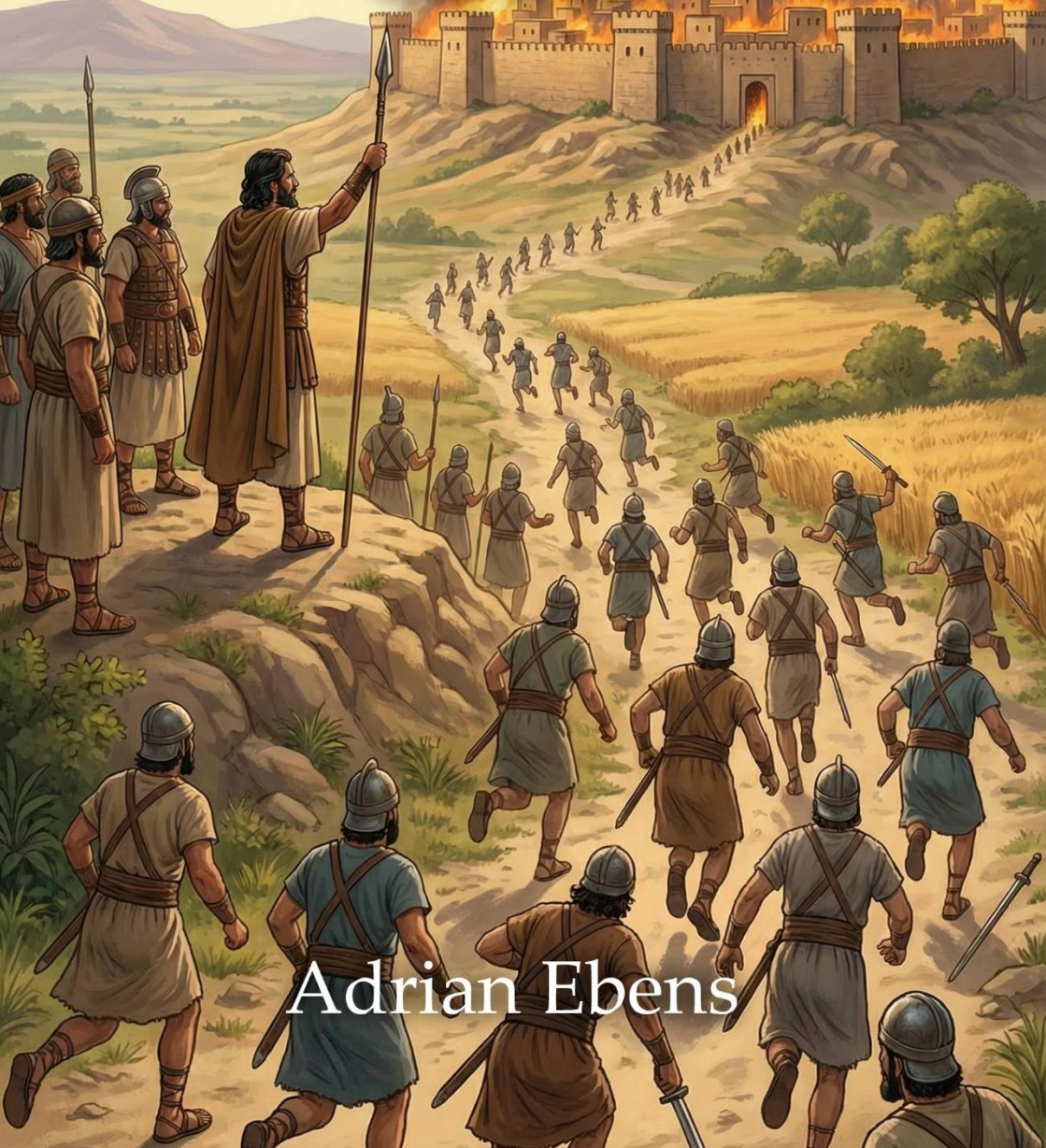


Destruction of Ai



Adrian Ebens



Adrian Ebens, 2026

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TRANSCRIPT FROM PRESENTATION
BY ADRIAN EBENS
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DESTRUCTION OF AI

Opening Comments:

Greetings, dear family around the world. Glad that you can join us again for another presentation. I hope that you've been enjoying some of the music, some of the more recent songs. It was just nice to think as we were listening to that song, "Our Beloved is Calling" and hasn't He been calling us step by step as we move on to a solid, immovable platform. So, just thinking about our great Father's love; it's a tremendous blessing.

