LESSON 5

THE BATTLE OF AI



Aim: **To show the children that relying on our own strength and wisdom instead of relying on God brings defeat.**

Scripture Reading: **Joshua 7:1-13**

Memory Verse: **Proverbs 3:5**
Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding ...

PRESENTING THE LESSON

STARTING POINT

When a woman wants to carry a large container of water on her head she asks someone else to help her lift it up. It's too heavy for her to lift into that position on her own. If she does try to do it by herself much water is likely to get spilt.

MAIN POINTS OF THE LESSON

1. Joshua sent some Israelites to spy on the city of Ai and the surrounding countryside (7:2).
2. When these spies reported back to Joshua they said it would be so easy to conquer Ai that only a few of their soldiers needed to join in battle (7:3). They did not ask God for his instructions. They put their faith in their own strength and wisdom.
3. **Describe what happened in the battle of Ai.** The inhabitants of Ai overpowered the Israelites, who became afraid and ran away (7:4-5). **Show Picture 5.** See how the Israelites are being chased away by the soldiers of Ai! Introduce this week's memory verse. The Israelites did not trust God. They relied on their own understanding of what they had found out about Ai.
4. Joshua and the other leaders of Israel were very upset by this defeat. They cried out their troubles to God. What would all their enemies in this land think of them now? They would laugh at them. They would defeat the Israelites and say the God of Israel was not really strong (7:6-9).
5. God was disappointed in Joshua and the people of Israel. The reason they had lost the battle was because they had relied on their own strength. They had forgotten that the victory over Jericho was wholly due to God, not their own cleverness. That was why they had dared taking on Ai without asking after God's will. **Refer to the introductory story, where the water is spilled when a woman tries to lift a heavy container onto her head all by herself.**
   Furthermore, the Israelites had disobeyed God's instructions and taken some things from Jericho for themselves, even though all of it belonged to the Lord (7:1, 10-12). **Do not tell the story of Achan now.** We shall come to that in the next lesson.

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6. Joshua had to tell the Israelites to prepare themselves for confessing their disobedience to God. They would defeat Ai only after their relationship with God was repaired (7:13).

Instil the Memory Verse

Our Response to the Story

When a person drinks dirty water, he or she gets ill. When we disobey God, we fall into sin and can't overcome our problems. The most important thing in life is to have a strong relationship with God, which means we must obey his instructions and put our trust in him.

Repeat the Memory Verse



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