

Joshua 9 – Compromise & Corruption are Inevitable without Revelation

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: In Canaan, Israel faced 2 types of enemies. They had already met the 1st type – the people of Canaan and the people of Bethel and Ai - face to face in battle. But then they faced the 2nd type of enemy, one that was more dangerous than the 1st. This enemy pretended to be Israel's friend, tried to forge (假装) a compromising alliance (联盟) with God's covenant people, hoping to neutralize the existential threat that Israel posed to them. Today you will hear from God's Word how his people dealt with this subtle enemy (狡猾的敌人) and how they should have dealt with this subtle enemy.

Our headings are: **Ignoring Revelation caused Israel to be Conned (受骗)**, **Ignoring Revelation caused Israel to compromise (妥协)**, and **Ignoring Revelation cause Israel to become Corrupted.**

Our goals are: **Knowing that directions for fighting in God's holy war** are not left up to your imagination, **you will make it your diligent duty to properly understand and use God's Word as your guide as you battle for Christ's kingdom.**

Ignoring Revelation caused Israel to Be Conned

1 And it came to pass when all the kings who were on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—heard about it, **2 that they gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel** with one accord. 3 But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, **4 they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors.** (使者) And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, 5 old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was **dry and moldy (长霉的)**. 6 And **they went to Joshua,** to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have **come from a far country;** now therefore, **make a covenant** with us." 7 Then the men of Israel said to the **Hivites,** "Perhaps you dwell among us; so how can we make a covenant with you?" 8 But they said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you, and where do you come from?" 9 So they said to him: "From a very far country your servants have come, **because of the name of the LORD** your God; for we have heard of His fame, and **all that He did in Egypt.**" 10 "and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan—to **Sihon king of Heshbon,** and **Og king of Bashan,** who was at Ashtarothe. 11 "Therefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, 'Take provisions (食物) with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We are your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us.'" 12 "This bread of ours we took hot for our provision from our houses on the day we departed to come to you. But now look, it is dry and moldy. 13 "And these wineskins which we filled were new, and see, they are torn; and these our garments and our sandals have become old because of the very long journey." 14 Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; **but they did not ask counsel of the LORD.** (14 以色列人受了他们些食物, 并没有求问耶和華。)

1. After seeing the destruction of Jericho, Ai, and Bethel, other nations of Canaan formed an alliance to fight against Israel.

This was not surprising to Joshua. He had gotten Israel ready to do battle in earnest using all God's provisions (plunder, power, worship). But while Israel was focused on the big enemy, they allowed themselves to be deceived by the subtle, smaller enemy, the Gibeonites. The lesson there is obvious. You must focus on all your enemies...even small sins!

2. Gibeonites sneakily (偷偷摸摸地) fought against Israel by trying to secure a friendly alliance with them.

They knew that Israel was unstoppable and that God was fighting for them. They planned to neuter (削除) Israel's ability to fight. **So the Gibeonites deceptively came as "ambassadors."** (An ambassador promotes peaceful relations between nations.) So they went to Joshua and the leaders of Israel and pretended they lived far away. They knew that if they were from "far away" Israel would not consider them a threat, but that they could be good trading partner, perhaps. **The Gibeonites said nothing about the recent miracles of the Jordan.** They **only mentioned the miracles of Egypt and from the early days** of the journey when God destroyed Og and Sihon. How deceptive! They were like their father, the Devil, who robbed Adam and Eve of their place in Paradise. And notice how the Gibeonites used the phrase "**in the name of the Lord**" to make Israel believe that they were interested in Jehovah. This threw Israel off, **just like churches that are desperate for alliances/members, treat those who merely say they believe in God as Christians – and baptize them and bring them in!**

3. The Israelites suspected that the Gibeonites might have been locals, from Canaan, but they did not ask God for counsel on this matter (prayer),

but made a covenant of peace with them **and called God to witness it.** But prayer was not the only thing missing! Joshua did not consult the **Urim and Thummim (乌陵和土明)**, nor did he use lots (抽签), nor did he consult the **written and memorized Word** of God, nor did he consult **the prophets.** No wonder he was fooled.

