

ADULT BIBLE CLASS · MAY 17, 2026

Grafted In:

*The Gibeonites, Unmerited Grace,
and the Ancient Foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Christ*
By Randy Graham

Joshua 9:1 - 10:15 | A Thousand-Year Arc of Faithfulness

1

Joshua 9 : 1 - 6

NIV

The Kings Unite | The Gibeonites Choose Differently

1 Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about these things—the kings in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the entire coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Lebanon (the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites)—
2 they came together to wage war against Joshua and Israel.
3 However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai,
4 they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended.
5 They put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy.
6 Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the Israelites, “We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us.”

3

Joshua 9 : 14 - 21

NIV

The Fatal Gap | The Oath Stands

14 The Israelites sampled their provisions **but did not inquire of the Lord.**

15 Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.
16 Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them.
17 So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim.
18 But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. The whole assembly grumbled against the leaders,
19 but all the leaders answered, “We have given them our oath by the Lord, the God of Israel, and we cannot touch them now.
20 This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that God’s wrath will not fall on us for breaking the oath we swore to them.”
21 They continued, “Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers in the service of the whole assembly.” So the leaders’ promise to them was kept.

5

PART 1

The Story

Joshua 9:1 - 10:15

2

Joshua 9 : 7 - 13

NIV

The Deception

7 The Israelites said to the Hivites, “But perhaps you live near us, so how can we make a treaty with you?”
8 “We are your servants,” they said to Joshua. But Joshua asked, “Who are you and where do you come from?”
9 They answered: “Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the Lord your God. For we have heard reports of him: all that he did in Egypt,
10 and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan—Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth.
11 And our elders and all those living in our country said to us, “Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them, “We are your servants; make a treaty with us.””
12 This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But now see how dry and moldy it is.
13 And these wineskins that we filled were new, but see how cracked they are. And our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey.”

4

Joshua 9 : 22 - 27

NIV

Confrontation and Grace

22 Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, “Why did you deceive us by saying, ‘We live a long way from you,’ while actually you live near us?”
23 You are now under a curse: You will never be released from service as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”
24 They answered Joshua, “Your servants were clearly told how the Lord your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from before you. So we feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this.
25 We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you.”
26 So Joshua saved them from the Israelites, and they did not kill them.
27 That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the assembly, to provide for the needs of the altar of the Lord at the place the Lord would choose. And that is what they are to this day.

“We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you.” — v. 25

6

Joshua 10 : 1 - 8

Five Kings Attack | God's Promise

- 1 Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and totally destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and that the people of Gibeon had made a treaty of peace with Israel and had become their allies.
- 2 He and his people were very much alarmed at this, because Gibeon was an important city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were good fighters.
- 3 So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem appealed to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish and Debir king of Eglon.
- 4 "Come up and help me attack Gibeon," he said, "because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites."
- 5 Then the five kings of the Amorites—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon—joined forces. They moved up with all their troops and took up positions against Gibeon and attacked it.
- 6 The Gibeonites then sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: "Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because all the Amorite kings from the hill country have joined forces against us."
- 7 So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men.
- 8 The Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you."

7

Joshua 10 : 9 - 15

The Battle | The Sun Stands Still

- 9 After an all-night march from Gilgal, Joshua took them by surprise.
- 10 The Lord threw them into confusion before Israel, so Joshua and the Israelites defeated them completely at Gibeon. Israel pursued them along the road going up to Beth Horon and cut them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah.
- 11 As they fled before Israel on the road down from Beth Horon to Azekah, the Lord hurled large hailstones down on them, and more of them died from the hail than were killed by the swords of the Israelites.
- 12 On the day the Lord gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the Lord in the presence of Israel:
 - "Sun, stand still over Gibeon,
 - and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."
- 13 So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.
- The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day.
- 14 There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the Lord listened to a human being.

"There has never been a day like it before or since." — v. 14

8

Where We Are in Joshua

Ch. 6	Ch. 7	Ch. 8	Ch. 8:30
Jericho Falls	Defeat at Ai	Ai Conquered	Covenant Renewed
God's plan + Israel's obedience = miracle	Achan's sin → catastrophe	Sin dealt with; God's strategy sought	Mt. Ebal — Israel recommits to God's Law

NOW: News of Israel's victories has spread. The Canaanite kings are responding...

