Joshua 7-8

Review…

- **Joshua 1-2 - A new leader for Israel…**
  - God met with Joshua - told him to lead Israel into the Promised Land...
  - Sending out the two spies into Jericho - Rahab the Harlot...
- **Joshua 3-4 - Crossing over…**
  - The nation of Israel was to follow their leaders and the Ark
  - Just as Moses had parted the Red Sea - God parted the Jordan River...
  - They were to take 12 stones and set up a memorial to remember the crossing...
- **Joshua 5-6 - Going to War…**
  - Removing the mark of the world / the end of the Manna...
    - As soon as they crossed over God has Joshua circumcise all the men of Israel...
    - They then celebrated the Passover - with the produce of the Land...
    - That was the last day God sent Manna - after that they lived off the Land...
  - The Commander of the Army of God met with Joshua - 'take of your shoes'...
    - Jericho was in impregnable fortress - impossible for Israel to conquer...
    - God told Joshua to march around the city for 7 days - then shout to the Lord...
    - And the walls came crumbling down - only Rahab and her family were spared!

Hidden sin… (*4 things*)

- **1st - The defeat at Ai… vs. 1-9** Read: Joshua 7:2-7
  - Overly confident... vs. 1-5
    - Joshua sent men to scout out the city of Ai...
      - The men came back and reported the city would be easy to conquer...
      - They recommended only sending 2000-3000 men to attack the city...
      - After the fall of the major fortified city of Jericho Israel was VERY confident...
      - Too confident - they were not the ones who had won the battle at Jericho...
      - It might be teaching a Bible study / or sharing Jesus with someone...
      - The first time we do something we are terrified - clinging to Jesus for His strength...
      - But when He pours out His Spirit - and we see God do a work...
      - The next time we step out - it is easy to get our eyes off of Jesus...
      - Thinking we have done this before - no problem - begin to depend on ourselves...
      - Forgetting we did not win the battle - it was always about God!
    - The army of Israel was defeated - the men of Ai killed 36 Israelites...
      - Those who remained were chased all the way back down the hill from the city!
      - We often get into the most trouble when we think we are all right in life...
      - That is when satan can sneak in - because we are most vulnerable...
      - We are depending on our strength - we are not trusting in Jesus...
      - And the only strength we have - is when we realize it is all about Jesus...
      - **II Corinthians 12:10 -** "My strength is made perfect in my weakness."

- Blaming God... vs. 6-9
  - Joshua tore his clothes - fell on his face before the ark - put dust on his head...
    - Joshua knew word of their defeat would get around...
    - Then all the nations of the Land would band together - and wipe Israel out!
    - God did you just bring us into the Land to let the Amorites destroy us...
    - It would have been better to stay on the other side of the Jordan...
  - When things go wrong - we often want to blame God...
    - When we have no money - when a relationship falls apart...
    - Even though we may have spent too much - been mean to our friend...
    - Rather than take responsibility for our actions - admit to our fault...
    - It is easier to shake our fists at God - blame Him for what happened...
    - The problem is until we are willing to admit our problem - be honest with God...
    - There is nothing He can do fix it - He cannot give us the solution!

- **2ND - ISRAEL HAS SINNED... VS. 10-26** READ: JOSHUA 7:10-15
  - Get up! Israel has sinned... vs. 10-12
    - Israel had not been defeated because God failed - it was because of sin...
      - God had commanded that everything from Jericho be destroyed by fire...
      - Yet someone had stolen some things - and hidden it among their possessions...
      - They thought no one saw - no one knew - and nothing bad had happened - yet...
      - When we sin - we may think that no one noticed - we think we get away with it...
      - There may not even be immediate consequences - making us think God is OK with it
      - God is patient - because he wants us to repent - admit to our sin...
      - **Romans 2:4** - "Knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance..."
      - But that does not mean that we will get away with our sin - **Galatians 6:7**
    - Israel had been defeated at Ai - because sin had separated them from God!
      - Sin will always separate us from our relationship / the blessings of God...
      - When we have conviction in our heart - we tend to avoid the Bible / church...
      - So God in His mercy lets life start to fall apart around us - lets us be defeated...
      - He lets us reap the consequences of our sin - to try and get out attention...
  - Finding out who had sinned... vs. 13-18
    - God had Joshua line up all the tribes / families / and households of Israel...
      - With all the tribes lined up - the tribe of Judah was chosen from the twelve...
      - From all the families of Judah - the family of Zarhite was chosen...
      - From the Zarhites - the house of Zabdi was chosen...
      - Each man from his house brought before Joshua - till Achan (*trouble*) was chosen...
    - God could have just told Joshua it was Achan - so why the theatrics...
      - God was giving Achan a chance to repent - to confess what he had done...
      - With each step - Judah / Zarhites / Zabdi - he could have stepped forward...
      - If only he would have repented - but instead he tried to continue to conceal his sin...
      - Ever noticed when you are convicted - everything reminds you of your sin...
      - Perhaps you stole something - and the teaching on Sunday is about theft...
      - You go home and turn on the TV - a courtroom where a thief is being sentenced...
      - You go to the market the next day - and you watch as police arrest a thief...

