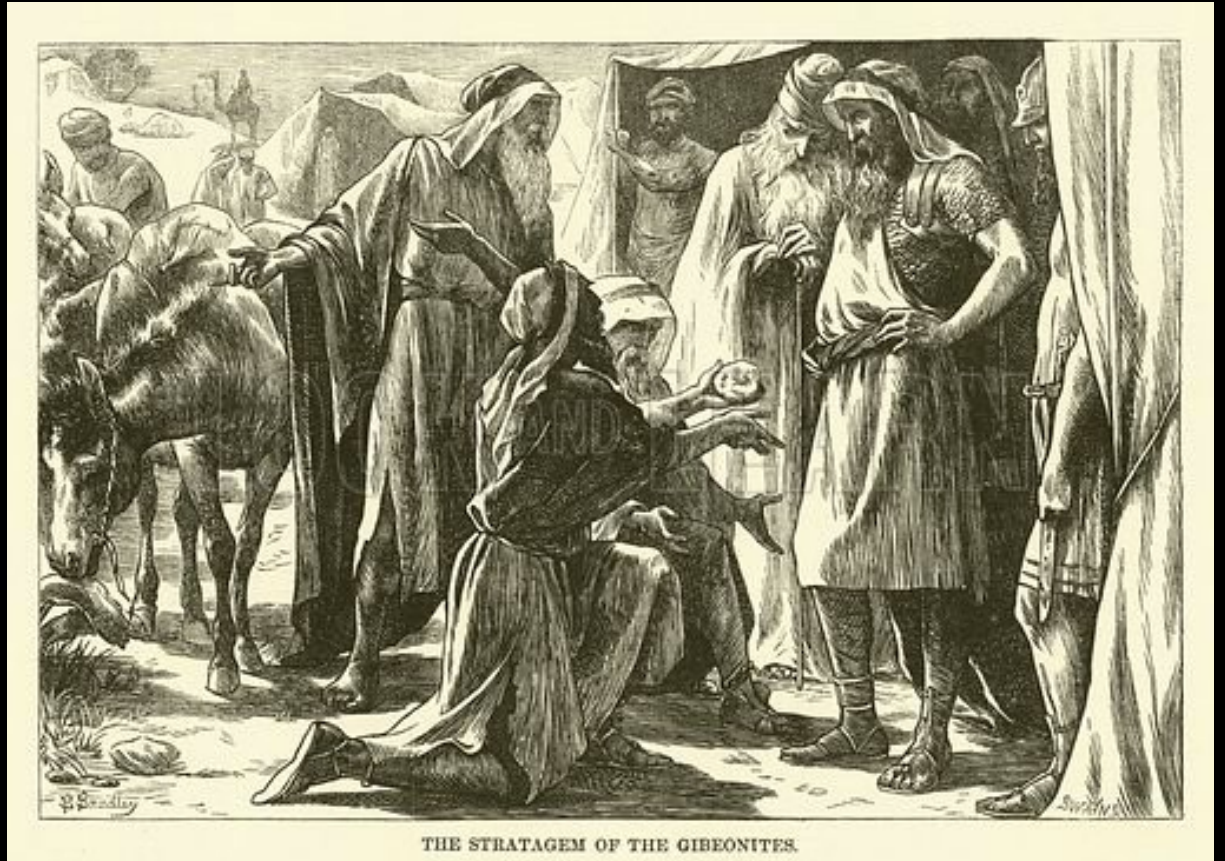


Don't Be Fooled— Joshua and the Gibeonites



JOSHUA 9:3–15

³ But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, ⁴ they on their part acted with cunning and went and made ready provisions and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, ⁵ with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes. And all their provisions were dry and crumbly. ⁶ And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant country, so now make a covenant with us.”

