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“The Day Time Stopped”

Weekly Bible Study Schedule

Tuesday, May 8, 7:00-7:55 AM in HHR #4

(hot breakfast provided)

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Chapters 10-21 in the book of Joshua offers significant progression of the LORD fulfilling His covenant (promise) to Abraham in the book of Genesis 15:18-21:

“When the sun was down, and it was dark, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch moved between the split carcasses. That’s when God made a covenant with Abram: “I’m giving this land to your children, from the Nile River in Egypt to the River Euphrates in Assyria—the country of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaim, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites.””

In the day, the ritual of sealing the deal in covenant was for both entities making the covenant to walk through the path of the split animal carcasses. It was a sign – we oath, agree, commit. However, in the Abrahamic Covenant, only God walked through the center. The smoking firepot and a flaming torch symbolized God. In other words, God sealed the covenant with an oath to Himself. God is always faithful, so this covenant could never be broken. Therefore, Abraham and Sarah will certainly have the “Promised Children” and their children the “Promised Land”.

From the beginning, this was God’s plan and promise, and only God’s power could bring it about. Thus, the impetus of Israel’s conquest over the Canaanite people groups. It was God initiated, God empowered, and God fulfilled.

This morning’s Bible study will examine five central highlights demonstrating God’s power and plan. First, Creator is Greater than the Created; Second, Concurring Opposing Nations; Third, Conferring the Promised Land to the 12 Tribes of Israel; Fourth, Caleb – the Strongest Old Man I know; Fifth, Cities of the Levites.

1. Creator is Greater than the Created (chap. 10)

Because Gibeonites joined Israel as allies, the 5 kings of Canaanite states joined forces, led by Adoni-Zedek, king of

Jerusalem (Jebusites). They went to war against Gibeonites because they defected to Israel enlarging Israel’s strength to drive out the Canaanites. The five kings: Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem; Hoham, king of Hebron; Piram, king of Jarmuth; Japhia, king of Lachish, and Debir, king of Eglon. Talk about stacking the deck – they certainly did against Israel, but not against God.

The men of Gibeon sent word to Joshua camped at Gilgal, “Don’t let us down now! Come up here quickly! Save us! Help us! All the Amorite kings who live up in the hills have ganged up on us.” (10:6-8)

Israel attacked, while God caused total confusion among the armies of the five kings securing victory at Gibeon. As Israel chased the Amorite armies, approximately 20-30 miles from Gibeon to Makkedah, and into the Aijalon valley, 15 miles long, God hurled huge hailstones on them from the sky.

Joshua spoke to God, with all Israel listening: “Stop, Sun, over Gibeon; Halt, Moon, over Aijalon Valley.” And Sun stopped, Moon stood stockstill. Until he defeated his enemies. (10:12-13)

Notice:

- The Sun stopped
- Never happened before
- God did what Joshua declared (v.14)
- God responded to the voice of Joshua. This was not a prayer, it was a command to the sun and moon.
- Clearly, God fought for Israel

2. Concurring Opposing Nations (chap. 11)

When Jabin, King of Hazor, heard he sent word to a host of kings to unite and fight against Israel.

They came out in full force, all their troops massed together—a huge army, in number like sand on an ocean beach—to say nothing of all the horses and chariots. (v. 4-5)

Once again, the odds are stacked against Israel. The point, there is no way, militarily, politically, or strategically, possible to defend against an army of this magnitude. They are cornered. The only way out is up. God said to Joshua:



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“Don’t worry about them. This time tomorrow I’ll hand them over to Israel, all dead...” (v.6)

Joshua defeated 31 kings and towns, respectively, in their long-time battle.

“Not one town made peace with the People of Israel...and Israel had rest from war” (v.19, 23)

3. Conferring the Promised Land to the 12 Tribes of Israel (chaps. 13-22)

Nine and a half tribes inherited land inside Israel (the Promised Land) with two and one half settling east of the Jordan.

So, the Lord gave to Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there. And the Lord gave them rest on every side, just as he had solemnly promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could stand against them, for the Lord helped them conquer all their enemies. Not a single one of all the good promises the Lord had given to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; everything he had spoken came true. (21:43-45)

4. Caleb – the Strongest Old Man I know (14:6-12)

“Caleb said to Joshua, “Remember what the Lord said to Moses, the man of God, about you and me when we were at Kadesh-barnea. I was forty years old when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land of Canaan. I returned and gave an honest report, but my brothers who went with me frightened the people from entering the Promised Land. For my part, I wholeheartedly followed the Lord my God. So that day Moses solemnly promised me, ‘The land of Canaan on which you were just walking will be your grant of land and that of your descendants forever, because you wholeheartedly followed the Lord my God.’ “Now, as you can see, the Lord has kept me alive and well as he promised for all these forty-five years since Moses made this promise—even while Israel wandered in the wilderness. Today I am eighty-five years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. So give me the hill country that the Lord promised me. You will remember that as scouts we found the descendants of Anak living there in great, walled towns. But if the Lord is with me, I will drive them out of the land, just as the Lord said.””

5. Cities of the Levites (chap. 21)

The Levites were given 48 cities from within the land of the sibling tribes; six of the 48 were cities of refuge. Cities of refuge were designated places for people that murdered someone unintentionally.

All tribes inherited their own land except for the Levites.

Levites lived off the food offerings brought to the Lord by the people. They were priests of the Lord and overseers of the tabernacle. Sacrifices to the Lord, worship, was their work. In other words, their land was the tabernacle; the presence and place of the Lord.

“That’s when God set apart the tribe of Levi to carry God’s Covenant Chest, to be on duty in the Presence of God, to serve him, and to bless in his name, as they continue to do today. And that’s why Levites don’t have a piece of inherited land as their kinsmen do. God is their inheritance, as God, your God, promised them.” (Duet. 10:9)

In other words, the LORD is their inheritance. He will provide for all their needs. The LORD is their portion.

The Lord wants to be our portion. He is the one that can meet our needs. Life has us searching for missing pieces in our lives. We long for the yearnings in our heart to be comforted, for the emptiness to become full, for our needs to be met. Longing for acceptance, self-worth, recognition, your striving to find it will not end. It’s illusive.

The Lord offers you and me Himself. He is enough. Full satisfaction comes when He is our portion. He’s created us and knows every detail about us. He knows exactly what we need. He offers Himself as our portion.

My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever. Those who desert him will perish, for you destroy those who abandon you. But as for me, how good it is to be near God! I have made the Sovereign Lord my shelter, and I will tell everyone about the wonderful things you do. (Psalm 73:26-28)



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