

JOSHUA 7-8

GOD CALLS FOR
FAITHFULNESS

INTRODUCTION

- After Jericho, Israel is shocked to lose a battle against the smaller city of Ai.
- When Joshua beseeches the Lord in prayer, He reveals sin in the camp—Israel had taken things devoted to Him from Jericho.
- Achan is identified as the guilty one and punished. With truth uncovered and relationship restored, Israel attacks again. This time Ai is defeated.

**GOD DEMANDS
WE SERVE HIM ONLY**

JOSHUA 7:1-27

FAILURE BRINGS HUMILITY

- Israel's journey into Canaan continues with a battle against Ai.
- Riding the victory of Jericho, Joshua prepares for battle, but not in the right way.
- There are two problems in this narrative: the sin of the people and the pride of Joshua.
- Joshua will come to see that leading sinful people comes at a cost.

FAILURE BRINGS HUMILITY

- This portion of the narrative also reveals Joshua's reliance on himself.
- Unlike the previous victory at Jericho, this military strategy is devised solely on the basis of perceived strength of the enemy, not on the strength of and dependence on Yahweh.

FAILURE BRINGS HUMILITY

- If the Israelites assumed that their comparative size and ability were what would bring victory, they were swiftly reminded that it is the presence of the LORD that makes them strong.
- The death of 36 soldiers and an embarrassing defeat led Joshua to pray.
- The LORD revealed that they had sinned by taking herem, or “devoted things,” from Jericho.

FAILURE REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY

- This sin of Achan was not simply an issue of theft.
- This was the sin of unfaithfulness. Wickedness and righteousness are matters of the heart, and God is fully invested in His children's hearts.
- God desires us to be faithful to Him, rather than possessions or professional successes, both of which were temptations for Joshua and Achan.

FAILURE REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY

- The Lord said that Israel had sinned, yet it was one man who took the sacred things to himself.
- Our actions affect people in ways we may never know.
- We live in an individualistic age, but the truth of community is reinforced for every believer in the body of Christ: “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (1 Corinthians 12:26).

FAILURE MUST BRING US TO PRAYER

- The failure at Ai led to Joshua's lament.
- Joshua, just like the Israelites, questions God.
- His prayer was accusatory and victimized, but it was prayer none-the-less, and He quickly did as the Lord commanded, "Get up!"
- It is better to say the "wrong" thing to the Lord than to isolate oneself from His presence.

FAILURE REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY

- God will not tolerate unfaithfulness and He will not compete with any other source for glory.
- God lets Joshua know that it's Him, or the devoted things.
- He will not stay if this hidden idolatry is not done away with.
- This account serves as a warning against yielding to future temptations.

FAILURE DEMANDS PUNISHMENT

- It is hard to look at Achan's punishment, yet we must not avoid the truth: because of his repentance and death, God pardoned Israel and restored the people to relationship with Him.
- We see the victory that will come in the next chapter is made possible because of cleansing from sin.
- Jesus Christ took our punishment and died our death so that we can be restored to relationship with God.

**REPENTANCE
RESTORES
RELATIONSHIP**

JOSHUA 8:1-35

THE CAREFUL PLAN

- God's presence demanded truth and repentance and, when the Israelites obeyed, they were granted another opportunity at Ai.
- This time, God's instructions preceded the battle: "Do not fear and do not be dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land" (Joshua 8:1).

THE CAREFUL PLAN

- This time, the Lord promises the same result as Jericho because the dependence on the Lord is the same as Jericho.
- God honors faithful obedience and dependence on him.
- The divine guidance that was missing from the first attack of Ai is present in the second attempt.

THE CAREFUL PLAN

- Again, God gives the victory; Israel's role is to obey.
- There is a real interplay of divine instruction with human strategy, success with failure, prayer with repentance, and obedience with consecration.
- All of this is evidence of the tender yet sacred relationship between God and His people throughout the conquests in Joshua.

THE CLEVER DIVERSION

- This time Joshua take the entire force of his military with him and sets an ambush for those at Ai.
- 5,000 of the men are set for an ambush between Bethel and Ai.
- Bethel was also an important Canaanite city.
- Moses never held anything more dangerous than a rod. Joshua points a javelin at the city as a symbol of God's judgment.

THE COMPLETE VICTORY

- There are three killing places in this chapter: the fields, the desert, and the city.
- This passage tells us that Ai became a permanent a heap of stones (Joshua 8:28-29).