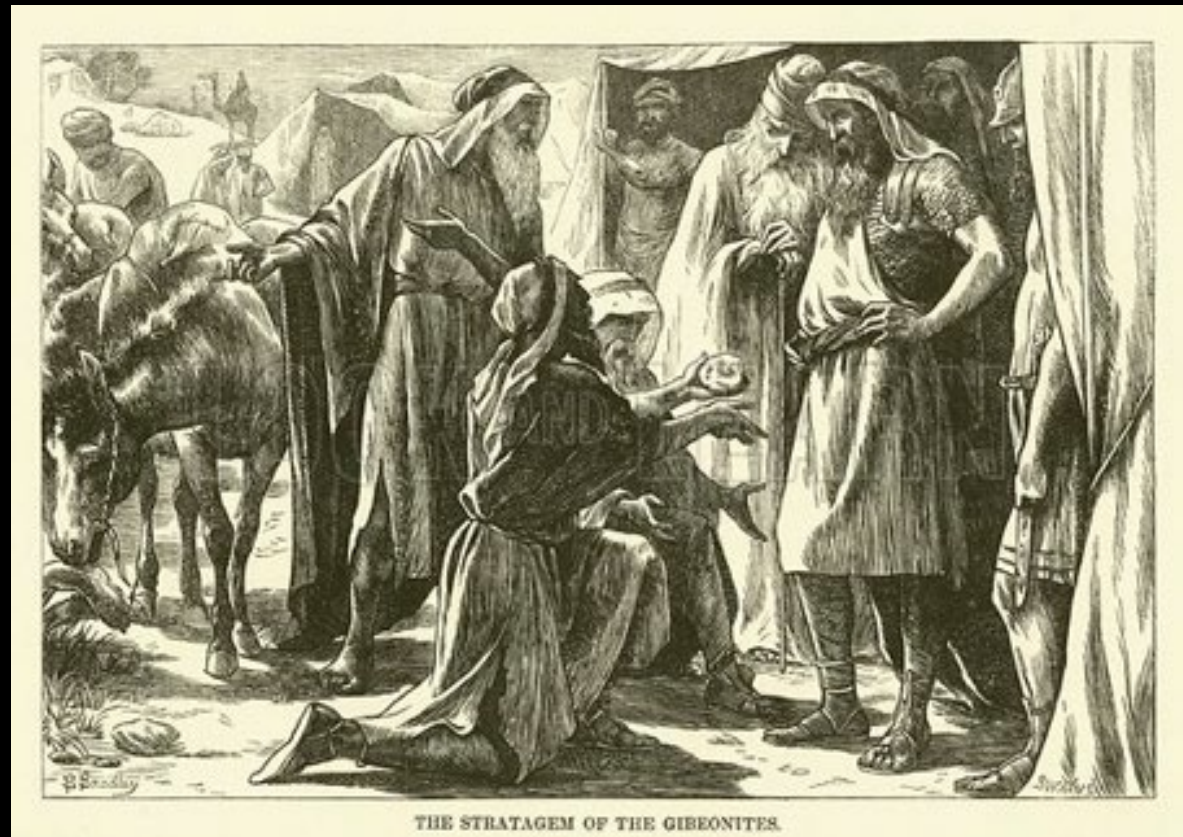
⁷ But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?" ⁸ They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you? And where do you come from?" ⁹ They said to him, "From a very distant country your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God. For we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in Egypt, ¹⁰ and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroath. ¹¹ So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey and go to meet them and say to them, "We are your servants. Come now, make a covenant with us." ' ¹² Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey on the day we set out to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and crumbly. ¹³ These wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they have burst. And these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey."

¹⁴ So the men took some of their provisions, **but did not ask counsel from the LORD.** ¹⁵ And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

Convinced that Israel could not be defeated, the people of Gibeon decided that the only way they could survive was to **trick** the Israelites into making a **treaty** with them.

They came to Joshua's camp acting as if they had journeyed from a **far country**.

To give their claim credibility, they dressed in **old garments**, put **old baggage** on their donkeys and carried **old, moldy bread**.



The Gibeonites said that even in their distant land they had *heard all about the God of Israel* and how he had given his people victory over all the nations that came against them.

What they had heard convinced them that they should seek to make a covenant with Israel, so they set out on a long journey to seek a treaty with Israel.

