

# The Gibeonite Treaty

Joshua 9 - 10

## PPT Title

## The Gibeonite Treaty

**Main Point:** We must not trust our own judgment, but follow God in everything.

## PPT Verse

**Key Verse:** *Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take. - Proverbs 3:5-6*

**Props:** Coins; Tattered, dirty jacket or cloak to put on, a small amount of loose dirt or brown make-up, bread with spots of blue or green food coloring so it looks moldy;

## BACKGROUND/REVIEW



**Say:** Last week we learned about Achan and the city of Ai. Achan was an Israelite who chose to disobey God's very clear instructions. He kept valuable things from Jericho even though he was told not to go near these things. **Teacher:** Hold up a handful of coins. Because of Achan's sin, the Israelites lost a big battle with the city of Ai. We learned that when we choose to disobey God, we remove ourselves from God's protection and His blessings. In the end, Achan's sin caused his death and the destruction of his family. When Joshua chose to OBEY God, God was no longer angry with His people, and once again, God blessed them. The next time the Israelites fought the men of Ai, God was with the Israelites, and they won the battle. The city of Ai was completely destroyed.

## THE GIBEONITES (Joshua 9)



**Say:** The Bible tells us that when the kings of the other cities in Canaan heard how the Israelites destroyed Ai and Jericho, they came together to make war against Joshua and the Israelites. However, there was one city that did not want to go to war with them. It was the city of Gibeon. It was not far from Ai. **Teacher:** point to Gibeon, Jericho, and Ai on the map. Gibeon was a large city - larger than Ai, and the men of Gibeon were great fighters (Joshua 10:2). Still, the Gibeonites were afraid of the Israelites, because they had heard that God had instructed His people to destroy all the people in the land (Joshua 9:24).

Listen to the instructions God had given to His people about going to war.

As far as all the cities INSIDE the land of Canaan, God said:  
*Kill everything in those cities that breathes. Completely destroy them. Wipe out the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. That's what the Lord your God commanded you to do. If you don't destroy them, they'll teach you to follow all of the things the Lord hates. He hates the way they worship their gods. If you do those things, you will sin against the Lord your God. - Deuteronomy 20:16b-18*



As for the cities OUTSIDE the land of Canaan, God said:  
*Suppose you march up to attack a city. Before you attack it, offer peace to its people. Suppose they accept your offer and open their gates. Then force all of the people in the city to be your slaves. They will have to work for you...That's how you must*

*treat all of the cities that are far away from you. Those cities don't belong to the nations that are nearby.* - Deuteronomy 20:11, 12, 15

**Ask:** So, what was God's rule for war for all the cities inside the land of Canaan? *Destroy all of the people in the land. Why? Because they worship false gods, and they would teach the Israelites to follow false gods.*

**Note to teacher:** This will be a MAJOR point in the following weeks. We will see that the Israelites did follow false gods because of the influence of the Canaanites who remained in the land, bringing about spiritual decline and judgment, found in the book of Judges.

**Ask:** What was God's rule for war for cities that were far away? *Offer them peace. If they accepted, they would be slaves.*

**Ask:** Why would any city accept this offer and choose to be slaves? *Because if they didn't, they would be killed like Jericho and Ai (Deuteronomy 20:12).*

**Teacher:** Point to Gibeon on the map again.

**Ask:** Is the city of Gibeon INSIDE the land of Canaan? Yes!

**Say:** The Gibeonites had heard these rules. They knew that if the Israelites obeyed God, they were doomed. They believed God was powerful enough to do what He said He would do! So they came up with a plan to trick Joshua and the Israelites. They sent a group of men to Joshua. But, first, they put on worn out clothes. **Teacher:** Put on your tattered jacket or cloak. They wore worn out sandals. They put worn-out sacks on their donkeys. They even brought dried-out, moldy bread with them! **Show "moldy" bread.** Get the picture, here. **Teacher:** Mess up your hair and smear some "dirt" on your face. Slump over and try to look weary. The Gibeonites made it look like they had been traveling for a REALLY long time, from a VERY far away place. Actually, the trip was only two or three days, downhill.



*Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us."* - Joshua 9:6



The Israelites were at Gilgal, right above Jericho. The Gibeonites had only traveled this distance. **Teacher:** Point to Gilgal, right above Jericho. Show the distance from Gibeon to Gilgal. The men of Israel weren't sure if they should believe the men. Again, Joshua asked them where they were from. The Gibeonites said they had come from "a very distant city." They said they came because they had heard reports of the mighty hand of God. They heard what He did for the Israelites in Egypt and in the land of Canaan. Then they *really* poured on the deception. They showed the moldy bread and said it was still warm when they left for their trip! They said their clothes and sandals were all worn out because their trip was so long.

Let's think about this. Joshua couldn't call the FBI to see if these people were whom they said they were. He couldn't sit down at his computer and do a "Google" search on distant lands, or how long it takes fresh bread to turn moldy.

