

Friday, April 12

**All passages taken from Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996.
Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189.
All rights reserved.**

Joshua 5:1 - 7:15

5 **1** When all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings who lived along the Mediterranean coast heard how the LORD had dried up the Jordan River so the people of Israel could cross, they lost heart and were paralyzed with fear because of them. **2** At that time the LORD told Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise this second generation of Israelites." **3** So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the entire male population of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth. **4** Joshua had to circumcise them because all the men who were old enough to fight in battle when they left Egypt had died in the wilderness. **5** Those who left Egypt had all been circumcised, but none of those born after the Exodus, during the years in the wilderness, had been circumcised. **6** The Israelites had traveled in the wilderness for forty years until all the men who were old enough to fight in battle when they left Egypt had died. For they had disobeyed the LORD, and the LORD vowed he would not let them enter the land he had sworn to give us—a land flowing with milk and honey. **7** So Joshua circumcised their sons—those who had grown up to take their fathers' places—for they had not been circumcised on the way to the Promised Land. **8** After all the males had been circumcised, they rested in the camp until they were healed. **9** Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the shame of your slavery in Egypt." So that place has been called Gilgal to this day. **10** While the Israelites were camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, they celebrated Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month. **11** The very next day they began to eat unleavened bread and roasted grain harvested from the land. **12** No manna appeared on the day they first ate from the crops of the land, and it was never seen again. So from that time on the Israelites ate from the crops of Canaan. **13** When Joshua was near the town of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and demanded, "Are you friend or foe?" **14** "Neither one," he replied. "I am the commander of the LORD's army." At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. "I am at your command," Joshua said. "What do you want your servant to do?" **15** The commander of the LORD's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did as he was told.

6 **1** Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. **2** But the LORD said to Joshua, "I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors." **3** You and your fighting men should march around the town

once a day for six days. **4** Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. **5** When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams' horns, have all the people shout as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town." **6** So Joshua called together the priests and said, "Take up the Ark of the LORD 's Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn." **7** Then he gave orders to the people: "March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the LORD ." **8** After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams' horns started marching in the presence of the LORD, blowing the horns as they marched. And the Ark of the LORD 's Covenant followed behind them. **9** Some of the armed men marched in front of the priests with the horns and some behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns. **10** "Do not shout; do not even talk," Joshua commanded. "Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!" **11** So the Ark of the LORD was carried around the town once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp. **12** Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the LORD . **13** The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the LORD, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the LORD . All this time the priests were blowing their horns. **14** On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days. **15** On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times. **16** The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the town! **17** Jericho and everything in it must be completely destroyed as an offering to the LORD . Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies. **18** "Do not take any of the things set apart for destruction, or you yourselves will be completely destroyed, and you will bring trouble on the camp of Israel. **19** Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron is sacred to the LORD and must be brought into his treasury." **20** When the people heard the sound of the rams' horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it. **21** They completely destroyed everything in it with their swords—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys. **22** Meanwhile, Joshua said to the two spies, "Keep your promise. Go to the prostitute's house and bring her out, along with all her family." **23** The men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all the other relatives who were with her. They moved her whole family to a safe place near the camp of Israel. **24** Then the Israelites burned the town and everything in it. Only the things made from silver, gold,

bronze, or iron were kept for the treasury of the LORD 's house. **25** So Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute and her relatives who were with her in the house, because she had hidden the spies Joshua sent to Jericho. And she lives among the Israelites to this day. **26** At that time Joshua invoked this curse: "May the curse of the LORD fall on anyone who tries to rebuild the town of Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay its foundation. At the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates." **27** So the LORD was with Joshua, and his reputation spread throughout the land.