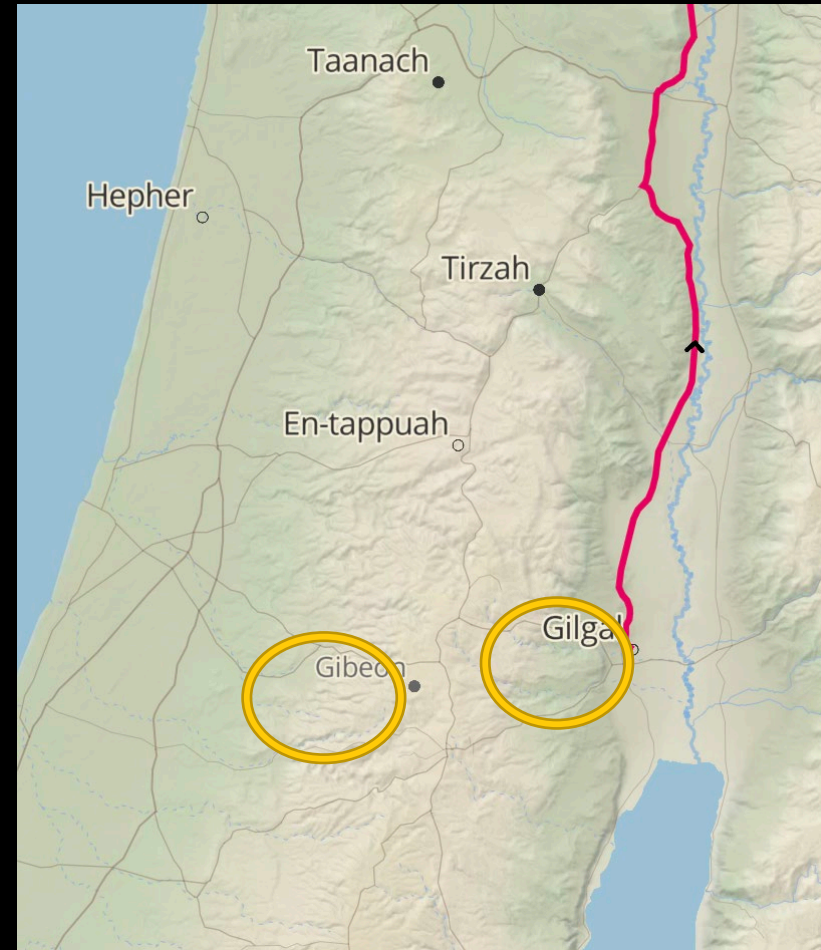


The truth was that the people of Gibeon were **Hivites** who lived right in the **middle of Canaan**, about **seven miles north of Jerusalem**, and **not far** from where Israel was then encamped at **Gilgal, close to Jericho**.

They were among the Canaanite peoples of whom God had commanded:

Deuteronomy 7:2

² “And when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall **make no covenant with them** and **show no mercy to them**.”



Joshua and his men were **completely taken in** by the Gibeonites.

They had a **plausible story** that gave every **appearance** of being true.

So Joshua made peace with them, and entered into a **covenant treaty** with them to let them live—a treaty he was bound to honor.



You can do what you think is best or inquire of the Lord, but inquiring of the Lord is always the better choice.



1. You can do what you think is best or inquire of the Lord, but inquiring of the Lord is always the better choice .

The key verse here is the last part of Joshua 9:14

¹⁴ So the men took some of their provisions, **but did not ask counsel from the LORD.**

For some reason, it *did not occur* to *Joshua* or the *leaders* of Israel to *ask counsel* of the Lord.



They *should have known better*.

When God commissioned Joshua to succeed Moses as Israel's leader, he specifically said that when Joshua made decisions about what Israel was to do, "*he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him . . . before the Lord*" (Numbers 27:21).



Even though the *Tabernacle* and the *Eleazer the High Priest* were only a *few steps away*, Joshua made the mistake of not inquiring of the Lord before making his treaty with the Gibeonites.



Stay in the tent!

Once made, Israel was *bound* to the treaty.

Joshua was obliged to let the Gibeonites live, so he made them ***wood-cutters*** and ***water carriers*** for the Israelites.

Bad decisions have consequences.
In the time of King David, God brought a three-year famine upon Israel because King Saul violated the treaty with the Gibeonites. The famine only ended after seven of Saul's sons were hanged.

