

# Don't quit!

---

**Purpose:** to encourage God's people not to quit when they make a mistake.

Ever make a mistake? Well don't sit wallowing in the mud. God will not quit on you. God's plans for you are still the same.

The children of Israel messed up in only their second battle, against who they thought were a weaker enemy. But did God quit on them? BNo! Here's what happened:

**Jos 8:1** - 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. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.

**Jos 8:2** - And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it."

Look what God does:

- He encourages them – "...do not be afraid..."
- He tells them to go again – "...take the people of war with you..."
- He assures them of victory – "...See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai..."
- He tells them what they are going to do – "...you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho..."
- He promises them a reward – "...its spoil and its cattle you shall take..."
- He gave them a strategy – "...lay an ambush for the city behind it."

Look what happened when they repented, dealt with their issues and obeyed:

**Jos 8:3** - So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night.

**Jos 8:4** - And he commanded them, saying: "Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready.

**Jos 8:5** - Then I and all the people who *are* with me will approach the city; and it will come about, when they come out against us as at the first, that we shall flee before them.

**Jos 8:6** - For they will come out after us till we have drawn them from the city, for they will say, '*They are* fleeing before us as at the first.' Therefore we will flee before them.

**Jos 8:7** - Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.

**Jos 8:8** - And it will be, when you have taken the city, *that* you shall set the city on fire. According to the commandment of the LORD you shall do. See, I have commanded you."

**Jos 8:9** - Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people.

**Jos 8:10** - Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

**Jos 8:11** - And all the people of war who *were* with him went up and drew near; and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley *lay* between them and Ai.

**Jos 8:12** - So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city.

**Jos 8:13** - And when they had set the people, all the army that *was* on the north of the city, and its rear guard on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

**Jos 8:14** - Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain. But he did not know that *there was* an ambush against him behind the city.

**Jos 8:15** - And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.

**Jos 8:16** - So all the people who *were* in Ai were called together to pursue them. And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city.

**Jos 8:17** - There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. So they left the city open and pursued Israel.

**Jos 8:18** - Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the spear that *is* in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the spear that *was* in his hand toward the city.

**Jos 8:19** - So *those in* ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire.

**Jos 8:20** - And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers.

**Jos 8:21** - Now when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city ascended, they turned back and struck down the men of Ai.

**Jos 8:22** - Then the others came out of the city against them; so they were *caught* in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. And they struck them down, so that they let none of them remain or escape.

**Jos 8:23** - But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

**Jos 8:24** - And it came to pass when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they pursued them, and when they all had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword.

**Jos 8:25** - So it was *that* all who fell that day, both men and women, *were* twelve thousand—all the people of Ai.

**Jos 8:26** - For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

**Jos 8:27** - Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which He had commanded Joshua.

**Jos 8:28** - So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day.

**Jos 8:29** - And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening. And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raise over it a great heap of stones *that remains* to this day.

Here's a little recap:

- God gave them an amazing strategy
- They did exactly what He told them to do
- They thoroughly defeated their enemies
- God will never quit on His children, so don't ever quit when you make a mistake:

**Psa 37:23** - The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD,  
And He delights in his way.

**Psa 37:24** Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;  
For the LORD upholds *him with* His hand.

**Psa 37:25** - I have been young, and *now* am old;  
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,  
Nor his descendants begging bread.

**Psa 37:26** - *He is* ever merciful, and lends;  
And his descendants *are* blessed.

A few things to remember:

- Our failures are opportunities for self-evaluation and for growth.
- God delights in those who are good in His sight and orders their steps
- God will uphold His children with his hand
- He will never forsake them
- He will give mercy (what we don't deserve)
- He will lend (allow you to use something that ultimately belongs to Him)
- He will bless you and your children.

So, if you make a mistake, don't quit!