

TWO REMINDERS ON THE THRESHOLD

¹⁰ When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you--a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, ¹¹ houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant--then when you eat and are satisfied, ¹² be careful that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

Deuteronomy 6:10-12

- I. Don't abuse the power and favor you are about to receive.
 - A. Leave the Edomites alone. (Deuteronomy 2:1-8)
 - B. Israel was not to attack the Edomites and take their land, for they were descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother. (Genesis 36)
 - C. Even when relatives seek to war, do not provoke unprofitable and costly confrontations.
 - D. Israel was to avoid the Moabites and Ammonites. (Deuteronomy 2:9-23; Genesis 19:30-38) These two nations were not to be conquered, because they were descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew. (Genesis 19:30-38) Sometimes God blesses people because of their relationship to other people.
 - E. Keep clear and short accounts moving forward, being willing to immediately reconcile and repair any damage from any abuses of power in the past. (Matthew 5:23,24)

²³ *“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.”*

F. God is untying complex knots and will be revealing anyone with whom you need to reconcile. Do it quickly, and find relief immediately.

II. Ask the Lord’s mind and permission. Avoid any Gibeonite entanglements. (Joshua 9:1-10:28)

A. Satan sometimes comes as a devouring lion - overt warfare (I Peter 5:8) - and sometimes as a deceiving serpent - covert warfare. (2 Corinthians 11:3) It’s easier to identify the lion when he is roaring, than to detect the serpent when he is slithering.

[1Pe 5:8 NIV] ⁸ *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

[2Co 11:3 NIV] ³ *But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

B. The Gibeonites were from only 25 miles away yet they lied and portrayed themselves as being from a foreign city. Their clothing, food and equipment we’re all designed to give the impression of a long journey. They sought the covenant of Joshua’s protection.

C. Joshua did not consult the Lord. (Joshua 9:14,15)

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.

- D. By trusting their own instincts, they brought an enemy into their camp.
- E. We must be sensitive to covert warfare at this time even more than overt warfare. (Balaam could not overtly destroy Israel so he covertly suggested a substitute love offensive. Send the Canaanite women out to seduce the men of Israel. (Numbers 25:1,2)

¹ While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, ² who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods.

- F. We must be mindful that God is freeing us from complex entanglements, not marrying us to more of them.