I've continued to work through the stories in the book of Joshua, because eventually I want to put another Mirror Principle book together: *The Kingdom of Heaven*, which I've mentioned before. Things keep jumping out that are of interest. Tonight, here in Australia, (for some of you it is morning) we are looking at the destruction of Ai and some people say, oh, the destruction of AI. Well, this is the city Ai and how it came to its end. We want to have a bit of a look through this story. I want to pick up a few points and some Hebrew grammar as we go along. But before I continue, I would just like to pray.

Opening Prayer:

Dear Father in heaven, I thank you for the opportunity to meet with my brothers and sisters and any who will be listening to this presentation. We pray, father, for your Spirit. Pray for the latter rain. We pray, Father, that we would reflect your image and that you would give to us the Spirit of your Son; that we would stay in the stream of life.

And I pray, Father, for any who are struggling, any who are facing difficulties, that I would remember that they are beloved by you and that you have prepared a place for all of us. And soon we will be in the heavenly kingdom. How we long to be there.

And I thank you for hearing this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Presentation:

I was just writing a letter to someone the other day who is probably in their 70s and not doing too well. And I said, just think soon we're going to walk the streets of heaven and listen to angelic choirs, sing with them, and eat the fruit of the Tree of Life and drink of the water of the streams of life. We will talk to all of the saints present and past. How wonderful that will be. Let us encourage one another with these thoughts.

So, I'd like to go to the screen, and we will look at the destruction of Ai. And we're starting in Joshua chapter 8 verses 1 and 2. So it says here:

Now the LORD said to Joshua: "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed;
take [imperative]

I'm putting in brackets the statements where God gives a command. And I've put that in, imperative, because this is important: the imperative in English is the command, a command to do something. The Hebrew provides for us where God is using the imperative and when He is not. And this becomes interesting in these first two verses. So, it says,

take [that's a command – imperative] all the people of war with you, and **arise**, [that's a command – imperative] **go up** [that's a

command – imperative] to Ai. **See**, [or look – that’s a command – imperative] **I have given into your hand**

And we’ll have a look at this next, what it means given into your hand. It says,

I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. And you shall do [Qal Perfect] to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king.

And then it’s interesting. “You shall do.” Now, having read all the other things that God is commanding them, you would think that the word “you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho.” Now, if you read this statement, it sounds like, OK, you killed all the people in Jericho except for Rahab and her family. You would think that this is a command “to do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho.” But the Hebrew form is actually *Qal*, which is the basic Hebrew form for a verb, it’s the most common. *Qal perfect*. And we’ll have a look at what *Qal perfect* means. So, this is not actually a command. It’s a statement. But it’s not actually an imperative command. It says,

And you shall **do** [Qal Perfect] 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** [that’s a command – imperative] an ambush for the city behind it.” (Joshua 8:1-2, NKJV)

Now that word lay is a command, that is imperative as well. So, the things that God said that they should do was to arise, take the people, arise, go up, see, I’ve given this city into your hands and lay in an ambush on the city. But the part about doing to the king of Ai and its people is not an imperative command. It is what we *Qal perfect*.

Okay, so let’s continue in Joshua and let’s notice here, “given into thy hand.” I want you to notice something here. I looked up “given into hand” and I found these verses that relate to this process. Now, notice what it says here in Jeremiah 12 and verse seven. It says,

I have **forsaken** mine house, I have **left** mine heritage;

Semi colon: semi colon is providing what has just been said is now defined by what is about to be said.

