

The Gibeonite Deception - Joshua 9:1-27

Topics: Acceptance, Appearance, Assumptions, Compromise, Consequences, Deceit, Discernment, Dishonesty, Enemies, Escape, Evidence, Impulsiveness, Judging Others, Leadership, Lying, Neighbor, Obligation, Partnerships, Promises, Reputation

Open It

1. In what ways do people sometimes pretend to be who they are not?
- * 2. What does it feel like to be deceived by a friend?
3. How do your friends and coworkers view people who are dishonest?

Explore It

4. What was the reaction of Israel's neighbors when they heard about the battles Israel had won? (9:1-2)
5. What kind of reputation had the Israelites established? (9:1-3)
6. How did the people of Gibeon respond differently to Israel from the rest of their neighbors? (9:3-4)
7. Under what false pretenses did the Gibeonites present themselves to the Israelites? (9:3-6)
- * 8. Why did the Gibeonites go to such lengths to make a treaty with Israel? (9:6, 24)
9. What lies did the Gibeonites tell Joshua? (9:6-13)
10. How did Joshua respond to the Gibeonites' request to establish a treaty? (9:7-8)
- * 11. What mistake did the leaders of Israel make in dealing with the Gibeonites? (9:14)
12. What did the Israelites do when they discovered that the Gibeonites had deceived them? (9:16-18)
13. Why did the Israelites not attack the Gibeonites when they discovered they were their neighbors? (9:18)
- * 14. What compromise were the Israelite leaders forced to make with the Gibeonites? (9:20-21)

Get It

15. Why do you think the Gibeonites' ruse worked?
16. How would you describe Joshua's attitude in dealing with the Gibeonites?
17. How do you think Joshua felt when he discovered his mistake?
18. What does this story teach us about the consequences of sin?
19. What does it mean to "inquire of the Lord"?
- * 20. In what circumstances do we tend to rely on ourselves instead of seeking God's wisdom?
21. Why is it dangerous to rely on appearances when making important decisions?
22. Why do you think God sometimes allows the plans of deceitful people to succeed?
- * 23. What do the actions of Joshua in this story teach you about how to deal with your own mistakes?
24. In what area of your life have you relied more on your own strength than God's wisdom?

Apply It

25. What do you want to remember the next time you make an unwise decision?
- * 26. How can you "inquire of the Lord" the next time you have an important decision to make?
27. What concrete action can you take to protect yourself from others who want to deceive or take advantage of you?