



Conquering Canaan

Lesson 2: Jericho And Ai

(Joshua 6:1-8:35)

After crossing the Jordan River, the first city the Israelites came to was Jericho. Now, Jericho had made itself as secure as it could, preparing for an attack from the Israelites. But, God told Joshua that He had given the city to them. In order to defeat the city, God told Joshua to make the Israelites march around the city one time each day, for six days. Seven priests were to carry seven trumpets made from ram's horns in front of the ark of the covenant. Then, on the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times and the priests were to blow the trumpets. When they heard a long blast from the horn, the soldiers were to shout. And, God said the wall around the city would fall down so that the soldiers could go into the city.

So, Joshua went to the priests and the soldiers and told them what to do. For six days, the ark, the priests, and the soldiers would leave the camp of the Israelites, and walk around Jericho one time. Then, they would return to camp.

But, on the seventh day, they started at dawn and marched around the city seven times. After the seventh time, the priests blew the trumpets. Joshua told the people to shout because the Lord had given them the city. But, he told them two things. First, he told them that everything in the city had been set apart by God to be destroyed and they were not to bring anything home with them or else they would be destroyed. All the silver, gold, bronze, and iron was to be put into the Lord's treasury. Second, he told them to save Rahab and the people in her house because of how she had treated the spies.

So, the soldiers shouted and the trumpets blew. When the soldiers heard the trumpet, they gave a great shout, and God made the wall around the city fall down. Then, they went into the city to capture it and destroy everything in it.

Joshua told the two men who had spied the land to go to Rahab's house and bring her and all her family who was with her out safely. They would be brought to live outside of Israel's camp. Other than that, Israel burned the city and brought the silver, gold, bronze, and iron to the Lord's treasury.

However, somebody in Israel did not obey God – and God was angry. But, most of the Israelites did not know what had happened. So, after Israel had defeated Jericho, they spied the

city of Ai. The spies said that the city was small and Israel only needed to send two or three thousand soldiers to win.

When Joshua sent about three thousand men to fight against the city, 36 of them were killed and the rest had to flee. Joshua and the Israelites did not understand why they had lost. So, Joshua asked God why He had allowed the Israelites to be defeated at Ai.

God told Joshua that Israel had sinned against Him by stealing some of the things He had said not to take. And, He said that this person had hidden those things with his own stuff. As long as this person was not punished, the Israelites would not be able to defeat the people of the land.

So, God helped Joshua find out who had disobeyed. It was a man named Achan. Achan admitted that he saw some of the beautiful treasures and wanted them so much that he took them and hid them inside his tent. And, because he disobeyed God, he, his family, and all his possessions were killed.

After this, God told Joshua not to be afraid and send the soldiers back to Ai because He had given the city to the Israelites. Joshua and the Israelites carried out a plan to attack the city and destroy it. This time, Israel defeated Ai – because God was on their side.

Then, Joshua built an altar to God on Mount Ebal, just as the law had commanded. Joshua copied the Law of Moses on stones. And, after Joshua had read the words of the law to the people, they all agreed to serve and obey God.

Study Questions:

1) What was the first city the Israelites captured after crossing the Jordan River?

2) How did the walls around the city fall down?

3) What two things did Joshua tell the soldiers before they entered the city?

4) Why did the Israelites think they only needed a small army to defeat Ai?

5) Why did the Israelites lose when they went to Ai the first time?

6) Who had disobeyed God? What did he do?

7) How was he punished?

8) Did the Israelites defeat Ai the second time? Why?

Memory Verse:

“The Lord said to Joshua, ‘Look, I have handed Jericho, its king, and its best soldiers over to you’” (Joshua 6:2).

Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about: