

Saturday, April 13

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Joshua 7:16 - 9:2

7 16 Early the next morning Joshua brought the tribes of Israel before the LORD, and the tribe of Judah was singled out. **17** Then the clans of Judah came forward, and the clan of Zerah was singled out. Then the families of Zerah came forward, and the family of Zimri was singled out. **18** Every member of Zimri's family was brought forward person by person, and Achan was singled out. **19** Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, by telling the truth. Make your confession and tell me what you have done. Don't hide it from me." **20** Achan replied, "It is true! I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. **21** Among the plunder I saw a beautiful robe from Babylon, 200 silver coins, and a bar of gold weighing more than a pound. I wanted them so much that I took them. They are hidden in the ground beneath my tent, with the silver buried deeper than the rest." **22** So Joshua sent some men to make a search. They ran to the tent and found the stolen goods hidden there, just as Achan had said, with the silver buried beneath the rest. **23** They took the things from the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites. Then they laid them on the ground in the presence of the LORD. **24** Then Joshua and all the Israelites took Achan, the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, tent, and everything he had, and they brought them to the valley of Achor. **25** Then Joshua said to Achan, "Why have you brought trouble on us? The LORD will now bring trouble on you." And all the Israelites stoned Achan and his family and burned their bodies. **26** They piled a great heap of stones over Achan, which remains to this day. That is why the place has been called the Valley of Trouble ever since. So the LORD was no longer angry.

8 1 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid or discouraged. Take all your fighting men and attack Ai, for I have given you the king of Ai, his people, his town, and his land. **2** You will destroy them as you destroyed Jericho and its king. But this time you may keep the plunder and the livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the town." **3** So Joshua and all the fighting men set out to attack Ai. Joshua chose 30,000 of his best warriors and sent them out at night **4** with these orders: "Hide in ambush close behind the town and be ready for action. **5** When our main army attacks, the men of Ai will come out to fight as they did before, and we will run away from them. **6** We will let them chase us until we have drawn them away from the town. For they will say, 'The Israelites are running away from us as they did before.'

Then, while we are running from them, **7** you will jump up from your ambush and take possession of the town, for the LORD your God will give it to you. **8** Set the town on fire, as the LORD has commanded. You have your orders.” **9** So they left and went to the place of ambush between Bethel and the west side of Ai. But Joshua remained among the people in the camp that night. **10** Early the next morning Joshua roused his men and started toward Ai, accompanied by the elders of Israel. **11** All the fighting men who were with Joshua marched in front of the town and camped on the north side of Ai, with a valley between them and the town. **12** That night Joshua sent about 5,000 men to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the town. **13** So they stationed the main army north of the town and the ambush west of the town. Joshua himself spent that night in the valley. **14** When the king of Ai saw the Israelites across the valley, he and all his army hurried out early in the morning and attacked the Israelites at a place overlooking the Jordan Valley. But he didn’t realize there was an ambush behind the town. **15** Joshua and the Israelite army fled toward the wilderness as though they were badly beaten. **16** Then all the men in the town were called out to chase after them. In this way, they were lured away from the town. **17** There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not chase after the Israelites, and the town was left wide open. **18** Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Point the spear in your hand toward Ai, for I will hand the town over to you.” Joshua did as he was commanded. **19** As soon as Joshua gave this signal, all the men in ambush jumped up from their position and poured into the town. They quickly captured it and set it on fire. **20** When the men of Ai looked behind them, smoke from the town was filling the sky, and they had nowhere to go. For the Israelites who had fled in the direction of the wilderness now turned on their pursuers. **21** When Joshua and all the other Israelites saw that the ambush had succeeded and that smoke was rising from the town, they turned and attacked the men of Ai. **22** Meanwhile, the Israelites who were inside the town came out and attacked the enemy from the rear. So the men of Ai were caught in the middle, with Israelite fighters on both sides. Israel attacked them, and not a single person survived or escaped. **23** Only the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua. **24** When the Israelite army finished chasing and killing all the men of Ai in the open fields, they went back and finished off everyone inside. **25** So the entire population of Ai, including men and women, was wiped out that day—12,000 in all. **26** For Joshua kept holding out his spear until everyone who had lived in Ai was completely destroyed. **27** Only the livestock and the treasures of the town were not destroyed, for the Israelites kept these as plunder for themselves, as the LORD had commanded Joshua. **28** So Joshua burned the town of Ai, and it became a permanent mound of ruins, desolate to this very day. **29** Joshua impaled the king of Ai on a sharpened pole and left him there until evening. At sunset the Israelites took down the body, as Joshua commanded, and threw it in front of the town gate. They piled a great heap of stones over him that can still be seen today. **30** Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God

of Israel, on Mount Ebal. **31** He followed the commands that Moses the LORD 's servant had written in the Book of Instruction: "Make me an altar from stones that are uncut and have not been shaped with iron tools." Then on the altar they presented burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD . **32** And as the Israelites watched, Joshua copied onto the stones of the altar the instructions Moses had given them.**33** Then all the Israelites—foreigners and native-born alike—along with the elders, officers, and judges, were divided into two groups. One group stood in front of Mount Gerizim, the other in front of Mount Ebal. Each group faced the other, and between them stood the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the LORD 's Covenant. This was all done according to the commands that Moses, the servant of the LORD, had previously given for blessing the people of Israel. **34** Joshua then read to them all the blessings and curses Moses had written in the Book of Instruction. **35** Every word of every command that Moses had ever given was read to the entire assembly of Israel, including the women and children and the foreigners who lived among them.

