

# A DEEPER DIVE

April 12, 2026  
Joshua 7:16 - 8:9

**Prayer Focus**— Each day this week as you meet with your savior, lift up in prayer the places in the world where there is war, destruction, and little hope. Also pray for the missionaries that you know of and support. Pray for our nation and our leaders, and also your local church and community. Pray daily for our Pastors and Elders. Finally, follow the instruction in Philippians 4:4-7 make your prayer personal. Remember 1 Peter 5:7.

**Monday: Reading**— Joshua 7: 16-26

**Consider this**— Harsh!?

Chapter 7 ends on a somewhat bleak note. Achan and everything he has, including the animals, and everyone in his family, were stoned to death and then the bodies and all the possessions were burned. Was this fair? Many say that the whole family knew of the sin, and stayed silent, so they deserved punishment too. For modern readers this passage is probably difficult. Davis says, "American individualists might believe this is unfair. Naturally, we can complain. But we do better to fear. Fear because one man's sin turned away God's presence from a whole people. Fear because a man's whole household was drawn into his punishment. We Christians generally have such tame views of sin; wrongly we have no paranoia over this contagious power." Does this statement ring true? Have you ever rationalized away sin in your life? Lift these things up to the Lord.

**Tuesday: Reading**— Joshua 8:1; Isaiah 59.

**Consider this**— It'll be OK

Reread verses 20-21 in chapter 7. What do Achan's words remind you of? Read Genesis 3:6. How do these two cases describe human nature so well? Do you think this plagues us still today?

We don't know what Joshua thought of the punishment that the Lord meted out to Achan and his family. But we do know that Joshua was obedient, and verse 1 has the Lord rewarding Joshua for his obedience—to the letter.

8:1 and 6:2 are very similar. Davis tells us that, "Yahweh...specifies the precise moment of the counter-attack ... Even the ambush is no bright idea of Joshua or Israel...Yahweh's help...comes after sin has been dealt with."

**Wednesday: Reading**— Joshua 7-8

**Consider this**— "Go Your Own Way" (apologies to Fleetwood Mac)

Read chapters 7 and 8 in one sitting. Think about what lessons are here for the Israelites to ponder, and learn from. In chapter 7, before they invaded Ai, we are told that Achan (and thus Israel) was unfaithful. Also, before the battle there is no mention of the Lord talking with Joshua, or Joshua seeking the Lord. He may have done, but there is no mention of it. In chapter 8 the Lord tells Joshua that he will defeat Ai. In fact, the Lord says, "I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai..." If you go back to chapter 6:1-2 you find that the Lord uses the same phrasing there about Jericho. Why is this use of the present perfect tense important?

Joshua chapters 7 and 8, when read together, shows in very stark and somewhat brutal terms what happens when Israel goes her own way and tries to do things without the Lord's blessing, and what happens when they follow the Lord's counsel. Can you think of cases that you have heard of, or that you have experienced that teach the same lesson? Have you walked in your own wisdom and paid a price for it? Are there circumstances where you sought the Lord's wisdom and were blessed because of it?

**Thursday: Reading**– Joshua 8:3-5

**Consider this**– Jericho redux

Joshua is told that what happened in Jericho will happen in Ai. But this time the Israelites will be able to keep all the plunder. This doesn't mean that the Lord is giving Joshua a formula for success. The battle for Ai is not the same as the battle for Jericho. There are no trumpets, and no one marches around the city. But the battle is won before it starts. In Christ, there are many battles that we fight, sometimes, it seems, on a daily basis. What are some ways that you keep in your mind that no matter how difficult things can get here and now, the battle, and the war is already won through Christ?

**Friday: Reading**– Joshua 8: 6-10

**Consider this**– The Strategy

Joshua lays his plans. This is deception, not a frontal attack. The Lord tells Joshua to “lay an ambush” and Joshua devises one. What is the success of Joshua's plan based on?

**Saturday: Reading**– Joshua 8: 10-13

**Consider this**– The night before.

In chapter 7, before the humiliating defeat, it seems the spies Joshua sent out were over-confident. At this point no one knew about Achan's sin or the Lord's anger. So, it is understandable that after the great victory at Jericho, Joshua and the army would think that Ai would be a walkover. This time, in chapter 8, even though Joshua has the Lord's assurance and blessing, he does not take these things for granted. He readies his army, sets his trap and leads the army into the battle the next day. Is there an application for us in these verses? Have you ever overcome a temptation one day, only to be felled by the same temptation a day, or a week later? Perhaps Joshua has learned a lesson we all need–seek the Lord daily and don't rely on yesterday's strength for today's battles.

From the Henri Nouwen Society–

Try to give your agenda to God. Keep saying, “Your will be done, not mine.” Give every part of your heart and your time to God and let God tell you what to do, where to go, when and how to respond. God does not want you to destroy yourself. Exhaustion, burn out, and depression are not signs that you were doing God's will. God is gentle and loving. God desires to give you a deep sense of safety and God's love. Once you have allowed yourself to experience that love fully, you will be better able to discern who you are being sent to in God's name.

**Sunday**- Go to church with the anticipation of hearing from the Lord.

Questions? Comments? Email me, Steve Callaway, at [stvc13@gmail.com](mailto:stvc13@gmail.com).