

Bible Study on Joshua
JOSHUA 9: THE GIBEONITE DECEPTION

Review: After the Israelites conquered Jericho and Ai, they traveled 20 miles north to Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, where they carried out God's instructions for covenant renewal in Deut. 27.

1. Joshua 9.1-2. A coalition of kings unite against Israel

- Earlier, the same peoples were terrified of the Israelites (2:9-11; 5:1).

- This was spiritual warfare (1 John 5:19; Ephesians 6:10-13).

2. Joshua 9.3-13. The Gibeonites deceptively seek peace with Israel

- The Gibeonites knew the Israelites were commanded to exterminate all the Canaanites and not make any covenants with them (v.24). Cf. Deut. 7:1-2.

- The Gibeonites also knew that the Israelites were allowed to spare and seek peace with the cities outside the land of Canaan (Deut. 20:10-11, 15-18).

3. Joshua 9.14-15. The Israelites made a covenant without consulting God

- Regarding those matters clearly revealed in the Book of the Law, there was no need to ask the Lord what to do. But what about those matters not revealed in Scripture, where counsel was needed? See Numbers 27:21

4. Joshua 9.16-27. Israel's reaction to the Gibeonites' deception

- Doesn't God's law allow the recall of sinful oaths?

- To break an oath made in God's name is to blaspheme and dishonor His name and bring severe consequences (Deut. 23:21-23; Eccl. 5:4-7; Psalm 15:4; 2 Sam. 21:1).

- Joshua pronounces them 'cursed' – they will never be anything but servants to Israel. In this way the prophetic curse of Noah upon Canaan in Gen. 9:25 was literally fulfilled

- But notice God's grace! Being woodcutters and water-carriers for God's house, will in every generation expose them to the gospel!

- Vv.24-25. The Gibeonites accepted their punishment.

APPLICATION

1. How do we ask counsel of the Lord today?

2. We must not base our decisions on what we see, but by faith in God's Word.

3. We must live with the consequences of our wrong actions, trusting in the Lord's mercy.

4. Some people, like the Gibeonites, join the church under false pretenses. Give examples.

5. How can God bring good out the deceptions the church suffers from today?