

Deceived but Delivered

Read: Joshua 9:1-27

Main Idea: We must exercise godly discernment to avoid deception and uphold our commitments to God and others, trusting in His guidance and truth in every situation.

Key Verses: “So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the LORD. And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live.”
(Joshua 9:14-15)

Key Principles

- When we lean on what we can see, taste, and touch instead of seeking the Lord, we leave ourselves wide open to being deceived.
- A united front of opposition should drive us toward God in prayer rather than toward hasty agreements that feel safe in the moment.
- Evidence that looks convincing is not the same as truth, and we honor God when we slow down to verify what we are being told.
- The most spiritual question in any decision is not whether the choice seems reasonable, but whether we have actually asked the Lord.
- A promise made in God's name binds us even when it costs us, because keeping our word reflects the faithful character of the God we serve.
- God is gracious enough to weave His redemptive purposes even through our flawed choices, drawing former outsiders near to Himself.

Discussion

1. Why did the news that terrified other Canaanite kings instead embolden them to fight? Where do you feel pressure to act quickly rather than prayerfully?
2. What made the Gibeonites' worn-out provisions so persuasive? How do you tell the difference between evidence that looks compelling and a claim that is actually true?
3. How does the comment that Israel “did not ask counsel from the LORD” (v. 14) explain the whole failure? What decisions are you making without God first?
4. Why did the leaders keep their oath even after discovering the deception? What does that teach us about keeping commitments when they become costly?
5. Where is the Lord calling you this week to slow down and seek His counsel before a decision you are tempted to settle on your own?
6. How does the Gibeonites' move from cursed deceivers to servants at God's altar picture His grace toward us, since we were also once outsiders?

Prayer

- Pray that we would pause to seek the Lord before we trust our own experiences.
- Pray for:
 - Our church to grow in prayerful dependence on God's direction.
 - Each of us to keep our word with integrity, even when it costs us.
 - Patient compassion toward outsiders, as we too were spared by grace.

Deceived but Delivered
Joshua 9

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| I. | Resist the <u>snare</u> of false <u>appearances</u>. | 9:1-13 |
| 1. | Be <u>alert</u> to coordinated <u>opposition</u> . | 9:1-2 |
| 2. | Be <u>wary</u> of false <u>weakness</u> . | 9:3-8 |
| 3. | Be <u>skeptical</u> of unverified <u>claims</u> . | 9:9-13 |
| II. | Refuse the <u>silence</u> of prayerless <u>decisions</u>. | 9:14-15 |
| 1. | <u>Seek</u> God's <u>wisdom</u> . | 9:14 |
| 2. | <u>Surrender</u> your <u>will</u> . | 9:15 |
| III. | Respect the <u>sanctity</u> of faithful <u>commitments</u>. | 9:16-27 |
| 1. | <u>Honor</u> your <u>promises</u> . | 9:16-20 |
| 2. | <u>Hold</u> your <u>integrity</u> . | 9:21-27 |

NEXT WEEK:
Praying for the Impossible
Joshua 10