

10/31/03

Lies Are Cleaver And Convincing
Josh. 9:1-27

One day God sent a prophet to prophesy against the alter at Bethel and after restoring the withered arm of Jeroboam, he refused to return with him and eat because God told him no to. But there was an old prophet who invited him to eat, telling him that an angel of God had sent him and he believed him, only to fall under judgment by a lion. 1Knnngs 13

Such was the case with Joshua and Israel, as they believed the Gibeonites, they were taken in by their lies.

We want to look at the covenant made by Israel with the Gibeonites, which is characterized by:

- I.** A fraudulent undertaking. Vs. 1-14
- II.** A foolish decision. Vs. 15-21
- III.** A formidable compromise. Vs. 22-27

I. A fraudulent undertaking. Vs. 1-14

- A.** The Gibeonites devised a deceptive plan to covenant with Israel. Vs. 1-5
 - 1.** The plan of all the other kings was to fight against Israel. Vs. 1-2

- a.** The kings who were on this side of the Jordan, encompassing those in the hills, the lowland, in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon had heard about the erecting of the alter, the reading of the Law at Mount Gerizm and Ebal. Vs. 1a-b
 - * The events of the previous chapter.
 - b.** Their names are given, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite--heard about it. Vs. 1b-h
 - c.** It was a united front in attempt to stop them from taking possession of the land. Vs. 2
 - * They were in reality rebelling against God who was judging them and giving the land to Israel! Gen. 15:16
- 2.** The plan of the Gibeonites was contrary to these kings. Vs. 3
- a.** The word “but” marks the sharp contrast.
 - b.** The deciding factor was in hearing what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai.
- 3.** The Gibeonites were cleaver in their plan. Vs. 4
- a.** They worked craftily “ormah”, which means wilily, shrewdness with an evil intent of presumptuous guile.

- * The word is used to describe the actions of a man who premeditates against his neighbor, to kill him translated treachery. Ex. 21:14
- b.** They went passing themselves off as ambassadors. Vs. 4a
 - 1) Those who are representing a foreign country.
 - 2) They were on the central mountain range about eight miles northwest of Jerusalem.
- c.** They took with them all the physical evidence to persuasively convince them of their words. Vs. 4b-5
 - 1) They took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended. Vs. 4b
 - 2) Old and patched sandals on their feet and old garments on themselves. Vs. 5a-b
 - 3) And all the bread of their provision was dry and moldy. Vs. 5c
- B.** The Gibeonites departed to persuade Israel by their careful deception. Vs. 6-14
 - 1. The Gibeonites arrived. Vs. 6
 - a.** They went directly to Joshua at Gilgal, the camp of Israel. Vs. 6a-b
 - 1) Probably this is a different Gilgal than the one of the men's circumcision.

- 2) There is one closer to the area of Mount Gerizim and Ebal, at the center of the land, which is probably the one. Deut. 1:30, 1Sam. 7:16, 10:9, 11:14, 13:7-8
- b.** They came face to face with Joshua and the men of Israel and declared the intent of their mission. Vs. 6c-f
 - 1) They said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country". Vs. 6c-d
 - 2) They said, "Now therefore, make a covenant with us." Vs. 6e-f
 - * Whenever you are pressured to make a decision don't, back off and wait!
- 2. The apprehension of the men of Israel was two-fold. Vs. 7
 - a.** Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you dwell among us". Vs. 7a-b
 - b.** "So how can we make a covenant with you?" Vs. 7c
 - 1) This was a check based on their understanding of the prohibition in the Law.
 - 2) But this could of very well been a check of Holy Spirit, warning them of the deception?

3. The response of the Gibeonites was with greater deception to distract them from having to answer the objection. Vs. 8-10
- a. They did it through false humility and submission, “But they said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” Vs. 8a-b
 - b. They are pressed by Joshua, who will not be side tracked, “And Joshua said to them, “Who are you, and where do you come from?” Vs. 8c-e
 - * Prohibited covenants with the people of the land. Deut. 71-3, 20:16-18
 - c. They seeing Joshua’s persistency and fear of being found out, immediately and cleverly distanced themselves from the land altogether. Vs. 9-10
 - 1) They said, to him: “From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God; for we have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt. Vs. 9
 - * The name of Yahweh refers to only to the fame but to the character of God as mentioned by Rahab! Josh. 2:9-11, 7:9
 - 2) They said, “And all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan--to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of

Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth.”
Vs. 10

* They mentioned nothing of Jericho and Ai, shrewdly confirming their ignorance to the local news!