I have given the dearly beloved of my soul **into the hand** of her enemies. (Jeremiah 12:7)

So given into thy hand is to forsake and to leave. So, when God says I have given Ai into your hands, it means He has forsaken His work of protecting Ai and He has left them. This is what it means to be “given into their hand.” So, if He has forsaken them and He has left them, then what does this actually mean? Well, here’s another text in Isaiah 47:6, where it says, that He gave Israel into the hands of Babylon. And notice what He says to Babylon.

I was wroth with my people [wrath means to forsake them], I have polluted mine inheritance, and **given them into thine** [Babylon’s] **hand:**

Notice what he says next.

thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke. (Isaiah 47:6)

And now have **I given all these lands into the hand** of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. (Jeremiah 26:6)

So, He gave Israel into the hand of Babylon, but He says, “you didn’t show them any mercy.” So, is it possible that in giving Ai into the hand of Israel that He was hoping that they might show them mercy and be gracious unto them? Yes, lay a siege to the city. Yes, surround them, like He did with Jericho. And when the walls came down and they were overwhelmed, then they could make a choice either to flee, like when Jesus cleansed the temple, or to bow the knee, repent, reject idolatry and desire to learn about the living God. We’ve looked at this before. This is what I believe were the hornets, the hornets of conviction, that this is what God wanted.

So, He delivered them into his hand. But we notice that God says something, when He says “You shall do to Ai as you have done to Jericho.” Now we need to look at the verb form, and we need to dig into this a little bit more. So, we see here [Joshua 8:1-2] that it says “and you shall do,” this is *Qal perfect*. What is what is *Qal perfect*? I searched online, and also in the E-sword tool,

Qal perfect

Understanding the Hebrew Qal Perfect

Definition and Structure

The Qal Perfect is a verb form in Hebrew that indicates completed actions.

It's interesting when it says, “You shall do to Ai and it's king what you did to Jericho,” it's using a verb form that is used for actions that are actually completed or that have happened in the past. So why is this verb form being used?

It is characterized by:

- Active Voice: The subject performs the action. (“You shall do to Ai; that's the subject.)
- Simple Aspect: The action is straightforward and not complex.
- Perfect Tense: [Notice this] The action is completed, often translated as past tense in English.

Why would this text, when God says “you will do to Ai as you did to Jericho,” why would it use perfect tense? Why isn't it one using imperative or using something that is in the future, something that is coming in the future? It's being written as if it has already been done. Now, it's interesting that we notice a little bit more about the *Qal perfect*. *Qal perfect* verb form is sometimes used in prophetic statements. Now, this is from E-sword: tense, voice, and mood tools.

Usage in Prophetic Statements

In prophetic literature, the Qal Perfect can convey certainty and finality.

So, it is an idiom or a mechanism that what is about to happen is so certain that it is spoken of as having already happened. And this is conveying certainty and surety. So, this is where this verb form is being employed to convey a sense of certainty, as in this is going to happen.

It often reflects God's actions or declarations, emphasizing that they have been completed or will certainly come to pass.

So here we see Hebrew usage of something that should be normally used for something that's happened in the past. But it's, we would say in English, "It's as good as done. It's certain. It's going to happen. I know this is going to happen."

And again, a little bit further in the E-sword tool it says,

2d) Sometimes in Hebrew, future events are conceived so vividly and so realistically that they are regarded as having virtually taken place and are described by the perfect. (E-sword Tense Voice Mood tools)

So, this is a Hebrew mechanism that is employing verb forms. And could it be that it's so vivid to God (He remembers the destruction of Jericho and the slaughter of all the people there) that it's so vivid and it's so visceral, as we would say in English, for God, that it's using this verb tense? That it's so realistic, and it's assured that it's going to happen.

Now, let's now go to the Young's Literal translation, because it's translating the *Qal perfect* as it literally would read. And notice what God says,

'and thou hast done [Qal perfect] to Ai and to her king as thou hast done to Jericho and to her king; only, its spoil and its cattle ye spoil for yourselves; set for thee an ambush for the city at its rear.'
(Joshua 8:2, YLT)

God is predicting the future as to what Israel has planned to do. He is telling them what they are about to do.