Make a bad enough decision and 3,000 years later people will make Medieval tapestries depicting what an idiot you were.

["Gibeonites Trick Joshua," Pieter
Coeck va Aelst tapestry, 1544]



God's divine guidance *was available but ignored.*

The problem wasn't that Joshua and his men were sloppy in their investigation but *they were alone in their decision.*

It wasn't that they didn't *think* but that they didn't *pray.*

So, they were deceived.



2. All of us are easily deceived.



There is a dangerous pandemic
that has infected the entire human
race . . .



. . . and it **isn't** the Coronavirus.

The human race is
universally infected with
spiritual blindness.

Worse yet, we are
often blind to our own
spiritual blindness.



Joshua's mistake speaks pointedly to us.

The New Testament repeatedly **warns** believers about **being deceived**.



Galatians 6:7

⁷ **Do not be deceived**: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

1 Corinthians 6:9

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived**

James 1:16

¹⁶ **Do not be deceived**, my beloved brothers.

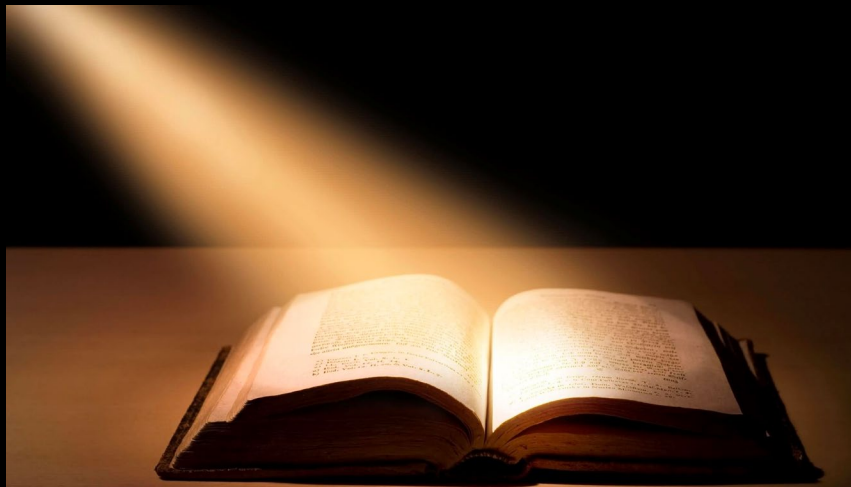
Without the *help of God's spirit* and the *counsel of God's Word*, all of us are *spiritually blind*.



3. *The remedy for being deceived is to lean upon God's wisdom rather than your own understanding.*

There is no excuse for a Christian's being **deceived** by appearances, or **left in ignorance** concerning God's will.

God still guides those who abide in **his word** and seek his wisdom in **prayer**.

