

Joshua 9:14 *“The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord.”*

1. Who are the enemies of God?

- **Dark Spiritual Powers**

Ephesians 6:10-12 *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”*

- **Unbelievers being influenced by Spiritual Powers**

[Slave girl in Acts 16]

- **Believers that are working against what God is doing or hurting others**

James 4:4-6 *“You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”*

2. The strategy of the enemies of God is to unify and to deceive.

Joshua 9:1-2 *“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)— they came together to wage war against Joshua and Israel.”*

3. Defense against the enemies of God is to obey God’s instruction and seek His wisdom.

4. As the people of God we need wisdom from God.

Joshua 9:3-15 *“However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended. They put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy. 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.”*

The Israelites said to the Hivites, “But perhaps you live near us, so how can we make a treaty with you?”

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

But Joshua asked, “Who are you and where do you come from?” 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, 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 Ashtaroth. 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.”’ 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 moldy it is. 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.” The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord. Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.”

5. Keeping our commitments even when it hurts.

Joshua 9:16-21 “Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them. So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim. 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, but all the leaders answered, “We have given them our oath by the Lord, the God of Israel, and we cannot touch them now. 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.” 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.”

Psalm 15:4

*“who despises a vile person
but honors those who fear the Lord;
who keeps an oath even when it hurts,
and does not change their mind;”*

6. God’s Grace displayed among the Gibeonites

Joshua 9:22-27 “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? You are now under a curse: You will never be released from service as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”

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. We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you.”

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

Fusion Group Questions:

1. What did the Holy Spirit speak to you through Joshua 9 and this sermon?
2. What do you need to do about it?
3. Have you ever been fooled by the “spiritual testimony” of someone? How did you come to realize the untruth?
4. When are you most tempted to handle things yourself rather than seeking wisdom through prayer?
5. Do you need the wisdom only when you are in doubt? Why?
6. Some might call Israel’s oath keeping “eating crow.” When has your mistakes lead to such crow eating dinners?
7. Do you think that there is a redemptive focus here concerning the Gibeonites? If so, how might you be a blessing to non-believers?