

The Book of Joshua



Gibeonite Deceit

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Bible Study – Good Shepherd Lutheran Church – Collinsville, Illinois

Chapter Nine

1. The Alliance of Canaanite Kings 9.1-2

How many nations are mentioned? Compare to 3.10.

Only six are mentioned here compared to 3.10. The Gergashites have dropped out. Skeptical scholars jump on this as an example of their view that this book of the Bible is a patchwork of stories that were made up. On the other hand there may be a very simple reason for this omission. One Jewish tradition says that the Gergashites had inhabited the land, but by the time Joshua arrived they had migrated to Africa. Yet their legacy continued when the nations of Canaan were listed.

Consider what Psalm 2 and Acts 4.15-28 have to say about those who conspire against God?

Psalm 2:1-2 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed...

Acts 4:18-20 And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. ²⁰ "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Many have conspired against God's plan of salvation. This is something God fully anticipated. In fact it is the ongoing story of the Bible. By the time we reach the last day the world will be in full rebellion against God and His Anointed (Messiah).

This is the shield used by Yale University. Although we can't be exactly sure what the Hebrew words "Urim" אֲוִרִים and "Thummin" תְּמִיִּם mean, they are similar to other Hebrew words that mean "light" and "perfections." The Yale shield and motto reflects the desire to pursue the will of God in all things.



Why is it important for us to seek God's will today? How do we do that?

James 4:15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

1 Timothy 4:4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵ for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

4. Israel's Dilemma 9.16-21

What was Israel commanded to do to the Hivites? How serious were oaths?

Deuteronomy 6:13 You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.

Deuteronomy 10:20 You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.

God is a God of truth. Everything we do either reflects this as we reflect His image or contradicts this as we show our fallen nature



The Famous Pool of Gibeon

Would Israel have been justified in breaking this oath? If forced to err, should we err on the side of mercy or justice?

5. Gibeonites Serve 9.22-27

How was the Gibeonite curse actually a blessing?

The Gibeonites were required to cut wood and carry water for the worship services of the tabernacle. This placed them in close proximity to the tabernacle and the teachings of the Torah. Eventually the tabernacle would be placed in Gibeon!

How can the Gibeonite incident be compared to the Rahab incident?

Like Rahab, Gibeonites showed faith. In 9.8 they say that they are coming to "the name of the LORD your God." This is similar to what the Queen of Sheba said when she came to Solomon. Later Jesus would commend her faith. They also seem to be aware of Deuteronomy 20.10-18 that Israel can offer peace treaties to nations far away.

In a sense the treaty with Gibeon was not like one of these peace treaties. Such a treaty did not involve coming to faith in Yahweh. A distant nation could work together with Israel and remain in their pagan beliefs. It was the pagan beliefs and practices of Canaan that were on God's *cherem* (things devoted to destruction) list.

Looking well beyond this incident we can see another similar situation that involves all of us. In Romans 9-11 St. Paul explains that Israel's rejection of the Messiah was used by God to bring the

Gentiles to faith. In many ways this unfortunate turn of events for Israel was very fortunate for us. A bad choice on the part of Israel leads to a good blessing for us. Here we see the fulfillment of Paul's words in Romans 8.28 "All things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."