

Joshua 07-05-18a

This is Friday, the 18th of May, 2007. We continue tonight our study of the book of Joshua, resuming in chapter 8. Let's take a moment as we begin to make sure that we remind ourselves of the role of God's Holy Spirit, the critical role that He plays in our understanding and application of God's Word. We can study it, we can talk about it, we can come to an academic knowledge, but it is only through God's Spirit that these things become real in our soul.

Now listen, I will tell you that there's lots of Christians studying the Bible, and then they wonder why God doesn't seem real, and the Bible doesn't seem relevant, and their spiritual life doesn't really seem to happen, prayers don't seem to be answered, and so on. This is the point at which that fate is determined. The Christian life is lived in the power of God's Spirit.

It is lived in the power of God's Spirit. If you do not understand the power of the Holy Spirit, if you think it's a hand-waving thing, if you think it's a tongue thing, if you think it's some far-off nebulous thing, that explains why your Christian life has no power. If you do not understand how to plug in your laptop, if you do not understand how to plug in your computer, if you do not understand how to start your car, those objects become useless.

You have to know how the power works, right? The power in the Christian life is God's Word and God's Spirit. It is that simple. You have to know how both of them work.

And learning the Word of God is not a matter of listening to me talk and understanding concepts. It is a matter of getting the truth of God's Word inside our soul where God the Holy Spirit can talk about it to us. That's what He does.

We'll be in the middle of a situation. We'll be yakking with somebody. We'll be making a choice in a set of circumstances.

We'll be going down the road doing this and hammering that and moving this and pushing that. And we're going to have a thought. And it's a new thought.

It didn't come from us. It comes from the Word of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit. We're going to say, you know what? I really ought to be doing this in a different way.

I ought to be thinking about this from a different perspective. I ought to be talking to this person in a different way. That's the fruit of the Spirit.

That's why it's called the fruit. It doesn't say the fruit of the Christian, does it? The fruit of the Christian is love, joy, peace, patience. Do you ever wonder? The fruit of the Christian, why isn't it love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and so on? Because you don't make it.

You can't make it. I can't make it. It's only God's Holy Spirit.

So when we approach the study of the Word of God, do not forget that this is the point at which His power picks up. Listening to the teaching of the Word of God will do no good if it does not come along with the power of God's Spirit. So it's important for us to recognize His role, recognize His presence, ask for His guidance, His ministry, to ensure that these things get stored in our soul so that they can come out later and produce the fruit of the Spirit.

Shall we pray? Father, we are so grateful that You have given us the privilege, given us the access into the things that belong to You. We are earthly. We are made of dust.

We are conceived in iniquity and born in sin. In us there dwelleth no good thing apart from Your grace. But because of the Lord Jesus Christ, because of His work on our behalf, we have been made partakers of Your nature, partakers of those things which You have for us in Your Word and in Your Spirit.

We thank You for that gift. We thank You for the costly sacrifice that had to be offered so that we could partake. And we pray that tonight as we study Your Word, God the Holy Spirit will find us ready and apt pupils, that we will not only understand the academic side, but we will understand the spiritual side of these passages we look at tonight and see their applicability to our lives and our thoughts in the days ahead.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Joshua chapter 8. You know the story.

The Israelites cross the Jordan. They get circumcised. They sit around for three days.

People in Jericho looking over the walls. March around for a week. Blow the trumpets.

March around seven times. The walls fall outward. Everybody rushes inward.

They attack the city. Rahab and her family are saved. Achan screws up.

Gets greedy. Takes some stuff. Doesn't obey the Word of God.

Thinks he won't get caught. The lots are cast. The scope is narrowed down, narrowed down, narrowed down.

There he is. Yes, I've got the stuff hidden in my tent. He is stoned.

He and his family. All of his stuff is burned with fire. He's placed under a big pile of stones.

And that is the emblem. That is the reminder, the monument to Israel. To remind them just as the man gathering sticks right after the law was given.