Most Canaanite Kings →

- Form a military coalition
- Strategy: strength in numbers
- Result: coming destruction

The Gibeonites →

- Choose a completely different path
- They have heard about Israel's God
- Strategy: get inside the covenant

Joshua 9:1-2

9

Who Were the Gibeonites?

Hivites

One of the seven Canaanite nations explicitly listed in Deut. 7:1 — no treaties, no mercy

A Major City

Josh. 10:2 — "a great city, like one of the royal cities... all the men thereof were mighty"

Four Cities

Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, Kiriath-jearim — central hill country, just miles from Gilgal

Their Situation

They knew what God had said about their fate. Fight — or find another way in.

Their Choice

The ONLY Canaanite nation in all of Joshua to seek peace rather than war

Their Motivation

"We heard of the LORD your God..." — drawn by what they heard about God, not Israel

Joshua 9:3-6 | Joshua 10:2 | Deuteronomy 7:1-2

10

The Deception — Coming With Nothing

Every detail carefully staged — but notice what the disguise reveals about their position:

Worn-out sacks	Loaded on donkeys — sign of a long journey	What the Disguise Reveals
Cracked wineskins	Patched along the way, supposedly	
Old, patched sandals	Footwear of people who've walked a great distance	
Threadbare clothes	Consistent with months on the road	
Dry, moldy bread	"Left our homes fresh — now stale from the journey"	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They could not come as themselves • They had no standing, no rights, no claim • They could offer nothing of value • Their only asset: they had heard what God had done <p><i>The deception was wrong — but the underlying posture was correct: humility, submission, throwing themselves on mercy.</i></p>

Romans 10:17 "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." — They heard; they believed; they acted.

Joshua 9:3-13

11

The Fatal Gap

Joshua 9:14 — *"The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD their God."*

They Used Their Eyes:

- Examined the moldy bread
- Checked the cracked wineskins
- Evaluated the story — found it convincing
- Reasonable. Rational. Wrong.

They Did NOT Use This:

- They had access to God
 - The Urim & Thummim — the High Priest was present
 - The Ark of the Covenant — at Gilgal
- They simply... chose not to ask.*

Joshua 9:14-15 | James 1:5

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Brought In By Grace

1 Discovery (v.16-18)

Three days later — they are neighbors. The congregation is furious. Joshua could have legally destroyed them.

2 Integrity (v.18-19)

"We have sworn by the LORD our God — we cannot touch them." God's name was invoked. That settles it.

3 Grace (v.26-27)

Joshua gives them life. Assigns them as servants at the altar. Not expelled. Not destroyed. Brought in.

Joshua 9:24-25 "We feared greatly for our lives... Now we are at your mercy — do to us whatever you think is right."

No argument. No appeal. No threat. Complete submission. The posture of grace received.

Joshua 9:16-27 | Ephesians 2:8-9

13

Five Kings Attack Gibeon

Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem organizes a coalition to punish Gibeon for making peace with Israel:

Jerusalem

King: Adoni-zedek

Organizer — alarmed by Gibeon's defection

Hebron

King: Hoham

Southern hill country — major stronghold

Jarmuth

King: Piram

Shephelah lowlands, SW of Jerusalem

Lachish

King: Japhia

Major fortified city in the lowlands

Eglon

King: Debir

Southernmost of the coalition cities

Without the Treaty:

Israel would face 5 major fortified kingdoms one at a time — each with time to prepare as their neighbors fell. Years of grinding warfare.

Because of the Treaty:

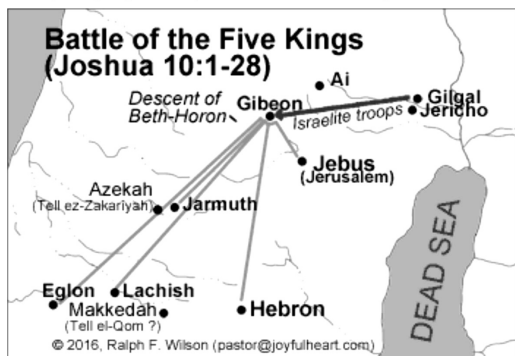
All five kings gather their armies at one location. One battle. God will defeat them all simultaneously — in a day He literally extends.

