

SERMON: CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

GOOD Morning OIC AND WELCOME TO FATHER'S HOUSE

In this Message I will be continuing in the book of Joshua with the title “Can You Believe It?”
Yes! Believing and trusting builds faith.

I closed my last Message titled **God's Word Above His Name** with the following words:
Whatever mysteries we feel are in the Father-Son of God relationship will all be made clear to the whole Universe. This is written by the Apostle Paul in **(1 Corinthians 15.23-28)** *23 But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back. 24 After that the end will come, when he {JESUS} will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power. 25 For Christ must reign until he {God the Father} humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. 26 And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For the Scriptures say, “God has put all things under his {JESUS } authority.” (Of course, when it says “all things are under his authority,” that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) 28 Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God’s authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere.*

And yes, the Bible says everything everywhere....and so shall it be! Let us rejoice that we are the Sheep Chosen to be in Jesus' Pasture.

This morning we follow Joshua and Israel into more uncharted waters, as if on a sailing ship in a typhoon! For they are moving forward to conquer the Promised Land people by **extermination of the sinners**, to rid the land of sin.

GOD'S RIGHT TO KILL

Note that God had limited the extermination of pagan cultures and society to the land of Canaan. Some Christians question God's right to kill human beings. Maybe a few Bible verses will help with this.

1. Human beings are God's creation and only He has a right to create or destroy them!

Let us look at **(Genesis 6.5-8)** *5 The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. 6 So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his*

heart. 7 And the LORD said, "I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them." 8 But Noah found favor with the LORD.

Question: If God destroyed all living things, Mankind and Animals, because of human wickedness would He not still be **Holy, and Righteous and Blameless?** The Christian's answer must be a bold **YES!** It was God's mercy, **and mercy only**, to seek out one man who would receive His **Undeserved Favor, Noah.** It is as if we all were put on Noah's Ark that day..the Human Race continued out of God's mercy.

2. Who but God should have the power to determine life and death? God declares these Rights in **(Deuteronomy 32.39-40/nasb1995)** *39 'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. 40 'Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven, And say, as I live forever, When we question who or how He Kills, we are actually saying there is a god besides Me.*
3. God's Plan – Mission Planet Earth- Mankind. In my message of August 3, 2025 titled: *God's Word Above His Name* I said: "Note that God had limited the extermination of pagan cultures and society to the land of Canaan. Israel was not commanded by God to declare war on all sinful Mankind! God's intention was to draw Mankind to His Holy People Israel for salvation to go outward to all the nations. If God's people did not display His Character of Holiness, Mankind had no hope on Earth!!! Other nations would have nothing to be attracted to regain relationship with their Creator. **God's Plan has always been , and always be, Mission of Salvation to all the nations and ethnic groups in the world."**

Now.... Remember God's right to exterminate **the Human Race** before the Flood but He chose mercy through Noah. **Later in history Israel had shown God their weakness to living closely to pagan wicked societies. The only way to rid or remove Canaan of sin, and offer salvation to the ancient world, was to rid Canaan of sinners!**

4. **God's Right to Choose.** **(Romans 9.14-16/NASB1995)** *14 What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! 15 For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION." 16 So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.*

5. Abraham's pleas to God for his uncle in Sodom in (Genesis 18.25/NASB1995)

Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous

*and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! **Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?***”

HOW CAN WE SINFUL MEN, NOW SAVED BY THE BLOOD OF GOD'S SON, NOT DECLARE FROM THE ROOFTOPS: ***Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?***”

But, now, let us see Joshua's next battle. God gave His Holy Word to protect the Gibeonites. Let us see how this complicates Joshua's Battle Plans!

Reading (**Joshua 10.1-2**) *1 Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured and completely destroyed Ai and killed its king, just as he had destroyed the town of Jericho and killed its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel and were now their allies. 2 He and his people became very afraid when they heard all this because Gibeon was a large town—as large as the royal cities and larger than Ai. And the Gibeonite men were strong warriors.* Now we find that the apparently weak and meek Gibeonites were not only crafty to deceive Joshua into making a peace treaty; but also, a mighty city of warriors. So the kings of that region of Canaan were not only fearful of Joshua but also of the Gibeonites!

Reading (**Joshua 10.3-6**) *3 So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent messengers to several other kings: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon. 4 “Come and help me destroy Gibeon,” he urged them, “for they have made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel.” 5 So these five Amorite kings combined their armies for a united attack. They moved all their troops into place and attacked Gibeon. 6 The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua at his camp in Gilgal. “Don’t abandon your servants now!” they pleaded. “Come at once! Save us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have joined forces to attack us.”*

Human reasoning alone would see this as Joshua's way out. Let the kings of Canaan exterminate the Gibeonites, a pagan tribe in the Promised Land. But no! God gave His WORD, lifting His Vow above His Name and previous Commands. This WORD was the peace treaty between Joshua, or really God, and the Gibeonites. Now God directs Joshua to defend them!

