



**Course:** A Survey of the Bible: Genesis to Revelation

**Lesson:** 11 (Part 7)

**Passage:** Joshua - Survey

**BUT the Children of Israel . . .** (Joshua 7:1)

### Some Important Lessons We Want to Learn

- ① God takes His commands seriously! God takes **sin** seriously!
- ② “One bad apple corrupts the whole bunch”
  - ★ “A little leaven leavens the whole bunch” (1 Corinthians 5:6)
    - See also 1 Corinthians 15:33; Galatians 5:9; 2 Timothy 2:17.
- ③ We are never in **greater danger** of yielding to pride and self-confidence when we have just had victory.
- ④ If we are to enjoy the blessings of God, we must remain steadfast in our obedience to Him.
- ⑤ Nothing escapes God sight. Everything lays naked before Him and we all must give an account to Him. (Hebrews 4:13)
- ⑥ There is nothing “personal” about “my” sin. Sin affects others. God looks at a church as **“a body”** (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12:4-5). God sees nations in a similar manner.

**Failure at Ai** (vv. 2-4a)

**The Results of Foolishness** (Joshua 7:4b-5)

**When Faced with Defeat/Trouble** (Joshua 7:6-10)

- REPENT! Sanctify yourselves! Purify yourselves!

**God Charges ISRAEL with Sin** (Joshua 7:11)

- (v. 11) **The charges**

**God’s Instructions** (Joshua 7:13-15)

- **GET UP!** There is a time to pray and there is a time to **DO!**
- **SANCTIFY the people.**
- **THE PUNISHMENT:**
  - He and **all that he has** shall be burned!
  - **REMEMBER** the seriousness of the “crime” – sin! **GOD** determines the seriousness of sin and He determines the punishment.

**Achan Identified & Executed** (Joshua 7:16-23)

**“Do Not Be Afraid . . .”** (Joshua 8:1)

- When we have confessed sin (putting away and have repented [turned back to God with a willingness to do things His way]) **then** we can hear God say, “Do not be afraid . . .” to comfort us, and “Arise . . .” to guide us along the way.
- **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD.** (Isaiah 59:2)
- These words were words of **great comfort** for those whose “hearts ... melted and became like water.” (Joshua 7:5)
- **GOD’S PROMISE:** “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

**“Take All . . . Arise . . . Go”** (Joshua 8:1-2)

- God’s first words were words of comfort but they were also **commands.**
- We are to be **steadfast** in the work that God has for us to do. (1 Cor. 15:58)
- God’s first word of instructions:
  - “take **all** the people of war”
    - The spies had said, “Do not let all the people go . . .” (Joshua 7:3)
      - ★ A PERSONAL APPLICATION: “Make every effort . . .”
- God’s PROMISE: “See, I have given . . .”
  - God’s sovereignty over nations and nation leaders:
    - Job 12:23; Ezekiel 30:20-26; Zephaniah 2:12-13.
    - Daniel 4:17, 32; Job 34:24; Romans 13:1-4.
  - **ONLY those who follow God’s Word can claim God’s promises.** (See Hebrews 6:11-12; 10:36)

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- God’s detailed word of instruction:
  - Do to Ai what I commanded you to do to Jericho.
    - **LESSON:** There can be **no compromise** when it comes to sin. God does not **compromise**, nor can we. (Read 1 Thessalonians 5:22)
  - Ai was under God’s condemnation, just as Jericho was.
  - **BUT** the spoils of war you can keep!
    - ★ If Achan had only waited!
    - ★ The “firstfruits” were given to God and now Israel could keep the rest for themselves.
      - It is the same with our tithes: Give the first part (a small part) to God **FIRST** and keep the rest for yourself.
  - “Lay an ambush behind the city.” – God gives details for Joshua and Israel to keep.
- **GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY and HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY:**
  - ★ God sovereignly **determined** that Ai would fall into the hands of the Israelites.
  - ★ **BUT** God **also** gave clear instructions to Israel to carry out.
- **LESSONS to learn:**
  - ① God changes leaders so that we will not begin to trust in flesh and blood instead of trusting in God.
  - ② God changes His ways so that we will not start depending on our personal experience instead of trusting His promises.
  - ③ God **always** has a way, a plan for His people to follow, and the only way for us to have victory is to obey God’s Word.