Gathering sticks on the Sabbath. So, he has troubled Israel. Joshua says, the Lord will

trouble you this day.

And Israel stoned him with stones. They burned him with fire after they had stoned him with stones. You want to talk about execution.

This is like being gassed, shot, hung, and electrocuted. They stoned him and they burned him. And then what was left of him, they buried under a big heap of stones.

It would be great if the people who excavate in the world of archaeology would find this great heap of stones. And on earth, the charred osteoporosis remains of Achan and his family. The bones.

They will find charred human bones if they find this pile of stones. They might even find the silver and the gold. If nobody has gone in there and pilfered it as they do so many other burials.

So, then God said, alright. The sin in the camp has been purged. We saw the great point of application.

God can do great things for us if we eliminate the sin in the camp. Even while we are achieving a great victory, there can be sin in the camp. God didn't stop the walls halfway down when Achan picked up the first piece of booty.

God didn't suddenly energize the people in Jericho when Achan picked up the Babylonian garment. God allowed them to complete and fulfill that victory. And everybody might have said, well, there can't be anything wrong because we won the battle.

This is often what modern day churches say. We must be doing something right. Look at all the people that are coming.

We've got a great victory. Look at all the money coming into the coffers. Success, whether it is our personal success, whether it is our financial status, whether it is our freedom from problems, does not necessarily mean that there is not sin in the camp.

How do we know that there is sin in the camp? How did Joshua find out? He found out the hard way because the next thing they tried failed. God said, if you do what you are supposed to, one of you will put to flight a thousand of the enemy. But if you do what is wrong, one of the enemy will put a thousand of you to flight.

And they sent several LFs of troops over to attack Aida. They said, we just need a small force, it is not a big city. And they got trounced and three dozen men died.

And that was the wake up call. Joshua went to God and said, Lord, what is up? And my question is, why did it take a defeat? Think about this. If you were fixing to go to battle, wouldn't it be a good idea to consult with the Lord? Joshua consulted with the commander of the armies of Israel.

Remember that? He met the man. Be strong and have a good courage and so on. But before Ai, they didn't consult.

Those three dozen men might not have died if Joshua had gone back to the Lord and said, Lord, we have won a great victory, we thank you for it, now we are fixing to go to Ai. Any special instructions? God would have said, don't go. You are sent into camp.

Why did those 36 men die? Because Joshua did not check with the Lord. As I said, this is about the only time you can find any hint of failure in Joshua. He didn't go to the Lord before he went to Ai.

God would have told him, don't go, I will not bless that effort. But nobody checked. Nobody checked.

Flushed with victory, sure that God is on their side, they go boldly and didn't check for two things. Didn't check for God's guidance, didn't check for sin in the camp. And there was sin in the camp.

And the only way they found out was when they went up against the battle and 36 men died. So, it's something to consider. If you try to build something and don't check with the Lord, you are laboring in vain.

If God is not in it, it's not going to prosper. It may seem to prosper from a human perspective. Look at the size of some of the cults.

Look at the size of the Catholic church. Look at the size of the Mormon church. I don't think God is in those things, but they are huge.

And they are considered in many ways to be successes and thriving. Look at the numbers. Look at the money.

Look at the history. Look at the buildings and the edifices and all that. Look at how much stuff gets published.

They are a thriving, going concern from a human point of view. But, you can also see that there is sin in the camp. Everybody knows about the problems with priests and abuse in the physical realm.

Everybody knows the problems with the Mormons and polygamy. I saw a TV special once where they were trying to make out like polygamy is just a great thing. What's the problem? Why does everybody insist on monogamy? You ought to read.

There is a book that has come out recently, or an article in an interview, with a lady who came out of polygamy in the state of Utah. And she said, don't listen to the propaganda. It is a misery.

It is a slavery. And the exchanging of wives, guys divorcing one and marrying another, and guys collecting wives and taking young teenage girls before they ever have a choice into their harems. She said it's horrible.

