

Joshua 9:1-27 – Seeking God's Guidance in Every Decision

Deception Comes When We Rely on Our Own Understanding

The Israelites had just experienced two major victories—Jericho and Ai. Word was spreading, and fear gripped the remaining nations in Canaan. Some of these nations decided to unite against Israel in battle. But the Gibeonites took a different approach—they chose deception over confrontation.

Disguising themselves as weary travelers from a distant land, they approached Joshua and the leaders of Israel, asking for a peace treaty. They brought moldy bread, old wineskins, and worn-out clothing to make their story convincing. Joshua and the leaders examined the evidence but failed to ask the Lord for direction.

"The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord." (Joshua 9:14)

How often do I make decisions based only on what I can see, rather than seeking God's wisdom? Sometimes, things *look* good, *sound* logical, and *feel* right—but without God's guidance, I may walk straight into deception. Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds me:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight."

Whether it's a new opportunity, a relationship, or a big decision, I need to pray first and trust God's direction—not just my own reasoning.

God Expects Us to Honor Our Commitments

When Joshua and the Israelites discovered the deception, they were **angry but bound by their oath**. They had sworn by the name of the Lord to make peace with the Gibeonites, and even though the agreement was made under false pretenses, they chose to honor it.

This is a powerful lesson on integrity. How do I handle situations where I've made a commitment, but later regret it? In a world where people often break promises when it's inconvenient, God calls me to be faithful to my word, even when it costs me.

This doesn't mean I shouldn't learn from my mistakes. Joshua made sure the Gibeonites would serve Israel instead of becoming a threat. Likewise, when I make a poor decision, I must ask: *How can I be faithful while still correcting the situation as best as I can?*

Every Decision Has Long-Term Consequences

Because of Israel's failure to seek God, the Gibeonites became permanent servants, cutting wood and carrying water for the altar of the Lord. This sounds minor, but later in Israel's history, the Gibeonites' presence causes conflict (2 Samuel 21:1-9).

This reminds me that small compromises today can lead to bigger issues later. The choices I make—what I entertain, what I allow into my life, who I partner with—can have lasting effects.

Am I making decisions that honor God not just for today, but for the future?

Final Reflection

Joshua 9 challenges me to:

- Seek God's wisdom before making decisions. No matter how obvious something seems, I need His direction.
- Be a person of integrity. My word should reflect my commitment to God's truth, even when it's hard.
- Consider the long-term impact of my choices. What I allow today may affect my future more than I realize.

Lord, help me to seek You first in every decision. Keep me from relying only on what I see or understand. Give me discernment so I won't fall into deception. And when I do make mistakes, teach me how to handle them with wisdom and integrity. Thank You for Your guidance and grace. Amen.