So Joshua marches out in obedience to God's direction. We see this in (**Joshua 10.7-8**) *7 So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. 8 “Do not be afraid of them,” the LORD said to Joshua, “for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you.”*

I will mention 5 important points on this Older Testament history as applied to Newer Testament Christians today! :

1. OBEDIENCE – Joshua obeyed God and defended the Gibeonites in warfare. Christians are commanded by Jesus: *Therefore, go and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.* Jesus command this to His disciples in **(Mathew 28.19)**.
2. NO FEAR – Joshua attacked the armies of five kings fearlessly! Christians have the Son of God with them always as He said in **(Matthew 28.20) 20** *Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: **I am with you always, even to the end of the age.***
3. VICTORY A GIFT – God promised Victory to Joshua. God promised Victory to Christians in **(Romans 8.37-38) 37** *No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. 38 And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.*
4. NONE SHALL BE STANDING AFTER THE FIGHT – Our efforts are to build Jesus' Kingdom on Earth: the Church: **(1 Corinthians 15.58)** *So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.*
5. OUR ULTIMATE VICTORY AFTER THE WAR – In **(1 Thessalonians 4.16-17) 16** *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with **the trumpet call of God.** First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. 17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.*

JOSHUA'S STUNNING VICTORY

Reading **(Joshua 10.9-11): 9** *Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise. 10 The LORD threw them into a panic, and the Israelites slaughtered great numbers of them at Gibeon. Then the Israelites chased the enemy along the road to Beth-horon, killing them all along the way to Azekah and Makkedah. 11 As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the LORD destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm from heaven that continued until they reached Azekah. **The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.***

Israel was not commanded by God to declare war on all sinful Mankind! God's intention was to draw Mankind to His Holy People Israel for salvation. Israel was to go outward to all the nations.

If God's people did not display His Character of Holiness, Mankind had no hope on Earth!!! Other nations would have nothing to which to be attracted, to regain relationship with their Creator.

God's Plan has always been , and always will be, Mission of Salvation to all the nations and ethnic groups in the world. God had supernaturally enabled the Israelite soldiers to kill the enemy by the sword often with not one lost Israelite. But, what Israel did not accomplish with the sword, God accomplished supernaturally by nature, His Creation. In **(Joshua 10.11)** *the LORD destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm from heaven that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.*

JOSHUA'S BOLD PRAYER – CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

Reading (Joshua 10.12-14): *12 On the day the LORD gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the LORD in front of all the people of Israel. He said,*

“Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon.”

13 So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies. Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jasher? The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. 14 There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the LORD answered such a prayer. Surely the LORD fought for Israel that day!

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

Here are a few theories or comments regarding the Sun stopping at Joshua's command:

First, God caused the earth to move slower to give Joshua more time to defeat the five Amorite Kings in **(Joshua 10.3)**. Your pastor calls this low theology or little faith in God's supernatural revelations in His Written Word.

A scientific fact: In 1972 scientists invented the “Atomic Clock” which does not depend on the sun, moon, or any outside influence. Since then, they have recorded a total of 27 seconds lost to the earth's continually slowing down in its daily rotation.

Second, Bible comments include that God created some crystal water clouds in the upper atmosphere to cause sunshine to shine later. We often see these in our very humid sky over Osaka.

They even appear as small rainbows in the clouds. But, the Bible says in **(Joshua 10.13)** *So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.*

What about the moon? It was both of these objects in the sky, not just their light that was seen.

ANOTHER NOTE FROM SCIENCE

If the earth stood still, the oceans would gradually migrate toward the poles and cause land in the equatorial region to emerge. This would eventually result in a huge equatorial mega-continent and two large polar oceans. **(esri/ArcUser Magazine). Thus, one day of no earth rotation would**

not be a worldwide catastrophe. God could have offset even the oceans beginning to move to the poles. But I believe, He had no need, scientifically speaking. God accomplishes His perfect will with natural and supernatural power. Whatever changes in nature that were experienced outside Israel may have produced “Fear of God!.” Possibly men would be shaken up by seeing such a change as the sun standing still and call to God the Creator!

ALMIGHTY GOD

Do we Christians really believe that our God is **ALMIGHTY**? We say He is; but, we too often struggle with doubts about His power. Let us look at God defying gravity with His Son Jesus and also a sinful human being, who had faith!

