

10/24/03

Joshua 7-8

Jericho has been taken, they have tasted victory in the promise land, they are ready to advance into the land.

Ai lays before them but something happens, sin has entered the camp, as Achan took of the things devoted to God.

Joshua and Israel are both unaware of the sin but hey should not of been ignorant about the defeat that took place at Ai.

7:1-5 The defeat of Israel at Ai.

7:1 The folly of Israel.

- 1) The sin of Achan involved the entire nation of Israel by a trespass. Vs. 1a
 - a) The word “But” marks the sharp contrast between the last verse of the pervious chapter and the first of this chapter.
 - b) Though God was with Joshua as He had been with Moses, sin had interrupted the favor of God for Israel.
- 2) The charge against Achan was that he took of the accursed thing. Vs. 1b-g

* They were told it would be their own destruction. Josh. 6:18, 26

- 3) The anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel. Vs. 1h
 - a) Today is no different, God still does not look kindly to sin in His church.
 - b) Paul confronted sexual sin. 1Cor. 6:17-19, 11:30-31
 - * Be sure your sin will find you our. Num. 32:23

7:2-5 The commissioning of spies to Ai.

- 1) Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and said, “Go up and spy out the country. So the men went up and spied out Ai.” Vs. 2
 - a) Ai means a ruins”, about fifteen miles from Jericho, which was at an elevation of 800 feet below sea level and now they would be going up to an elevation of 2500 feet above sea level, a difficult adjustment.
 - b) Beth Aven means house of wickedness.
 - c) It encompassed the area of the central mountains.
- 2) The spies retuned with their reconnaissance report. Vs. 3
 - a) The told Joshua to not bother all the people for the people in Ai were few.

- * The reference to “go up” means that they were ascending in altitude from Jericho.
- b) Two or three thousand men would be sufficient to attack Ai.
 - * It is estimated that the city had about 12,000 inhabitants, roughly about 3,000 fighting men.
- c) They had become presumptuous and over-confident in themselves by not seeking God on the matter.
- 3) The outcome was that about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai. Vs. 4
- 4) The details were distressful. Vs. 5
 - a) The men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, as they chased them from the gate of the city to Shebarim, killing them on the descent.
 - b) The result was that the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

7:6-9 The desperation of Joshua over the defeat at Ai.

7:6 The despair of Joshua.

- 1) Joshua tore his clothes, a sign of mourning, grief and bereavement.
 - a) Joshua had been around for forty years with Moses, he should of known

something was wrong in the camp, not with God.

- b) Joshua knew that sin is the only thing that caused God to remove His favor.
- 2) Joshua fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until evening, to hear from God. Vs. 6b-c
 - a) The time to seek God was a bit late.
 - b) The time should have been before they attacked Ai.
- 3) Joshua and the elders put dust on their heads. Vs. 6d
 - a) Their mourning and grief is for their defeat, death of the men, being humiliated and discouraged.
 - b) Their mourning and grief should have been over the fact that God had removed Himself from them.

7:7 The direct accusation of God by Joshua.

- 1) Joshua blames God for the failure of Ai. “Alas, Lord GOD, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all- to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us?” . Vs. 7a-f
 - a) Questioning God, “Why have You brought the people over the Jordan at all. Vs. 7a-d
 - b) Decisively holding God responsible for the death of the men. Vs. 7e

- 2) Joshua had failed to remember the promise of God, declaring that he wished they would have compromised and been satisfied on the Jordan, “Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan!” Vs. 7g
- a) The people in the wilderness also. Ex. 16:3, Num. 14:1-4
- b) Defeats cause us to double guess our right decisions and what we have heard from God.

7:8 The discouragement of Joshua.

- 1) Joshua was more concerned about how to explain the defeat and disheartened condition to Israel, “O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies?”
- 2) Joshua should have been more concerned with asking God, what was wrong.

7:9 The distorted view of God’s honor by Joshua.

- 1) Joshua informs God that now the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land would hear what happened, surround them and kill them, “cut off our name from the earth” Vs. 9a-c
- 2) Joshua then kind of reprimands God by saying, “What will You do for Your great name?” Vs. 9d

- a) As if to say, “I am attempting to be the best field general but Your aren’t making it easy for me Yahweh”.
- b) I am trying to uphold Your name in honor but what are You going to do now that You got us into this mess?”
- * Moses did the similar thing. Ex. 32:12, Num. 14:13-16, Deut. 9:28, 32:26-27

7:10-15 The divine rebuke of Joshua for his complaint about the defeat at Ai.

7:10-13 The indignation of God.

7:10 The Lord reproves Joshua.

