



Biblical Manhood

Remembering Our Legacy, Fulfilling Our Destiny
November/December, 2018

Moving On!

Have you ever had to move on from a defeat? Have you ever had to pick up and move forward after a loss? Maybe you yielded to a sin that you said you'd never fall to again. Maybe you decided to do your will instead of God's will. Maybe you had a setback because of a bad choice. Maybe a relationship went sour because of selfish decisions.

Joshua and the people of Israel found themselves in such a situation. They had been disobedient to God. Because of this, they had suffered a stunning defeat. The sin had been confessed and confronted. Their relationship with God had been restored. It's no longer time to mourn; it's time to move on.

How were they able to move on after their defeat, after their own failure? At the same time, how can you move on after such a time like this? In **Joshua 8:1-13**, we see how you can move on after a time of failure.

Resist fear and discouragement.

It's interesting how **Joshua 8** begins, "Now the LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up

to Ai" (**Joshua 8:1a**). After a stunning defeat, the LORD immediately tells Joshua not to be afraid or discouraged. God knew that Joshua was inclined to both of these. He had already commanded him to be strong and courageous (**Joshua 1:7**). Yet, He knew that Joshua was particularly prone to these emotions after this failure. In His loving care, God speaks to Joshua and encourages him not to fear or be discouraged.

After defeat, God does not want you to be afraid. After failure, God calls you not to be discouraged. Fear and discouragement can paralyze a person. This is the great temptation after times like this. Instead of moving on to what God has, there is the temptation to do nothing, to wallow in pity, fear, and discouragement. We are afraid to step out and trust God. We are discouraged, believing that we have messed up and can't expect God's blessing.

However, God calls us to resist fear and discouragement. God is the God of second chances – and third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth . . . well, I believe you see the point! Failure isn't final for the child of God. Defeat is not the last word

for the one who seeks and trusts the LORD. Let the words of God stir you to put aside any fear or discouragement that you have and move on to what God has for you.

Trust God's time and way.

God commands Joshua to move forward and take the city of Ai. Yet, there is a slight difference in His command this time, "Only its spoil and its cattle shall you take as booty for yourselves" (**Joshua 8:2**). Had Achan only waited! If he had only waited for God's timing and way!

Believers need to remember this truth. We must trust God's time and way.

In **Joshua 7**, Joshua nor the people had any direction from the LORD. They had not heard His word or command. This was their decision, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for the people of Ai are few" (**Joshua 7:3**).

They did not seek the LORD. They did not wait on Him. They decided what they were going to do and went about it. It led to defeat and disaster.

This text calls us to trust God's time and way. We are to pray and dig into His Word. We are to wait on Him. We have to forsake the temptation to rush to take the things that we think we need or want. The LORD desires to give us more if we will be patient and trust in Him. How we

need to pray for the grace to trust His time and His way.

Renew your commitment to obey God.

In Joshua 8, we see that the victory of Ai was going to be a divine gift to Joshua and Israel:

"See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land" (8:1)

"For the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand" (8:7)

"For I will give it into your hand" (8:18)

The text is clear: God would give Joshua and Ai the victory. Yet, they still had to obey God. They had to carry out a military plan. They had to position troops in the best place to secure victory.

The strategy for taking Ai was an ambush and pincer movement. The bulk of the army would position itself behind the city (8:3-4). Joshua would take a small force and approach the city; they would pretend to be defeated like they were the first time they came against Ai (8:5-6). When they went out to chase Joshua and his forces, the rest of the army waiting in ambush would attack the city, take it, and burn it with fire (8:7-8).

We see on display here God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. God had determined to give Joshua and Israel victory. The text emphasizes it would be a divine gift.

Yet, they had to act in obedience to God's instructions. They had to go and fight the battle. The LORD was at work behind the scenes. However, that didn't excuse Joshua or Israel from making plans, situating troops in the best possible place for victory, or from fighting the battle. God is sovereign but we are responsible.

God has much that He wants to give you. He has much that He wants to do for you. However, it's not automatic. It's not apart from your efforts. Seek the LORD. Dig into His Word. Worship Him and fellowship with believers. Move on from the failure, looking for what God has next. After defeat and failure, it's time to renew our commitment to obey God. He wants to bless but we must seek and trust Him.

Remember that Jesus is with you.

In Joshua 8, the text tells us that Joshua stayed with the people. Joshua 8:9 reveals that he lodged with the people who would be the decoys to draw the people of Ai out. Joshua 8:13 says that Joshua spent the night in the valley with his troops. How are we to understand this?

There is a simple explanation. Joshua spent part of the night with the main part of his troops. Some time during the night, he got up and joined the other troops that were setting the ambush.

The ironic thing is that Joshua was with the most dangerous group. He was with the group would be the decoys. He would be among those who pretend to be defeated and

flee. The decoys had the most dangerous job. Yet, Joshua is among them. The text shows us that this leader is one who lives among his people rather than standing aloof from them.

The same is true even more so of the greater Joshua, Jesus Christ. Jesus is with His people. He is with us in the fiercest of battles, the most dangerous of times. When you move on from times of defeat and failure, you don't do it alone. Jesus is with you. He is there to stand with you. He will guide you. He will provide you with strength and help. He will defend and fight for you as you battle. You're not alone as you move on; Jesus is with you!

World Prayer Plan

January

- 1-Afghanistan-The Church
- 2-Afghanistan-The Lost
- 3-Albania
- 4-Algeria
- 5-American Samoa
- 6-Andorra
- 7-Angola
- 8-Anguilla
- 9-Antigua
- 10-Argentina-The Church
- 11-Argentina-The Lost
- 12-Armenia
- 13-Aruba
- 14-Australia-The Church
- 15-Australia-The Lost
- 16-Austria-The Church
- 17-Austria-The Lost
- 18-Azerbaijan
- 19-Bahamas

20-Bangladesh

21-Barbados

22-Belgium

23-Belize

24-Benin

25-Bermuda

26-Bhutan

27-Bolivia-The Church

28-Bolivia-The Lost

29-Botswana

30-Brazil-The Church

31-Brazil-The Lost

24-China-Christian Literature

25-China-Conversion of Soldiers

26-China-Collapse of Communism

27-China-Taiwan

28-Colombia-The Church

February

1-British Virgin Islands

2-Brunei

3-Bulgaria

4-Burkina Faso

5-Burundi

6-Byelarus

7-Cambodia

8-Cameroon

9-Canada-The Church

10-Canada-The Lost

11-Cape Verde Islands

12-Cayman Islands

13-Central African Republic

14-Chad

15-Channel Islands

16-Chile

17-China-The Church

18-China-The Lost

19-China-Persecuted Believers

20-China-Spiritual Warfare

21-China-Missionaries

22-China-Agencies Working in China

23-China-Provision of Bibles