So, God is saying, "You have done this." Now again; we could interpret this as God knows the mind of man and He reads the mind of man, and man has already committed himself to do this so that God can speak as it already has taken place. And because of that, we also have the element that God is certain that this is going to happen. And that's where it becomes interesting that you could read this as a command from God. Again, there's a mirror at play here in the text, because you could read this; and there are some aspects of Scripture that seem to indicate that this is still a type of command. Or you can read it that God is aware of what Israel is going to do. He knows what they are going to do. And therefore, God is telling Israel of what they're going to do, not as a command; because the language in the Hebrew is not a command, it is a statement. How do we interpret this statement?

And this is where we need to employ our understanding of the character of Jesus and His revelation of the Father. Do we employ the *Qal perfect* to say that God says, "I am certain that this must be done and therefore you must do it." You can read it that way, or "I'm certain you're going to do this and I'm letting you know that this is what's happening." And that gives to man the opportunity to read it as, "Oh, well, what do you want us to do?" Or simply seek for a confirmation what they were wanting to do all along.

And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it. (Joshua 8:2, KJV)

Again, I've got the KJV there that "you shall do." That's what it says in the KJV. But in the Young's Literal, it says "thou hast done." The Young's Literal definitely talks about it as if it were past tense. So, God is predicting the future as to what Israel has planned to do. He's telling them what they are about to do.

Again, if you wish, from my reading of Scripture, you can still interpret this that God is certain that He wants this done, or you can read this as God is certain that this is what they will do; and they have already

committed themselves to do this. Knowing that we have that ambiguity in the text, we as the reader decide what the meaning of the text is here.

The KJV uses the language of “thou shalt do.” This sounds like a command, but it is not. It is a statement of what God knows Israel will do.

That’s a really important point here, because Joshua 8.2 is the critical component of God’s involvement in what takes place in this story. From this point forward, we move to Joshua and his execution of his plan to destroy the city of Ai. But verse two seems to offer to us a command from God to do to Ai what they had done to Jericho. But the Hebrew is not giving us an imperative, it’s not giving to us a command directly from God. It’s giving us a statement. And we can interpret this statement two different ways. You decide which way it is. As for me and my house, we will interpret this according to the earthly life of Jesus. And I know that the majority of you will do the same.

So, we see here in Joshua 8.1, we have

Josh 8:1

Arise – Imperative

Go up – Imperative

See/Behold – Imperative

Josh 8:2

Thou shalt do – Qal perfect – Thou has done.

Lay an ambush [Imperative]

So in amongst all these imperatives, which is a command, we have this statement of fact. And I’m suggesting to you that this statement of fact is, with all these other imperatives – yes if we compare it to Jericho, yes, God says march around the city, blow the trumpets – these are all commands of God. In the same way, lay an ambush, do all these things; but there is no command from God to kill the people of these cities, we don’t find this. And this is important when we’re reading the Hebrew in this text.

So, let's come to the next text. Now, here I want to show you more of the *Qal perfect*, how it is being used to interpret the actions in the past. And I'm using the same Hebrew word and the same *Qal perfect* form. So here we see the exact same verb form, exact same verb and verb form is being used now to describe past actions. So, Exodus 18.1,

When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, **heard of all that God had done** H6213 [H8804] for Moses, and for Israel his people, *and* that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt; (Exodus 18:1)

So, this is showing you how this verb form can be used for things that are completed in the past. And again, Deuteronomy,

The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, **according to all that he did** H6213 [H8804] **for you in Egypt** before your eyes; (Deuteronomy 1:30)

Here, *Qal perfect*, has done. It's an action that has already happened in the past. It's exactly the same verb form as Joshua 8 and verse 2. And again, in Deuteronomy 4.3,

Your eyes have seen what the LORD did H6213 [H8804] **because of Baalpeor**: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. (Deuteronomy 4:3)

This is describing an event that happened in the past and it's exactly the same verb form.