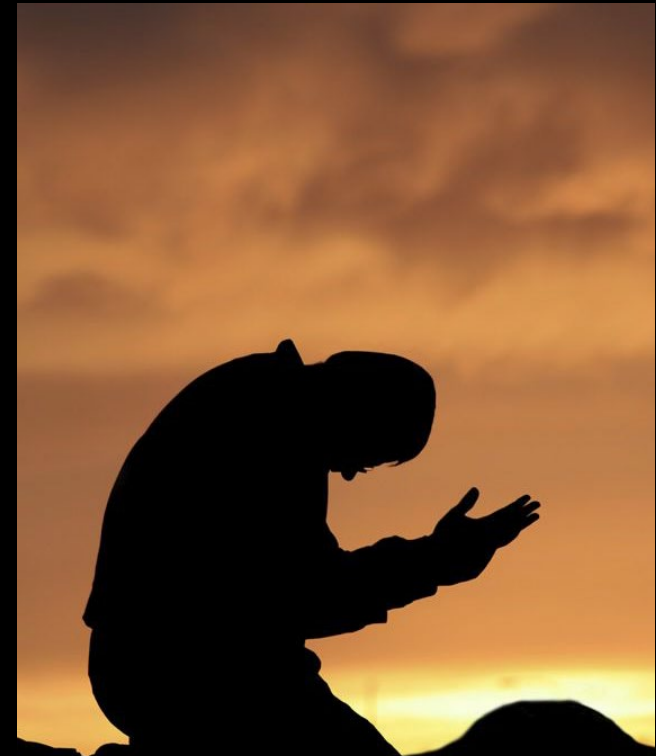


Psalm 119:105

¹⁰⁵ **Your word** is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

James 1:5

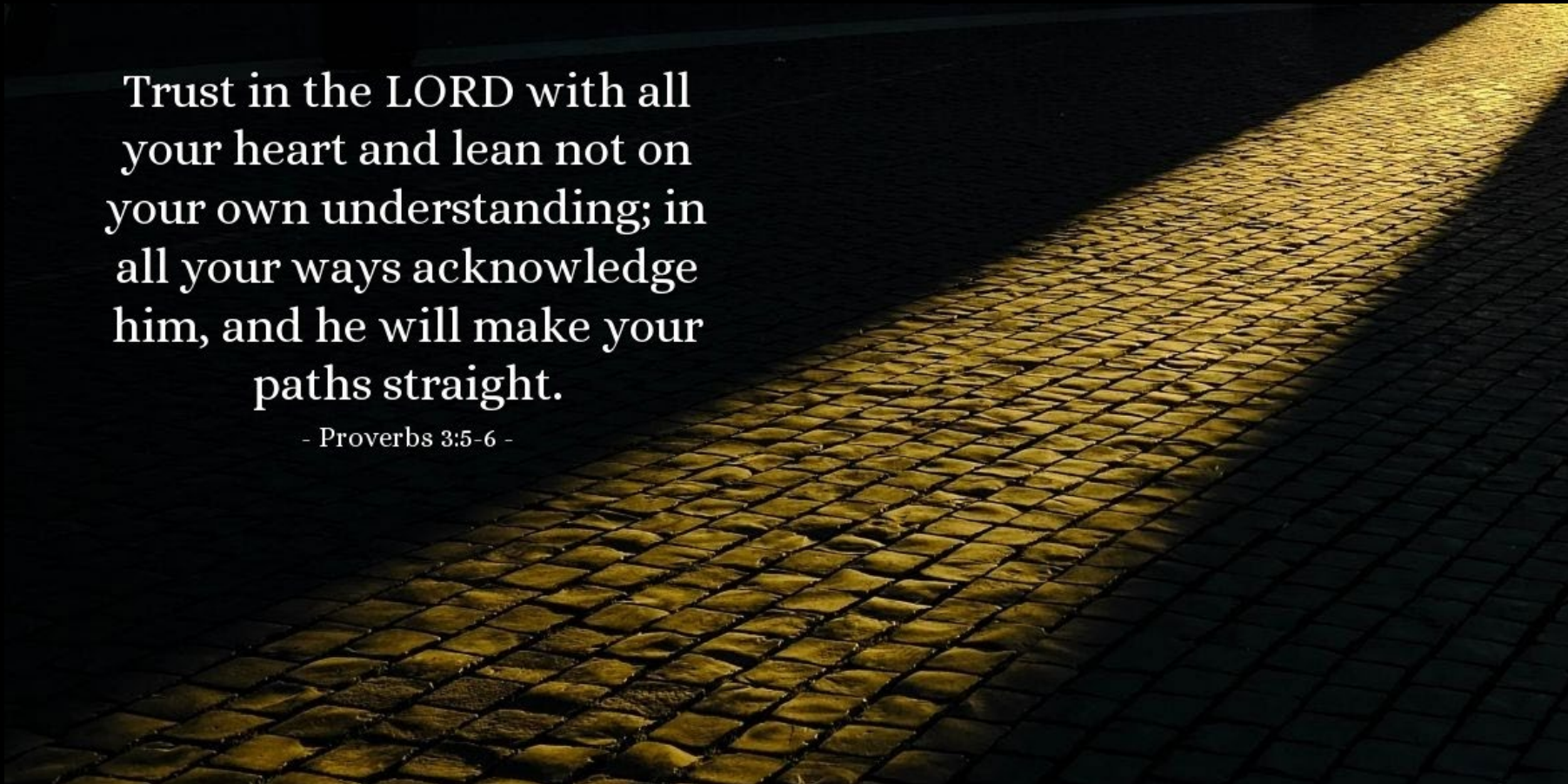
⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask God**, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.



