



FOLLOW
THE DONKEY
The Continuing Journey

The Donkey of Discernment

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.”

Joshua 9:3–5



The Donkey of Discernment

The Gibeonites arrive on donkeys, worn-out sacks, cracked wineskins, patched sandals, dry bread

Everything looks authentic but looks can lie

They've come not in honesty but in fear and deception hoping Israel won't notice

“But they did not seek the counsel of the Lord.”

(v.14)



First Instinct of Discernment

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

Joshua’s first reaction:

(v.7)

He had a moment of suspicion, that was the spark of discernment flickering

God often gives that quiet check in the spirit before deception takes hold



First Instinct of Discernment

Joshua sensed something was off but he didn't follow that feeling to prayer

Suspicion without prayer leads to self-confidence, not spiritual clarity

How often do we sense something isn't right but rush ahead anyway?

Discernment starts with instinct, but it matures through inquiry with God



Questions Without Consultation

“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.”

**They expressed a desire to
be servants**

Joshua 9:8–9

**They claimed to be from a far-off land,
but never said where they were from**

They even acknowledged God



Right Process Wrong Person

Joshua questioned them but never questioned God

He asked the right questions to the wrong people

He was thorough in diplomacy but silent in devotion

Joshua gathered information when he needed revelation

Discernment is not about clever reasoning, it's about dependence on God



Decisions by Sight, not Discernment

The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord.

“Sometimes there’s a subtle difference between God’s elevator and Satan’s mineshaft.”

Joshua 9:14

When prayer is missing the price is coming

Everything before builds toward this moment of neglect

Everything after unfolds from its consequence

One un-prayed decision can produce years of unwanted obligation



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.



The Cost of Unchecked Decisions

Discernment delayed becomes deception exposed

While God can redeem our missteps, He would rather prevent them

When we fail to seek God's direction, we end up serving what we were meant to subdue



Israel was called to rule the land but they became bound by their own un-prayed promise

The Cost of Unchecked Decisions

Israel is now under King David

**Joshua, the elders, and the original
treaty-makers are long gone**

Yet the consequences remain

A famine reveals unfinished business

**David does what Joshua didn't do, he
inquires of the Lord**



The Cost of Unchecked Decisions

“It is because of Saul and his bloodstained house; he put the Gibeonites to death.”

2 Samuel 21:1

**Joshua teaches us how
discernment is lost**

**Saul teaches us how
discernment is ignored**

**David teaches us how
discernment is restored**



What the Donkey -- Joshua

Even worn-out things can deceive if we don't pray through them

Discernment isn't suspicion, its submission to God's voice

Even good leaders stumble when they lean on logic instead of the Lord

Prayer is the hinge that keeps perception from becoming presumption

"But they did not inquire of the Lord."



What the Donkey – Saul and David

When we don't seek God, we don't just risk inconvenience we risk inheritance

Poor discernment doesn't just affect us it affects those who come after us

**Seek the Lord early or
you may have to seek Him
later; under pressure**



The Discerning Donkey

Where have you “sampled” decisions without seeking God?

Before your next life choice pause... Pray

**Seek the Lord early... or you may have to seek Him later;
under pressure**

**Let the Spirit show you
whether you're standing at
God's elevator or the
enemy's mineshaft**



“But they did not inquire of the Lord.”

Terms and Conditions

ACCEPT



When we seek His counsel first, even worn paths become wise paths and the donkey that once carried deception can now carry discernment.

