

Today's Bible Teaching

“A mistake God chose to turn into a blessing”

From Joshua Chapters 9:1-27

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A prayer to prepare you for hearing and learning from God's word.

Almighty God and loving heavenly Father, guide me and teach me of yourself from your Word. Help me and others to see the wisdom and value of living life according to your word the Bible; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. **Amen.**

Joshua 9:1-27

¹ Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about these things—the kings in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the entire coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Lebanon (the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites) — ² they came together to wage war against Joshua and Israel.

³ However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, ⁴ they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended. ⁵ They put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and mouldy.

⁶ Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the Israelites, “We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us.”

⁷ The Israelites said to the Hivites, “But

perhaps you live near us, so how can we make a treaty with you?”

⁸ “We are your servants,” they said to Joshua.

But Joshua asked, “Who are you and where do you come from?”

⁹ They answered: “Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the Lord your God. For we have heard reports of him: all that he did in Egypt, ¹⁰ and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan—Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroath. ¹¹ And our elders and all those living in our country said to us, ‘Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them, “We are your servants; make a treaty with us.”’ ¹² This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But now see how dry and mouldy it is. ¹³ And these wineskins that we filled were new, but see how cracked they are. And our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey.”

¹⁴ The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord. ¹⁵ Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.

¹⁶ Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbours, living near them. ¹⁷ So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim.

¹⁸ But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the Lord, the

God of Israel.

The whole assembly grumbled against the leaders, ¹⁹ but all the leaders answered, “We have given them our oath by the Lord, the God of Israel, and we cannot touch them now. ²⁰ This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that God's wrath will not fall on us for breaking the oath we swore to them.”

²¹ They continued, “Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers in the service of the whole assembly.” So the leaders' promise to them was kept. ²² Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, “Why did you deceive us by saying, ‘We live a long way from you,’ while actually you live near us? ²³ You are now under a curse: You will never be released from service as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”

²⁴ They answered Joshua, “Your servants were clearly told how the Lord your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from before you. So we feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this. ²⁵ We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you.”

²⁶ So Joshua saved them from the Israelites, and they did not kill them.

²⁷ That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the assembly, to provide for the needs of the altar of the Lord at the place the Lord would choose. And that is what they are to this day. (NIV)

What's one thing I have learnt from today's Bible Teaching? Write it below:

Questions:

1. How did the kings west of the Jordan respond to the advancing success of the Israelites? How did the Gibeonites respond? Why? (See vss 1 to 13 and 22 to 27 also Deuteronomy 7:2-4)
2. How did the Israelites respond to the Gibeonites? (See vss 14 to 21. See also Numbers 30:2; Deuteronomy 23:21-23; James 5:12; Psalm 15 Proverbs 3:5-6)
3. How did God respond? (See vss 23 and 27; 1 Chronicles 16:39; 1 Kings 3:4 and Nehemiah 3:7)
4. Far from leading Israel into idolatry, the Gibeonites faithfully served the Lord as one with the Israelites. How does God today bring into fellowship those who seem to be outside his grace? (See John 1:12)
5. The story is about integrity and the fear of the Lord. Not making decisions without first enquiring of the Lord. The keeping of promises and working with God with the consequences to fulfil his purpose when mistakes are made. Can you think of examples in your life?

Pray about what you've learnt about God, and yourself.