to the camp and said we came from a far country we want to make a covenant of peace with you and the children of Israel began to ask questions now who are you? where do you come from? maybe you dwell in our midst but instead of answering directly they tried to answer it in a very clever way and said we are your servants we are your servants and Joshua made further inquiry and said now who are you? where do you come from? in other words you find Joshua and the children of Israel were a little bit suspicious and yet you find these people spoke with such sweet sweetness they said well we came from a far country we heard of what God had done in Egypt and to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the river Jordan as if they

had never heard what had happened to Jericho and Ai so our people decided to come and ask for peace and we are willing to be your servants and they showed them all these old rent patched molded things the children of Israel took these things and they were deceived they made a covenant of peace with them but on the third day discovered that they were people who were in their midst but they had already vowed a vow before God to preserve their lives so nothing could be done but to make them hewers of wood and drawers of water now this is the story the enemy sometimes will try to withstand Christ our possessing

Christ by building up strongholds say in our mind prejudice preconceived ideas pride all these things can be built up in our minds so that we are blinded to the truth of Christ and

sometimes the enemy will try to tempt our flesh with the things of the world and if he is successful in that then he is able to block our way to the knowledge of Christ but at other times you will find the enemy will try to deceive us he is a deceiver a deceiver you remember even in the garden of Eden how the serpent came to Eve and talked to Eve as a friend that's where the deception was he came as a friend because he was looking at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil evidently Eve was admiring that tree Eve was longing for the fruit of that tree but she dare not because she knew God said you should not eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for on the day you eat thereof you shall surely die God forbid and she knew it and yet she was there standing before that tree and

admiring that tree so here came the serpent acting as her friend and said does God say you cannot eat any of the fruit of the tree now of course at that time man did not eat meat at that time man's food was fruit God gave the fruit of the tree as food for man but Satan came in such a sly way and said did God say you shouldn't eat any fruit of any tree in other words God was a hard harsh person God he wanted you to die not to live and of course Eve said oh no of course not we can eat all the trees except this one we cannot eat and she said we cannot touch it in other words she accepted some suggestion from the serpent God was a hard bastard so Satan continued and said not so not so God knew that if you eat that fruit your eyes will be open you will be as God that's the reason why God

forbid you to eat that tree because he was jealous of you what a friend you know these sweet words entered into the ears of Eve Satan came as an angel of light he transformed himself into that angel of light and used sweet words to deceive Eve and Eve was deceived one of the most subtle way of our enemy is deception if he should come out in open we will recognize him easily detected but when he transformed himself into that angel of light how easily people are deceived so brothers and sisters do remember that in the strategy of the enemy there is such a thing called deception and deception is always here on the earth from the day in the garden of Eden up to our present time you will find deception is everywhere why because the deceiver is everywhere and when you read 2nd Corinthians you

will find there will be false apostles and Paul said there is nothing strange about it because even Satan can transform himself into that angel of light deception is unavoidable on this earth because the deceiver is on earth but brothers and sisters that doesn't mean we must be deceived it is true that deception is everywhere the deceiver is working but that doesn't mean that we must be deceived the children of Israel were deceived because they did not inquire you find here the children of Israel asked questions Joshua asked questions but after they heard the answers deceiving words instead of bringing the whole matter to God and inquire of the Lord they acted on their own and that's why they were deceived brothers and sisters whenever we have a question whenever there is a suspicion you

know sometimes in our spiritual life sometimes in the things that we are in contact with sometimes you will find within us there is a little bit of suspicion there now of course God does not want us to be suspicious I mean to have a suspicious nature that is very ugly you know and yet you will find often times you will find when we hear something or when we are in contact with something or even with someone we may not be able to pinpoint and yet somehow you will find there is within us some question within us there is some suspicion we do not know whether this is true or whether it is not true now brothers and sisters whenever we are in such state be careful this is the time that we should bring the matter to the Lord and inquire if at that time we act quickly we will act on our own we

