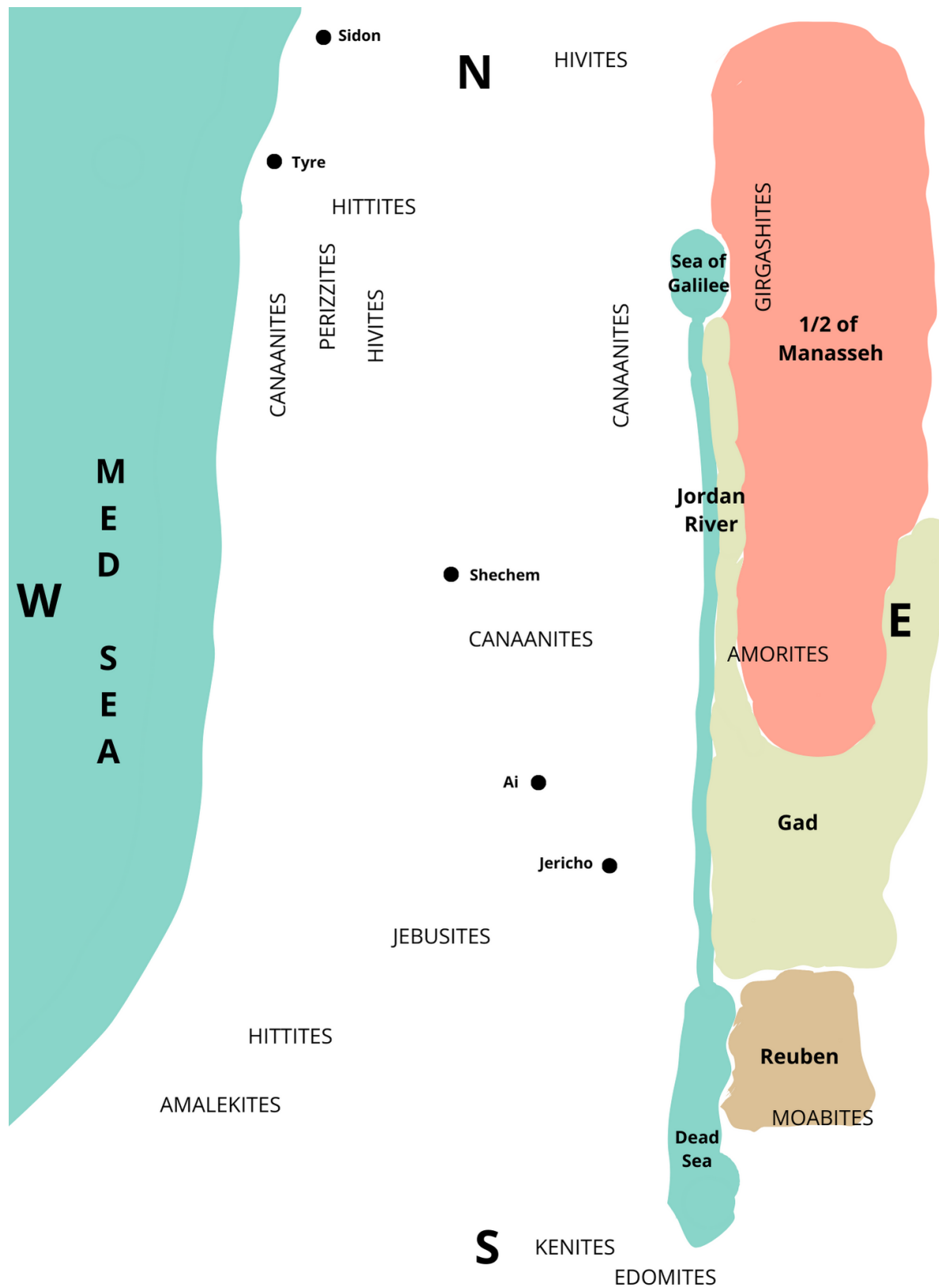




The Central Attack

Joshua 6-8

God had given the Children of Israel the Promised Land, but they would need to take it by faith as those currently occupying the land fought against them. Likewise, Jesus Christ has given us life, but there is a very real enemy (sometimes it is our own flesh) that fights against us, claiming all that He has for us. As we work through the rest of our study, ask the Lord to show you the enemies currently occupying your promised land.

Read Joshua 6:1-5.

