

## Misplaced Confidence

### Scripture Reading — Joshua 8:1-8, 14-17, 24-27

*The king of Ai ... hurried out ... to meet Israel in battle.*  
—Joshua 8:14—

When Israel returned to Ai, the people of Ai were confident that they could rout Israel, as they had done before.

What was different this time? This time Israel began its battle with the Lord's permission, and they followed his instructions. When God's people comply with heaven, God's will is done on the earth (see Matthew 6:10). And because Jericho was the firstfruits that went into the Lord's treasury, Israel would receive the riches of Ai.

Unable to resist the divinely planned ruse, Ai's soldiers hurried out to swat the pesky flies of Israel. But the Lord's strategy—hiding and catching the enemy by surprise—brought Ai to its knees.

In time, God will build his own city, Jerusalem, and into it will flow the treasures and peoples of the nations (Revelation 21:24).

Following the Lord in this world can be dangerous and messy, for body and soul. But not following him leads to far greater danger.

The destruction of Jericho and Ai are a sign, to this day, of the nations' fear of God. The death and resurrection of Christ are also a sign, to this day, not of fear but of God's victory over sin, over misplaced confidence, and over those who gather together against the Lord and his anointed (Psalm 2:1-6).

### Prayer

*Lord, may all who oppose you die to themselves by the sword of your Spirit so that they may rise to newness of life, as citizens of the city you are building. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Bible Characters](#), [Joshua](#)

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