COVENANTAL WORSHIP

- When the battle at Ai is said and done, Scripture records Israel traveling further north to Mt. Ebal in order to fulfill Moses' instructions recorded in Deuteronomy:
- “And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal.”

COVENANTAL WORSHIP

- The Israelites refocus just as before on their sacred relationship with Yahweh.
- They pause to confess and to celebrate with sacrifices and covenant renewal.
- After the violation of their covenant with the Lord, repentance was necessary and a turning back to the Lord from sin and reestablishing the covenantal relationship with their God.

QUESTION:

**WHY THE TEN
PLAGUES OF EGYPT?**

TEN PLAGUES?

- Why did God bring these plagues?
- Why did God use these specific plagues against the Egyptians?
- What was their purpose?



1. BLOOD

- The rivers, streams, ponds, and drinking water turned to blood (Exodus 7:14-25). The fish in the waters died and left a stench throughout the land.
- This showed the powerlessness of the Egyptian river deities, such as Hapi, the god of the Nile.



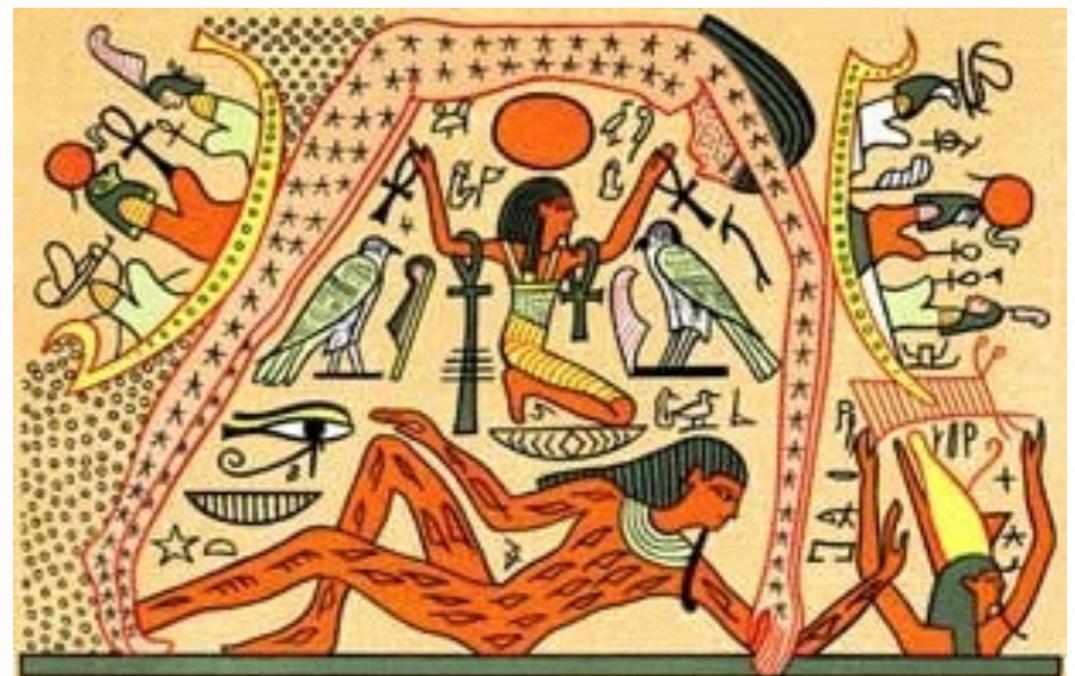
2. FROGS

- Masses of frogs swarmed out of the streams and rivers and entered the Egyptians' houses, bedrooms, beds, and ovens (Exodus 8:1-15).
- The plague of frogs showed God's power over the god Hekt that had head like a frog.