4. The physical evidence was to conceal their false words. Vs. 11-14
 - a. They related their commission by their elders and the people. Vs. 11
 - 1) Telling them to take provisions with them for the journey and go to meet them. Vs. 11a-d
 - * They did not mention a king!
 - 2) Their message was to be, We are your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us.” Vs. 11e-g
 - * This is the third time they mentioned they were their servants, which appeals to the pride of man, playing on their view of being more powerful and in control!
 - b. They revealed the provisions as evidence of a long duration of time. Vs. 12-13
 - 1) Their bread was presented as dry and moldy, instead of hot and fresh when they left. Vs. 12

- 2) Their wineskins were empty and torn instead of full and new. Vs. 13a-c
- 3) Their garments and sandals had become old because of the very long journey. Vs. 13d
- 5. The Gibeonites succeeded in their deception due to careless perception. Vs. 14-15
 - a. The men of Israel relied on their own understanding. Vs. 14
 - 1) They took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the LORD.
 - 2) The word “take” means to take with the hand, with the idea of examining it! Vs. 14a
 - b. The men of Israel did not ask God. Vs. 14b
 - 1) The word “but” marks the sharp contrast.
 - 2) Literally from the mouth of Yahweh.
 - 3) Everything pointed to the verification that their words were true by the physical evidence, so why bother!
 - 4) Joshua had been instructed to seek God through the use of the Urim and thummin by the priest, for

determining the will of God, but the did not. Nun. 27:18-21

Illustration

The Chinese idiom for treachery and craftiness is, ““Honey in mouth, but dagger in heart.” #2434, Vol. 2

Application

- 1. People will do anything and say anything to secure their own benefit and well-being.
 - a. Sometimes it begins innocently but as it progresses, a decision is made consciously to present things in a better light.
 - b. This could be due to persona gain, fear of information being known or even shame of the truth.
 - c. Our American society today for the most part has no problem with lying or saying whatever it takes to obtain or accomplish whatever they are after, for morals and ethics have been replaced by situational ethics and value clarification and relativism.
 - 1) Jeremiah says, “Everyone will deceive his neighbor, And will not speak the truth; They have taught their tongue to speak lies; They weary themselves to commit iniquity.” Jer. 9:5
 - 2) “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For

Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.' 2Cor. 11:13-15

2. Beware of people who do not want to answer your questions or information needed.
 - a. It could be in terms of casual or personal relationship, that a person is seeking just their own agenda and will say anything to obtain their goal.
 - b. It could be a business deal and the person wants to hurry you to make a quick decision or close a business deal, take your time and ask all the questions necessary.
 - c. It could be a Matthew eighteen, but the person is not being very truthful, distorting and omitting information..
 - * "Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another." Eph. 4:25
3. Be very diligent to seek out correct and accurate information, particular in matters of life-long commitments and relationships.
 - a. Don't depend on your own understanding.
 - b. Don't trust your own conclusion, when it contradicts the word of God.
 - c. Don't be fooled by those in the church who still practice on deceit and manipulation.

- 1) We are to put on the whole armor of God to withstand the wiles of the Devil. Eph. 6:11-12
- 2) He is the God of this world. 2Cor. 4:4
- 3) He is a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1Pet. 5:8
4. Be careful to not become indifferent to the privilege of seeking the mind of God.
 - a. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; Phil. 4:6
 - b. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who can not sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Heb. 4:14-16
 - c. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal... 2Cor. 10:3-5

The deception came by a fraudulent undertaking!

