**A Three-Part Series on the Book of Joshua: Legacy Makers – What will you leave behind? Part One**

**SBJ6: The God of a Second Chance**

**(Joshua 8: 1-29)**

***Pastor Tan Moy How***

Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land. You shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king, except that you may carry off their plunder and livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city.” So Joshua and the whole army moved out to attack Ai. He chose thirty thousand of his best fighting men and sent them out at night with these orders: “Listen carefully. You are to set an ambush behind the city. Don’t go very far from it. All of you be on the alert. I and all those with me will advance on the city, and when the men come out against us, as they did before, we will flee from them. They will pursue us until we have lured them away from the city, for they will say, ‘They are running away from us as they did before. So when we flee from them, you are to rise up from ambush and take the city. The Lord your God will give it into your hand. When you have taken the city, set it on fire. Do what the Lord has commanded. See to it; you have my orders.” (Joshua 8:1-8)

# Introduction

The relatively small city of Ai soundly beat Israel because there was sin in the camp and also they did not seek God’s counsel before invading Ai. When Joshua and the elders went to God after the defeat, God spoke to Joshua and told him to investigate and deal "brutally" with the sin in the camp. After the investigation, Achan son of Zerah from the tribe of Judah was found guilty. All of Achan’s family and property were stoned and burned as a consequence for bringing sin into the camp. (Joshua 7)

Sin is something that God takes seriously, and the occupation of the land is above all an assault on sin. "A man who refuses to admit his mistakes can never be successful. But if he confesses and forsakes them, he gets another chance." (Proverbs 28:13 TLB)

Our God is the God of a second chance. After sin has been dealt with in the community, and God’s counsel was sought through prayer, He delivered the city of Ai into the hands of the Israelites.

# **:light-bulb-219x300.jpgBig Idea: Do not retreat. Face your enemy. Never quit!**

# Do not retreat (Joshua 8:1-2)

## A word of encouragement

Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” (Joshua 8: 1a)

Our tongue is powerful because words have the power of life and death (Proverbs 18:21). God‘s word to Joshua restored his courage and trust that the Promised Land is for the Israelites to conquer. We too need to hear, believe and put into practice God's word of encouragement in our lives.

## A word of instruction

Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. (Joshua 8: 1b)

It is the Lord who gives us courage and confidence when we are afraid and discouraged because through him all things are possible (Mark 10:27). We must remember always to seek His face before going in because:

### The Lord always has a plan for His people

Come before Him and seek His face so that you know the plans He has for you. Do not go headlong into whatever it is that you are doing before you know that He will go before you.

### Victory always comes by obedience

God’s instruction is simply to obey. When we run ahead of God, we rob ourselves and hurt others just as the Israelites did in their first assault on Ai. Our obedience to God brings blessings to us and vice versa – disobedience to God brings curses upon us.

## A word of promise

For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land. (Joshua 8: 1c)

The word God spoke to Joshua “I have delivered” is a promise. His promises only came true when Joshua and the Israelites stepped out in faith for God to deliver and give them victory over Ai.

Likewise, our failures are not final. Our true character comes out when how defeat is handled. Remember to first seek His word for us so that we can overcome and gain victory in our lives.

# Face your enemy (Joshua 8:3-13)

Before facing the enemy, the Israelites made preparations and plans for the attack.

## Listen carefully (Joshua 8:4)

People are to listen to what God has to say to them.

## Do what the Lord has commanded (Joshua 8:8)

God's promises are sure. All the Israelites need to do is to combine their faith in Him and do what is commanded.

In the same manner, we must remember God’s faithfulness to us. Do not allow the past to set us back. Listen to His word, and have faith to act on His commands.

# Never Quit (Joshua 8: 14-29)

Steps to be successful in life's battles:

## Be in a state of readiness

Be alert so that you are always ready to go when God calls.

## Go to God for help and believe in His promises

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3)

Prayer should be the first priority, not a last resort.

## Face your enemy instead of retreating

Faith is never passive. Faith gives courage and strength to move onward.

# Conclusion

There are three things that we can learn from Achan’s sin and the second assault on the city of Ai:

1. Second chance springs from true repentance and confession.
2. The second chance is always only in Christ.
3. Sin does not have the last word, and a person who renews his or her relationship with God can progress with Him.



Sermon summary contributed by Adeliyn Lim.

Prayer items by Ngui Yuen Loong.



 SERMON: The God of a Second Chance

**Pray:**

* We will seek God daily and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the sins in our lives.
* We will repent of our sins knowing that God is faithful and just.
* We will trust God and obey Him in our thoughts and deeds.
* We will have courage in our Christian walk, which is more often than not different from the way of the world.
* We will not give up doing God’s will.

***The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)***

**MINISTRIES & EVENTS: Volunteers - Writing**

***The church needs people who can write to serve in many areas.***

**Pray:**

* Those gifted in writing to come forward to avail themselves to serve.
* The writing ministry will play its roles in the church to communicate the message clearly and reach out to target audience effectively.
* The love, grace and mercy of God will be shared through words to those who need them, through printed media or social media.
* Writers who serve will be able to take their skills to the next level to have even more power in their words to touch, transform and change lives.
* The writers will be able to tap into the technology to reach out to many in the world.

***“Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. (Habakkuk 2:2b)***

MALAYSIA MY NATION: The Haze

*The air quality is Singapore has become alarming poor, registering a psi (pollutant standards index) of 215 last Friday (26/08/2016). The haze is expected to affect Malaysia soon.*

**Pray:**

* Citizens will take precautions and avoid extended outdoor activities.
* Health and environmental authorities will monitor the situation closely and advise the public accordingly.
* Protection for those in the high risk groups, including the elderlies, the toddlers, those with respiratory problem.
* The perpetrators who practise slash-and-burn method to clear land in the palm oil plantation and pulp and paper industry will be identified and brought to justice and punishment be handed out to prevent them from doing this again and again.
* Business owners will conduct their business responsibly. They will not create more peatlands, destroy the natural habitats of local flora and fauna, and cause health hazards of millions of people in the region.

***Do not pollute the land where you are. (Numbers 35:33a)***

* **A TRANSFORMED WORLD: Earthquakes**

***Several earthquakes strike recently, including one in Italy (magnitude 6.2) and Myanmar (magnitude 6.8), taking lives, injuring many and destroying properties.***

**Pray:**

* Friends and family members of the victims to be comforted.
* Local authorities and volunteers to help affected victims to get back on their feet.
* Rebuilding and repair will take place quickly to allow the locals to resume their normal lives.
* People will realize they need the Lord and will respond when approached by Christians who share the good news with them.
* People will find hope in God. They will seek and find refuge in God.

***God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. (Psalm 46:1-3)***