

Enemy Deception



Joshua 9

20 Joshua Chapter 9 – TRUST THE LORD WITH ALL OF YOUR HEART

Jericho and Ai have fallen and the news has spread. The people of the surrounding cities feared for their lives. And several of these cities decided that they had to band together to come against Israel.

Then in the chapter we realize that one group didn't decide to get into the confederation, instead they did a ruse.

³ The inhabitants of Gibeon also heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, ⁴ but they on their part acted craftily and went and took provisions for a journey, and took worn-out sacks on their donkeys, and wineskins that were worn out, split open, and patched, ⁵ and worn-out and patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry and had become crumbled.

They were from about 25 miles away and they made themselves us to look like they had come from a long way.

⁶ And they went to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now then, make a covenant with us." ⁷ But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you are living ⁱⁿ within our land; how then are we to make a covenant with you?" ⁸ So they said to Joshua, "We are your servants." Then Joshua said to them, "Who are you and where do you come from?" ⁹ They said to him, "Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the LORD your God; for we have heard the report about Him and all that He did in Egypt, ¹⁰ and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon and to Og king of Bashan who was in Ashtaroth.

Those were the kings conquered over on the east side of the Jordan before they had crossed over. They knew about Jericho and Ai, but they didn't mention it.

¹¹ So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We are your servants; now then, make a covenant with us."' ¹² This bread of ours was hot when we took it for our provisions from our houses on the day that we left to come to you; but now behold, it is dry and has become crumbled. ¹³ And these wineskins which we filled were new, and behold, they are split open; and these clothes of ours and our sandals are worn out from the very long journey."

¹⁴ So the men of Israel took some of their provisions, and did not ask for the ^(a)counsel of the LORD. *¹⁵ And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore an oath to them.*

They sampled the provisions but did not seek the counsel of the Lord.

¹⁶ However, it came about at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were neighbors and that they were living ^(b)within their land. ¹⁷ Then the sons of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁸ But the sons of Israel did not attack them because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. And the whole congregation grumbled against the leaders. ¹⁹ But all the leaders said to the whole congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we cannot touch them. ²⁰ This we will do to them, even let them live, so that wrath will not be on us because of the oath which we swore to them." ²¹ So the leaders said to them, "Let them live." And they became gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the whole congregation, just as the leaders had spoken to them.

We need to learn that sometimes we give our word and we make a mistake, but we still should keep our word. We shouldn't ever try to undo a

They disobeyed and they paid for it later. Years later, God held Israel to its word. King Saul and his sons were all hung on the wall of Gibeon.

²² Then Joshua called for them and spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' when you are living within our land? ²³ Now therefore, you are cursed, and you will never cease to be slaves, both gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the house of my God." ²⁴ So they answered Joshua and said, "Since your

servants were fully informed that the LORD your God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you, we feared greatly for our lives because of you, and did this thing. ²⁵ And now behold, we are in your hands; do to us as it seems good and right in your sight to do.” ²⁶ This he did to them, and saved them from the hands of the sons of Israel, and they did not kill them. ²⁷ But on that day Joshua made them gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, to this day, in the place which He would choose.

God took the mistake of Israel and He redeemed it. The people would stay among them and be servants, but in Ezra you can read that about 500 years later, the Gibeonites were still there among them and they never were a problem to Israel. I guess it's a picture of God's grace.

The enemy wants to tell us that our mistakes are fatal. But the reality is that God can take our mistakes and He can forgive us again and again. No matter how many mistakes we make, God can give us another chance.

The mistake they made was to believe the voice of the enemy and we do the same thing. Remember what it said, "they sampled their provisions"....they were waking by sight and not by faith. No one took time to pray. We get into tough situations and we neglect prayer and consulting God.

We don't pray because we don't expect God to answer.

Over and over we're told that God will lead us in the way we are to go. "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING. Whenever Israel leaned on their own understanding, they got themselves in trouble.

Let's be people of our word who lean on Him with all of our hearts. We've got to learn to give God all of the mistakes that we've made. The enemy tells us we're unworthy and we're stupid. We are not treated as we are by God because we are worthy. He treats us the way He does because grace. He blesses us in the middle of our failings.

God had mercy on the Gibeonites in spite of their deception. WE need to learn that the enemy deceives and that we need to be prepared for deception. Also we learn that God extends His grace in ways we don't understand.