And she's got a sister who is still trapped in that and can't get away. There is evil. There is sin in the camp.

And whatever measure man may use, by God's standard, those places are under discipline. So, that's a point to remember. So now they go up to Ai.

And Aiken has been identified. And God now says what he didn't say before. Do not be afraid or be dismayed.

Take the people of war. Go to Ai. I have given into your hand the king of Ai.

His people are sitting in his land. Now God speaks. We didn't have this declaration right after Jericho, did we? Joshua just did a recon.

Took the word of the spy. Sent some men up there. Now God speaks.

Now he's got a divine commission. You shall do to Ai and his king as you did to Jericho and his king. But this time keep the spoiling cattle for yourselves as booty.

Lay an ambush, God says. Joshua knows how to do this because he has been trained by Moses in the art of war. And Moses is one of the great prince generals of the entire ancient world.

Trained by the best. Plenty of experience down there in Egypt. So, if somebody says put on an ambush, Joshua knows how to put on an ambush.

Now you recall I gave you a handout last time. And copies of it are in the download folder on our church FTP site under the Joshua study, under handouts. There's a couple of things there you'll want to look at.

The articles I gave you by Dr. David Livingston are worth reading. Not only because they are well reasoned and contain a lot of great information, but Dr. Livingston has excavated extensively these sites. And when he talks, he's not just, you know, he's not a Googler or something.

He didn't just come up with a bunch of information on the web and say, I think it's this way. He is a noted expert in the field and has done the archaeology himself. One of the things I wanted to point out, I started last time, and I'm going to give you a little bit more of this.

I'm trying to give it in small doses. You know, if you have to take nasty medicine, you take a little bit and wash it down with something better. So some of this is more

academic and historical and archaeological information.

And it's important, I think, to cover it. It's important that we know it. So that when someone comes up and attacks the veracity of the biblical account and starts fire hosing us with a bunch of alleged science, we know what they're talking about and we know what, if anything, is the matter with their arguments.

So it's important that you know these things. But I don't think anybody ought to make a whole Bible class out of archaeology and what did they find, you know, 16 meters down in the mud, that you don't live your life before God on archaeology. We live it on God's word.

So I have to give this to you in little doses. But if you look on the web, if you Google, because we're not archaeologists, you go out there and you say, well, what's up? If you go to Wikipedia, listen, use caution if you go to Wikipedia. It's like anything else done by committee.

Encyclopedia by committee is like anything else done by committee. And you can find good things, but you need to be careful. I would never use Wikipedia as my primary reference.

You gals that are in school, don't quote Wikipedia as one of your sources in a research paper. It stinketh. But you can find, if you want to just do a quick and dirty check on something, they will generally have the basic skeleton of the facts.

They will often have some links at the bottom. It's not bad either. It's just not something that has a reputation worthy of citing it as a primary source.

But if you go there and you say, well, what about AI? What about Jericho and AI? You're going to find that the atheists and the skeptics and the thereisnogod.org and all these other guys are going to say, oh, the Bible, what's the matter with you? You believe this bunch of Hebrew myths and legends that were made up late. Archaeologists have proven that AI was destroyed in 2300 BC and was not even inhabited when Joshua came into the land, no matter when you say he came in, 1450, 1230, I don't care when you say the Israelites came into the land, there was no town at AI whatsoever. It's been excavated.

A Southern Baptist professor went there for seven years and excavated all over the place. His name is Calloway. He published a big article.

He died in 1988. He was quoted in Biblical Archaeology Review. All over the place.

I'm sorry, but the Bible has been refuted. There is no town at AI for Joshua to conquer. Oh, they love to parade that.

It will be on a great big flag waving if you go anywhere on the web where there's a skeptic and they say, oh, this whole AI thing is a bunch of eyewash. It's a bunch of nonsense. Well, this is why what I'm about to tell you is important.

Dr. Calloway, God rest his soul, professor at Southern Baptist Seminary, went over there and dug all over the place. The place he was digging is called Et-Tel. Et-Tel.