1. What was the current status of Jericho and why? (v. 1)

2. Verses 2-5 detail the instructions given to Joshua by God.

- a. What had God given them? (v. 2) _____

- b. How many days would they march around the city one time? _____

- c. Why do you think God commanded the Ark to go with them? _____

- d. How many times were they to march around the city on the 7th day? _____

- e. Seven priests went before the Ark. What were they to do on the 7th day that they had not been instructed to do on the prior six days, and what would this signal the people to do? (v. 4-5)

- f. What would be the final outcome? _____

Seven – in Biblical numerology the number seven represents completeness or perfection.
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Read Joshua 6:6-11.

3. In what order would the Israelites line up to go around the city of Jericho? (v. 6-9)

First: _____

Second: _____

Third: _____

Fourth: _____

Fifth: _____

4. Read Romans 8:31. Based on this verse and what you have studied so far, how could Israel face a fortified city like Jericho with confidence?

5. Joshua did not need to come up with a plan. God was with them, and He could easily give them the victory, but what would be required of Joshua and the Children of Israel if they were to be successful in their fight against Jericho? (Joshua 1:7-8)

6. How does this principle apply to us today? Why is it important for us to obey God's rules for life, even if they might seem outdated or countercultural?

7. **THINK:** What do you think God hoped to teach the Israelites through their marching around the city?

Read Joshua 6:12-19.

8. What would the outcomes be for Jericho and Rahab, and what was the reason behind each of those outcomes? (v. 17)

a. Jericho: _____

b. Rahab: _____

9. What additional instructions did Joshua give the Israelites on the 7th day?

v. 18 _____

Why? _____

v.19 _____

10. How can the heart of these instructions be applied to your own life today?

11. **THINK:** If Jericho, strong and formidable, represents the world in the life of the believer, why do you think every living thing in Jericho needed to be destroyed?

Read Joshua 6:20-27.

12. What curse is spoken of in verse 26?

13. What happened 500 years later? (1 Kings 16:34 ESV or NLT version)

14. Summarize what the account of Jericho has taught you about God.

As Christians, we will face battles against Satan, the culture, and even our very own flesh, but we need not be afraid, for the LORD our God is with us. Let Him be the commander in your life; follow His instructions and you will have the victory.

15. Review the map at the beginning of this week's lesson. Note where the initial attack took place. If Israel was successful in taking this central area, how would it help them take the rest? If Israel were to fail, how would it put them at greater risk?

Read Joshua 7.

Morale was high. The Lord had given Israel a decisive victory in Jericho, not a single one of them was lost. Ai, being much smaller than Jericho, should be no trouble at all.

16. Record the words that come before and after the word "but" that opens chapter 7.

Words Prior	Transitional Word	Words After
So, the LORD was...	BUT	The Children of Israel...

17. What sin caused the anger of the LORD to burn against the Children of Israel, and who did God charge with the guilt of this sin? (v. 1, 11)

18. Why did God tell Israel to stay away from the accursed things in Jericho? (v. 6:18)

19. Why did God hold the entire nation responsible for the sin of one man? (Deut. 23:14, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14)

The sin of one can affect many. As it turned out, the greatest enemy Israel would face would be themselves. It was their own sinful nature that would trouble them, and the same is true for us today.

20. **THINK:** What mistakes did Joshua make at Ai, and what could he have done differently that would have ensured their victory and saved the lives of thirty-six of his men?

Often, we seek the Lord for wisdom and direction when we are feeling scared or uncertain about things, but when we feel confident and sure of ourselves, we charge forward without asking. This is the point where we stop walking by faith and start walking by sight.

21. How did Joshua react to their defeat, and how is this reminiscent of their time in the wilderness? (v. 6-9, Exodus 14:11, 16:3, 17:3)

Covet – to desire, take pleasure in, delight in; in a bad sense of inordinate, ungoverned, selfish desire.

22. Achan admitted that it was covetousness that caused his sin. What were the individual steps that led to his sin, and what steps can we take to protect ourselves from falling victim to the same? (v. 20-21)

23. **THINK:** Why do you think Achan dug a hole and hid the items he took under his tent? What does this tell you about his mindset when it comes to sin and God?

24. The judgment of Achan's sin is difficult to understand. What does Deuteronomy 24:16 tell us about Achan's relatives being punished alongside him?

25. **THINK:** Why do you think God enforced such a dramatic judgment of this sin? What do you think He was trying to teach the Children of Israel at this very particular point in their quest for the Promised Land?