Joshua 10:1-5

14

Map: The Five Amorite Kings

← Paste your map image into the open area on the left and resize freely



Five Kings -> One Location

1. Jerusalem

Coalition organizer; ~6 mi SE of Gibeon

2. Hebron

S. hill country; Abraham's city

3. Jarmuth

Shephelah lowlands, SW of Jerusalem

4. Lachish

Major fortified city in the Shephelah

5. Eglon

Southernmost; likely Tel Eton

God brings all five to one place because of Israel's treaty with Gibeon.

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Map: Gibeon and Israel's Base at Gilgal



Key Points

- **Gibeon (Al-Jib)**
~6 miles NW of Jerusalem
- **Gilgal (Israel's camp)**
Near Jericho, Jordan Valley — ~20-25 miles from Gibeon
- **The Jordan River**
Gibeon is solidly WEST of the Jordan
- All Joshua 9-10 action is on the west bank

Joshua 9:2 | Joshua 18:23

16

Joshua Keeps His Oath — At Full Force

The March (v. 9)

- Joshua marches ALL NIGHT from Gilgal
- ~20-25 miles uphill in darkness
- His ENTIRE army — no token force
- Total commitment to the sworn obligation
- He did not send a delegation. He showed up.

God Fights Back (v. 10-11)

- LORD throws enemies into panic and confusion
- Israel strikes a great blow at Gibeon
- Enemies routed through the valley of Aijalon
- God hurls large hailstones from heaven
- More die from hailstones than from Israel's swords

Notice:

Joshua's faithfulness to an oath made carelessly triggers God's most extraordinary response. The battle he never should have had to fight becomes the occasion God chooses to fight for Israel most visibly.

Psalm 15:4 "...who keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind."

Joshua 10:9-11

17

"Sun, stand still over Gibeon"

Joshua 10:12-13 "Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: 'Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.' So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies... The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day."

Public Faith

"In the presence of Israel" — bold, specific, declared before the whole army

Unprecedented

v. 14: "There has never been a day like it before or since"

God Answers

God responded to a human prayer by altering the created order

Why Here?

The battle that began in failure becomes the stage for history's greatest miracle

18

The Strategic Irony — God Works Through the Mistake



The disobedience that created the obligation **also created the opportunity.**

God's sovereignty was not frustrated by Israel's failure. He worked through it to accomplish what Israel could never have engineered.

Joshua 10:8 "The LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you.'"

Joshua 10:6-8

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PART 2

A Thousand-Year Story

The Gibeonites in Scripture from Joshua to Nehemiah — ~1400 BC to 445 BC

21

The Gibeonites Through the Entire Bible

c. 1400 BC Joshua 9-10

Grafted In

Brought into Israel's covenant; assigned to the altar

c. 1000 BC 1 Kings 3:4-5

Tabernacle at Gibeon

Solomon offers 1,000 sacrifices there; God appears in a dream and grants wisdom

c. 500 BC Ezra 2:43-58

Home from Exile

Nethinim (Gibeonite descendants) listed among returnees from Babylon — they came back with Israel

c. 1825 BC Josh. 18:25 / 21:17

A Levitical City

Gibeon assigned to the Kohathite priests — a Canaanite city becomes a priestly city

c. 1000 BC 2 Samuel 21:1-14

God Enforces the Oath

Saul breaks the covenant by killing Gibeonites; God sends 3-year famine; David makes restitution

c. 445 BC Neh. 3:7 / 10:28-29

Building & Signing

Men of Gibeon repair Jerusalem's wall; Nethinim sign Nehemiah's covenant oath

23

But Wait —

There's More. Much. Much. More.

The story of Joshua 9-10 doesn't end at the campfire in Gilgal.

The Gibeonites will still be in the story a thousand years later.