Et-Tel in Arabic and all of the other derivatives of ancient Semitic languages. Tel means grind. So Et-Tel means the ruin.

And they said, well, you know, AI means ruin. So they just took the town of AI and translated its name into Arabic, Tel. And so Et-Tel is AI.

This is the place that Calloway excavated. And he found no city. Well, guess what? Et-Tel truly was not inhabited.

It was a city that was destroyed in 23-something BC and never really became anything again. It was excavated before that by Judith Marquette Krauss back in the 1930s. In the 1960s and 68-72, Calloway was there and proved without any shadow of doubt that that town had existed, a town had existed at Et-Tel from around 3100 BC, three millennia before Christ, all the way down and was destroyed about 2250 BC, which is 800 years before Joshua got there.

So, you know, did the three LFs go and 36 men got killed by ghosts because there was nothing there? They say, well, the Bible is not true. There has been no pottery whatsoever at Et-Tel dated from the Middle Bronze or the Late Bronze period. The Late Bronze period, which is the time of the conquest, has been dated by archaeologists to the 1200s BC, which is wrong, and I'm not going to go through all this stuff, but Late Bronze ended in the 1400s BC, and that's why they keep trying to have a late date for the exodus and the conquest, because they've screwed up the dating of Late Bronze pottery by two or three hundred years, and so everything that they find is pottery, and they say, well, see, this is 1200s BC.

No, Late Bronze, that's the incursion of the Israelites into the land. That's when all the pottery changed, and that's 1400 BC. There's a lot of independent evidence, but here are the reasons why Et-Tel is not AI.

There was a small Israelite village on Et-Tel from around 1200 to 1050 BC. It was inhabited as just a little village for about 150 years because they found some early Iron Age pottery. You know, you have Bronze Age and then Iron Age, Early Bronze, Middle Bronze, Late Bronze, and right around 1500, 1400 BC, switch over from Late Bronze into Early Iron.

That's why Saul and Jonathan had the only iron swords in Israel, because even down around the time of 1000 BC, the Philistines had iron, but they had a monopoly on iron

working and smelting and sharpening and all of that. So, the reason Ai is identified with Et-Tel is because of its relationship in the Bible. Ai is said to be near Beth-El.

Beth-El has been identified by the archaeologists with a modern site called Beitin, B-E-I-T-I-N. Bear with me, I know this is dry, but it's somewhat interesting if you pay attention. I'm going to give you a summary of about seven or eight articles by Dr. David Livingston.

Beitin was destroyed around the 12th century BC. Beth-El was not destroyed. The Book of Joshua says nothing about Joshua going in and destroying Beth-El, but when Beitin was first excavated by O.B.G. Wood and W.F. Albright, they found this destruction layer and they said, look, here's a destruction layer that dates to the 12th century BC in Beitin.

So, this is Beth-El and Joshua destroyed it. It doesn't matter that the Bible doesn't say Joshua destroyed Beth-El and doesn't say anything about him burning it. They found a destruction layer and back then, Albright in particular was thinking, well, I want to find something that will prove the Bible.

So, he mistakenly linked Beitin with Beth-El and with Joshua when it's too late and Joshua never destroyed it in the first place. So, it was just a screwy idea. So, here are the reasons from the Bible why Beitin is not Beth-El.

Therefore, Et-Tel is not Ai. Number one, Abraham built an altar on the mountain east of Beth-El. There is no mountain east of Beitin.

None. East of Beitin, there's nothing. Now, there is another place, and I'm going to have you try to just remember four place names tonight.

Out of all of these details, you don't have to remember much of it, but there's four place names I want you to remember. First of all, we'll see if we can get these down. I'm going to give you four little statements.

Beitin is not Beth-El. Okay? Everybody say it with me. Beitin is not Beth-El.

It's bait. It's like fishing to lure you in. Beitin is not Beth-El.