7 1 But Israel violated the instructions about the things set apart for the LORD . A man named Achan had stolen some of these dedicated things, so the LORD was very angry with the Israelites. Achan was the son of Carmi, a descendant of Zimri son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah. **2** Joshua sent some of his men from Jericho to spy out the town of Ai, east of Bethel, near Beth-aven. **3** When they returned, they told Joshua, "There's no need for all of us to go up there; it won't take more than two or three thousand men to attack Ai. Since there are so few of them, don't make all our people struggle to go up there." **4** So approximately 3,000 warriors were sent, but they were soundly defeated. The men of Ai **5** chased the Israelites from the town gate as far as the quarries, and they killed about thirty-six who were retreating down the slope. The Israelites were paralyzed with fear at this turn of events, and their courage melted away. **6** Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothing in dismay, threw dust on their heads, and bowed face down to the ground before the Ark of the LORD until evening. **7** Then Joshua cried out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, why did you bring us across the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites kill us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side! **8** Lord, what can I say now that Israel has fled from its enemies? **9** For when the Canaanites and all the other people living in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe our name off the face of the earth. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?" **10** But the LORD said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying on your face like this? **11** Israel has sinned and broken my covenant! They have stolen some of the things that I commanded must be set apart for me. And they have not only stolen them but have lied about it and hidden the things among their own belongings. **12** That is why the Israelites are running from their enemies in defeat. For now Israel itself has been set apart for destruction. I will not remain with you any longer unless you destroy the things among you that were set apart for destruction. **13** "Get up! Command the people to purify themselves in preparation for tomorrow. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Hidden among you, O Israel, are things set apart for the LORD . You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things from among you. **14** "In the morning you must present yourselves by tribes, and the LORD will point out the tribe to which the guilty man belongs. That tribe must come forward with its clans, and the LORD will point out the guilty clan.

That clan will then come forward, and the LORD will point out the guilty family. Finally, each member of the guilty family must come forward one by one. **15** The one who has stolen what was set apart for destruction will himself be burned with fire, along with everything he has, for he has broken the covenant of the LORD and has done a horrible thing in Israel.”

Luke 15:1 - 32

15 **1** Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. **2** This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people—even eating with them! **3** So Jesus told them this story: **4** “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? **5** And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. **6** When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’ **7** In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away! **8** “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won’t she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? **9** And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbors and say, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin.’ **10** In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God’s angels when even one sinner repents.” **11** To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: “A man had two sons. **12** The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now before you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. **13** “A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. **14** About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. **15** He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. **16** The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. **17** “When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! **18** I will go home to my father and say, “Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, **19** and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.”’ **20** “So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. **21** His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’ **22** “But his father said to the servants, ‘Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and

put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. **23** And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, **24** for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.’ So the party began. **25** “Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, **26** and he asked one of the servants what was going on. **27** ‘Your brother is back,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.’ **28** “The older brother was angry and wouldn’t go in. His father came out and begged him, **29** but he replied, ‘All these years I’ve slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. **30** Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!’ **31** “His father said to him, ‘Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. **32** We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!’”

Psalms 81:1 - 16

81 1 Sing praises to God, our strength. Sing to the God of Jacob. **2** Sing! Beat the tambourine. Play the sweet lyre and the harp. **3** Blow the ram’s horn at new moon, and again at full moon to call a festival! **4** For this is required by the decrees of Israel; it is a regulation of the God of Jacob. **5** He made it a law for Israel when he attacked Egypt to set us free. I heard an unknown voice say, **6** “Now I will take the load from your shoulders; I will free your hands from their heavy tasks. **7** You cried to me in trouble, and I saved you; I answered out of the thundercloud and tested your faith when there was no water at Meribah. Interlude **8** “Listen to me, O my people, while I give you stern warnings. O Israel, if you would only listen to me! **9** You must never have a foreign god; you must not bow down before a false god. **10** For it was I, the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it with good things. **11** “But no, my people wouldn’t listen. Israel did not want me around. **12** So I let them follow their own stubborn desires, living according to their own ideas. **13** Oh, that my people would listen to me! Oh, that Israel would follow me, walking in my paths! **14** How quickly I would then subdue their enemies! How soon my hands would be upon their foes! **15** Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him; they would be doomed forever. **16** But I would feed you with the finest wheat. I would satisfy you with wild honey from the rock.”

Proverbs 13:1

13 1 A wise child accepts a parent's discipline; a mocker refuses to listen to correction.