- 1) The LORD said to Joshua: “Get up!”
- a) His presence before the Lord was an affront to God.
- b) He had accused God rather than to seek the reason for the defeat.
- * There is a time to pray and a time to move, similar to Moses before the Red Sea. Ex. 14:15
- 2) The LORD said, “Why do you lie thus on your face?”
- a) Rejecting his complaint.
- b) Rejecting his accusation.

7:11-12 The identification of their sin.

- 1) The nation had sinned. Vs. 11a-b

- a) Joshua should have been looking for sin in the people instead of trying to find fault with God.
 - b) Israel had sinned, missed the mark of what God required of them. Vs. 11a
 - c) Israel had also transgressed, a willful disobedience of Yahweh's covenant He had commanded them. Vs. 11b
- 2) The indication of their sin. Vs. 11c-d
- a) They had taken some of the accursed things. Vs. 11c
* These things were devoted to Yahweh.
 - b) They had stolen them for Yahweh. Vs. 11d
 - c) They had deceived themselves and the people. Vs. 11d
 - d) They had placed these things among their own stuff. Vs. 11e
- 3) The implication of their sin. Vs. 12
- a) This was the very reason the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies. Vs. 12a
 - b) This was the reason why Israel turned their backs before their enemies. Vs. 12b
 - c) The reason being, they had become doomed to destruction. Vs. 12c
* Since they took of the accursed thing, they now were cursed by Yahweh!

- d) This would be the reason why Yahweh would not be with them anymore. Vs. 12d
* God does not leave His people, they forsake Him!
- e) This removal of His presence had a remedy, if they destroyed the accursed from among you. Vs. 12e

7:13 The instruction about their sin. impediment due to their sin.

- 1) Joshua as the leader was told to get up, and sanctify the people. Vs. 13a-b
- 2) Joshua was to give the reason for the command of God. Vs. 3c-h
 - a) He was to tell them to sanctify themselves for tomorrow because Yahweh said there is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel". Vs. 13a-g
 - b) He was to tell them that they could not stand before their enemies until they took away the accursed thing from among them. Vs. 13h
 - 1)) Sin is an impediment to God.
 - 2)) He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy. Prov. 28:13, Ps. 66:18, Is. 59:1-2

7:14-15 The indicated plan for the inquiry of the one who sinned.

7:14 The indicated procedure.

- 1) In the morning Joshua was to bring the people according to their tribes and God would choose the tribe that sinned. Vs. 14a
- 2) That tribe would come according to families and God would chose the family that sinned. Vs. 14b
- 3) That family would come by household and God would chose the household that sinned. Vs. 14c
- 4) That household would come according to man and God would choose the man that sinned. Vs. 14d
- 5) The reasoning behind the long drawn out procedure is to magnify God's love and mercy to forgive.
 - a) How the mind of God was known is not indicated but it was either by the Urim and Thummim of the priest, which means lights and perfections. Ex. 28:30
 - b) Or by lots, even as Jonah. Num. 33:54
* "The Lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. 16:33

7:15 The indicated judgment.

- 1) The one who sinned by taking the accursed thing shall be burned with fire. Vs. 15a
- 2) The person and all he possess will be burned with fire. Vs. 15b-d
 - a) The reason are two, he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD. Vs. 15c
* Transgressed "abar" means to cross over willfully knowing the prohibition of the covenant.
 - b) He has done a disgraceful thing in Israel. Vs. 15d
* He wrought folly in Israel, Gen. 34:7

7:16-26 **The discipline to remove the sin that caused the defeat at Ai.**

7:16-18 The implementation of God's instructions.

- 1) Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. Vs. 16
- 2) Joshua brought the clan of Judah, and he took the family of the Zarahites. Vs. 17a-b
- 3) Joshua brought the family of the Zarahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. Vs. 17c-d
- 4) Joshua then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of

Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.
Vs. 18

7:19-21 The inquiry and confession of Achan.

1) The inquiry from Achan regarding his sin.

Vs. 19

a) He inquired from Achan with humility and gentleness. Vs. 19a-c

* “Now Joshua said to Achan, “My son, I beg you.”

b) He instructed Achan to honor God.

Vs. 19d-f

1)) Achan was to give glory to the LORD God of Israel by making confession to confirm that God is the revealer of all that is secret. Vs. 19d-e

* The root word is to give Him praise.

2)) Achan was to be honest in his confession by telling Joshua what you have done and not hide it from him. Vs. 19f-g

* “So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, “Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.” Jn. 9:24

2) The incriminating confession of Achan regarding his sin. Vs. 20

a) Achan answered Joshua and said, “Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel.” Vs. 20a-b

b) Achan gave witness to what he did. Vs. 20c-21

1)) He described the lust of the eye, “When I **saw** among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I **coveted** them and **took** them.” Vs. 20c-21a-d

a)) These are the three steps all take, when they sin! 1Jn. 2:16

b)) James says God does not tempt any man but every man is tempted....