So, if you go out on the web and you see anybody talking about Beth-El and Beitin, they're wrong. You know why? The Bible says they're wrong. The Bible says Abraham went to a mountain east of Beth-El.

There is no mountain east of Beitin. Furthermore, not only did he go there in Genesis 12.8, but when he was on that mountain in Genesis 13.10, the altar that he built there, when Abraham was up there, he was going to sacrifice Isaac and so forth, and then he came down. Then later on, they went to Egypt during the famine, and then they came back.

Remember that in Genesis 13? And he comes back with Lot. I'm sorry, he didn't sacrifice

Isaac at this time. This is Genesis 12.13. Isaac is later.

Isaac is like 18. But in 13, when he first gets into the land and he comes near Beth-El, he builds this altar on this mountain east of Beth-El, which was Luz at the time. He builds an altar, goes to Egypt, comes back, and he's with Lot.

And in Genesis 13.10, it says Abraham goes up to this altar that he built before on the mountain, and he looks out over the plain. Now think about your air map, or my air map, of the Holy Land, Palestine, Israel. You've got the mountain up here at Beth-El.

You've got the Jordan River flowing into the Dead Sea. Remember that? You can look out, and you can see the plain that comprises the area north of the Dead Sea. It was a big plain.

This is where Sodom and Gomorrah were, and the other three cities that got destroyed. Well, you have to be able to get up high enough to be able to see those, because Genesis 13.10 says that Abraham and Lot went up there and saw the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar. So you've got to be up on an elevation.

There is no such elevation. You can't see the Jordan or the plain from any place near Beth-El. So, there is a place.

There is another place called Elbireh. E-L-B-I-R-E-H. Elbireh.

Point number one, Beth-El is not Beth-El. Point number two, Elbireh is Beth-El. Because east of Elbireh, there is a mountain.

And from that mountain, you can see about 35 kilometers. All across the southern end of the Jordan, northern end of the Dead Sea, you can see the whole thing. Beth-El is not Beth-El, although it has been universally identified all the way up until just recent years.

David Livingston has done a great job in adducing all of this evidence to say, look, for the last hundred odd years, you've had this wrong. No wonder you're trying to say the Bible is not true. You've got the wrong mound of archaeological dump stuff.

So, the travel reports from pilgrims that traveled through the Holy Land further substantiate this. I won't go into all the gory details. You can look up Livingston's reports and read them if you'd like.

But he has gone all the way through these people that traveled. There was a guy in 1888. A guy named Cunningham Gakey went through there and saw Roman milestones.

And the ancient evidence that says that Ai was 12 miles north of Jerusalem. And you use these Roman milestones. And Elbireh is exactly 12 miles north of the center of Jerusalem.

Beit-in is not. Beit-in is 14 miles north. There was a traveler who came down the other way who was a Moslem.

And he said, I hit this one town and then further south I found Ai. Well, the town further north that he hit first, that's Beit-in. And Ai is Elbireh.

If you try to say that if you reverse the identifications, then the further south village does not exist. It only matches the pilgrim descriptions when you realize that Bethel is Elbireh and that this other place I'm going to tell you is Ai. So, the church father Hieronymus talked about this.

Eusebius says Bethel was 12 miles north of Jerusalem. Beit-in is 14 miles north. So, that establishes where Bethel is.

So, the first two things we have to know are in your mind now, right? What's number one? Beit-in is not Bethel. Number two? Elbireh is Bethel. If you can just stuff these in your brain, you can surf the web all you want about Jericho and Ai and you'll get it right.

And you'll be able to weed out the nincompoops and the ignoramuses who do not know their archaeology. Because this has been proven beyond doubt. Now, just in the last 10 or 15 years, this has come to light.

You're in possession of information that many, many naysayers and atheists and agnostics and other critics of the Bible don't even know. So, that's why I'm taking the time to infuse it into our brains. It's important.

You go to college. You get into a discussion. Somebody says, oh, archaeology has just proved all that.