II. A foolish decision. Vs. 15-21

- A. The Shalom covenant was realized. Vs. 15

1. The leader Joshua believed them and made peace with them. Vs. 15
 - a. The agreement Joshua made was one of fellowship with them. Vs. 15a
 - b. The implications were to a greater commitment, soundness, health, protection, etc.
2. The leader Joshua confirmed this peace by a covenant made with them to let them live. Vs. 15b
 - * They were one in alliance and mutual dependence now!
3. The rulers of the congregation swore to them. Vs. 15c
 - a. The agreement was a direct disobedience to God command to not make a covenant with the people of the land, lest they make them sin against God. Ex. 23:32
 - b. God said, “Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst” Ex. 34:12
 - c. God told them, “But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you

in the land where you dwell.” Num. 33:55

- B. The shocking reality to Israel. Vs. 16-17
 1. They lied about the distance of their homeland. Vs. 16
 - a. At the end of three days, after having made the covenant with them, they heard they were their neighbors.
 - b. Once they obtained their goal, they gradually spoke the truth, knowing there was nothing they could do about it.
 2. They lied by omitting the nearness of their cities in the land of promise. Vs. 17
 - a. They are named for us, Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim.
 - b. Kirjath Jearim is where the ark rested for twenty years after Philistines returned it, until David brought it to Jerusalem. 1Sam. 7:2
- C. The shabby reasoning for honoring the oneness of the covenant. Vs. 18-19
 1. The children of Israel did not attack them, because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel. Vs. 18a-b

2. The outcome was that all the congregation complained against the rulers. Vs. 18c
 - a. Rightly so, they compromised the word of God.
 - b. They had fresh in their minds the sin of Achan and probably feared the leaders had jeopardized the well-being of the people of God.
 3. The rulers, all of them said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them.”
 - a. They were wrong by not seeking God on the matter and trusting themselves.
 - b. They were wrong by swearing by the LORD God of Israel, to the people, this was their policy not God’s.
 - c. They said they could not touch them, God did not.
- D.** The shameful rational in view of the covenant. Vs. 20-21
1. They attempted to make up for their mistake by dressing it with spiritual garb but it still is flesh. Vs. 20
 - a. They said, “This we will do to them: We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us”, which is nowhere revealed by God, this was their attempt to co-

- hearse, intimidate and manipulate the people to agree with them.
- b. They gave the reason, “Because of the oath which we swore to them.”, binding themselves to something they pledged without God’s approval, this is their justification.
 - 1) It seem that God honored the hearts of the Gibeonites, for they became loyal to Israel, for God judged Israel three years of famine because Saul slew Gibeonites. 2Sam. 21:1
 - 2) But we have to be so careful not to use this case to justify our disobedience to God, to force the hand of God to honor us.
 - 3) Sometimes God in His sovereignty, will work despite our disobedience but this is not doctrine!
2. They made them servants, forgetting their own lives of bondage. Vs. 21
 - a. The rulers said to them, “Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation.” Vs. 21a-c
 - b. The rulers had promised this to the Gibeonites, before the meeting with the people. Vs. 21d

Illustration

How many young men or ladies have had to live with the consequences of their decisions because they were self-determined to be in charge of their lives?

Application

1. The incredible and horrible things people have to live with for making foolish decision, become reality.

- a. A person will make a decision to be unequally yoked and after they have evidence of the person's ill intent or deceitfulness continue in the relationship, settling for less.
- b. Others ignore all the warning signs and follow through into marriage, living a life of heart-break and discouragement.

* The prince of the power of the air, children of disobedience by nature, children of wrath. Eph. 2:1-2

2. The excuses and reasons given most of the time for the basis of their foolish decisions are exactly that.

- a. They can not be backed by the Scriptures.
- b. They can not be attributes to God's leading.
- c. They can not be credited to God's glory.

* It is a refusal to reckon the old man dead, on a daily basis. Rom. 6:11

3. The people who make constant foolish decisions in their lives can do one of two things.

a. They can attempt to spiritualized everything to appear spiritual.

1) Well, you know God uses everything for His glory.

2) God will save my husband or wife because I married them.

3) I am serving the Lord and I don't care what they do.

* Thinking they are pleasing God and growing in their fellowship!

b. They can admit their error and repent.

1) Ask God to forgive them.

2) Ask God for the grace, wisdom and strength to obey and glorify Him.

