

JOSHUA CHAPTER 7 - (Part 2)

- 7 -

7:4 **3,000 went up to Ai ... but fled before the men of Ai**

What a contrast to Jericho! The Canaanites must have been amazed!

- But **then** they realised that they could take-on Israel! They would hide no longer!
- For **us**: Eph 6 unless we put on **the whole** armour **of God** we will **not** be able to withstand the approaches of the enemy.

What is the mistake **here**? In Josh 6:3 **all the men** were to go up.

In Josh 6:5 **all the people** were to participate.

- Here at Ai most of the fighting men and **all** the people stayed in the camp! **IDLE!**
- But the **Ark of the Covenant** wasn't sent either!
- A **united front** was to face the enemy – but they disobeyed...

7:5 36 Israelis were killed – the rest fled as far as Shebarim.

Shebarim = breaches – which refers to the rout of Israel here.

The **result** was that **the hearts of the people melted and became like water**.

What a contrast to Joshua 3:10!

By this you shall know that the Living God is among you And that He will, without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, etc.

Where is their Faith and Trust in God **now**? They have fallen into despair and hopelessness.

- **Remember Josh 5:1** that the Canaanites feared **Them!**
- Just one fall and instead of turning **TO** God they lose Faith.
- **This** is how fragile we are!

But what is **God** going to do? With **them and** with us He **uses** the painful failure **to teach us** Wisdom, Truth, Repentance and Dependence on Him.

- God will **EXPOSE** the hidden sin among them – bring it out to the light so that it can be dealt with.

7.6 Joshua prostrated before God in the Ark – prostrated until evening (the time of Sacrifice).

He and the Elders put dust on their heads.

- Now in trouble Joshua behaves just as **Moses** had done in the past.

Notice (i) Joshua **showed no anger** to the fleeing soldiers about their cowardice.

(ii) Joshua showed no anger to **God** for allowing this to happen.

(iii) He **knew** that something dreadful was wrong and he came to ask God for enlightenment.

Notice that the **rending of the clothes** was a sign of grief, lamentation and disturbance.

cf 2 Sam 1:11 Gen 37:29 Num 14:6 Judges 11:35 etc Mt 26:65 Acts 14:14

- **The Church today** needs to go before God **fasting, weeping and mourning rending your HEARTS, not your garments**: Joel 2:12-13 / 1 Pet 2:5-7

Worst case scenario: Jer 5:3 – we won't receive God's correction.

(NB) Joshua did the **Right** thing: he prostrated before the Living God ready **to receive** whatever God would reveal to Him.

- on our faces, **in the dust**, is the right place **for us**, poor sinners.

- Joshua must come to realise that it was **His Failure** to consult God before Ai that **caused** this disaster.

Why? (i) God would have **told** him **NOT** to go because there was sin in the camp and so the army did not deserve His help.

(ii) God would not have allowed the **Disunity**, with most of the people **IDLE**.

Remember that **ONLY ONCE** before was Israel defeated in battle: **Num 14**

- Pride and self-confidence were in both incidents.
At Kadesh Barnea the People fell into unbelief and distrust (like here)
 - so they **REFUSED** to take orders from God and enter the Promised Land from the **best** position
 - then when God punished them by ordering them to return to the Wilderness for 38 years, they went up to meet the enemy in defiance of God's **newest** order.
 - Moses **warned** them Not to go because **the Ark** would not go with them. **Num 14:41-43**

Here at Ai **history repeats itself**. They go **WITHOUT** God, "in the flesh": they are beaten.

NB: The Ark of the Covenant didn't go with them.

Note that Joshua's prostration in anguish before God points to **the Agony of Jesus** in Gethsemane when God wanted to deal with **all** the hidden sin of Humanity...

Joshua's prayer lasted until the evening sacrifice...

Jesus prayer lasted until **His own sacrifice** as the Lamb of God: Mt 26:39

The **Prayer of a Repentant Leader**: Joshua 7:7-9

7:7 Joshua's **first** words were a **complaint!** **Alas! Lord God, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all – to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us?**

cf Ps 142:1-2

I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift my voice to the Lord for mercy.

I pour out my complaint before Him; BEFORE HIM I tell my trouble.

- Wow! Joshua is in crisis – wondering what it is **all for**: both Jordan and Jericho miracles have receded in his mind...
 - How like **us** to forget God's past graces in our **present** pain and distress.
 - Like **us** Joshua doesn't see his own failures and is unaware of **why** this happened.
 - Joshua's distress **clouds** his mind and so he **PRESUMES** that the defeat at Ai means the whole campaign is lost! He jumps to conclusions **BEFORE** asking **God** for enlightenment. He can't **accept** the loss of 36 men out of 3,000.

Note that our lively faith in God can **only** be maintained by **CLOSE COMMUNION** with God.