You say, like what? You're talking about Jericho and Ai? Oh, yeah. Well, let's talk about Jericho and Ai. Because you don't have the latest archaeology.

You're the one that's fouled up. It is the Bible that identifies these places beyond all doubt. Now, Ai is located in reference to Bethel.

Our first two points tell us where Bethel really is. And that site of Elbira matches all of the biblical descriptions, all of the pilgrim descriptions that have ever been made of where and what type of place Bethel is. So now, in Joshua 8.11, it says there's a valley north of Ai.

You remember that? That's when the battle was taking place and the ambush and so on. Well, Et Tel, that they have identified as Ai, because it's near Betin, doesn't fit Ai. For one, it's not near Elbira, which is the real Bethel.

And secondly, it has no valley north of it. It doesn't fit the topography. There was a guy named Dr. Rainey who has tried to counter or argue against Livingston's findings.

But his stuff is weak. All of his arguments are lame. He's like wasting his time.

I won't go into all of that. But he bases it on where he thinks the Roman milestones might have been. Well, it's been proven from floor mosaics and stuff that the milestones are where they are.

It's 12 miles to Bethel. Betin is not Bethel, so go away, Professor Rainey. So now, when you talk about Ai, Ezra and Nehemiah, once again, we go to the Bible for our truth.

Ezra 2.28 and Nehemiah 7.32. Ezra 2.28, Nehemiah 7.32, and again in Nehemiah 11.31, says that Ai was re-inhabited. When they came back from the exile, people lived in Ai. Guess what? Et-Tel has been uninhabited, sat there uninhabited, for 1200 years.

From the time of its destruction in 2250 BC, all the way down, it was totally uninhabited. It wasn't even occupied during the time of Joshua, as we've already pointed out. But, there is a mound that is southeast of Elbira, which is Bethel, as we know, that is Ai.

This is the site of ancient Ai. North, it's called Kirbet Nisya. Kirbet is kind of like sherbet, but it's not.

It's K-H-I-R-B-E-T, Kirbet Nisya. North of Kirbet Nisya, there is a wide valley. So, that fits what the Bible says.

Point number one, Bethen is not Bethel. Point number two, Elbira is Bethel. Point number three, Et-Tel is not Ai.

I pulled up some stuff on the web this afternoon, all about Et-Tel and all of these atheists, spewing bile all over the Bible, saying, Oh, what a load of Tommy-Rod archaeologists, even Christian archaeologists, this Southern Baptist professor has gone over there and proven that Et-Tel was a wasteland during the time of Joshua. Well, fine. Et-Tel is not Ai.

Ai is Kirbet Nisya. N-I-S-Y-A. Kirbet Nisya.

It fits the topography. This is the map I gave you last week. If you look at that map that I gave you, and it's in the folder, if you need to download it again, that's Kirbet Nisya, that's Ai.

And you can see how well the topography fits. We traced out the battle last time. So, when Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai in Joshua 7-2, which is near Beth-Avon, to the east of Bethel, Beth-Avon has been found to be Tel-Miryam.

It looks like Mary with AM on the end. Tel-Miryam. So, everything fits.

There is nothing close to Et-Tel that could be Beth-Avon. So, Kirbet Nisya is near the desert of Beth-Avon. And it is across this desert that the natural boundaries for this area

fell.

And they are mentioned in 1 Samuel 14-23. So, I say all that, and we are almost through the dry part, so if you are starting to fall asleep, you can wake up now. Four points.

What they think is Bethel is not Bethel. It is El-Bira. And what they think is Ai, Et-Tel, is not Ai.

And there are also linguistic reasons. Did you know, they say, well, it has to be Ai, because Et-Tel means the ruin, and so does Ai in Hebrew. There are seven places in Israel that are named Et-Tel.

Because there are ruins all over the country. The name thing alone does not make any sense. And none of the archaeological evidence for Et-Tel fits.

