

Study Guide



Joshua 9 – March 5, 2017

Gibeonite Deception

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we walk through Joshua we are going to see how Joshua relates to our everyday battle of faithfulness. **Our aim and our prayer for this study is to gain the wisdom we need for the battle of faithfulness.** During our time in Joshua we will be adapting our study guide from [Crossway's book, Knowing the Bible: Joshua, A 12-Week Study](#) by Trent Hunter. We recommend you purchase this book and use it in your Community Groups and for personal study as we go through Joshua. We have copies of the book available in our bookstore.

For this weeks study on Joshua please check out the following pages...

Walk Prayer & Missions

March 25- April 4—South Sudan
For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared
Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

March 3rd-4th— [Marriage Conference](#)
March 5th-April 9th— [Connection Group](#)
March 5th-April 9th— Kid's Shine
March 17th-19th— [DNow](#)
April 14th-15th— [Men's Canoe Trip](#)
May 26th-31st— [Student Life Camp](#)

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Great is Thy Faithfulness](#)":

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee,
Thou changest not, Thy compassion's, they fail not,
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Read Joshua 9

Commentary

The story of the Gibeonite deception can make us scratch our heads. They are an entertaining bunch, but who are these people, and what are they doing in the story? The Gibeonites seem to know that Israel was directed to dispossess and exterminate the residents of Canaan and probably knew that Israel was to make no treaties with these peoples (v. 24; Exod. 23:31-33; 34:12; Deut. 7:2). But they may also have known that Israel was permitted to spare and conclude peace with cities located 'very far from you' (Deut. 20:10-18); doubtless for this reason the Gibeonites stress that they are from 'a distant land' (vs. 6,9).

One might compare the Gibeonites words with Rahab's confession of faith in 2:10-13. How difficult to tell the difference between faith (like Rahab's) and flattery (like Gibeon's), especially when that flattery is so spiritual and pious. Both are Canaanites set apart for destruction; both have heard about and fear Israel and her God; both know they are doomed unless they are accepted by Israel; both plead for mercy, albeit in a suspect and clumsy fashion; both are received and integrated into the covenant community. **So it appears that God, even through Israel's foolish failings, is working out his plan (Deut. 7:2; Josh. 9:14).** As promised, God is extending the blessing of Abraham to the nations (Gen. 12:1-3), a blessing fulfilled ultimately in the church.

The Israelites foolish failing was their decision to neglect wisdom. Joshua 9 warns God's people against such cocky independence. **In the context of our various trials we need wisdom to know how to function in those trials and circumstances; it is available from a giving God, and we are to ask for it (James 1:5).** Our need is no different from Israel's. **We need not only the power of God to overwhelm our obvious enemies but also the wisdom of God to detect our subtle enemies.** Unfortunately, the church too often craves God's power while it ignores God's wisdom.

Discussion

1. When the native people who lived in the land heard about Joshua's conquest of Jericho and Ai what did they do (vs. 1-2)?
2. Read verses 3-6. What plan did the people of Gibeon devise to protect themselves from the people of Israel? Look at Joshua 10:1-2 to get some background about who the Gibeonites were. What was their objective with the people of Israel? Why did they make all their provisions look old and worn out?
3. Look at Deuteronomy 7:2 to see why the leaders of Israel were wary about making a treaty with the Gibeonites. How were the Gibeonites able to overcome the skepticism of the leaders of Israel?
4. What does Joshua 9:14 reveal about Joshua's deeper problem?
5. Looking at verses 15-21. What agreement did Joshua make with the people of Gibeon (vs. 15)? What were the implications and complications of the agreement they made with Gibeonites? What was one chief aspect of this agreement that made it so binding (vs. 18-19)?
6. What thoughts do you have about Joshua's neglect to ask God's counsel regarding making a covenant with the Gibeonites? Why do you think Joshua did not seek God's counsel? In whose name did Joshua make the covenant with the Gibeonites? What could Joshua have done to seek God's counsel?
7. How would you compare the Gibeonites to Rahab and her family? Review Joshua 2:8-15 regarding Rahab and Joshua 9:8-15 and vs. 22-26 regarding the Gibeonites. What was each of their beliefs about the God of the Israelites and about the Israelites mission in Canaan? What were Rahab and the Gibeonites asking for from Israel? How were they similar to each other? How were they different from each other? Why do you think Rahab is included in the heroes of the faith in Hebrews chapter 11 and there is no mention of the Gibeonites there?

Application

1. This chapter shows the dangers of making a covenant with non-believers. Second Corinthians 6:14-15 says, “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?” These verses are applied, among other things, to the covenant of marriage between believers and unbelievers. How do the complications arising out of this covenant in Joshua 9 relate to complications that often arise out of marriages between believers and non-believers?

2. When are you most tempted to handle things yourself rather than seeking wisdom and prayer?

Note: This weeks questions are based upon questions in the Book entitled “Joshua” by Trent Hunter (available in the NFCC bookstore, at Lifeway Bookstore, or online.)

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Joshua to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

Here is a list of local ministries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Hub/purchased
Young life
Heart of hope
First priority
Ark-la-Tex crisis pregnancy center
Community renewal
Grief counseling
Celebrate recovery
Samaritan counseling
Last call ministries
Golden age ministries
Rescue mission
Luke's lighthouse
NOLA Baptist
FCA

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you are in your groups this week! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!