ALMIGHTY GOD WITH HIS SON - Jesus Walks on Water

Reading (Matthew 14.22-31) *22 Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. 23 After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. 24 Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. 25 About three o’clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, “It’s a ghost!” 27 But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!” 28 Then Peter called to him, “**Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.**” 29 “Yes, come,” Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “**Save me, Lord!**” he shouted. 31 Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?”*

Peter trusted Jesus. He had much faith and love for His Master. If not, he would not have made such a strange request: “**Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.**” So Peter was saying if it's you, **command me** to walk on the water. Peter trusted Jesus' power to make His commands happen! Peter actually succeeded to **walk toward Jesus on water!**

Peter did not stop and analyze the theology as he stepped out of the boat. He trusted Jesus! “**Can You Believe It?**” **Yes! Believing and trusting builds faith.**

The Bible also tells us that Jesus holds the Earth in its place. Knowing this, walking on water on the earth seems a small display of Jesus' power! The Letter to the Church at Colossae makes this clear in: **(Colossians 1.15-17)** *15 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed*

before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,

16** for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.**17** He existed before anything else, **and he holds all creation together.

So, in **verse.16** *for through him{Jesus}* God created everything, and **verse.17** *he holds all creation together.* Jesus holds the whole Universe together: every planet in orbit, every galaxy spinning and every star in its place, every sea in its boundary. Yes, He also holds the sea in the palm of His hand. **Peter was just walking on the palm of God's Hand.** If there were no earth or sea, it would make no difference, if Peter's faith could handle that!

God humbled Job even as He was about to vindicate Job's righteous heart in (**Job 38.31-32**) ***31** “Can you direct the movement of the stars— binding the cluster of the Pleiades or loosening the cords of Orion? **32** Can you direct the constellations through the seasons or guide the Bear with her cubs across the heavens?*

That is the Bible's declaration of the power of **Almighty God and His Son**, the Word of God.

This is true and should not be doubted or rationalized to deny God's omnipotence in (**Joshua 10.13**) *So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.*

OUR GOD RAISES THE DEAD – CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

A sinner cannot become a Christian without coming to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead!

The Apostle Paul declared this fact in (**Romans 10.9**) *If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in **your** heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* Believing God's supernatural revelations in the Older Testament also encourages our faith today. The Apostle Paul also showed how natural we all should feel about God's omnipotent power over life and death.

Paul was on trial for his life before King Agrippa. Paul was preaching Jesus' Gospel using his life story as a Pharisee and Jew. He knew that Agrippa was trained in the Jewish religion and up to date in Jesus' Ministry and Crucifixion. We can picture Paul calmly saying in the King's Court in (**Acts 26.6-8**) ***6** Now I am on trial because of my hope in the fulfillment of God's promise made to our ancestors. **7** In fact, that is why the twelve tribes of Israel zealously worship God night and day, and they share the same hope I have. Yet, Your Majesty, they accuse me for having this hope! **8** Why does it seem incredible to any of you that God can raise the dead?* He spoke the Universe into existence. He threw the stars in their places. He created LIFE...why not Raise the Dead?

A SUN STOPPING EVENT – ONE OF GOD'S GREAT STORIES

To close my message we read (Joshua 10.15) *Then Joshua and the Israelite army returned to their camp at Gilgal.* Can you imagine the table talk over dinner in Gilgal that night. The Lord God Almighty, and His Omnipotent Power to support and fight for His Chosen People was the only topic, I expect. What might He do next, they must have asked each other.

What about us, His Chosen People in Christ? Do we talk God up...or make a point of sharing things He does to support us? God helps us daily in so many small and great ways. But every day is continuing **the Greatest Way God helped us.** Much greater than God's simply stopping the Sun. Is not stopping the sun but a small thing compared with raising Jesus from the dead?

GOD'S GREATEST STORY – JESUS' SACRIFICE AND RESURECTION

God confirmed or made it clear that He accepted Jesus' sacrifice for our sins when He raised Him from the grave! As written in **(Romans 4.22-25):** *22 And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous. 23 And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded 24 for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. 25 He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.*

Therefore, We can have the confidence that God has accepted Christ's sacrifice for our sins because God raised Jesus from the dead!

And in (Romans 1.1-4/NASB1995) *1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,*

Church --- We have the Greatest Story Ever Told on Earth to talk about every day.

“Can You Believe It?” Yes! Believing and trusting builds faith. Let 's Believe It! Let's Do It!

Let Us Pray,

REFERENCES

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