

## Lesson 71 Joshua and the Gibeonites

## **Story Elements**

- Text: Joshua 9:1-27
- Setting: circa 1405 B.C., near Gilgal.
- **Characters:** God, Joshua, and Gibeonite ambassadors
- Plot: Men from Gibeon deceive the leaders of Israel into making a peace treaty with them.
- Key word(s) "\_\_\_\_\_" (vv 6,7, 11, 15, 16)
- Climax Joshua 9:14 And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD.

## Clever Ruse

| rv 1-15) As news spread across Canaan of the destruction of Ai and Jericho, many of the city-states in the and formed a confederacy against the Hebrews. However, the Hivites of Gibeon (and also of Chephirah, eeroth and Kirjath-jearim), took matters into their own hands and formed a cunning plan to trick the ebrews into a peace treaty. The plan involved:  Professing to be from a distant land. (The Hebrews were permitted to make treaties with nations outside of cf. Deu. 20:10-17)  Providing "evidence" to convince the Hebrews of their distant origins, including moldy bread, worn-out clothes, and ruined  Proclaiming their fear of God (vv 9-10). The Gibeonites were wise to mention only their knowledge of the exploits of the Hebrews under Moses' leadership and not also the miraculous victories of  This added to their claim of having left their homeland a long time previous. |
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| he Gibeonite plot was successful, and the Israelites were deceived.  |
| CATION The Hebrews' mistake was in not asking counsel of the LORD. They trusted in their own abilities  ———————————————————————————————————  |
| nsecrated Servants   |
| discrated off value  |
| vy 16-27) Three days later, the Hebrews discovered the real origins of their mysterious visitors and paid them visit. The soldiers wanted to attack the cities, but the princes (or elders) of Israel restrained them because f the they had made with the Gibeonites.   |
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APPLICATION→ Like Rahab, the Gibeonites are a Canaanite illustration of salvation and grace to the Gentiles. Matthew Henry wrote, "Let us imitate these Gibeonites, and make our peace with God in the rags of humiliation,

| godly sorrow, and mortification, so our iniquity shall not be our ruin. Let us be servants to Jesus, our blessed Joshua, and make a league with him and the Israel of God, and we shall"  10 |   |
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| 5.   | Later, we see the Gibeonites:  a. Become a part of tribal land (Josh. 18:25)  b. Have their town dedicated as a town (Josh. 21:17)  c. Would be unjustly persecuted by King (2 Sam. 21:1)  d. Helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:7)  |
| C  | oncluding Thoughts  |
|  | We may wonder why Joshua honored a treaty made under false pretenses, but we must remember that different cultures have different perspectives on oaths. An oath made in the name of the LORD was especially viewed as binding. (vs. 18) Can you think of another character that made a rash oath?  |
|  | <b>a 15:4</b> In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth his own hurt, and changeth not.  |
| 7.   | Though the princes of Israel were wrong on making the oath, they did right in honoring the oath. This helped to exalt in the eyes of the Gibeonites (who lives were spared) and in the Hebrew soldiers (who were denied the spoils of Gibeon).  |
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| CL   | swer Key: Key word(s): "league" • 1. a. Canaan; b. wineskins; c. Joshua • 2. →understanding • 3. league • 4. wood atters; b. Nethinims →live • 5. a. Benjamin; b. Leviticval; c. Saul; d. Nehemiah • 6. Japheth, Jud. 11:30-40 • 7. the name God  |
| Re<br>th   | w to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the Story Elements section. (2) ead through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the Answer Key. (3) Check your answers with see key and make the necessary corrections. (Note: some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one aswer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the Notes section. |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 307.