Numbers 27:21 "He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation." (21 他要站在祭司以利亚撒面前, 以利亚撒要凭乌陵的判断, 在耶和華面前为他求问。他和以色列全会众, 都要遵以利亚撒的命出入。) 22 **So Moses did as the LORD commanded him.** He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. Joshua thought they could "taste" the bread to see if it were moldy. **Doesn't this remind you of the Garden of Eden?** **Adam and Eve were given the best land,** with everything they needed to accomplish God's task for them, but they too were deceived **when they ignored God's revelation (启示)**. They did not even talk to God about what the Devil said to them! **Adam and Eve have the Lord Jesus meet with them regularly** as they embarked on the task of having dominion in the world for God's glory, just like the Lord Jesus appeared to Joshua (Joshua 5:1-12) as he prepared to lead Israel to conquer the land for Jesus Christ. **And Adam and Eve would have lived in the Garden forever if they had obeyed Divine revelation,** just

as Israel would have remained in Canaan forever if they obeyed. Further, bringing Israel into the Land of Canaan was God's way of beginning the journey in earnest of restoring those who were lost in Adam back to himself through Jesus Christ. This deception was a major stumbling block (绊倒人的障碍物) to that. Thankfully, your new Joshua, Christ, did not fail when he was tempted (被试探). He knew the Word of God and used it 3X (三次) to rebuke Satan.

Ignoring Revelation Caused Israel to Compromise

15 So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the rulers of the congregation swore to them. 16 And it happened at the end of three days, after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were their neighbors who dwell near them. 17 Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim. 18 But 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.

1. Joshua made a dangerous compromise with a wicked Gibeonite enemy and soon found out that he had been fooled. But he had already made vows with them. Were the Gibeonites wrong to fool Israel? Surely. But Israel was wrong – very wrong – to not to have investigated. Israel signed a legal paper without knowing the person – a complete stranger. The Lord had placed a holy obligation on Israel not to do this. But Israel was like many Christians who marry non-Christians, hoping that things would get better later. Big mistake in both cases!

2. Because Israel had made the vow in the name of the Lord, they could not destroy the lying Gibeonites – who ensured that they could not only survive, but that they could continue to live their own sinful way...and forced Israel to accept it. The Gibeonites could have become followers of Jehovah – without the deception and be saved. But they rejected that opportunity. What compromise the elders bring upon God's church when they are not discerning!

3. Do Christians make compromises like this today? Absolutely.

a. We learn recently of a few brothers who scorned (鄙视) the Lord's baptism and were re-baptized according to the dictates (命令) of the Baptists. Sometimes people join a lesser church to find a spouse. But it is a sinful compromise.

Sometimes people join a lesser church because they don't want to submit to faithful teaching. Both are sinful compromises.

b. A Christian might marry a "nice" person, even though she may not be a Christian. Do you know how those marriages usually turn out? That non-believer may make herself look attractive, but the Christian soon finds out that they don't have the same goals. They can't raise children the same way. They have two focuses! It is hard to get out of those situations! So learn to test before your trust...test the church...test the company...the friend...the girl friend.

c. There are many "nice" people (like the Gibeonites) who lure innocent and/or weak Christians into joining cults (异端崇拜) Eg: Jehovah's Witnesses are some of the nicest people, but where do you think they and everyone they deceive are heading for rejecting the Trinity (三位一体的教义)?

d. We have compromised and joined churches that advertise they will embrace you (take care of your children, help you in your business, or meet your felt needs) (迎合人们感觉上的需要) if you visit - but many of them have departed from orthodoxy.

e. Many have compromised and joined the World Council of Churches. WCC sounds good, doesn't it? But this unity is based on compromising of truth (对真理的妥协). The World Council of Churches is a wicked organization.

f. We have compromised with evolutionists 进化论者, closing our eyes to the faults of the evolutionary theory, robbing God of his glory, and reinterpreting the Bible.

g. We have compromised with democracy and often pray that God will preserve that which rejects him as Lord.

h. We have compromised with sociology (社会学) and determined that the government, in union with non-Christian kids who graduated from higher education churches, know more about how to raise children than God himself.

