

## Ransom Notes

## Stand Still

**“Stand Still. Don’t move,”** a voice quietly directed the person waiting for a mammogram. Perhaps only women will appreciate those four words. How many times have I obeyed them, in spite of the anticipated momentary discomfort? She, who is basically a ‘wiggly-worm’, tries to breathe deeply and concentrate on the values of six-seconds of immobility.

Why? Temporary discomfort is endured for possible prevention of future, severe health issues or even possible death.

These memories popped into my head, as I reflected on some of the international news of the day. Words of Israel-Hamas conflict filled the air-waves. Families have taken shelter in anticipation of possible disaster. Huddled in bunkers, basements, or safe-rooms, quiet and limited movement is necessary, even for small children.

Why? Quietly standing or sitting still for many hours is a challenge, but possibly saving your family motivates all to endure.

Joshua, many years ago, encountered a ‘stand still’ situation. His army had recently totally destroyed the city of Ai. Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard about this. He also remembered that Joshua had taken over Jericho and its king. Being afraid, the king contacted four neighboring kings. Together, this quintet of kings of the Amorites, moved forward and attacked Gibeon.

Immediately the Gibeonites sent word to Joshua, encamped at Gilgal, to come quickly to save them. Joshua gathered his army and off they went, enduring an all-night march, in order to help.

The Lord contacted Joshua, telling him, “Do not be afraid of them. I will help you.” Joshua’s team took the city by surprise, and Israel defeated them completely at Gibeon. His army continued to follow the enemy down the road, but he had a bit of help.

This is such a wonderful example of God’s power. As the enemy was fleeing, the Lord hurled large hailstones down on soldiers, and more of the troops died from hail than killed by swords of the Israelites. Wow!!! I love the image and surprise as those little balls of ice came pounding down on the military. That would certainly be cheaper ammunition than the bombs and missiles necessary to fight twenty-first century wars.

But that is not the end of God’s power. Joshua requested of the Lord an unheard of suggestion. Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun STOP – to stand still over Gibeon and the moon to also stop. God heard the request, and you know what happened. Well, actually, the sun stood still, and the earth slowed down its rotation cycle.

Yes, there was an increase in daylight, thus allowing Joshua and his army to get revenge. Never before nor since, has the Lord listened to humans and, at their command, delayed the movement of the earth, sun, and the moon. Wow! Standing still, yes, the standing still of the sun or the earth worked for good that day.

Take a moment and review this encounter with ‘God in Charge,’ by reading Joshua 10:1-15. You may even want to finish the chapter and see what happened to the five kings who initiated the conflict.

What about us today? Could there be times when we need to ‘stand still’ to ‘catch-up’? Would there be a time when Christian leaders need a rest or retreat to allow for spiritual feeding? Do we occasionally respond in unkind ways to others, whereas remaining silent might have resulted in a more productive solution? Is there truth in the statement that occasionally ‘silence’ can be golden, rather than just plain yellow?

Take a moment to stop, recharge your spiritual battery, and be ready to fight off the ‘hailstones’ Satan sometimes throws at us. The Kingdom then needs each of us to Step Out and lead and help others.

