

THE GOD WHO FIGHTS

Stories in Joshua



enduring faithfulness

joshua 9, 14

joshua 9:3–15

But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, they on their part acted with cunning and went and made ready provisions and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes. And all their provisions were dry and crumbly. And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant country, so now make a covenant with us.”

joshua 9:3–15

But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?” They said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” And Joshua said to them, “Who are you? And where do you come from?” They said to him, “From a very distant country your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God. For we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth.

joshua 9:3–15

So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, ‘Take provisions in your hand for the journey and go to meet them and say to them, “We are your servants. Come now, make a covenant with us.”’ Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey on the day we set out to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and crumbly. These wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they have burst. And these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey.” So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the LORD. And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

the command

- Israel was supposed to take all of the promised land and drive out all of the pagan nations.
- The people of Israel and the land of Canaan were to be pure and holy for the Lord.
- Instead, Israel gets tricked by a scheme that was... maybe not that hard to fact check.

obedience

- First and foremost, obedience is seen in actions and not merely in words.
 - **Matthew 21:28–31:** *“What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you.*

obedience

- Up until this point the people of Israel had been obedient to God, even when it took great faith to be obedient.
 - Crossing the Jordan, marching around Jericho, etc.
- For many, it can be easy to be obedient in the big things, but fail in the small issues.
- In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus takes the “big issues” and makes them “small issues.”

obedience

- Jesus breaks down murder (v.21), lust (v.28), divorce (v.31), oaths (v.33), revenge (v.38) and loving your neighbor (v.43).
- Jesus not only taught the words, but He lived the words as well.
- Without Jesus obedience to God would be impossible.

the failure

- v.9:14: *So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the LORD.*
- Many things are black and white in the Bible.
 - Most of our decisions are not so black and white.
- You are a friend of Jesus, He can speak to you, and you should listen to Him.

complete obedience

- Joshua 16:10: *However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this day but have been made to do forced labor.*
- Joshua 17:12–13: *Yet the people of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. Now when the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.*

complete obedience

- *Judges 2:1–3: Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, “I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.”*

complete obedience

- Lack of full obedience to the Lord will come back to bite you in the end.
- Any “territory” you still give the enemy in your life through willful, constant sin will absolutely affect you, the people around you, and your generational line.
- Others will have to fight the battles you were supposed to fight.

enduring faithfulness

- Enduring faithfulness is not one of perfection, but of obedience over the course of your life.
- Caleb is a prime example of enduring faithfulness.
- We first see Caleb as one of the spies.
 - **Numbers 13:30:** *But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it."*

enduring faithfulness

- Numbers 14:24: *But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.*
- The next time we really see and hear from Caleb is in Joshua 14.
 - He is now 85 and has been faithful to the Lord for the 45 years since he was a spy.

enduring faithfulness

Joshua 14:6–13: Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, “You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the LORD my God.

enduring faithfulness

And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.' And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.

enduring faithfulness

So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.”

Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance.

enduring faithfulness

- He remembered the hope of the promise given to Him by God.
 - **Romans 15:13:** *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*
 - **Colossians 1:13:** *To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*
 - **1 John 3:3:** *And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.*

enduring faithfulness

- He keeps himself strong.
 - *14:11: I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.*
- Enduring faithfulness requires that we work out our spiritual muscles.
- We cannot expect to be strong in the Lord when we do nothing to keep strong.

enduring faithfulness

- He fights the tough battles.
 - *14:12: So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.”*
- We cannot have “spiritual entitlement.”
 - God’s salvation and love come freely, but there are things we have to fight for.
- Be ready to fight for the good things that God has for you.

enduring faithfulness

- With the Holy Spirit enduring faithfulness is possible for the believer.
- Faithfulness is about behavior, but it is also about perseverance.
- **Hebrews 12:1–2:** *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

reflection

- Does the obedience of Jesus lead you to obedience?
- Where are you giving the enemy territory in your life through disobedience?
- Imagine a life where you have enduring faithfulness.