* "I say then: **Walk** in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the **flesh**. Gal. 5:16

4. When we see that we have made a wrong and bad decision or promise, that is in violation of the Scriptures, we should not hold to it, lest it should hurt or destroy us and others.

a. Don't think you must honor a legal or binding contract that is based on lies, deception or fraud, like Joshua, you walk away from it.

b. "Bread gained by **deceit** is sweet to a man, But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel." Prov. 20:17

The foolish decision came by self determination!

III. A formidable compromise. Vs. 22-27

- A.** The personal confrontation of the Gibeonites for their deception. Vs. 22-24
- 1.** Their personal accountability of their words. Vs. 22
 - a.** Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, “Why have you deceived us.” Vs. 22a-d
 - b.** Joshua repeated their very words, “We are very far from you, when you dwell near us?” Vs. 22e-g
 - 2.** Their punishment for their deceit. Vs. 23
 - a.** Joshua told them they were cursed and none of you shall be freed from being slaves—“ Vs. 23a-c
* They lost their freedom, literally they would never cease to furnish slaves!
 - b.** Joshua told them they would be woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God, the tabernacle and later the temple. Vs. 23d
* They lost their free-will!
 - 3.** Their prior hidden motive of their deceit. Vs. 24
 - a.** The Gibeonites came clean and said, “Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy

- all the inhabitants of the land from before you.” Vs. 24a-c
- b.** The Gibeonites declared that self-preservation will involve anything, “Therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing.” Vs. 24d-e
- B.** The personal concessions of Joshua with the Gibeonites after the deception. Vs. 25
- 1.** The Gibeonites casts themselves at Joshua’s mercy. Vs. 25
 - a.** They entrusted themselves to Joshua, “And now, here we are, in your hands.” Vs. 25a-c
 - b.** They acknowledged their guilt by declaring, do with us as it seems good and right to do to us.” Vs. 25d
 - 2.** The Gibeonites were spared by Joshua. Vs. 26
 - a.** Joshua delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel. Vs. 26a-b
 - b.** The Gibeonites were not kill. Vs. 26c
 - 3.** The Gibeonites were made works of the people and things of God. Vs. 27
 - a.** Joshua that very day made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation. Vs. 27a
 - b.** Joshua made them also woodcutters and water carriers for the altar of the LORD. Vs. 27a

- c. The place would be the tabernacle and temple. Vs. 27b
 - 1) This was the lowest of work. Deut. 29:10-12
 - 2) This was compromise and unsound wisdom by putting heathens to do service to the Lord!

Illustration

Dishonesty in many ways

Unfortunately often pays;

Happily it's also true

Deception catches up with you. #2453

Application

1. All and any confederacy or attack by individuals are to be entrusted to the Lord.
 - a. "For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, But the LORD upholds the righteous". Ps. 37:1-2
 - b. "No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me," Says the LORD." Is. 54:17
 - c. "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God [is] faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of

escape, that you may be able to bear it." 1Cor. 10:13

2. All deception and lies must be confronted and responded to, if people are going to be honorable and reconciled.
 - a. Truth must be spoken, to clear up all the lies, omissions or distortions.
 - b. The truth is to be excepted as a sign of repentance for the wrong or damage done through the deceit.
 - c. The person should be assured that from that point on, all the energies will be to restore, strengthen and develop the relationship.
 - d. The accountability includes leaders.
 - 1) John says, "I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God." 2Jn. 1:9-11
 - 2) His name means to be nourished, rightly so by his lies and abuse of his power!
2. All of us need to remember how gracious Jesus has been to us in such situations.

- a. We must be gracious and merciful, as the Lord has been to each of us.
- b. We must make sure, we are not merely attempting to punish the person on an ongoing basis.
- c. We must leave the past behind by the grace of God and the love of God by dying to self.
 - 1) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.” Eph. 4:30-32
 - 2) Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also [must do].” Col. 3:12-13

The formidable compromise would become a source of further compromise!

Conclusion

The covenant made by Israel with the Gibeonites was characterized by:

- I. A fraudulent undertaking!

- II. A foolish decision!
- III. A formidable compromise!