We have so compromised that NBC recently described Olympian David Wise as living an alternative lifestyle because he believed in God, marriage, and children.

Pray that your leaders will learn to be discerning (慎思明辨的) so your journey to capturing the land for Christ and your marching to the New Jerusalem would be victorious!

Ignoring Revelation Cause Israel to Become Corrupted

19 Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them. 20 "This we will do to them: We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them." 21 And the rulers said to them, "Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them." 22 Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' when you dwell near us? 23 "Now therefore, you are cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves—woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God." 24 So they answered Joshua and said, "Because 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; therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. 25 "And now, here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us." 26 So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them. 27 And 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 to this day.

1. Through ignoring revelation, Israel became corrupted and compromised with the Gibeonites. So God cursed all Israel

because of what their leaders did. How did God curse them?

a. Imitation influence: The Gibeonites, these lying idol worshippers (拜偶像的人) who refused to submit to the true God, would live among Israel. And it is always easier to imitate bad behavior than good. We say “Bad company corrupts good behavior. Israel was a blank canvas for the fibbers (习惯撒谎的人) of Gibeon.

Proverbs 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

b. Intermarriage influence: What is most natural to living among a people than wanting to pick a wife or husband from among them? The quickest and smartest way for Satan to destroy the church is urging covenant children to marry outside of the covenant. Let it be that good fathers always make sure their children marry other covenant children, lest your children face this same type of curse.

Deuteronomy 7:1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the **Hivites** and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, 2 "and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.3 "Nor shall you make marriages with them...4 "For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods..."

2. This corruption weakened Israel's ability to prosecute the war properly. Sin always slows down God's work. How could they have the desire to defeat the enemies when the enemies could be related to you and looked just like you? Isn't this a neutralizer to spiritual conquering as well? Why fight someone if they were “okay” or lived just like you?

3. The suffering from corruption of these pagans (异教徒) continued for 500 plus years. They lived during the time of King Saul who killed some Gibeonites. God rightly cursed Israel for breaking covenant. Israel faced famine!

2Samuel 21:1 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites."

Isn't this what happened to Adam and Eve as well? They caused sin to overtake every single person who has ever lived! All mankind were condemned through them.

Romans 12:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

4. And yet, you see how God worked with Joshua to bring some good out of this sinful compromise. How? Joshua commanded the Gibeonites to be woodcutters and water carriers for the worshippers of God and the priests of God. This was helpful to Israel. And in doing this, the Gibeonites could see the purification of God's people and desire it! So worship was supported and evangelism promoted even through this great sin. Isn't this what happened to Adam and Eve also? In the midst of their sin, God revealed the proto-evangelium - the first Gospel. Out of sin came God's revelation of salvation.

Conclusion:

Joshua was the son of Nun, but he was not the Son of God – the General he had met and spoken to recently. But instead of talking to his general and getting instructions, he guessed! As a result, the Israelites were conned, they were forced to compromise, and they were ultimately corrupted by the Gibeonites.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: **First**, get the clear sense that this was speaking directly of the need for the better Joshua - the true Joshua. Jesus Christ was the personification (化身) of revelation. He came to reveal God's truth – how to be saved, how to live, and how to conquer the world. **Second**, you are involved in a cosmic war – a world war - and **it is dangerous to try to fight this war without instructions.** Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.” (没有默示, 民就放肆, 惟遵守律法的, 便为有福。) Get God's revelation and use it. **Third, there is also a war within the church.** Get the spiritual warning to avoid those who lure you into compromise – which is translated “sin.” Keep your “compromising radar” up and running at all times. You were bought with the blood of Jesus. Don't be joined to pretenders (伪装者) to his throne.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, God's authoritative revelation says that you are a sinner and unless you get a Savior – the Lord Jesus Christ – and embrace him – you will spend eternity in hell, enduring the wrath of God. Will you embrace the Savior today? Will you embrace his life of righteousness and his substitutionary death? Then, and only then, you will be holy.