20

Who Are the Nethinim? — The Same People, a New Name

The Gibeonites are called three different things across Scripture depending on the era. Here's the trail:

Joshua's Time	Joshua's Sentence	David through Nehemiah
<p>"Gibeonites"</p> <p>Joshua 9-10</p> <p>The straightforward name — the people of Gibeon and its three sister cities. They are Hivites, one of the seven Canaanite nations.</p>	<p>"Hewers of Wood & Drawers of Water"</p> <p>Joshua 9:21-27</p> <p>A descriptive title, not a proper name. It defines their assigned role at the altar of the LORD — the service Joshua gave them as their place in Israel.</p>	<p>"Nethinim"</p> <p>Ezra 2:43 / Neh. 3:26 / 1 Chr.</p> <p>A formal Hebrew title meaning "the given ones" or "the dedicated" — from natan, to give. David institutionalized this name when he reorganized temple worship. Same people; a covenant title replaces a geographic one.</p>
<p>How we know they're the same people: (1) "Nethinim" — Hebrew root of both Joshua's assignment and the title Nethinim. (2) David formalizes them while making restitution to Gibeonites (2 Sam. 21). (3) Jewish Talmud identifies them as Gibeonites explicitly.</p>		

Joshua 9:27 | Ezra 8:20 | Nehemiah 3:26 | 2 Samuel 21:2 | Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot

22

God Enforces the Covenant — Four Centuries Later

<p>1 Saul Breaks the Oath</p> <p>Saul massacres Gibeonites in a burst of nationalistic zeal. This event is not recorded elsewhere — but God remembers.</p>	<p>2 Three-Year Famine</p> <p>During David's reign, God sends famine. David asks why. God answers: "It is because of Saul and his bloodstained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death." (2 Sam. 21:1)</p>
<p>3 David Asks the Gibeonites</p> <p>David goes to the Gibeonites. They refuse silver or gold. They ask only for seven of Saul's descendants — the house that violated the oath.</p>	<p>4 Restitution Made; Famine Ends</p> <p>After David acts, God heals the land. An oath sworn at Gilgal still had teeth four centuries later. God had not forgotten.</p>

The covenant made in Joshua's day was still being enforced in David's day. God does not forget what was sworn in His name.

2 Samuel 21:1-14

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The Long Faithfulness — Three Final Moments

Ezra 2:43-58 / Nehemiah 7:46-60

Coming Home from Babylon

After 70 years of Babylonian exile, the Nethinim — temple servants widely identified as Gibeonite descendants — are listed by family among the returnees. They had been carried off with Israel. They came home with Israel. Still there, after nearly a thousand years.

Nehemiah 3:7

Repairing the Wall

"The men of Gibeon and of Mizpah made repairs..." When Nehemiah calls all Israel to rebuild Jerusalem's broken walls, the Gibeonites show up. Not as reluctant laborers — as fellow citizens investing in the restoration of God's city.

Nehemiah 10:28-29

Signing the Covenant

The Nethinim are listed among those who sign Nehemiah's solemn covenant — binding themselves to walk in God's Law. People whose ancestors deceived their way into covenant are now voluntarily binding themselves to God's law alongside Israel.

From Joshua's tent to Nehemiah's wall — nearly 1,000 years. At every point: still there. Still faithful. Still serving.

25

Is the Gibeonite Story a One-Off?

No. God was doing this repeatedly — grafting outsiders into the covenant line by grace, through faith, all the way to the genealogy of Christ.

Rahab

Canaanite woman from Jericho. Enemy. Prostitute. Heard about Israel's God, hid the spies, confessed faith, was saved by a scarlet cord. Ends up in the genealogy of Christ as the mother of Boaz.

Joshua 2 | Matthew 1:5

The Gibeonites

Hivite nation. Marked for destruction. Deceived their way into covenant. Served at the altar for 1,000 years. Returned from exile with Israel. Signed Nehemiah's covenant.

Joshua 9 | Ezra 2

Ruth

Moabitess. Widow. The Moabites descended from Lot's son — no standing in Israel. Clung to Naomi, confessed faith in Yahweh, gleaned in the fields of Boaz (Rahab's son). Also in the genealogy of Christ.

Ruth 1 | Matthew 1:5

Rahab married into Israel. Her son Boaz married Ruth. Both Gentile women are in the direct lineage of David — and of Christ!

27

Three Confessions — One Pattern

Rahab — Joshua 2:11

"...for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below."

The Gibeonites — Josh. 9:9, 24-25

"We have heard reports of Him... We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever you think is right."

Ruth — Ruth 1:16

"Your people will be my people and your God my God."

Romans 10:9-10 "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."