will act on our reasoning and often times you will find the result proves that we are wrong we are deceived do not think that we ourselves are beyond deception this itself is the greatest of all deceptions you know why people are deceived because they are so sure of themselves they are so confident that they will not be deceived they think we have investigated we have questioned but we have investigated and we are satisfied we cannot be wrong oh brothers and sisters whenever we come into that kind of mentality we are bound to be deceived Paul said I have no confidence in my flesh no confidence in my flesh yes we have every confidence in the Lord that is true no one can live without confidence but our confidence is in Christ we have full confidence in the Lord and yet so far as our flesh

goes there is no confidence the children of Israel was so confident they did not inquire of the Lord they thought it was unnecessary and the result was they were deceived so first of all brothers and sisters how can we avoid being deceived we need to bring everything questionable everything suspicious we need to bring these things to the Lord and inquire of Him never act but wait upon the Lord and if only the children of Israel will wait upon the Lord certainly the Lord will reveal everything to them you know why they were deceived they were deceived by appearance by all appearance these people must have come from a far country why because you will find the sacks were old sacks the wine skins were dry and patched and tied together the sandals were old and patched and even the bread were

dry and moldy now according to all appearance what can you say they must come from a far country and by all what you heard sweet words we are your servants so humble so friendly they could not be they cannot be enemies but they were deceived by appearance you know Paul says once he knew Christ in the flesh but no more he said he will know no one in the flesh why because when you try to know people in the flesh that is by appearance how easily we can be deceived men always look at appearance but God looks upon the heart and if we judge people by appearance if we judge things by appearance we will be deceived we will easily be deceived Paul said I judge no one according to the flesh but in the spirit when he judged Christ according to the flesh by appearance how he was deceived by the enemy

into persecuting the followers of Christ but when he knew Christ in the spirit what a difference and brothers and sisters let us remember this never be deceived by appearance if we go for appearance we are deceived it is the spirit the spirit detects knows you know sometimes well when you read first John you will find first John among God's people they are little children they are young men they are fathers of course the little children are most susceptible to deception they are so ignorant so innocent certainly they will be easily deceived and yet there in first John you will find little children you have the anointing within you you have the Holy Spirit within you and the Holy Spirit who dwells in your spirit will detect will detect and you know sometimes the children even though they

are so ignorant sometimes grown up are more easily deceived than little children why little children they judge by intuition but we judge by logic by our reasoning and Christians should judge by intuition in the spirit as the Holy Spirit impresses upon your spirit then you know and this will be true and it will not be a lie so thank God we have a built in protection you know if we really know how to live before God and walk in the spirit you will find the Holy Spirit within us will judge will give us the discernment and you will find it is not according to appearance it is according to the spirit and thus we will not be deceived you know why were the children of Israel deceived they were deceived by these old things old sacks old wineskins old sandals old and dry and woody bread you know

old garments they were deceived by these old things do you know that we have a natural love for things old that's why antique is so expensive everything that is old seems to have some kind of worth you know it

is natural within us we just love things it must be right there is some kind of authority in anything old there and we respect that and we love that you know that is a natural tendency within us things old and they are deceived by things old you know why is tradition so hard to break even though we find the tradition is not in the scripture it is the tradition of the fathers it is not the tradition of the scripture and yet you find it is so hard to break why because there is a reverence for oldness it is old you know often times we find in Christianity there are arguments yes it is

true this is not in the scripture but our fathers have practiced that for hundreds and thousands of years and for several decades or several centuries so it cannot be wrong we have to reverence that which is old and keep it isn't that true there is a certain temptation in oldness you know and as the bible says no one after he has tasted the old wine will want the new wine he always said the old is better the old is better but how deceiving the children of Israel were deceived by the oldness of the thing and of course you can enlarge it how the children of Israel at the time of our Lord Jesus they were deceived by the traditions of the fathers they even violated the commandment of God because of their reverence for the tradition of the fathers so the Lord said you are hypocrites you are

