

## **Joshua Chapter Nine (Part One) - Teaching Notes**

**Introduction:** A key idea in the book of Joshua is that God blesses obedience. Today, we hope to discuss the deception by the Gibeonites.

### **Body:**

**Read Joshua 9:1-15**

**B. Conquest of Southern Canaan. 1. Deception of the Gibeonites.** Those to the west of the Jordan River began to form a coalition to defend against Joshua and the Israelites. However, there were people from Gibeon who were deceptive. They pretended as if they were from a long ways away and tricked Joshua and the leaders into making a peace treaty. When the truth was found out that the Gibeonites were neighbors, there was initial grumbling. However, the leaders stuck together, kept their oath, and made the Gibeonites woodchoppers and water carriers.

### **Applications -**

- **What are you listening to and what are you saying?** Notice in vss. 1-2 that the people heard about what God had did and were afraid. First, both faith and fear come by hearing. In fact, fear may simply be believing something bad will happen. Second, we should make sure we are telling people about what God is doing, so they can believe in His blessings and fear His punishment. Third, we should be careful about what we listen to. If we are not careful, we will end up believing and fearing the wrong thing because we listen to it too much. *Let's work on telling others about God and monitoring what we listen to.*

- **Godly coalitions.** Notice in vss. 1-2 that the ungodly nations worked together. It is embarrassing to see ungodly people working in coalition with one another and we, who claim to be in love with Jesus, cannot work together. We may get a passing grade for working together in our own church - choirs and ushers. But when it comes to working together with other churches, our track record becomes less impressive. And when we look at working with other Christian denominations, our track record gets even worse. *Let's work on working together for the glory of God and advancement of His agenda.* Collaboration can help our churches do a better job with ministering to our men, young people, and even with economic empowerment.

- **Getting closer to God.** Notice in vss. 3-13 that the Gibeonites lied to save their lives. First, lying is sin. Even if God blesses, in spite of the sin, sin is still sin. Second, as bad as the lie may have been, the lie was inspired by the people's fear and reverence of God. They chose to take their chances with God's grace than to face His justice and wrath. In this sense, they may have shown more reverence for God than many of those in our churches. There are too many people who behave as if God will not do much in response to our sins. Think about how many people rob God of His tithes and offerings, praise and worship, and time and talent. *Let's work on reverencing God enough to draw close to Him.* The best way to draw close to God is to obey His will, not lie.

- **Inquiring of God.** Notice in vss. 14-15 the danger of making decisions without inquiring of the Lord. There is a way that seems right to a person, but the end is death. Things are not always what they seem. Thus, as believers, we are called to constantly call on the Lord for wisdom and seek His leadership in what we do. This is not to say that God will always speak to us in a miraculous way. Sometimes God simply reminds us of biblical principles or give us peace of mind with reason based or advice based decisions. And sometimes God gives us peace with decisions that are contrary to reason and advice, but are not contrary to scripture. *Let's strive to hear and obey God's will in all of our decision making.* This should be even more the case, when we are making big decisions.

- **The responsibility of leadership.** Notice in vs. 15 that at the end of day, Joshua was the one responsible for the decision. On one hand, leaders should seek sound advise from those around them. But on the other hand, leaders should make the decisions that they are willing to own, because they will be held responsible for the decisions that they make. *Let's pray for our leaders to seek and obey God's wisdom, instead of simply lean on their own reason or the advise of others.* As the leader goes, so goes those who follow.

**Conclusion:** Let's work on obeying God's will. God has much for those who obey His will.