	Rahab	Gibeonites	Ruth
Believe in your heart:	"I know that the LORD your God is God..."	They heard reports of God's acts and staked their lives on them	"Your God will be my God"
Confess with your mouth:	To the spies — publicly, before it was safe	To Joshua face to face, before they knew if he would spare them	To Naomi — publicly, at great personal cost
All three exhibit the Romans 10 pattern — 1,400 years before Paul wrote it.			

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PART 3

Two Stories. One Author

Ancient foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Christ — written 1,400 years in advance

26

Not a New Idea — God Was Doing This All Along

Paul's great argument in Romans 11 about Gentiles grafted into Israel's covenant was not a new idea. God had been demonstrating it for over 1,400 years.

Rahab

Background:

Canaanite woman from Jericho. From the very people Israel was commanded to destroy.

Confession:

"The LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below." — Josh. 2:11

Result:

Saved by grace. Married into Israel. Mother of Boaz. Named in the genealogy of Christ. — Matt. 1:5

Joshua 2 | Hebrews 11:31

The Gibeonites

Background:

Hivite nation. Marked for destruction. Entered the covenant by deception with nothing to offer.

Confession:

"Your servants were clearly told how the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from before you" Josh. 9:24

Result:

Grafted into Israel's covenant. Served at God's altar for 1,000 years. Their city hosted the tabernacle. Still faithful in Nehemiah.

Joshua 9 | Nehemiah 10:28-29

Ruth

Background:

Moabitess. Explicitly excluded from the assembly of the LORD "even to the tenth generation." — Deut. 23:3

Confession:

"Your people will be my people and your God my God." — Ruth 1:16

Result:

Grafted in by faith. Married Boaz (Rahab's son). Grandmother of Jesse, great-grandmother of David. Named in the genealogy of Christ. ★ Full study coming in a future class.

Ruth 1-4 | Matthew 1:5

Romans 11:17 "You, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root." — Paul revealed what God had been demonstrating for 1,400 years.

28

"But Weren't They Forbidden to Marry Israelites?"

Deuteronomy 7:1-4

No intermarriage with the seven Canaanite nations — Hivites, Hittites, Amorites and others. This covers Rahab's people directly.

"...for they would turn away your sons from following me." — Deut. 7:4

Deuteronomy 23:3

"No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, even to the tenth generation." This covers Ruth's people by name.

Ruth is a Moabitess — explicitly named in this prohibition.

But read the reason:

The prohibition was never about bloodline. It was about **spiritual protection**. The danger being guarded against was a pagan spouse pulling an Israelite back into foreign gods. That is the entire stated rationale.

Ezra 9-10; Neh. 13

Foreign wives sent away — they had NOT converted; they were actively drawing Israel back to foreign gods. Prohibition enforced for its stated reason.

Rahab & Ruth

Embraced Yahweh wholeheartedly. The prohibition's entire purpose was satisfied. They were no longer a spiritual threat — they were fellow worshipers.

Deuteronomy 7:1-4 | Deuteronomy 23:3 | Ezra 9-10

30

Faith Was Always the Line That Mattered

<p>Rahab</p> <p><i>Canaanite — Deut. 7 applies</i></p>	<p>Confession: <i>"The LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below"</i></p> <p>Result: Married into Israel. In the lineage of Christ.</p>	<p>Prohibition: applied Faith: satisfied it</p>
<p>Ruth</p> <p><i>Moabitess — Deut. 23 applies</i></p>	<p>Confession: <i>"Your God will be my God"</i></p> <p>Result: Married Boaz (Rahab's son). In the lineage of Christ.</p>	<p>Prohibition: applied Faith: satisfied it</p>
<p>Gibeonites</p> <p><i>Hivites — Deut. 7 applies</i></p>	<p>Confession: <i>Integrated into altar worship; served at God's house for 1,000 years</i></p> <p>Result: Returned from exile with Israel. Signed Nehemiah's covenant.</p>	<p>Prohibition: applied Faith: satisfied it</p>

Romans 2:28-29 **"A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly... No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly."** Paul didn't invent this principle. He revealed what it had always meant.

31

Entrusted With the Holy

When Israel's worship system was disrupted, God's most sacred objects came to rest in Gibeonite territory.

