

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Joshua: God's Faithful Giving Of The Promised Land To Israel

#### Part II: God's Giving Israel Victory Over The Canaanites, Joshua 5:13-12:24

##### C. God's Lesson On Protective Discernment In Israel's Defeat At Ai

(Joshua 7:1-26)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

2 Timothy 3:13 predicted that deception would intensify in the last days, and we can readily illustrate it today:

(1) On April 22, 2015, President Obama warned of "rapidly warming global temperatures and ever-more-severe storms caused by climate change" (Lamar Smith, "The Climate-Change Religion," The Wall Street Journal, April 24, 2015, p. A11) and Pope Francis promotes the same viewpoint (Coral Davenport & Laurie Goodstein, "Pope Francis Steps Up Campaign on Climate Change, to Conservatives' Alarm," nytimes.com, April 27, 2015).

Yet, "(e)ven the U.N." that will try "to forge a new international climate treaty later this year . . . doesn't agree" with them. "In its 2012 Special Report on Extreme Events, the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says there is 'high agreement' among leading experts that long-term trends in weather disasters are not attributable to human-caused climate change," Ibid. Lamar Smith, chairman of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, adds, "Climate alarmists have failed to explain the lack of global warming over the past 15 years" (Ibid.) and the April 30, 2015 issue of the journal (Ibid., p. A13) cited a June 24, 1974 Time magazine story that even told how "(c)limatological Cassandras are becoming increasingly apprehensive" about "another ice age," for "(t)elltale signs are everywhere," and that "(s)ince the 1940s the mean global temperature has dropped 2.7 degrees F."

(2) Remarkably, this matter touches on a far greater deception: "Christina Figueres, the official leading the U.N.'s effort to forge a . . . climate treaty later this year . . . told reporters in February that the real goal is . . . the redistribution of wealth among nations" (Ibid.), or Marxism! However, that ideology extols group control at the cost of individualism, what was touted by the demon Alice Bailey consulted in her era (Brannon Howse, Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 15-18). So, Satan fuels Marxism behind the climate-change narrative being touted by influential men so that millions of people will accept the narrative as true to the eventual subverting of individuals to group control!

(3) Deception plagues even conservative Christian entities: the Answers In Genesis magazine (Answers, January-March 2015) ran the article, "Biblical Counseling -- Common Cause With Creation" by Dr. Heath Lambert, executive director of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, where he claimed: "I know of no single biblical counselor who rejects the scientific observations of secular psychology," Ibid., p. 32! That is an amazing statement, for "research psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey" asserted, "The techniques used by Western psychiatrists are, with few exceptions, on exactly the same scientific plane as the techniques used by witch doctors." (Martin & Deidre Bobgan, PsychoHeresy, 1987, p. 36, Foreword by Dave Hunt, citing R. C. Fuller, Mesmerism and the American Cure of Souls, 1982, p. 46-47) However, many believers who trust all that Answers magazine prints will try "Christian Counseling"!

(4) Deception can affect us in our own Church: I once heard a Christian Counselor claim from this pulpit that God likely let a woman the counselor knew commit suicide because her life was too painful for her to handle! This claim errs according to Romans 6:1-3 that teaches we can and should live in newness of life as victorious over sin!

Need: So, we ask, "*How can I be discerning to avoid being blind-sided by troublesome error and sinful defeat?!*"

- I. **Joshua 7:1-9 reports how a man's sin and deceit set up the unwary nation Israel for tragic defeat at Ai:**
  - A. Achan, a man in Israel, angered the Lord by keeping some of the goods of Jericho that were banned, Jos. 7:1.
  - B. Joshua 7:11 KJV claims he "dissembled," i. e., he "deceived" (*kahash*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 471) the rest of Israel in committing this sin, secretly hiding the stolen goods among his possessions.
  - C. As a result, Joshua and Israel then attacked the city of Ai with only 3,000 men, thinking it would be an easy battle, only to see God not help them so that they fled from Ai, losing 36 men in battle, Joshua 7:2-5b.
  - D. This turn of events shocked Israel and Joshua and crushed their morale, Joshua 7:5c-9.
- II. **When Joshua turned to God to lament over the tragedy, the Lord revealed Israel's need to identify the sinful party and to punish him that Israel might return to the position of divine blessing, Joshua 7:10-15:**
  - A. In a state of irritation with Joshua, God ordered him to get up, asking why he was down on his face, for the problem was not with the Lord, but with Israel who had sinned by taking of the banned goods, Joshua 7:10-13.
  - B. Accordingly, the Lord ordered Joshua the next morning to identify by divine lot the party who had violated the ban so that he and all that he possessed would be destroyed by fire in punishment for sin, Joshua 7:14-15.

