

Joshua 9:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.

Analysis

And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel—Joshua's protection of the Gibeonites upheld covenant integrity despite their deception. The verb נָצַל (natsal, 'delivered') often describes divine rescue from enemies. Joshua's intervention prevented mob justice, establishing rule of law over vengeful impulses. The Israelites wanted to attack them (v. 18), but Joshua's leadership restrained the assembly.

This protection foreshadows Christ as covenant mediator, who delivers believers from deserved wrath. The Gibeonites obtained through treaty deception what they could never earn—safety within Israel's camp and service in God's presence. Similarly, believers receive through Christ's righteousness what deception could never secure: reconciliation with God. Later history vindicated Joshua's protection; when Saul violated this treaty, divine judgment fell on Israel (2 Samuel 21:1).

Historical Context

Joshua's decision carried long-term implications for Israel's political landscape. Gibeon became a Levitical city (Joshua 21:17) and remained important through Israel's monarchy—the tabernacle resided there during David's reign (1 Chronicles 16:39, 21:29). Saul's later massacre of Gibeonites violated this sacred oath, requiring David to make atonement through executing Saul's descendants (2 Samuel 21:1-9), demonstrating that God held Israel accountable for covenant promises even those made under deception.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Joshua's protection of the deceptive Gibeonites challenge our tendency to withhold mercy from those who wronged us?
2. What does God's later judgment on Israel for violating this treaty teach about the seriousness of covenant promises?
3. In what ways does this narrative illustrate that God's grace often operates through imperfect human decisions within His sovereign plan?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶת־יָדָם לְפָנָי עָשָׂה

And so did H0 H3651 he unto them and delivered H853

H6213 H5337

בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבָנִי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל

them out of the hand of the children of Israel that they slew H3027 H1121 H3478 H3808 H2026

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