26. Do you have any hidden sins in your life? (I encourage you to stop and ask the Lord to reveal anything to you.) If so, what steps can you take to walk worthy?

Read Joshua 8.

When we sin, it is easy for us to become discouraged. As we look forward, we can become fearful of repeating the same mistakes we have made in the past. Israel had suffered a humiliating defeat as judgment for sin that had not been dealt with. In addition, they failed to seek God for direction and underestimated the strength of their enemy.

27. Having dealt with the sin of Israel, what words did God use to encourage Israel to move forward? (v. 1)

28. Moving forward, Israel would need a renewed faith. Read Romans 10:17. How can we seek to renew our faith when we experience times of discipline and discouragement?

29. Read Psalm 37:23-24. How can these verses encourage you when you experience a slip in your walk with Christ?

Asking the Lord to reveal the hidden sin in your life, dealing with that sin, trusting in the Lord to help you face the formidable foe of your flesh, and looking to Him for His plan for each day will keep you in line with His will and give you the faith to receive His promises.

30. God used a very different approach in the taking of Ai than He did with Jericho. What other major difference was there, and what lesson can be learned in light of this and Achan's sin? (7:18-19, 8:2)

Our God is a magnificent God Who uses a myriad of ways to accomplish His will. His timing is perfect, and He is good. Wait on Him! He never disappoints.

31. **THINK:** Read Joshua 8:18-19, 25-26, Exodus 14:13-16, 21-22, and Exodus 17:8-13. With these accounts in mind, what do you think Joshua's raising of his spear may have signaled to the Children of Israel?

32. What are some things in your own life and relationship with God that remind you of His faithfulness and that He will be with you in times of uncertainty?

Pride and covetousness led to disobedience; disobedience led to judgment; judgment led to repentance; repentance led to obedience; and obedience led to victory. Note that at this point, there is a pause in their military efforts.

33. What did they do before moving on to take the north and south portions of the Promised Land? Be careful to consider each thing they did and record how it relates to us today. (v. 30-35)

34. By the end of Joshua 8, a total of four heaps of stone had been built. Review each one and record what they were to remind the people of. (Explanations are not given for each, so you will need to think about what God might have wanted them to learn/remember.)

Joshua 4:20-24 _____

Joshua 7:26 _____

Joshua 8:29 _____

Joshua 8:30-36 (Joshua 1:7-8) _____

God has promised us every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3), dealt with our sin on the cross, and given us victory over our flesh through the power of His Word and His Holy Spirit in us. May we be careful to always remember.

“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success.”

- Joshua 1:7-8

A Closer Look at Covetousness

Joshua 7:21

In Joshua 7, we read of the sin of Achan. Israel had been specifically commanded to abstain from the accursed things, and yet Achan did not heed this command.

35. Read Joshua 7:21. What sin did Achan confess? _____

36. Read Exodus 20:17. What is the tenth commandment? What are we not to covet?

In the original Hebrew language, *to covet* means: *in a bad sense of inordinate, ungoverned, selfish, or lustful desire*. The dictionary definition is: *to desire wrongfully, inordinately, or without due regard for the rights of others*.

37. Go back to Exodus 20 and read through the Ten Commandments. Record how covetousness could cause one to break the other nine commandments.

Achan heard the command, but he saw the pretty, shiny things and wanted them so desperately that he was not only willing to disobey God, but he had to bury the things he took so he wouldn't get caught. He was willing to sacrifice everything (his life, the lives of his countrymen, the lives of his family, the nation of Israel) for something he didn't even get to enjoy. It sat wasted under the earth. This is what covetousness does.

We must take the sin of covetousness very seriously. It can lead to other sins that will affect more than just ourselves. It is something we all struggle with. It is so common to our human nature that we need God's commandments to make us aware!

38. Read Romans 7:7-12 and record what Paul teaches us about the necessity of the commandments concerning covetousness.

39. Write down some things you desire that could lead you to covet.

40. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about covetousness.

Ephesians 5:3, 5

Luke 12:15

Colossians 3:5

41. Read the following verses and record what we should focus on instead.

Matthew 6:19-21

Hebrews 13:5

To covet is not simply to desire; it is to allow one's desires to get out of control—unrestrained, selfish, and lustful. When this happens, greater sin is at stake, as it was for Achan. Praise God for His grace, forgiveness, and perfect Word to keep us in check.

42. Go back to your list from #39. What can you do to keep your desires in check? Write down anything new you have learned and anything you need to apply to show love to God through obedience.