2)) He declared where he had hidden them, “And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.” Vs. 21e-f

* The tenth commandment, you shall not covet. Ex. 20:17

7:22-23 The incriminating evidence of Achan’s sin.

1) The process of justice was speedily as Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it. Vs. 22

- a) There were no motions drawn of illegal search and seizure raised.
 - b) There were no objections to have legal council.
- 2) The procurement of the items were taken from the tent and brought to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. Vs. 23
- a) The witness of God was sufficient.
 - b) The witness of Achan was incrimination.
 - c) The witness of the evidence verified his guilt.

7:24-26 The impressionable execution of Achan.

7:24 The procession to the execution.

- 1) Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had. Vs. 24a-m
- a) There is no forgiveness, due to the fact that Achan was found out.
 - b) He did not confess voluntarily but only because he was discovered, the implication being he would not of ever confessed it God had not revealed his sin.

- 2) They brought them to the Valley of Achor. Vs. 24n
- a) Some object to the execution of his sons, daughters but they had to of being party to the sin, for no one pays for another man's sin before God.
 - b) The things coveted and all that he owned is to be burned also, the silver, gold, oxen, donkeys, sheep and his tent.
 - c) Achan himself.
 - * "For what **profit** is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt. 16:26

7:25 The proclamation before the execution.

- 1) Joshua charge Achan with his crime, "Why have you troubled us?" Vs. 25a-b
- 2) Joshua declares the verdict of the Lord, "The LORD will trouble you this day." Vs. 25c
- 3) Joshua witnessed the execution of Achan by the people, "So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones." Vs. 25d-e
- a) Death was administered first.
 - b) Then the bodies were cremated.

- 4) Some will say this is too severe and harsh, so let examine the crime.
 - a) The one who sinned already knew they had sinned but they thought they could get away with their sin.
 - b) The defeat and death of the men at Ai, should of caused the sinner to come forwards and confess but they did not, they instead hardened their heart.
 - c) The instruction to all to present themselves before the Yahweh was another opportunity for the person to repent but instead hardened their heart more.
 - d) The indication of Achan by God as the sinner indicated the line of being too late for repentance for the sin, he was hardened and said nothing.
 - e) The individual confession was due to being found out and caught, being sorry for his sin.
- 5) No one pays for the sins of another before God.
 - a) Ezekiel tells us that the sin of a father and son are never imputed to the other. Ezk. 18:20
 - b) Achan and those of his family were guilty, though nothing is said, but without doubt all were involved

- c) Korah rebelled but his children were not, because they were innocent. Num. 16:32, 26:11
- d) Verse twenty-four shows he didn't need the money.
 - * Our sin involves others. 1Cor. 4:5, I Pet. 4:17-18

- 7:26** The perception after the execution.
- 1) They raised a memorial. Vs. 26a-b
 - a) They raised over him a great heap of stones to remind all of what sin does to a family and a nation. Vs. 26a
 - b) They still could see it to the day of the writing of the book of Joshua, reminding their children and future generations. Vs. 26b
 - 2) The Lord was once again for Israel. Vs. 26c
 - a) The LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger impressing their minds and hearts, that sin brings God wrath and judgment without exception.
 - b) Instructing them to confess their sin before it is too late.
 - c) Imploring them to understand that sin removed place a person back in fellowship with God.
 - 3) They named the location according to the tragic event. Vs. 26d

- a) They named the place the Valley of Achor to this day, which means trouble.
- b) The play on word is inescapable, the name of Achan means “troubler”.
- c) They did not whitewash the matter and said, “Oh he made a mistake, he did not know what he was doing”, no he brought trouble because he was a troubler!
* Ananias and Sapphire are of the same example. Acts 5

8 :1-9 The command battle plan of God.

8:1-2 The Divine favor of God is restored.

- 1) The LORD exhorted Joshua saying, “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed”. Vs. 1a-c
* The reason being, sin had been removed from the camp, Achan. Josh. 7:26
- 2) The Lord then commands Joshua to attack Ai again. Vs. 1d-f
 - a) They were to take all the people of war not just a few and go up.
 - b) Not like they thought with three-thousand.
- 3) The Lord gives Joshua a promise. Vs. 1g-q

- * He had given into their hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.
- 4) The Lord gives specific instructions. Vs. 2
 - a) They would do to Ai and its king as they did to Jericho and its king. Vs. 2a
 - b) They were to take only its spoil and its cattle as booty for themselves. Vs. 2b
 - c) They were to lay an ambush for the city behind it. Vs. 2c
* That is precisely the reason why we need to seek God for everything every time, because we can not fall into patterns for our approaches or decisions in life, even though they may be very similar!