- You start to wonder if the whole world knows what you did - a conspiracy!
- God is just giving us abundant opportunities to 'come clean' of our sin...
- And if we would just be willing to confess - everything would be OK...
- **I John 1:9 -** "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- But it is our choice - He will not force us to repent - force us to be forgiven

o Compromise... vs. 19-26 READ: JOSHUA 7:19-25

- With no where to hide - Achan finally confessed what he had done...
  - After Jericho fell he saw a beautiful robe / 200 silver coins / and ½ kg of gold...
  - He wanted them so much he took them and buried them beneath his tent...
  - Joshua sent men to check - and they found the stolen loot where Achan said...
  - So they took him / his family / and his possessions - stoned and burned them!
  - We see 3 powerful warnings from the example of Achan...
- 1st - The things of this world are not worth dying for...
  - Achan ended up dying for a shirt and a little bit of spending cash...
  - The irony is he never even got to use them - they were just buried under his tent!
  - What is our eternity worth - what is the cost we would sell our soul for...
  - Satan is willing to give you just about anything - to keep you out of heaven - but...
  - **Matthew 8:36** - "How do you benefit if you gain the world but lose your soul..."
  - Unfortunately like Achan most people often sell out for very little...
  - And with only a few short years here on earth - they never really get to enjoy it!
- 2nd - Our sin does not just effect us...
  - Because of his sin - his children also perished with him...
    - Why did the kids also die - does God punish kids for their fathers mistake...
    - **Ezekiel 18:20** - "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son."
    - The stolen good were under their tent - they also must have known...
    - When God was narrowing down the guilty party - they also said nothing...
    - Therefore they were just as guilty in the sin as their father!
  - Because of the sin of Achan - the armies of Israel were defeated at Ai - 36 men died!
    - We often make the mistake of thinking that our choices only affect us...
    - If we choose to sin– only we face the consequences– we are not hurting others...
    - The truth is that our lives effect many people – our kids / family / friends...
    - Either indirectly by our example – our children following us...
    - Or directly as a result of our actions – being angry using hurtful words
- 3rd - Confess your sins before it is too late...
    - One day we will all confess all our sins before Jesus...
    - **Romans 14:10** - "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."
    - The question is the result of our confession - salvation or judgment...
    - If we confess now - we find Grace and Forgiveness in Jesus...
    - If we try and hide our sin - we will confess - as we are judged and condemned...
    - Do not be like Achan - do not wait till it is too late - confess today!
    - **II Corinthians 6:2** - "Today is the day of salvation..."

- **3RD - THE DEFEAT OF AI... VS. 1-29** READ: JOSHUA 8:1-8

- A cunning plan... vs. 1-9
  - Joshua sent 30,000 men ahead - they would wait in ambush behind the city and wait...
    - Joshua would take the rest of the army and attack the city from the front...
    - They would run away - pretending to be defeated again - drawing out all the men...
    - Then the 30,000 men were to rise up and take the undefended city!
  - Joshua had a plan - because he was not going to take any chances this time...
    - The defeat at Ai had taught him far more than the victory at Jericho!
    - We tend not to learn well from our successes - but we learn best from mistakes...
    - Often the best teachers in life is the consequences of our sin...
    - So do not beat yourself up when you make a mistake - just be sure to learn from it!
- The fall of the city... vs. 10-29
  - In the morning the king of Ai attacked Joshua - but did not know about the ambush...
    - Joshua began to retreat - and the king of Ai emptied the city to chase them...
    - The men in hiding came out and took the city without a fight and set it on fire...
    - The men of Ai looked back and saw the smoke - they were caught in a trap...
    - Joshua attacked from the front - the men of Israel from the city came from behind!
    - Not a single person was left alive - 12,000 in all wiped out in a single day!
    - The king of Ai was hung on a tree till night fall - then buried under a pile of rocks...
    - The city was left a permanent heap of ruins for all to see!
  - Joshua and Israel were victorious - but not because of their plan...
    - They defeated Ai that day because they had confessed their sin...
    - And unlike the first time they attacked - God was with them this time!
    - When things in life do not seem to be going our way - we need to check our hearts...
    - It may well be there is some 'hidden sin' that we have not dealt with...
    - And until we confess that sin before the Lord - we will be defeated...
    - But as soon as it is addressed - we will find God is back on our side...
    - We will be - **Psalm 1** - ' A blessed man - and whatever we do will prosper.'

- **4TH - BLESSINGS AND CURSES... VS. 30-35** READ: JOSHUA 8:30-35
  - Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim - **Deuteronomy 27:1-10**...
    - Following the command of Moses - Joshua made an alter on Mount Ebal...
    - And in front of all Israel he wrote the Words of the covenant on the altar...
    - Then the nation was broken up into two groups - with the Ark and priests in between...
    - And Joshua read EVERY command Moses had given to the entire assembly...
  - The real lesson Joshua learned - stick to the Word of God...
    - The only thing that sin does well – is separate us from God...
    - The best way to avoid sin - the best way to find victory in life - read your Bible...
    - The Bible will keep you from sin – sin will keep you from the Bible!
    - **Psalm 119:11** - "Your word I have hidden in my heart... I might not sin against You!"
    - The greatest lesson we can learn from our mistakes - stick to the Word of God!