(NB) What Joshua **says** to God actually echoes the complaints of those in the Wilderness who were punished by God! cf **Deut 1: 27, 32** cf **Num 14:9**: Joshua's **own** words!

Notice that when the Saints fail in their relationship with God that they are just like anyone else!

7:7 is Joshua's unbelievable statement to God: **Oh that we had been content and dwelt on the OTHER side of the Jordan!** But the **other side** of the Jordan is NOT the Promised Land!

- our hero has fallen... no vision... no understanding... no valour... no ability to lead others.

Elijah in 1 Kings 19:1-4 shows another great hero who had single-handedly taken on the 400 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and defeated them.

... now running for his life from the threat of Queen Jezebel!

- He went back to God at Sinai to report his "failure"... !
- The saints are just like us – wonderful when upheld by God... **BUT...**!

7.8 **O Lord! What shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies?**

Now Joshua comes back to the issue in hand... but, he is **STILL** not saying the right thing!

Later leaders in history will approach God differently in defeat:

1 Sam 4:3 **Why has the Lord defeated us before the Philistines today?** (2 Sam 21:1)

Lesson for us: We must NOT close our eyes to the signs God gives us of His displeasure.

It won't help! **Prov 3:11** **Heb 12:5**

1 Pet 5:6 **Humble yourself before the mighty hand of God and in due time He will raise you up.**

7:9 For the Canaanites... shall hear... and cut us off...

At long last Joshua realises that they have given their enemies **THE ADVANTAGE** over them!

- secret sin gives our spiritual enemies a **foothold**: **Eph 4:27-29**

Thus what will you do for Your Great Name?

- Concern for God's glory should have been **FIRST** – not last!
The whole process of the Exodus concerned God's Creation, **God's** People and **God's** plan to set up His Kingdom on Earth... and we act as if it were all **ours**!

7:10 DIVINE DIALOGUE: God **alone** can reveal the **TRUTH**.

- a) God gave Joshua **a hearing**: Ps 103:4 **He knows what we are like... that we are DUST.**
- b) Ps 57:17 **a broken and contrite heart you will not despise.**
- c) Joshua is then told to **Get up!** Even though he has failed, the Lord God accepts **the fact** that he humbled himself all day until the evening sacrifice – when a sin offering is made –
- d) It's not Joshua's failings that God is concerned about, so He reveals the **TRUE CAUSE** of the disaster to him. **THE CAUSELESS CRISIS CANNOT COME!**
- Healing must include removing the **CAUSE** of the problem (**Doctors** take note!!)

7:11 God revealed the problem to Joshua. **Israel** (the People as a whole) **has sinned.**

God has not changed His plans for Israel but He **WILL NOT** work with **DISOBEDIENCE.**

Note that God sees **them all** as a **CORPORATE UNIT** cf 1 Cor 12:20,26

They have broken my Covenant which they had just committed themselves to! **Deut 13:17 ... they have STOLEN... and DECEIVED** ... everything in Jericho belonged to **God** alone, and was to be given back to Him in **The BAN.** cf David's (hidden) sin exposed by Nathan: 2 Sam 11:14,15
Ananias & Sapphira in Acts 5:2-7 (hidden sin and deception)

Remember God hates **DECEIT**: that's how Satan works

(NB) Therefore, with Satan's **claw** in the heart of the Nation, the people were **powerless** before their enemies. Look at the Church today... with secret sin in the clergy...

7:12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies... BECAUSE they have become doomed to destruction.

(NB) The covenant with God was **conditional.**

- a) Deut 6:16-18; 11:8-9 balance out Deut 20:1-4 goes with Deut 11:22-25
Note: Deut 28:1 begin the blessings and vs 15 the curses of the covenant.
Deut 28:25 **The Lord will have you DEFEATED in front of your enemies.**
- b) The worst punishment God can give to us is: **neither will I be with you anymore... unless you DESTROY this accursed thing.**
Therefore the choice is **ours** whether God is **with us** or not!
The condition is that the "accused thing" has to go!: **Heb 12:14**

7:13 Get up! Sanctify the people... cf Joel 2:15-16

For us Jesus is the **Sanctifier**: Heb 13:12 He sanctified us with His Precious Blood from all the defilements of sin. (Eph 2:3-)

Sanctify yourselves: is a call to purify ourselves of sin... self-examination
confession of sin and repentance...

The twofold aspect of Sanctification: what Christ did... what we have to do.

- a) We are saved in Christ: Acts 16:31 – but we have to "work out our Salvation"

}	Phil 2:12
	1 Tim 4:16
 - b) We are new creatures in Christ: 2 Cor 5:17 – yet we have to "put on the new man" Eph 4:24
 - c) We are complete in Christ: Col 2:10 and yet grow in grace, etc. 2 Pet 1:5
- Christ has completed everything in Redemption but we must reach out to possess as much as possible of what Christ has prepared for us.
 - Prepare today for a major event tomorrow.