



The Danger of Walking by Sight

JOSHUA 9:1–27



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WELCOME:

Fixing Our Focus

Suggested icebreaker:

Ask each GG member to share a brief story or experience where something or someone appeared to be different than they actually were. You may use these questions to prompt sharing:

- Have you ever bought something online that looked great in the pictures but was disappointing in reality?
- Have you ever misjudged someone based on first impressions?
- Can you recall a time when you were tricked or deceived by appearances?

WORSHIP:

Adoring Our God

Suggested songs:

- [Trust and Obey](#)

WORD & WALK:

Understanding & Applying the Word

LESSON AIM

1. Discernment and Dependence on God: GG members will understand the necessity of seeking God's guidance in all decisions to avoid deception and align actions with His will.
2. Covenant Faithfulness: GG members will learn the importance of honoring commitments and oaths, even in challenging circumstances, as a reflection of integrity and faithfulness to God.
3. Balancing Justice and Mercy: GG members will explore how to appropriately balance justice and mercy in dealing with others, reflecting God's character in our interactions and decisions.

INTRODUCTION

Joshua 9 recounts the deception of the Gibeonites, who craftily secure a treaty with Israel to save themselves from destruction. This chapter highlights the importance of seeking God's guidance in decision-making and the consequences of failing to do so. Through this narrative, we explore themes of discernment, covenant faithfulness, and God's justice balanced with mercy.

The Gibeonites deceive the Israelite leaders (vv. 1–13)

Instead of going to battle against the Israelites, the Gibeonites sought to have a treaty with them so that they would not be destroyed like those in the previous cities conquered by Israel.

1. What plan did the Gibeonites hatch when they heard of Israel's victories? What does this suggest about their understanding of God's power and his command to Israel?
2. How did the Israelites initially respond upon hearing the Gibeonites' story? What does this tell us about their awareness of potential threats to fulfilling God's commands?
3. What proof did the Gibeonites present to support their story? What does this story tell us about external appearances versus internal realities?

Application

Be aware that appearances can be deceiving. Therefore, recognize the importance of discernment and seeking God's guidance in all decisions. How can you develop a habit of looking beyond external appearances and seeking God's discernment before making significant decisions?

WORD & WALK:

Understanding & Applying the Word

The Israelites form a treaty before discovering the deception (vv. 14–17)

The Israelites make a treaty with the Gibeonites without consulting God first. And so, after several days, they discovered that the Gibeonites were actually residing in Canaan.

1. What did the Israelites fail to do before making a treaty with the Gibeonites? What were the implications of their failure to do so?
2. How long did it take to discover the true location of the Gibeonites? What can we learn about the consequences of decisions made without seeking God's guidance first?

Application

Reflect on the importance of accountability and dealing with the consequences of your actions. How do you usually handle a mistake or oversight? Do you seek to rectify it in a way that honors God?

The Israelites honored their treaty but imposed penalties for the Gibeonites' deception (vv. 18–27)

The Israelite leaders honored their word and didn't destroy the Gibeonites. However, they made them slaves of the nation because of their deception.

1. Why did the Israelite leaders decide to honor their oath to the Gibeonites? What does this teach about the sanctity of oaths and covenants in God's sight?
2. What consequence did Joshua impose on the Gibeonites for their deception? How does this balance justice and mercy, and what does this reveal about God's justice in the face of deception?
3. What roles were the Gibeonites assigned after Joshua decided their fate? How does this symbolize their integration into Israel and their service to God?

Application

How can you balance justice with mercy in dealing with others, especially those who have wronged you? How can you address the issue in a way that is just but also show compassion and seek restoration?

WORD & WALK:

Understanding & Applying the Word

PRAYER ITEM

Heavenly Father, we are reminded of the importance of seeking Your wisdom in all our decisions and the value of integrity in our commitments. Help us to discern truth from deception and to balance justice with mercy in our daily lives. Father, may we always turn to You first, trusting in Your perfect guidance. Teach us to honor our promises and to reflect Your character in all we do. We are grateful for Your constant presence and the lessons You teach us through Your Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. ■



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