

=THE LIFE OF JOSHUA=
Lesson 6
Joshua Makes an Unholy League

AIM: to teach pupils the danger and the sin of making unholy alliances.

POINT OF CONTACT: In the Old Testament we are told that the Jews could not sow two kinds of seed together and could not put two types of material in the same garment. Bring two different types of material to class, hold them up, and explain that they could not be in the same garment; or bring several types of seed to class and explain that they could not be planted together. This could lead into the fact that God wants His people to be separate and not to yoke themselves up with unbelievers.

INTRODUCTION: The Bible warns against yoking up with unbelievers. The Jews are now in the Promised Land. They have been told to destroy their enemies completely. (Let the pacifists consider this!) However, the Gibeonites deceived them, and by this deceit they caused Joshua to enter into an unholy alliance with them. To start the lesson off, the teacher should stress the importance of not yoking up with unbelievers. Read II Corinthians 6:14-18 to the class, and stress the following:

1. A believer should not join a church with unbelievers. By that, we mean that the believer should join a church that preaches the new birth and requires people to confess Christ as Saviour before they are allowed membership. (Stress here the importance of not attending services in churches with boyfriends, girlfriends, etc. when the church is liberal and does not believe the Word of God and the deity of Christ. Also stress to the pupils the importance of never joining a church unless they know the church believes the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, and God's plan of salvation.)
2. A believer should not marry an unbeliever. This is very vital to our young people. It should be stressed that a saved person should never marry an unsaved person. It is unscriptural to do so. God punished the Israelites as much for this sin as for any sin they ever committed.

If marriage between the saved and the unsaved is discouraged and even forbidden in the Bible, how much more is this true regarding courtship between believers and unbelievers! The Christian young person should not date the unsaved young person. This is very vital and cannot be stressed enough.

(Teacher, do not be afraid of repetition. The same truths should be stressed over and over again, for several reasons. In the first place, the young child should have these truths indelibly impressed on his mind by repetition. In the second place, there are young people who will never be there again or perhaps have missed the lessons when you stressed this subject before. Stress this point very strongly. Even though you may teach young children whose dating years seem far off, teach these vital Bible principles now so their precious lives will be lived within God's will.)

3. In business, it is important that Christians do not enter into this area with unsaved people.
4. In the matter of organizations, we should limit our allegiances and alliances to those who are saved. This is God's plan. America should make no alliance with heathen nations. The church should belong to no alliance with other churches that do not believe the Bible. A preacher should not belong to an alliance with other preachers that do not believe the Bible. Certainly the Christian should not be yoked up with unbelievers. Now let us examine the story for this week's lesson.

- I. THE GIBEONITES WANTED TO USE GOD'S PEOPLE BY JOINING UP WITH THEM. See Joshua 9:3. They had heard of the wonderful crossing of the Jordan River. They had heard of the great victory God had given them at Jericho. They had heard that though the Jews had lost the first battle of Ai, they had then gone back and conquered Ai. Now they were afraid; hence, for their sake, they wanted to form a league or an alliance with God's people. This is always the case. When the Devil's crowd is in the majority, they want no league, they want no alliance. When they are in the minority, they want to use God's people. The liberal never starts anything; he steals from the fundamentalist. The Devil is a parasite; he works on what the fundamentalist has started, and the Devil tries to steal it. This is the case of many denominations and liberal churches. How sad, but how true it is! Any time the unbeliever wants an alliance with the believer, it is for his own good, not for the good of the believer!

- II. THE GIBEONITES USED DECEIT. Read very carefully Joshua 9:4-6, and tell the story to the pupils. Notice how deceitful they were. This is always the case with the liberal. He will pose as a fundamentalist. He will use terms to make the people think he believes the Bible until he gets in the majority. Then he gets brazen. This is why the Christian needs to be as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. This is also why he needs to counsel with his pastor and more experienced people before he joins a group or becomes yoked up with anyone. Deceit is the favorite weapon of Satan's crowd.
- III. JOSHUA MADE THE MISTAKE OF NOT SAYING, "NO!" IMMEDIATELY. See Joshua 9:7. Joshua should have said to the Gibeonites, "No, there will be no league!" Instead, he considered them, and in considering, he gave the Devil a chance to get his foot in the door. When the temptation comes to yoke up with an unbeliever, whether in marriage, business, or church, the Christian should not even consider it or discuss it. There should be an immediate and emphatic "NO!" lest there be temptation to yield.
- IV. JOSHUA MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE WHEN HE MADE PEACE WITH THE GIBEONITES. The liberal always talks about peace until he is in charge. Satan's wiles always involve the using of terms that God uses and even oftentimes a misquoting or misrepresentation of the word "God" in an effort to sound good to the believer. Joshua listened to these peace talks, peace demonstrations, and chants. He made the terrible mistake of thinking that peace is always God's plan. God's plan here was for war, for complete destruction of the heathen nations. Though Joshua was a great man, he made a mistake here.
- V. JOSHUA SACRIFICED PEACE LATER FOR PEACE NOW. Read Joshua 9:18. Trouble came. Notice the people began to murmur, and later on, more trouble came. This is always the case if we sacrifice the future on the altar of the present. If we stand for what is right, peace will come later. If he goes ahead and fights the battle, he can have peace for years to come. The saved girl who marries the unsaved boy may have a wonderful time during the honeymoon. For the first few years of marriage it may be nice, but in the final analysis, when children come, when children grow up, when decisions of life face them, trouble is going to come, and heartache is inevitable!
- VI. JOSHUA FORFEITED THE PERFECT WILL OF GOD. See Joshua 9:18, 19. Now he cannot do what God told him to do. He has promised and sworn that he would save the Gibeonites and not destroy them. Hence, all he can do now is the acceptable will of God as he does in verse 20 and following. Once a person has left the perfect will of God, all he can do is do the permissible will of God or the acceptable will of God.