

# *Within the Word*

## *A Study of Joshua 7 & 8*

### **A Note from Kathy**

*These are very serious chapters. If we are wise, we will approach them with a desire to hear from God, to know Him in a deeper way, and to worship Him with our whole heart. Joshua 7 shows us very clearly one of the reasons God hates sin: it hurts the innocent, as well as the guilty. Achan thought his sin was private, but it carried a cost he did not foresee.*

### **Observation**

Read the chapter, at least twice, before beginning the study guide. This will give the Lord an opportunity to help you see the things He desires for you to know.

1. Let's read a few verses to see exactly how God felt about Israel, before jumping into this chapter. When you read, underline what God thought about Israel?

#### **Exodus 19:5**

*Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine*

#### **Deuteronomy 7:6-8**

*For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. <sup>7</sup>The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, <sup>8</sup>but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

#### **Deuteronomy 14:2**

*For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*

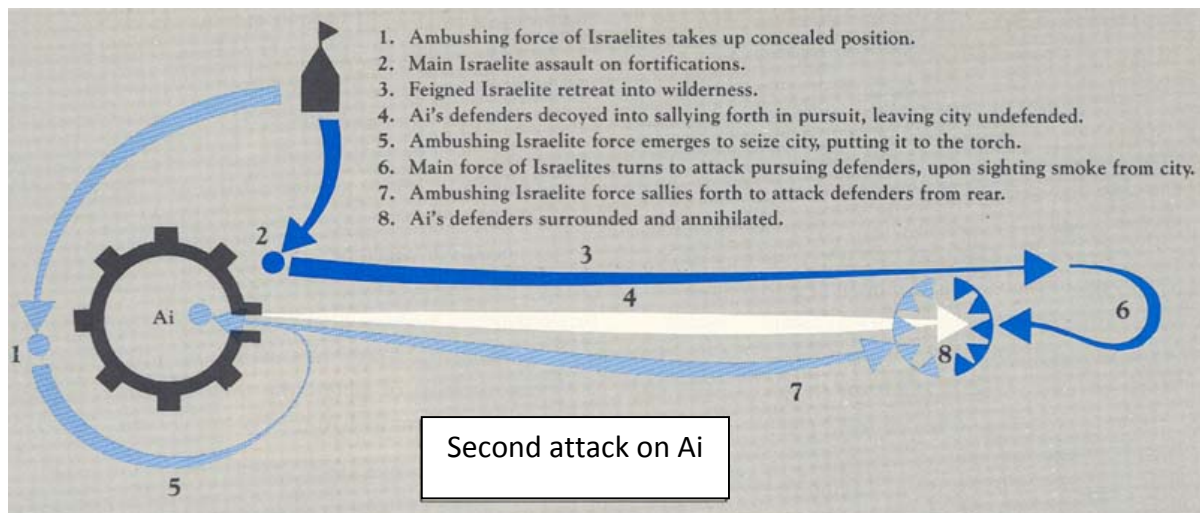
#### **Deuteronomy 26:17-19**

*You have today declared the LORD to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice. <sup>18</sup>The LORD has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments; <sup>19</sup>and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the LORD your God, as He has spoken.*

2. Now go back to Joshua 7:1, what was the problem? As a whole, how did God view Israel?
3. What was the result of this sin?
4. Joshua sent men to spy out the city of Ai. What was the report the spies came back with?

5. How many men were sent to take the city of Ai? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What happened? List the details from verses 4-5?
7. What was Joshua's response to the news when the army returned? What was the response of the elders of Israel? What was the response of the people in general?
8. After reading Joshua's statement in verses 7-9, what did Joshua think would happen next?
9. God was quick to tell Joshua the real problem. Using verse 11, make a list of the problem.
10. God instructs Joshua to consecrate the people. What do you suppose they were to do that night?
11. The next morning all of Israel is to stand before God. How is the guilty person revealed? What is the discovery process?
12. Achan is found to be the guilty person. What does Joshua give him a chance to do? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Numbers 32:23 says, "be sure, your sin will find you out." Was this proven true for Achan? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Referring to Joshua 7:21, write out the progression of Achan's sin.
15. Joshua did not deal with the sin until the evidence was completely shown. After Achan confessed, and the evidence was brought before them, what did Joshua and all Israel do?
16. In Joshua 8, the Lord instructs the Israelites to return with the whole army to attack Ai. What are they to do? What is God's promise? What is the plan?
17. What is one of the main differences between this raid and the raid on Jericho?