**Ask:** So, what should Joshua have done? *Ask God!*

**Say:** Read this important verse with me:

**PPT Verse**

*The men of Israel looked over the supplies those men had brought. **But they didn't ask the Lord what they should do.*** - Joshua 9:14



**Say:** Uh oh, we can see it coming! Joshua made a peace treaty with the men. He made an oath that they could live. All of the Israelite leaders agreed and made an oath, in the name of the Lord, that all of their people could live. Three days later, the Israelites found out that the Gibeonites lived near them. The Israelites were very angry with their own leaders for making the peace treaty with them. They did not want to make God angry by going back on their oath, so they did not go to war with the Gibeonites. Instead, they made the Gibeonites to be their slaves. This may seem like a good solution, but it was not what God had commanded. God told the Israelites to destroy all of the people in the land of Canaan, because if they lived, the Israelites would eventually follow their false gods and sin against God. We will see in later lessons that this is exactly what happened (Judges 2:11-13).



**Application:** Today, we live in what is called the "Information Age." We can find information on any subject in the whole world in just a matter of minutes. There are literally millions of books on the market. There are thousands of different magazines, on every subject from knitting to space travel. Then there is television and the computer. It is very easy to think we have all the answers. Or at least, we think there are other really smart people who have all the answers. But the Bible warns us about thinking we have all the answers.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; **do not depend on your own understanding.** Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take. - Proverbs 3:5-6*

When we do what we think is right without seeking God FIRST, it is called "being wise in our own eyes." The Bible says:

*Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a foolish person than for him. - Proverbs 26:12*

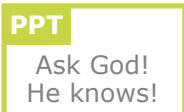
*Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil. - Proverbs 3:7*



It is like a small child trying to do something without their parent's help. Say a two year old wants to walk through her neighborhood to play with her friend. The child has a very limited amount of knowledge and limited amount of experience.

**Ask:** What dangers could there be for this child? *She could get lost, she might run out in front of a car, a big dog might come after her.*

**Say:** The parent, however, has lived 20 or 30 years longer than that child has. The parent knows the safest way to get there. And the parent can see all of the consequences that lie ahead for the toddler. That little child may be sure she knows how to get to her friend's house, but she really does not. There are dangers she cannot see. The parent knows MUCH more than the child, and only wants what is best for the child.



Likewise, God is INFINITELY smarter than we are (Isaiah 55:9). He has always been (Genesis 1:1) and He can see everything in our lives (Psalm 33:13-14). And God only wants what is BEST for us (Jeremiah 29:11). Isn't it wise to let Him instruct us and guide us? The Bible says God will reward those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

**The Sun Stands Still** (Joshua 10)

**Teacher:** Before teaching, choose two students. One will hold the moon; one will hold the sun.



Today, when we hear the name "Jerusalem," we automatically think of an important city for the Israelites in Jesus' day, and even for the Jewish people today. However, way back when the Israelites entered the Promised Land, there were other people living in Jerusalem. The king of Jerusalem had heard about how Joshua and the Israelites had destroyed Jericho and Ai. This king also heard about the Gibeonites making a treaty with the Israelites. The king and his people were very alarmed because Gibeon was a great city with a great army.

**Ask:** Why would the Gibeonite treaty make the king nervous? *The Israelites already had a very big army and God was on their side; now the Gibeonites would help Israel; the Gibeonites would not help the people in Jerusalem.*



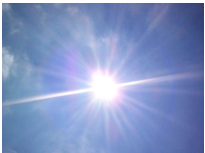
The king of Jerusalem asked five other kings to join him and attack Gibeon. So the armies of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon all joined together and attacked Gibeon.

*The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua at his camp in Gilgal. "Don't abandon your servants now!" they pleaded. "Come at once! Save us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have joined forces to attack us."*

*So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. "Do not be afraid of them," the Lord said to Joshua, "for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you."- Joshua 10:6-8*

**Teacher:** Have a student hold up moon picture and walk across stage area while you talk about marching at night. Joshua and his army marched uphill all night long. It was a 25-mile march in the cover of night. **Have the moon go down, and have a student hold up sun picture up high, and walk slowly across the stage area (child should not stop moving until the sun stops in the story).** They arrived early in the morning and took the kings by surprise. God gave the Israelites great victory in fighting by confusing the enemy armies. Then, as the armies tried to run, God hurled large hailstones down at them. This killed even more of the enemy soldiers than those who died while battling.

Then Joshua asked for something VERY unusual. He asked for the sun to stand still in the sky!



*The sun stopped in the middle of the sky. [Sun stop!] It didn't go down for about a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since. It was a day when the Lord listened to a mere man. You can be sure that the Lord was fighting for Israel! - Joshua 10:13b-14*

Therefore, darkness did not fall until Joshua and the Israelites destroyed all of their enemies. God had promised victory. God ALWAYS keeps His promises!

**Application:** God confused the armies, sent hail, and even stopped the sun in the sky to keep His promise to deliver the enemy into Joshua's hand! Surely, God will go to amazing lengths to keep His promises and glorify His name (John 12:28). The Bible is FULL of God's promises.

**Ask:** If God would stop the sun in its tracks to keep His promise, is there anything that could stop Him from keeping His promises to you? *No!*

#### PPT Main Point

**Main Point:** We must not trust our own judgment, but follow God in everything.