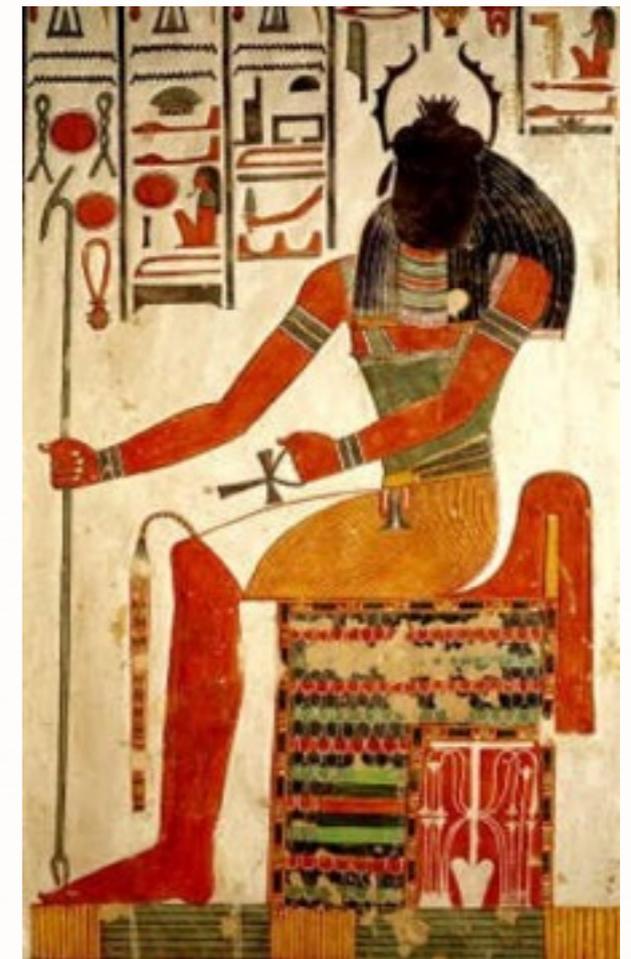
3. LICE

- The dust of the land turned to lice, or gnats, and covered the people and animals (Exodus 8:16-19).
- This plague showed God's power over Geb, the earth god, which was now covered with lice.



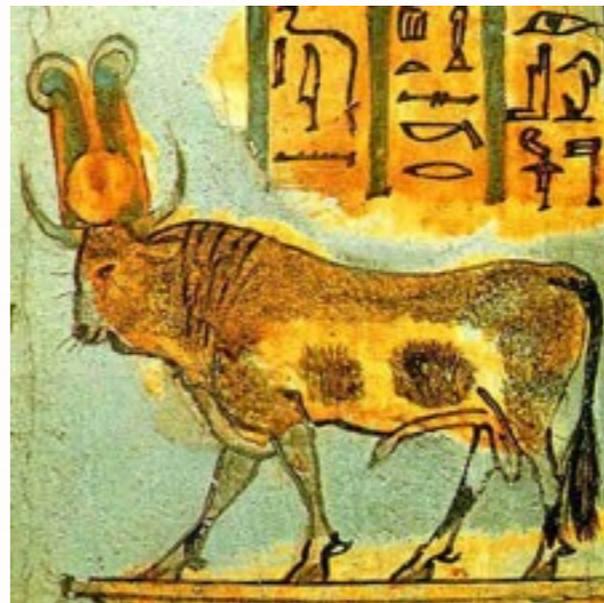
4. FLIES

- Swarms of flies flew into Pharaoh's house, and the houses of the Egyptians. (Exodus 8:20-32).
- The plagues of insects showed God could control them and the insect god Khepri offered no protection.



5. MURRAIN

- An infectious disease affected the cattle but was not spread to the livestock of the Israelites (Exodus 9:1-7).
- This plague mocked the Egyptian cattle gods, such as Hathor, the cow goddess, and Apis, the bull god.