Kirbet Nisya has not yet been excavated. Dr. Livingston would love to excavate Kirbet Nisya, but it has just been surveyed. There have just been a few little sample holes dug.

But it is tantalizing, because they may find that heap of stones, under which we are going to find the king of Ai. And by nailing down these places, the archaeology of the ancient world can begin to confirm what we already know is true, which is the biblical account. But when they get their dope right in digging over there, they find confirmation over and over again.

They used to think there was nobody such as Pilate, and then they found an inscription with his name on it. They used to think there was no such thing as the Hittites, and then they found the entire Hittite Empire. They used to think that there was no such thing as the early kings of Israel, and then they found a stone with Jehu's name on it, the Moabite stone.

Over and over again, the naysayers and the ne'er-do-wells get proven wrong, as archaeology finally figures out what's right. So, that's enough archaeology. But I just want to point out to you that if you're thinking, well, this whole thing is a fantasy and a fairytale because archaeology has proven it wrong, no, the Bible, as usual, has been a means of correcting screwed-up archaeology.

And it is there. And I think if time goes on and they get the chance to excavate Kirbet Nisya, they're going to find a destruction layer, and they're going to find a big heap of stones, and they're going to find a human skeleton underneath, who used to be the king of Ai that Joshua put there. So, let's see how that took place.

We got all the way up to the great victory where they closed the pincers, the men who had burned the city came out on one side, Joshua's men turned around. Now, let's see how good your memory is. What was the signal to spring the trap? Do you remember? What was the signal that the men had to watch for? Joshua did what with his hand? He

raised up his spear, his javelin.

Maybe he had a banner on it. Maybe he had Mrs. Joshua's scarf on it or something. Whatever it was, when he held up that, well, you've seen that.

You know how they do it. They take the thing and, you know, the old World War I pilots would take their honey's scarf and put it around their neck for good luck or whatever. Well, you know, Joshua, I fully expect he might have had a sweetie back in the camp there.

She said, now, dear, be sure and take your good sandals and here's your lunch. Here's my scarf. Wear this for good luck or something.

It would have made it more visible. When he put his javelin in the air like a banner, everybody could see it. Maybe it had the colors of his tribe or something on it.

But in any case, he raised the javelin. And that was the signal. Now, let me read you something, if I can find it.

This is from Kyle and Dalich. I love Kyle and Dalich because they're old. They've been dead for decades.

They wrote way back in the 1800s. The Kyle and Dalich commentary is eschewed and set aside and pooh-poohed by the modern academic world. And I love it because there's all kinds of great stuff in it.

It's not perfect. They were somewhat liberal for their day. But it's a great old commentary.

And I don't think you ought to necessarily buy a set because it's huge and it'll absolutely numb your mind to try to read through it. But if you can get a copy of it digitally. In fact, I think you can even find it on the web for free.

I think it's in the public domain. Be that as it may, let me just read you something. The common custom of war, back in these days, is mentioned in some ancient Roman writings.

There's a thing called Lipsius De Militia, written by a guy named Suidas. You don't have to remember all that. But just know that the Romans were big aficionados of war.

And they were war historians. It was like Clausewitz or a lot of these other guys who would go back and study old battles and say, here's the traditions and the customs. And what he says in Lipsius De Militia is that these ancient generals would raise the war signal and hold it high and would not bring it down until the conflict was to cease.

Now, do you remember back in Exodus chapter 17 when Amalek came and fought with

Israel in Rephidim? Exodus 17.8 Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, Choose some men. Go out and fight with Amalek.

Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. Remember that? It was the first big military conflict they had after they got out of Egypt. Joshua did as Moses said to him.

And he fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And so it was when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed.

When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. Moses' hands became heavy. So they took a stone and put it under him.

And he sat on it. Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and the other on the other side. And his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

What is in Moses' hands here? It's a wooden staff, right? And how many hands is he holding up? Both hands. He's got Aaron on one side and Hur on the other, right? It means that the rod is in both hands. And so if he raises it up over his head, what does he look like? What does he look like up on top of that hill? There's going to be another man in that posture with his hands connected by wood.

