

### The Destruction of Deception

October 30 - November 5, 2011

**PRAYER:**

Begin with a few moments of sharing thanks and praises in prayer.

**OPENER:** What was your favorite costume as a child? Why?

Have you ever bought something that later turned out to be a lemon?  
How did you feel?

**Read:** Joshua 9:1-15

**DISCUSS:** How did the kings west of the Jordan react to Israel's conquest of Jericho and Ai? What about the people of Gibeon?

How would you have reacted if you had been a king in that area?

What was the ruse used by the people of Gibeon to trick Joshua and the Israelites? Why do you suppose it worked?

In this regard, what is the significance of the Israelites "sampling" but not "inquiring"? (vv. 12-14)

**Read:** Joshua 9:16-27

What did the Israelites do when they discovered they had been tricked by the Gibeonites? (vv. 16-18)

How did this affect those responsible for the unpopular treaty?

How did Joshua finally deal with the Gibeonites? (vv. 22-23)

What was the Gibeonites response to Joshua's curse?

**PLAN for ACTION:**

The Gibeonites knew that their neighbors were fighting a losing battle, for God was fighting for Israel, and no army could resist Him. So, they decided to use guile instead of muscle. If Satan does not defeat you by coming as the devouring lion (1 Peter 5:8-9), he will try again as the deceiving serpent (2 Corinthians 11:3). He never gives up.

The men of Israel "did not inquire of the Lord" (vs. 14) as they should have. Have you ever made an important decision in your life without inquiring of the Lord? What was the result?

Have you ever made a promise which later turned out to be difficult or unpopular to keep? What happened?

As a fearful and accursed Gibeonite, would you have fought for your freedom or submitted to perpetual slavery? Why?

Do you readily accept, or usually resist, authority imposed on you? Does it depend on who is doing the imposing? How so?

Strategy was important for Joshua. What does that say about the use of strategy in planning your life? In doing God's work?

How can this group pray for you this week?