9 1 Now all the kings west of the Jordan River heard about what had happened. These were the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who lived in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far north as the Lebanon mountains. **2** These kings combined their armies to fight as one against Joshua and the Israelites. **3** But when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, **4** they resorted to deception to save themselves. They sent ambassadors to Joshua, loading their donkeys with weathered saddlebags and old, patched wineskins. **5** They put on worn-out, patched sandals and ragged clothes. And the bread they took with them was dry and moldy. **6** When they arrived at the camp of Israel at Gilgal, they told Joshua and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land to ask you to make a peace treaty with us." **7** The Israelites replied to these Hivites, "How do we know you don't live nearby? For if you do, we cannot make a treaty with you." **8** They replied, "We are your servants." "But who are you?" Joshua demanded. "Where do you come from?" **9** They answered, "Your servants have come from a very distant country. We have heard of the might of the LORD your God and of all he did in Egypt.**10** We have also heard what he did to the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River—King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan (who lived in Ashtaroth). **11** So our elders and all our people instructed us, 'Take supplies for a long journey. Go meet with the people of Israel and tell them, "We are your servants; please make a treaty with us.'" **12** "This bread was hot from the ovens when we left our homes. But now, as you can see, it is dry and moldy. **13** These wineskins were new when we filled them, but now they are old and split open. And our clothing and sandals are worn out from our very long journey." **14** So the Israelites examined their food, but they did not consult the LORD . **15** Then Joshua made a peace treaty

with them and guaranteed their safety, and the leaders of the community ratified their agreement with a binding oath. **16** Three days after making the treaty, they learned that these people actually lived nearby! **17** The Israelites set out at once to investigate and reached their towns in three days. The names of these towns were Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. **18** But the Israelites did not attack the towns, for the Israelite leaders had made a vow to them in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. The people of Israel grumbled against their leaders because of the treaty. **19** But the leaders replied, “Since we have sworn an oath in the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel, we cannot touch them. **20** This is what we must do. We must let them live, for divine anger would come upon us if we broke our oath. **21** Let them live.” So they made them woodcutters and water carriers for the entire community, as the Israelite leaders directed. **22** Joshua called together the Gibeonites and said, “Why did you lie to us? Why did you say that you live in a distant land when you live right here among us? **23** May you be cursed! From now on you will always be servants who cut wood and carry water for the house of my God.” **24** They replied, “We did it because we—your servants—were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded his servant Moses to give you this entire land and to destroy all the people living in it. So we feared greatly for our lives because of you. That is why we have done this. **25** Now we are at your mercy—do to us whatever you think is right.” **26** So Joshua did not allow the people of Israel to kill them. **27** But that day he made the Gibeonites the woodcutters and water carriers for the community of Israel and for the altar of the LORD — wherever the LORD would choose to build it. And that is what they do to this day.

Luke 16:1 - 18

16 1 Jesus told this story to his disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a manager handling his affairs. One day a report came that the manager was wasting his employer’s money. **2** So the employer called him in and said, ‘What’s this I hear about you? Get your report in order, because you are going to be fired.’ **3** “The manager thought to himself, ‘Now what? My boss has fired me. I don’t have the strength to dig ditches, and I’m too proud to beg. **4** Ah, I know how to ensure that I’ll have plenty of friends who will give me a home when I am fired.’ **5** “So he invited each person who owed money to his employer to come and discuss the situation. He asked the first one, ‘How much do you owe him?’ **6** The man replied, ‘I owe him 800 gallons of olive oil.’ So the manager told him, ‘Take the bill and quickly change it to 400 gallons.’ **7** “‘And how much do you owe my employer?’ he asked the next man. ‘I owe him 1,000 bushels of wheat,’ was the reply. ‘Here,’ the manager said, ‘take the bill and change it to 800 bushels.’ **8** “The rich man had to admire the dishonest rascal for being so shrewd. And it is

true that the children of this world are more shrewd in dealing with the world around them than are the children of the light. **9** Here's the lesson: Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when your earthly possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an eternal home. **10** "If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. **11** And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? **12** And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own? **13** "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." **14** The Pharisees, who dearly loved their money, heard all this and scoffed at him. **15** Then he said to them, "You like to appear righteous in public, but God knows your hearts. What this world honors is detestable in the sight of God. **16** "Until John the Baptist, the law of Moses and the messages of the prophets were your guides. But now the Good News of the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is eager to get in. **17** But that doesn't mean that the law has lost its force. It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the smallest point of God's law to be overturned. **18** "For example, a man who divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery. And anyone who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery."

Psalm 82:1 - 8

82 1 God presides over heaven's court; he pronounces judgment on the heavenly beings: **2** "How long will you hand down unjust decisions by favoring the wicked?
Interlude **3** "Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. **4** Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people. **5** But these oppressors know nothing; they are so ignorant! They wander about in darkness, while the whole world is shaken to the core. **6** I say, 'You are gods; you are all children of the Most High. **7** But you will die like mere mortals and fall like every other ruler.'" **8** Rise up, O God, and judge the earth, for all the nations belong to you.

Proverbs 13:2 - 3

13 2 Wise words will win you a good meal, but treacherous people have an appetite for violence. **3** Those who control their tongue will have a long life; opening your mouth can ruin everything.