So, let's now look at this same verb form being used for future action. And notice here, something interesting, Deuteronomy 4.25,

When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt *yourselves*, and make a graven image, *or* the likeness of any *thing*, **and shall do** H6213 [H8804] **evil in the sight of the LORD** thy God, to provoke him to anger: (Deuteronomy 4:25)

Now, it's interesting here that it doesn't use a typical future tense verb. It's using a verb that's speaking of the past. And what we would

interpret here is that there is a certainty that has been used in the Hebrew that says that Israel is going to fall away. And again, we could say that God has determined that they're going to fall away. He's certain that because He's determined it, or God knows what is in the hearts of the children of Israel, and therefore, He knows what's going to happen. He knows they're going to forsake Him and fall away from Him. And so, this same verb, which normally speaks of actions in the past, is being used to describe actions in the future as a type of certainty. Because God reads the hearts of Israel, He knows what they are going to do, and so He speaks to it in that way. Again, 1 Kings 17:12,

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, *I am* gathering two sticks, **that I may go in and dress** H6213 [H8804] **it for me and my son**, that we may eat it, and die. (1 Kings 17:12)

So, in her mind, it's an action in the future, but she speaks it as if she's already done it.

Online Audience: So, it's a statement from God to draw out what is already confirmed in the minds of Israel.

Pr. Adrian: Yes, correct. God knows. So, He is speaking of what they are planning to do. But it is spoken in such a way that you could interpret it as God wants it. Or you could interpret it as God knows what you're going to do, and He's telling you what you're planning to do. And again, we as a reader decide how to read these texts.

So, again, being able to dig into the Hebrew and to see these things here, it really is encouraging. And again, in Joshua 8:7, in the very passage we're looking at, Joshua is speaking.

Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your God **will deliver** [Qal perfect] **it into your hand**. (Joshua 8:7)

Used to denote certainty – “As good as done. Consider it done. Certain.”

Now, this is Joshua speaking, and Joshua is acting on his faith, and he is speaking here using the *Qal perfect* form. He is speaking, “This is as good as done.” He’s exercising his faith and he’s speaking of a future event as if it has already happened – about delivering the citizens of Ai. And in this context, Joshua is showing faith, great faith. Obviously, it’s in a wrong context, but he is showing great faith.

So, now notice Joshua’s command here. We’re now reading Joshua 8:4-8. This is Joshua’s command.

And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, *even* behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: And I, and all the people that *are* with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them, (For they will come out after us) till we have drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them. Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. **And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do.** See [Imperative], I have commanded you. (Joshua 8:4-8)

When I was looking at this, I’m going, well, I didn’t read in the text where God said to set the city on fire. So, why is Joshua saying to set the city on fire? One thing I thought of was that in the previous chapter, when Achan had taken the things that were dedicated to be destroyed, that God says they shall be burnt with fire, that maybe Joshua was referring to this. But I’m not quite sure, and I didn’t have time to dig any further into this, as to why he’s saying that God commanded them to burn the city with fire, when God only had said, “I’ve given them into your hands.” Unless he interpreted, maybe they probably burnt Jericho with fire as well, that He thought, well, you’ll do to them as you did to Jericho. So, maybe Joshua interpreted that as, well, God’s commanding us to do the same thing as we did to Jericho. Maybe that’s where he got it from. I’m not exactly sure. But it’s interesting.

The sequence of events:

1. Joshua sends a group of 5000 men to lie in position for an ambush
2. He takes his main force and makes a front attack on the city
3. He withdraws his men and causes the men of Ai to believe they were beaten
4. The men of Ai come out against them and Joshua draws them out of the city.
5. Then Joshua gives a signal [raises his spear – this comes out later in the chapter] for the 5000 men to take the city
6. The second group enter the city and start to set it on fire.
7. The men of Ai see their cause is lost.

And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, **and slew the men of Ai.** (Joshua 8:21)

So, all the men of Ai are wiped out in this process. So, now we come to what I call the slaughter. And it says,

And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, [so out in the field, those who were fighting them, they wiped them all out] in the wilderness wherein they chased them [so they chased the men down, they wiped them all out], and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword. And *so* it was, *that* all that fell that day, both of men and women [and that would include children, because if they killed all the men and the women, you would assume the children were part of that; because it says all of them], *were* twelve thousand, *even* all the men of Ai. For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, **until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.** (Joshua 8:24-26)

And when we think of that, it's very confronting. In fact, it was so confronting that when Josephus was trying to give to the Romans a history of his nation, he actually altered the true events so that it didn't look so bad to the Romans. And so, I want to read to you what Josephus wrote of this particular account. This is *Antiquities Book 5, Chapter 1, paragraph 15*.

