

BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL
PROMISES, PROMISES—PART 1
2 SAMUEL 21:1; JOSHUA 9

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Introduction

2 Samuel 21:1

The background for this verse goes back four centuries before the days of David, back to the days of Joshua as Israel was entering and conquering the land as they went. **(Turn to and read Joshua 9 and make comments)**

Joshua 9:1–2

When the Israelites entered The Promised Land it was **“Occupied Territory”!** We can see that the land was full of all these **“-ites”** mentioned in **Verse 1!**

There was controversy then just as there is controversy now about whose land that area of the world belongs to! Understand that it was God’s land to give and He gave it to Abraham and his descendants!

So, if anyone can be described as being in **“Occupied Territory,”** it is all of Israel’s enemies that are occupying ANY part of the land God gave Israel! All the land will be restored to Israel in the Millennial reign of Christ!

We see that after Israel’s victory at Jericho and then (after a hiccup) at Ai, word was getting around about the Israelites and what they were doing!

So, those living in the **“Occupied Territory”** decided to join together to fight against the Israelites! So, they joined together, with the exception of the Gibeonites who were next in line for Israel to conquer. (Israel was conquering as they went and moved through the land.)

Joshua 9:3-6

The Gibeonites figured that they were toast if they fought Israel, so they came up with this plan to **deceive the Israelites and trick them** into making a **league** with them. **(A league meaning a compact, a covenant...a promise!)**

Joshua 9:7

We see the first indication here of reluctance on the part of the men of Israel! And rightfully so! In fact, warning bells and flashing lights (or whatever their equivalent was in that day) SHOULD HAVE been going off in their minds!

Joshua 9:8-11

Note here how they didn’t really answer Joshua’s questions about **who they were and where they came from!**

Joshua 9:12-13

The **evidence** they used to prove that they were from far away and traveled some distance to be there came down to: **1) moldy bread, 2) ripped and dusty wineskins (bottles), and 3) old clothes and shoes.**

Joshua 9:14

Here we see that Joshua and the Israelites really **didn’t learn the most important lesson** from the goof up in their first attempt at fighting Ai! Remember how **they didn’t ask counsel of the LORD then?** If they had, they would have known **the hand of the LORD was against them because of Achan’s sin!** 36 of their men lost their lives because of it!

And what do we see here? **They “...asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD!”**

Joshua 9:15

Here we see **Joshua and the princes of the congregation of the Israelites foolishly made a covenant with the Gibeonites.** It doesn’t matter that the Gibeonites lied and deceived them because with God **a covenant is a covenant!**

Understand that the LORD had been clear about His people not making a covenant with the inhabitants of Canaan to begin with!

Deuteronomy 7:2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

It is why we see the reluctance back in **verse 7!**

What should they have done? Ask counsel at the mouth of the LORD! NOT make a league when you are not absolutely sure!

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Joshua 9:16-17

Three days after the league—we see the “*Ha, Ha, Ha Gotcha*” moment here!

Joshua 9:18-19

Joshua and the princes of the congregation of Israel and the children of Israel were now bound by this covenant, this league, this agreement where they swore to the Gibeonites that they would let them live! The children of Israel did what they were good at—They murmured against the princes, but it didn’t change anything! **THEY WERE BOUND TO THE COVENANT THEY MADE!**

Joshua 9:20-23

This was **the next best thing** that the children of Israel could do. The best thing to do was to OBEY GOD and not make a league! So they had to settle for second best! They made them bondmen—wood cutters and water drawers! i.e. They put them in servitude!

Joshua 9:24-27

We see that the Gibeonites lost their freedom, but they got to live! Israel on the other hand, would suffer from this failure and other failures to obey the LORD with regard to making covenants with the inhabitants of the land. (*Cf. Judges 2:1-5*)

Now, back to our text:

2 Samuel 21:1

This verse says that King Saul violated the covenant that Israel had made with the Gibeonites by slaying some of them!

It is doubtful that King Saul had forgotten about this covenant. After all it is recorded in Scripture. It is more likely that **he convinced himself that the covenant was so old it really didn’t have any binding force on Israel any longer. But he was very wrong!**

We see here in **Chapter 21** that **Saul’s actions with regard to the Gibeonites brought a three year famine upon the land of Israel!**

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Now we see that the famine didn’t come until some time after Saul died during the reign of King David.

Some seem to think that if God does not immediately deal with sin He will never deal with it, but they fail to grasp God’s delay as a manifestation of His grace, not an assurance that men can sin without fear of judgment!

So, it fell to David to deal with Saul’s covenant breaking and make things right. It is not for us to question why God waited until this particular time to deal with it! He is God and He has His own ways and His own purposes!

WE SEE HOW DAVID ENQUIRED OF THE LORD REGARDING THE REASON FOR THIS THREE YEAR FAMINE. (21:1)

Israel had been suffering from this three-year long famine! **David sensed that maybe God was not pleased about something, so he enquired of the Lord concerning the reason for this famine.**

God’s answer was clear: **It was because of the sin of Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites!**

Now understand we are not given the details of this anywhere in Scripture! But, we don’t have to be given the details! God doesn’t owe that to us!

Some have suggested that Saul had possibly been carrying out a scheme to systematically eliminate the Gibeonites little by little and that his family was in on it! Maybe he thought he could eliminate them little by little and God wouldn’t notice! We don’t know! That is all just man’s speculation!

What we do know is that:

- 1) **Saul’s actions were a violation of Israel’s covenant with the Gibeonites!**
- 2) **God was not pleased!**

Also, it is apparent that **God had kept Saul’s scheme from totally eliminating the Gibeonites!**

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In fact, until reading about it in our text, we would never have known anything about it, but God knew! And a number of years after Saul sinned, **God brought this famine upon the land of Israel, prompting David to inquire into this matter and then try to make it right.**

NEXT TIME, LORD WILLING, WE'LL SEE DAVID GOING ABOUT TO SET THINGS RIGHT WITH THE GIBEONITES. (21:2-9)