### Joshua Builds an Altar (Joshua 8:30)

- Contrasting two piles of stones (v. 29 and v. 30)
  - One was built to bury Ai’s king.
  - The other was built to honour the King of kings.
  - One has a dead body underneath that suffered the wrath of God.
  - The other has a dead body on top that bore the wrath in the sinner’s place.
  - One was a warning to evil-doers.
  - The other was instruction for those who wished to do well.
- This is strange but very instructive.
  - It would seem that once Israel had secured these two cities (Jericho and Ai) that they would proceed on the momentum of victory to take the rest of the land!

- BUT instead, they travel between 25-30 km to Ebal and worship!
  - Joshua takes the entire nation!
  - Joshua takes them to Ebal in accordance with Joshua 1:8-9 and Deuteronomy 11:26-29; **27:1-7, 12, 13.**
  - On Mount Ebal Israel will offer sacrifices, read the Law of God, and affirm with “**amens**” the blessings and curses of the Law!
- This is an act of faith!
  - Men only built on land they owned – yet, Israel had only conquered a small part of Canaan!
  - Joshua **anticipated** by faith God being faithful in His promises.

### An Altar (Joshua 8:30-31)

- This is the first time we have the word *altar* in the book of Joshua.
- An **altar** was the **meeting place** between God and men.
- For this reason God gave **specific** instructions on how to build the altar
  - **He did not leave it to man!** (These instructions were given **three times!** – **Exodus 20:24-25; Deuteronomy 27:5; and Joshua 8:31**)
  - The altar was the place where the **holy, holy, holy God** and **sinful** man dealt with sin and salvation.
    - It was only at the **altar** where God would accept man!
    - The altar was to be made “of **whole** stones which have not been touched (chiseled or cut) by man.” (See Exodus 20:24-26)
    - The altar was not to be made “beautiful” by man because it was a “picture” of his worthlessness as a sinner. To beautify the altar would cause man to have a warped view of himself.
    - The altar must be God’s workmanship, unbeautified by man’s skill..
- “altar” is מִזְבֵּחַ *mizbeach* and means “the place of slaughter”.
  - ★ From the beginning God taught **sinful** man that there could be no fellowship between Himself and sinful man **except** through the shedding of blood and that of a **perfect substitute**. (Hebrews 9:22)
- The “altar” was also a “picture” of Jesus Christ, who took upon Himself the **likeness** of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3)
  - ★ There is only **one meeting** place between God and sinful man and that is Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:12; John 14:6; 10:7, 9)
  - ★ In Scripture, Christ is prefigured as the **High Priest** (the Offerer; Hebrews 9), the Altar (Hebrews 13:10) and the Offering (John 1:29; Hebrews 9:11-14, 27-28)

- ★ When Christ came “He had no form or comeliness, and when we saw Him, there was no beauty that we should desire Him.” – thus the “altar” was made from ordinary stones.
- ★ The stones were to be **whole** stones – Christ’s life was **perfect** – nothing was to be “chiseled” away from Christ’s life!
- ★ The “altar” was built on Mount Ebal, the mount of the curse, and not Mount Gerizim, the mount of blessing.
- ★ Christ came to the place of the curse and became a curse for us! (Galatians 3:13)
- On the altar a **burnt offering** (Leviticus 1) was a picture of Christ giving Himself “wholly” and “completely” unto God in our place.
  - Also a **peace offering** was made and was a picture Christ making **peace** between God and man. (Romans 5:1; 1 John 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Luke 2:14).

## HAVE WE LEARNED!

Romans 15:4

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