hypocrites and this is something we should be careful too do not say that we are about it the natural tendency is with every one of us and how we need to go before the Lord to inquire of him and decide whether it is or whether it is not and I think there might be another reason you know the children of Israel they were in a foreign land surrounded by enemies seven tribes of Canaan even though by the power of God they had two victories big victories and yet how they would like to have more friends allies than enemies that's natural if only they could have more friends more allies than more enemies it would make things much easier so I think probably that is another reason why they jumped at the opportunity they were suspicious and yet they did not pursue their suspicion they would rather

just accept what Gideonites said why because they wanted friends allies to help them to make their lives easier they didn't want to go all the way the hard way the way of the cross probably that is another reason you know dear brothers and sisters God did say to Moses when they go out to battle but not with the people in the promised land when they go to fight against people outside of the promised land in Deuteronomy we are told the first thing the children of Israel would do was to offer peace before they attack the city they should first offer peace and if peace is rejected then they can lay siege of the city and attack it but God said this is for people who are outside of the promised land but for people in the promised land there is no peace no compromise they have to be completely

destroyed because if they are not destroyed they will be a snare to the children of Israel they will lead them away from God into abomination dear brothers and sisters it is true according to the word of God say Romans chapter 12 we are told we should make peace with our neighbors as much as is possible with us in other words so far as we are concerned so far as it is within our ability we should make peace with all our neighbors that is true we should not have any enemies among men even though people may be hostile to us and ill treat us we are told to pray for them and to bless those who persecute you we should have no enemy on earth and yet brothers and sisters with Satan and his evil forces that is another story the Bible never say we should make peace with Satan and with evil forces

no never it is a battle to death no compromise no peace because if we compromise it will be a snare to Satan we always say no always say no there can be no compromise and you know again and again in the Bible you find even in the time of Abraham for instance when Abraham came back after a great victory over the four kings and he rescued his nephew Lot and brought back all that were captured by the kings

how the king of Sodom came to meet Abraham and said Abraham you may have everything that I had give me the people and you may have all my wealth what a temptation what a temptation but thank God Abraham was met by Melchizedek first and Melchizedek blessed him in the name of the most high God and gave him the wine and the bread and showed him that it is the Lord so Abraham was able to

resist the temptation not to be deceived he said I will not take anything from you lest people say you make me rich God is my wealth I do not be made rich by you he overcame the temptation and you also know when the Jewish remnant how they came back from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the temple and their enemies came and offered help and said we will help you we will help you to rebuild the temple they did not come to help they came to disturb and thank God for Zerubbabel and these people they said no you have no part we will do it ourselves even if it is the hard way and even in the time of Nehemiah you find when he built the walls of Jerusalem they came again and said we are your friends let's help but actually they want to disturb to confuse and Nehemiah rejected them and even when

our Lord was on earth how the enemy came in again and again you remember in the wilderness the enemy said now if you bow to me I will give the whole world to you you don't need to go to the cross just a bow all are yours but the Lord said Satan get away and even use Peter try to deceive our Lord be kind to yourself don't go to the cross the Lord said Satan get me behind no compromise no compromise brothers and sisters we should be kind and friendly with our neighbors that is with man but when it came to evil spirit to Satan there can be no peace no compromise otherwise it will be a snare to us so here you will find the enemy used another trick craft deception and because the children of Israel probably thought too much of themselves they did not inquire of the Lord and the result was they

were deceived when they discovered they were deceived it was too late because their leaders had already made a vow before God in the name of the Lord to make that covenant of peace and the children of Israel were like very much at that time they were zealous like very much to kill them but Joshua said no we couldn't do that because we will put the name of the Lord in jeopardy and you know in one sense because they were deceived and they made a covenant of peace in the name of the Lord with their enemies they were not allowed to destroy the enemies but to make their enemies hewers of wood and drawers of water in the house of God and in the assembly in other words these people will be before them as a reminder of the discipline of the Lord the Lord put them because they were deceived

therefore they were put under discipline you know how the children of Israel according to their flesh when they discovered that they live among them how they were like to just destroy them so they will not be before their eyes they will forget that once they were deceived but God forbid God forbid as long as these Gibeonites live before them they reminded the children of Israel that they were under the discipline but even out of discipline God really make it something of use that is to say their enemies become hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of God and for the assembly even so you will find God can still get something out of it but anyway you will find the children of Israel were under discipline instead of getting an ally to help them you will find the children of

