

## ISRAEL RESTORED TO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

### *Forgiveness Leads To A Second Chance*

#### Joshua 8:1

In **Joshua 8**, God gives the children of **Israel** a second chance, this time to do things *His way* in the taking of the city of **Ai**. The momentum **Israel** had achieved by the *miraculous crossing of the Jordan* and the *supernatural victory over Jericho* was stopped by the *defeat at Ai*. But one must always remember that **Israel** was defeated, not because they were *out manned*; they were defeated because of *sin*. As a result of their defeat, despair permeated, not only among all those in the camp, but also within the heart of **Joshua**.

Now with **Achan's** sin judged, God's favor toward **Israel** was restored (**Galatians 6:1**) and He reassured **Joshua** that He had not forsaken him or His people. When **Joshua** heard God's words of encouragement (**Joshua 8:1**), his heart quickened, for these were the same words that he had heard several times before, "*Do not fear or be dismayed (discouraged).*" **Moses** has spoken these words at **Kadesh Barnea** when he sent out the *twelve spies* (**Deuteronomy 1:21**). **Moses** also spoke these words to **Joshua** forty years later when he was turning over the reins of leadership to him (**Deuteronomy 31:8**). **Joshua** again heard these words when God spoke to him just after the death of **Moses** (**Joshua 1:9**). Now at this crucial time in **Joshua's** life, it was good to be reminded and reassured that God was ready to lead if he and the nation of **Israel** were ready to *hear* and *obey* Him...which they were.

One must remember though, the second time you have to do something, it will always be more difficult. Do it right the first time, otherwise it will always take *more effort, energy, and cost*. This principle was especially true with **Joshua** and **Israel**. This time God's plan involved using all the fighting men of **Israel**.

#### Three Scenarios of Dealing with Sin and Receiving Forgiveness:

- **When God directly confronts us with our sin.** This was the case with **Joshua** and **Israel** following their defeat at **Ai**...God confronted **Joshua**.
- **When God brings one to their senses.** This was the case with the **Prodigal Son**.
- **When God brings someone into our life that directly confronts us with our sin.** This was the case with **Nathan** confronting **David**.

When confronted with our sin, how we respond to that revelation shows our true *faith* and *trust* in God...and our understanding of His *willingness* and *ability* to *forgive us*. It reveals our true *relationship* with God. Ie. *Defensive...Justifying...Running...Trying to put it out of our mind...* or...**Repent. Pride vs. Humility.**

#### I. THE PROBLEM IN BEING RESTORED TO FELLOWSHIP:

##### Joshua and Israel after their defeat at Ai...**Joshua 7.**

- **THE PROBLEM OF DOUBT**...Has God forgiven me (us)?  
One of the strongest messages presented in Scripture is *forgiveness*. The Bible is the story of how God *forgives*. It begins in **Genesis** and continues through **Revelation**. If forgiveness is one of the central themes...where do you suppose the enemy might attack you as God's children? Through the process of *forgiveness!*
- **THE PROBLEM OF DEFEAT**...You feel defeated...you wonder if you will (can) ever be used by God again. This is why we tend to *look back* instead of *looking up*...just as **Joshua** and **Israel** looked *back* (**Numbers 11**) instead of looking *upward*.
- **THE PROBLEM OF DEPENDENCE**...When we fail God we get embarrassed and quit depending on God and begin depending on others. We develop a co-dependency...dependent more on man than on God.  
  
We tend to blame God or someone else for our defeat...even though we are the one who *sinned* and *disobeyed* God. Again, that's the *normal pattern of life*. We always want to *blame someone else* for our failures. Ie. *I am a victim*.

#### II. THE PROCESS TO BEING RESTORED TO FELLOWSHIP:

##### Prodigal Son...**Luke 15:11-32**

- **REPENT**...Confess the sin.
- **RECONCILE**...Receive God's grace and mercy...be reconciled to God and be reconciled with those we have sinned against.
- **RECLAIM**...Regain *surrendered ground*...areas that have been compromised and given over to the enemy.
- **RESTORE**...Return and be restored...mend and repair relationships.

### III. THE PATHWAY TO BEING RESTORED TO FELLOWSHIP:

Nathan and David...[II Samuel 12:1-15](#)

- **HEAR GOD**...You have to seek to hear from God...*have ears to hear what the Spirit has to say*. Lord, tell me how to do it your way. Get in God's Word.
- **SERVE GOD**...You have to seek to preform your duty as unto the Lord. Do what God commands you to do. *Humility and obedience*.
- **DEPEND ON GOD**...You have to seek and wait for the Lord to meet your needs...the source of victory.

#### LESSONS WE CAN LEARN:

- God is GRACIOUS. He always provides a way of escape.  
*"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."*  
~I Corinthians 10:13
- God FORGIVES. He is *mercy*.  
*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*  
~I John 1:9
- God RESTORES.