Golgotha. And as long as he's up there, they prevail. And Joshua was down in the valley looking up.

And as long as he saw those hands, he knew they were going to prevail. Any time those hands started sagging, the enemy started taking over. So they made sure that those hands stayed high.

Now, look at the battle at Ai. Joshua raises his javelin. A javelin has a wooden hat, a wooden handle.

It's made of wood with a tip. It's made out of whatever you've got, bronze or flint or later on iron. But it's a wooden handled weapon.

You can't make it out of iron or something. You can only throw it about four feet and kill your nearest fellow soldier. It's got to be wood.

It's got to be light. So he raises it up. Now, look at verse 26 of Joshua 8. It came to pass that Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field and the wilderness where they pursued them.

And when they had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. So it was that all that fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000, 12 elephs, all the people of Ai, for Joshua did not draw back his hand. Joshua did not draw back his hand.

Joshua put his hand up with the javelin and he didn't draw it back all the rest of that day. Now, how do you think he held his hand up that long? How did Moses hold his hand up? They probably sat him on a rock and they probably got a couple of guys to help him hold his arm up. This is Joshua's battle of the Amalekites.

What Moses did for the army on that day, Joshua now does at Ai. Why not at Jericho? There wasn't a pitched battle against soldiers at Jericho. Jericho is an analog to the destruction of the Egyptians.

That's why you have the cycles. That's why you have the repetition of the marching and the perfection of it, the sevens, the warnings, the inevitability of it. It's like a clanging gong, just like the plagues in Egypt.

In Egypt, you had three sets of three because it was all God's doing. What did the Israelites have to do to put the plagues on Egypt? Not a dang thing except stay in Goshen, right? They didn't bring the flies and the frogs and the darkness and the hail and the boils and all the rest of it, did they? God did all of that. What's the number of God in the Bible? Three.

And you have three sets of three plagues, right? Everybody talks about the ten plagues. It's nine plagues plus the death of the firstborn and the Passover. That stands alone.

It's unique. It's separate. It's different.

So you have three cycles of three. What do you have at Jericho? You've got seven sevens. What's the number seven in the Bible? It's the number of man on earth, which is four, northeast, south and west, the four winds and all of that, and the number of God.

It's God and man. That's the perfection of human history, 7,000 years, 4,000 years, the age of man, 3,000 years, God with man, and together you have that perfect seven. Six is not enough.

Six falls short. Six, six, six. You don't get there in human strength.

It takes what God has done for man, His perfect provision in all four directions and all four dimensions on earth. Four is the number of man on the earth. Three is the number of God.

When you add them together, it is perfect. So in the plagues, you have three times three. In Jericho, you have seven sevens.

Now, after God's destruction of the Egyptians and His liberation of His people, the first big conflict is Amalek. After God works with the army of Israel and they accomplish their deliverance, they accomplish their victory, they rush in and destroy everybody in Jericho, the next great conflict is at Ai. There's a false start, just as the people of God in the Old

Testament had a false start.

They missed it the first time, but they're going to hit it the second time. They missed it when Jesus came the first time, they're going to get it when Jesus comes back the second time, Yeshua. So now, when they go to Ai the second time, what happens? Now you've got the victory, just like you did over Amalek.

Now you've got the raised hand and the rod. And Joshua, Yeshua, does not bring his hand down. He did not retract his hand, did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear.

Why does it mention the spear? The same reason it mentions the rod. The rod in Moses' hand is a rod of judgment. The spear is an implement of destruction.

There's a little bit of a difference there. It is a weapon of war. Moses didn't hold up a weapon of war.

A rod can be used to guide sheep. A rod can be used to judge and to rule. It's a symbol of authority.

A spear is a warlike symbol of look out for me, I'm about to end your life. Well, until he'd utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. So there's a profound significance to this genuine historical battle.

Let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we'll see what happens in the aftermath.