Israel had to defend the Gibeonites in other words it put them into a worse situation but the story with the Gibeonites did not end here if you go to 2 Samuel you find in 2 Samuel I think it is in chapter 21 2 Samuel yeah in 2 Samuel chapter 21 and there was a famine in the days of David three years year after year and David inquired of Jehovah and Jehovah said it is for Saul and for his house of blood because he slew the Gibeonites and the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel but of the remainder of the Amorites and the children of Israel had sworn to them and

Saul sought to smite them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah after many years you know the book of Judges cover over 300 years when it came to the end of

Samuel is 450 years and now came David to become king and when David was king hundreds of years had passed and yet here you find during his reign there was three years of famine and David inquired of the Lord and the Lord said it is because of Saul when Saul was king he became zealous zealous he became zealous for the children of Israel and he killed the Gibeonites he killed the Gibeonites so far as the flesh is concerned the flesh could not stand discipline now probably we need to explain it a little bit more and that is in application you know the moment we discover we are deceived what should we do should we continue in deception certainly not the moment we discover that we are deceived we should immediately repent humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and look for his mercy we

certainly should not continue in deception and yet often times you find after we are deceived we may have to go through a period of discipline and if so then our attitude should be we should humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God so that in due time he may exalt us but this is something the flesh couldn't stand you know the flesh couldn't stand discipline Saul represents the flesh Saul is different from David because Saul is a man of the flesh the first time you find Saul you find Saul was chasing an ass some asses and asses always represent wildness the flesh Saul represents a man of the flesh and as a man of the flesh he could not stand discipline there was the zeal for the children of Israel and it seemed to be a good thing to be zealous for God's people so he wanted to kill the

Gibeonites to forget about the whole thing there would be no reminder of their failures in our appearance it looked to be very commendable but actually he was disobeying God when God said destroy he wouldn't destroy when God said not destroy he wanted to destroy because he just couldn't understand so here you find Saul in his reign he killed some of the Gibeonites in a zeal for the children of Israel and for Judah and for that reason God sent three years of famine in the time of David so finally you find seven sons of Saul seven descendants of Saul must be hanged for that reason before the wrath of God passed away so anyway I think there is another lesson that is for us to learn how we need to recognize the disciplinary hand of the Lord the flesh will never like it and yet the only way is

to submit ourselves under the mighty hand of God until in due time he will exhort us and not try to right a wrong with another wrong you know we tend to do something you know thinking that we are writing a wrong but we do a wrong thing to write a wrong thing and it makes it worse so I think this is the lesson that we have to learn and after that is over then you will find in the book of Joshua the campaigns began one with the southern confederacy and the other with the northern confederacy I don't think we need to go into that and after these two campaigns were over the war warfare in the promised land covered probably seven years and after the war was over the backbone of the enemy was completely broken even though there were still scattered enemies in the promised land but the backbone

of the enemy was broken so you find in the latter part of the book of Joshua God commanded Joshua to apportion the land the land was divided to the children of Israel even though there were still enemies to be wiped out and yet the land was divided among the children of Israel now that is the book of Joshua so finally may we be reminded of one thing and that is spiritual warfare is unavoidable in the process of possessing Christ but never make spiritual warfare as an end it is only a means because the end is possessing Christ therefore God does not want us to be occupied fully with our enemies God wants us to be occupied fully with Christ and I think this is something we need always to remember our heavenly father how we praise and thank thee in spite of the enemies in the heavenlies

trying to hinder us from possessing the fullness of Christ and yet thou has already overcome the enemy therefore we can possess fully our possession oh we do ask thee Lord that because thou art our captain and we put our trust in thee thou will deliver us from all the deception all the vows of the enemies that we may be able to enter into our inheritance and to be appraised to thy name we ask in thy precious name amen

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