<p>1 The Ark Rests at Kiriath-jearim</p> <p>1 Samuel 7:1-2</p> <p>After the Philistines returned the Ark, it was brought to Kiriath-jearim — one of the four original Gibeonite cities. It remained there for 20 years in the house of Abinadab.</p> <p><i>A Gibeonite city became home to the Ark of the Covenant for a generation.</i></p>	<p>2 The Tabernacle Moved to Gibeon</p> <p>1 Chronicles 21:29 2 Chronicles 1:2-6</p> <p>After Saul's slaughter of the priests at Nob, the tabernacle and the altar of burnt offering were relocated to Gibeon itself — the Gibeonites' own chief city.</p> <p><i>The physical structure of Israel's worship now stood in Gibeonite territory.</i></p>	<p>3 Solomon Meets God at Gibeon</p> <p>1 Kings 3:4-5 2 Chronicles 1:3-7</p> <p>Solomon offered 1,000 burnt offerings at the altar at Gibeon. That night God appeared to him in a dream and offered him whatever he asked. He received wisdom.</p> <p><i>The most famous divine encounter of Solomon's reign happened at a Canaanite city tended by Canaanite descendants.</i></p>
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God apparently had no difficulty entrusting His most sacred objects to Canaanite-descended people who served Him faithfully.

33

The Same Story — Told Twice

The Gibeonites (Joshua → Nehemiah)	Gentile Christians (Romans, Ephesians)
Canaanites — outside the covenant, no standing or claim	"Foreigners to the covenants of the promise" (Eph. 2:12)
Marked for destruction under God's judgment	"Objects of wrath" (Eph. 2:3); under God's just judgment
Came with nothing — entered through deception, not merit	"Not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:9)
Faith came by hearing — they heard; they believed; they acted	"Faith comes by hearing" (Rom. 10:17)
Brought in by grace — Joshua chose mercy over judgment	"Brought near by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13)
Accepted the lowest place; threw themselves on mercy	"Humble yourselves before the Lord" (James 4:10)
Grafted into Israel's covenant; given a role at the altar	"Grafted in" to the olive tree of Israel (Rom. 11:17)
After 1,000 years — fully absorbed, indistinguishable	"Neither Jew nor Gentile... all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28)

35

The Great Irony

The Israelites, born into the covenant at Sinai, repeatedly abandoned Yahweh for the Canaanite gods of Baal and Asherah.

The Gibeonites — former Canaanites who entered the covenant by deception — appear to have left those gods behind and never gone back.

The outsiders grafted in proved, over a millennium, more consistent than many of the insiders born in.

May the same be said of us.

32

The Faithful Ones — A Sentence Embraced as a Vocation

There is not a single verse in all of Scripture where the Nethinim protested their status, petitioned for release, or expressed resentment.

Psalm 84:10 **"Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked."**

This psalm was not written about the Nethinim — but it could have been their motto.

<p>Nehemiah 3:26 Repaired a section of Jerusalem's wall near the Water Gate — the gate named for their ancestral work</p>	<p>Nehemiah 7:46-60 Listed by family name among the exiles returning from Babylon — 392 Nethinim came home with Israel</p>
<p>Nehemiah 10:28-29 Signed Nehemiah's solemn covenant to walk in God's Law — voluntarily, publicly, at personal commitment</p>	<p>Nehemiah 11:21 Their own neighborhood (Ophel), their own leadership, tax-exempt like priests and Levites</p>
<p>Ezra 7:24 King Artaxerxes exempted them from all toll, custom and tribute — recognized as a sacred order</p>	

Nehemiah 3:26 | 7:46-60 | 10:28-29 | 11:21 | Ezra 7:24 | Psalm 84:10

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For Every Gentile Believer in This Room

Ephesians 2:12-13 "...remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise... But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

We came to this covenant with nothing to offer.

We had no ancestral claim to the promises of Abraham.

We were outside — strangers to the covenants.

God was under no obligation to include us.

We were brought near not by our merit but by grace.

Someone else's blood secured our place.

We are Rahab. We are Ruth. We are the Gibeonites.

Outsiders, brought in — and called to a LIFETIME of faithfulness.

The Gibeonites' story — and Rahab's, and Ruth's — is our story, written in advance.

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