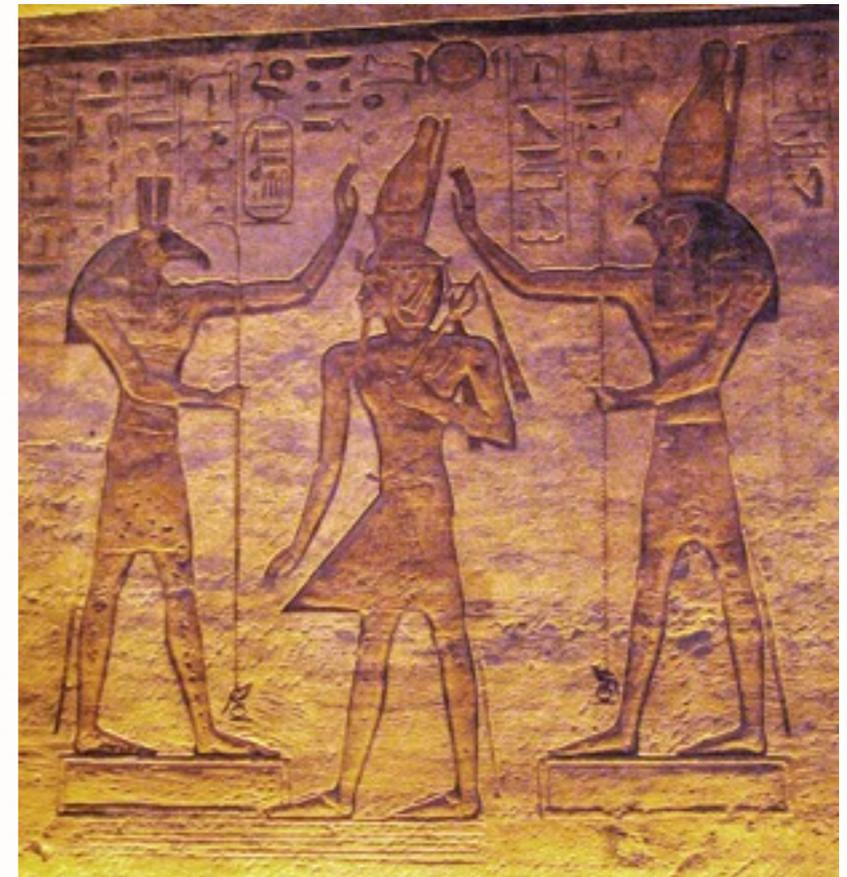
6. BOILS

- Moses and Aaron took ashes from the furnace, tossed them into the air, and God turned them into boils and sores on the Egyptians and their animals (Exodus 9:8-12). The Israelites were not affected.
- This was an attack on Sekhmet, goddess of physicians and healers.



7. HAIL

- God sent a massive hail storm with lightning that ran along the ground that destroyed trees, crops and any person or animal not under cover (Exodus 9:13-35).
- God showed His power over the gods of thunder and storms, such as Min and Set.



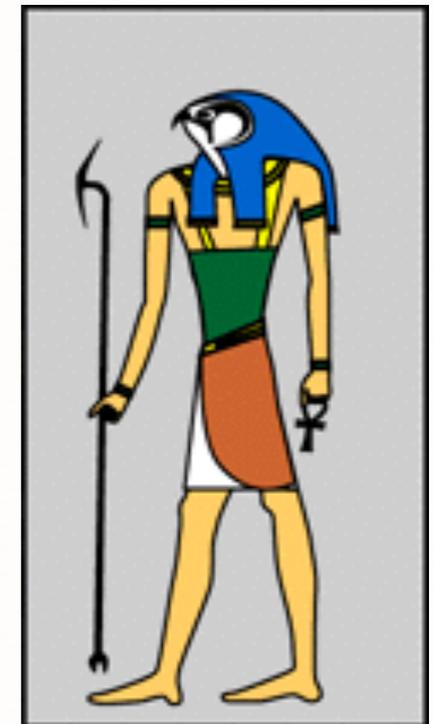
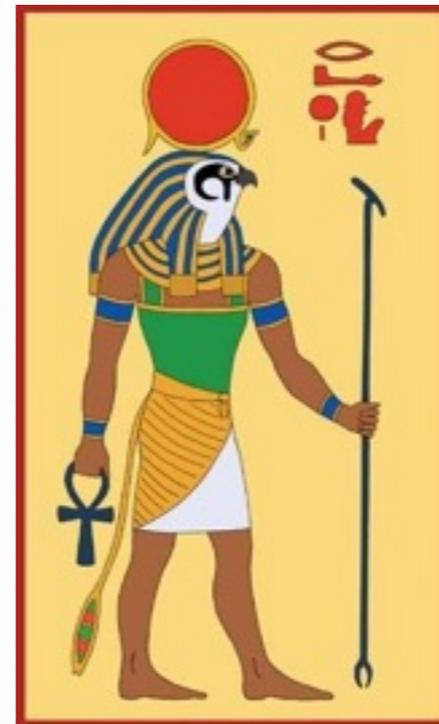
8. LOCUSTS

- A terrible swarm of locusts covered all the land of Egypt that filled the houses and at any residue of trees left from previous plagues (Exodus 10:1-20).
- This was showed the powerlessness of the god Serapis, the defender of the land against locusts.



9. DARKNESS

- For three days, darkness engulfed Egypt. The people could not even see each other, so they stayed in their houses for three days (Exodus 10:21-29).
- This plague showed God's power over Egypt's sun god Ra and the sunrise deity Horus.



10. DEATH

- The final plague came at midnight when all the first born children of Egyptians died (Exodus 11:1-10).
- The death of the firstborn children was a direct attack on Isis, the goddess of childbirth and motherhood, one of the oldest goddesses in Egypt.