18. Add numbers to the chart below showing the number of fighting troops at each location.



19. According to verses 16-17, what did we learn about the fighting forces in Ai and Bethel at the time of this siege?

20. What was Joshua instructed to do, in order to see the city delivered into his hand?

21. The city of Ai was under the judgment of God. How many were left alive the next day? \_\_\_\_\_  
God has given the people of Canaan many, many years to repent. He has given them signs to show his power and might, and yet, only Rahab turned to God and was saved. When God judged a people, did He give them sufficient time and opportunity to repent?

22. In Joshua 8:30-35, we see the covenant renewed at Mount Ebal. This is a wonderful time of restoration and renewal. List the events from verses 30-35 with details.

23. Why not try your hand at drawing this scene. Stick people are perfectly fine.

## Application

1. The sin of one man brought the anger of God against the entire nation of Israel. Many suffered because God's hand of protection had been withdrawn. Do you believe this has any relevance to the plight of our nation today? Read the verses below before answering. What should we be busy doing?

### **2 Chronicles 7:14**

*...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

### **Psalms 81:13-14**

*If my people would only listen to me, if Israel would only follow my ways, <sup>14</sup>how quickly I would subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes!*

### **Mark 8:34**

*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.*

2. Joshua implied God had let him down. He seemed to feel God had not done what He had promised. Have you ever felt like Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_ When we feel this way, this might be a good time to remind ourselves of the true character of our God. What do you know, from personal experience, about the character of God?
3. Spiritual leaders need to know their God well enough to lead others to truth. Is Joshua leading well in verses 7:7-9? \_\_\_\_\_ How might Joshua have handled this better?
4. God calls for the entire nation to consecrate themselves; this will require some heart searching through the night. The next morning they are to stand before God. What do you believe they did in their homes that night? \_\_\_\_\_  
When trouble hits your home is this what you do? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you believe this would be a good idea the next time you experience a family trial? \_\_\_\_\_
5. This was a very open discovery process. Everyone would have been watching and waiting to see where the lot would end up. When it did come to Achan, Joshua gave him an opportunity to confess. Notice the progression of Achan's sin. Would you say this is the progression of all sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
Read Genesis 3:6, about Eve's sin, and briefly compare them below.
6. Achan's sin was uncovered and brought before Joshua and the leaders of Israel. Now, the people had to do a hard task. I doubt anyone wanted to do it, but God wanted Israel to be a light to the nations. Other nations would look at Israel and see their God. They needed to be a people that looked to God. As believers, we are to be the salt and light to the world we live in. Would you say you are seasoning and preserving like salt? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you giving light in the darkness?  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is it difficult with our modern, watered-down definition of love and forgiveness, to think about dealing with sin in this way? \_\_\_\_\_ If we are not willing to deal with sin quickly, it will grow and infect everything and everyone around us. Is there a sin that has come to your mind that you need to deal with today? Are you willing to tarry for a while with the Lord and allow Him to search your heart?

**Psalms 139:23-24**

*Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

8. After the sin of Achan had been dealt with, what was the relationship like between God and Israel? Read Isaiah 43:25 before answering.

**Isaiah 43:25**

*I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.*

9. Why would God need to tell Joshua, once again, not to be afraid? It is easy to feel like everything is going to work out fine when you are on the heels of a big victory but how about after a defeat? Notice the way God described Ai to Joshua in Verse 1, "I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land." It's a done deal Joshua. Can you think of a time when you were on the heels of a defeat and God told you not to be afraid? What was your response?
10. The plunder from the city of Ai would be theirs to take. Unlike Jericho, where they were commanded not to take anything for themselves, God is allowing them to build their herds and flocks from the spoil of conquered Ai. How different things could have been for Achan and Israel, if Achan would have simply waited for God to enrich him. Do people try to rush ahead of God's blessings today?
11. Israel learned a valuable lesson with these two battles: 1) with God on our side, we cannot lose, and 2) without God, we cannot win. Have you experienced this in your own life? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you had undeniable victories that could only be a blessing of God? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you had battles that clearly should have ended in victory, yet, because you were not obedient to God, He did not go with you? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Have you ever been tempted to disobey God like Achan, thinking it was no one's business how you made your money? Have you ever thought, "it's my life, and I will do as I please"? If yes, did you stop to consider the consequences of disobedience? Did you ask yourself if anyone else would be affected, if you disobeyed God? Who might have suffered along with you if you made the choice to disobey?

13. What have you learned about God in these two chapters? Finish these sentences below then write a couple of your own.

My God is \_\_\_\_\_

My God does \_\_\_\_\_

My God will never \_\_\_\_\_

If God is for me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. It is often said that ignorance of the law is no excuse. According to Joshua 8:30-35, could anyone living among the nation of Israel honestly say, they did not know what the Lord expected?

15. Would anyone be justified if he said, I do not know what the Lord requires? Please explain your answer.

16. Please write out Micah 6:8 below.

17. According to Micah 6:8, what does the Lord require of believers today?