8:3-9 The Divine plan is disclosed to the people.

- 1) Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night. Vs. 3
- 2) Joshua revealed the battle plan God gave him. Vs. 4
 - a) He commanded them to lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Vs. 4a-d
 - b) They were not to be very far from the city and all were to be ready. Vs. 4e-f

- 3) Joshua and other would be decoys to draw the men of the city out. Vs. 5-7
 - a) He and all the people with him would approach the city; and when they came out against us as at the first, that we shall flee before them. Vs. 5
 - b) This would be to deceive them, making them think they were retreating as the first time. Vs. 6
 - c) Then the men hiding behind the city for the ambush would arise and cease the city and God would deliver it to their hands. Vs. 7
 - d) At that time they were to set the city on fire, ad God commanded. Vs. 8
- 4) Joshua and the men prepared for the next morning. Vs. 8
 - a) Joshua sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai. Vs. 8a-d
 - b) But Joshua lodged that night among the people. Vs. 8e

8:10-29 The execution of the battle plan.

8:10-17 The advance of the army of Israel.

- 1) Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. Vs. 10

- 2) All the people of war came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai, there being a valley between them and Ai. Vs. 11
- 3) Five thousand men hid in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. Vs. 12
- 4) They night with the ambush set, Joshua and the army on the north And when they had set the people, all the army went that night into the midst of the valley. Vs. 13
- 5) When morning came, the king of Ai saw them in the valley, that he and the men of the city hurried to go out against Israel to battle, at a designated place before the plain, not knowing of the ambush behind the city. Vs. 14
- 6) Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness and the men of Ai pursued them away from the city. Vs. 15-16
- 7) There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. So they left the city open and pursued Israel. Vs. 17
 - a) Sometimes Christians get lured by Satan to chase after temptations and leave their homes open to destruction
 - b) Sometimes pastors leave so often that they leave the church open for

destruction by no having capable men to oversee the church!

8:18-22 The signal to encircle the enemy came from God.

- 1) The LORD said to Joshua, “Stretch out the spear that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.” And Joshua did so. Vs. 18
- 2) The men hidden in the ambush arose and ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire. Vs. 19
- 3) And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw the smoke of the city ascended to heaven, they had no power to flee any way, seeing themselves encircled and none of them remain or escape. Vs. 20-22

8:23-29 The complete destruction of the people and the city.

- 1) The king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua. Vs. 23
- 2) Israel having slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field and the wilderness, they returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword, totaling twelve-thousand men and women of Ai. Vs. 24-26
- 3) Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves,

according to the word of the LORD which He had commanded Joshua. Vs. 27

- 4) Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day. Vs. 28
- 5) They hung the king of Ai on a tree until evening. And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raised over it a great heap of stones that remained to that day. Vs. 29
* Deut. 21:22-23

8:30-35 The altar erected at Mt. Ebal, Gerezim

8:30-32 The obedience of Joshua to the Law.

- 1) Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal. Vs. 30
 - a) Mount Ebal is by Shechem, about thirty miles from Ai.
 - b) Expression of thanks, acknowledging God’s faithfulness to preserve them and give them the land, an action of worship.
- 2) This was in fulfillment to the command of Moses, written in the Book of the Law of Moses. Vs. 31
 - a) An altar of whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron tool. Ex. 20:25

- b) They offered on it burnt offerings, dedication and consecration, to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings, symbolic of fellowship with God.
- 3) Joshua in the presence of the children of Israel, wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. Vs. 32
 - a) The altar and plaster to write the law. Deut. 27-28
 - b) Written in our hearts now. Heb. 8:10-12, 10:16, Jer. 31:33
 - c) The second appearance of God to Abraham at Shechem promising him the land and built an altar. Gen. 12:6-7

8:33-35 The reading of the Law.

- 1) All of Israel, with their elders and officers and judges, stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, the stranger as well as he who was born among them. Vs. 33
 - a) Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim. to pronounce the blessings. Deut. 27:12
 - b) Half of them in front of Mount Ebal, to pronounce the blessings. Deut. 27:12

- c) As Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the people of Israel.
 - * The ark between the two and all the people saying Amen, so be it.
- 2) And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. Vs. 34
 - a) The Word of God was to be the foundation of the nation.
 - b) The Word of God was to be their only guide for obedience.
- 3) There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them. Vs. 35