- III. Thus, Joshua and all Israel obeyed the Lord to root out the evil in their midst: they discovered that Achan and his family had taken and hidden the banned goods, so Israel punished them, Joshua 7:16-26.**
- IV. However, and remarkably so, this tragedy could have been avoided had Joshua and all Israel, including Achan, heeded the Lord's signals of protective discernment (as follows):**
- A. God's expressed irritation with Joshua and all Israel's grief and depression in Joshua 7:10-13 reveals that their defeat at Ai and resulting grief was inexcusable, and in view the facts involved, it certainly was (as follows):
  - B. First, Achan could have avoided his sin by paying heed to God's **precedents**:
    1. Achan had seen God's great power and provision for him and his kin in crossing the Jordan, Jos. 3:1-4:24.
    2. He had also seen God's great power and provision make the unassailable walls of Jericho fall out and down the city hillside to form an access for him easily to rush up into Jericho for victory, Joshua 6:1-27.
    3. Thus, Achan should have **recalled** these *precedents* to have revered the Lord for His power to judge him if he did not obey Him about the banned goods and also to trust Him to supply ample booty in future battles!
  - C. Second, Israel could also have avoided being deceived by paying heed to God's **precedents**:
    1. All Israel had seen both God's great power and provision for her through Joshua at the Jordan crossing and at Jericho, and her warriors had also agreed to follow Joshua's lead, Joshua 3:1-4:24; 6:1-27 and 1:16-18.
    2. However, **neglecting** these **precedents**, Israel's spies and warriors *insubordinately* advised Joshua to send only 3,000 men to fight Ai, **errantly** viewing their Jericho success was achieved in their **own** might.
  - D. Third, Joshua could have avoided being deceived by heeding God's **precedents** and His **written Word**:
    1. Himself a part of Israel, Joshua had seen God's great power and provision at the Jordan and Jericho, but he too had forgotten the lessons they taught to where he chose to attack Ai *independent* of God's advice!
    2. Besides, Joshua had **failed** to **heed God's written Word**, and it left him vulnerable to Achan's deception:
      - a. In Joshua 1:8 with 1:3-5, God had told Joshua closely to heed written Scripture for military success in Canaan, and part of that written Word was Exodus 23:20-22 that predicted how the Angel of the Lord, the Preincarnate Christ, would lead Israel to take possession of the Promised Land (especially Exodus 23:20).
      - b. Indeed, that passage advised Israel not to provoke the Angel of the Lord lest He punish her (Exodus 23:21), and only as Israel heeded Him would she enjoy His help in defeating the Canaanites, Ex. 23:22.
      - c. Thus, based on *Scripture*, **Joshua errantly failed to consult the Angel of the Lord before attacking Ai!**
    3. Furthermore, the Preincarnate Christ in Joshua 5:13-15 had graciously appeared to him to lead Joshua to defeat Jericho, so he should have recalled this **precedent** and **consulted** that **Angel of the Lord before attacking Ai**, for God would then have told him about Achan's sin so it could be handled before the battle.

***Lesson:*** (1) *Joshua and all Israel could have not only avoided Achan's sin, but they could have also learned of his deception and avoided their tragedy at Ai by heeding divine precedents and Scripture.* (2) *Nevertheless, after the failure at Ai, Israel rightly obeyed God to learn of Achan's sin and to punish it for her restoration to God's favor.*

***Application:*** (1) *May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16.* (2) *Then, may we offset the current era's great deceptions by (a) recalling divine precedents and (b) heeding written Scripture, what 2 Timothy 3:13-17 also directs us to do!* (3) *If we have fallen prey to painful deception, may we confess it to God to rebound, 1 John 1:9.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message . . .)

Scripture reveals how we can overcome each issue of deception that was noted in our sermon introduction:

(1) On warnings by the president and the pope of future weather disasters due to alleged human-caused global warming or "climate change," Genesis 8:22 claims that while the earth remains, it will have a livable climate of seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter and day and night. Yes, 2 Peter 3:10-11 predicts the earth will pass away with great heat, but not by climate change, but by judgment after the Millennium, Revelation 20:1-11.

(2) On the U.N.'s Marxist push to redistribute wealth, Hebrews 13:5 calls us to be content with what we own, that God will not leave or forsake us in meeting our needs, and on the Marxist oppressive suppression of individuals to groups, Psalm 1:1-3 teaches the blessing of one who heeds Scripture versus the deprivation of one who does not.

(3) On the issue of "Christian Counseling" in general, Isaiah 9:6 ESV calls Jesus the "Wonderful Counselor" and in Revelation 19:11-16 "the Word of God" personified. If we then trust in Christ as Savior and expose our minds and hearts to written Scripture, we will come under all of the counseling care we need under the oversight of Christ.

(4) On the Christian Counselor's claim that sometimes life is too painful to avoid committing sin such as suicide, 1 Corinthians 10:13 claims God will not let us be tempted to sin above our capacity in His grace to handle it!

**May we heed Biblical precedents and ultimately written Scripture to avoid being harmfully deceived.**