Application

Trust in the LORD with all
your heart and lean not on
your own understanding; in
all your ways acknowledge
him, and he will make your
paths straight.

- Proverbs 3:5-6 -

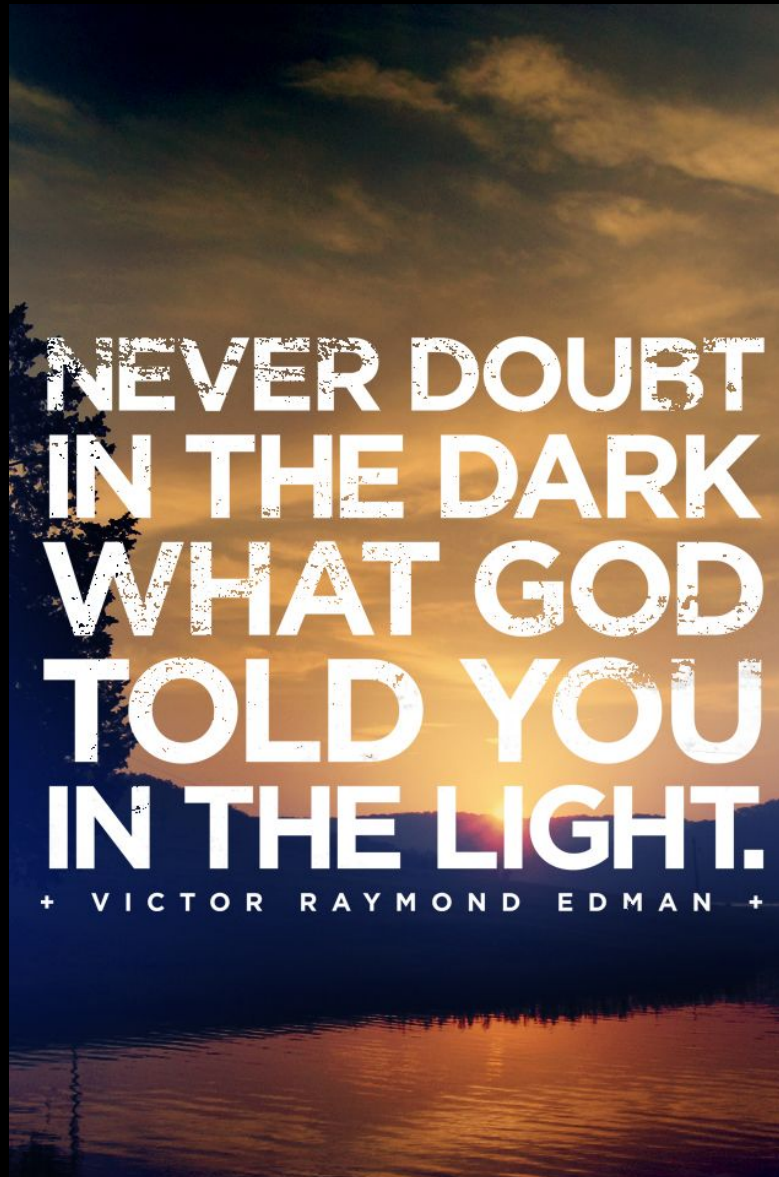


God's *guidance* is
promised to *all* who seek it
on ***three conditions***:

1. To *trust in the Lord* with all
your heart is to make up
your mind that you ***believe
what God says*** and will ***do
what he commands*** without
exception.



2. *Not leaning on
your own
understanding
means
renouncing your
own wit and
wisdom, and
never doubting
God's word
or thinking that
you know better.*



3. To *acknowledge God in all your ways* is to wholeheartedly *pursue* what we *ask for* in the *Lord's Prayer*:

that *God's kingdom come*
and *his will be done*
over *every square inch of your life*.

YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE,
ON EARTH

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

MATTHEW 6:10

Don't be fooled!