Accordingly, these men took the city, and slew all that they met with; but Joshua forced those that came against him to come to a close fight, and discomfited them, and made them run away; and when they were driven towards the city, and thought it had not been touched, as soon as they saw it was taken, and perceived it was burnt, with their wives and children, they wandered about in the fields in a scattered condition, and were no way able to defend themselves, because they had none to support them.

Can you imagine the men of Ai seeing the city on fire and they're thinking, my wife and my children are dead and they are wandering around, wondering what to do next, bewildered, and confused. And then the Israelite soldiers fall upon them and kill them all.

Now when this calamity was come upon the men of Ai, [now notice what Josephus says next] **there were a great number of children, and women, and servants, and an immense quantity of other furniture.**

I'm like, hang on a minute, are you saying that Israel spared the women and the children and only slaughtered the men of Ai?

The Hebrews also took herds of cattle, and a great deal of money, for this was a rich country. So when Joshua came to Gilgal, he divided all these spoils among the soldiers. (Josephus, *Antiquities Book 5, Chapter 1, para.15*)

Which is something that the Romans definitely would do. So, I did a bit of research on this discrepancy between what Joshua, the book it says itself and what Josephus was saying. And if you look at Wikipedia, amongst other sources, here is the rationale for Josephus.

The Rationale: **Josephus often wrote for a Roman audience. Historians believe he sometimes “softened” the more violent aspects of Jewish history** to make the Israelites appear more civilized and less “barbaric” to Roman sensibilities, who viewed the wholesale slaughter of women and children as extreme, even by their standards. (Google Summary)

And that’s a Google summary of events. So, Josephus is trying to soften the impact of the events. Joshua, the book of Joshua, records everyone died, which means we would say that the whole city was genocided. It was wiped out. There was nothing left.

And again, this is a quote from Wikipedia.

Josephan scholar Louis Feldman highlights several of the misconceptions about the Jewish people that were being circulated in Josephus’s time. In particular, the Jews were thought to lack great historical figures and a credible history of their people. They were also accused of harboring hostility toward non-Jews [I wonder why they thought that?], and were thought to be generally lacking in loyalty, respect for authority, and charity.[Isn’t that interesting. They were lacking in Agape, or I guess charity/charitas, more particularly.] With these harsh accusations against the Jews fluttering about the Roman empire, Josephus, set out to provide a Hellenized version of the Jewish history.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiquities_of_the_Jews#:~:text=They%20were%20also%20accused%20of,version%20of%20the%20Jewish%20history.)

And as we know, whoever writes the history, it’s always his story. So, it’s not an accurate account; Josephus is trying to soften the full, brutal impact of this story.

So, it says, as we read earlier, [in Joshua 8:24-26] I’m just re-quoting the last part of verse 26,

... until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. [They were wiped out.] (Joshua 8:26)

This was a genocide. Josephus dare not give a history to the Romans of wiping out women and children. It would prejudice them against the Jews. It's interesting, this habit of softening the reality of what is actually happening.

When do Christians specifically mention that Joshua and his soldiers cleaved the skulls of women and children and took the infants and dashed them against the rocks? Is this something that is emphasised by Christianity? No, the overwhelming emphasis is on the men, the men who killed 36 Israelites, the men who had dared to raise their ugly heads and stand in the way of Israel's forward march. And we would say, well, these men deserve to die. So that is why they paid the price. But it is rarely mentioned that the women and the children were destroyed as well.

This is reinforced by the point that with the Midianites, when Israel spared the women and the children, that Moses became wroth and says, why have you kept the women alive? Slaughter the women that have known a man and the male babies, the male children. So, this had been instilled into them. Again, because they were operating in an old covenant, if they didn't do this, these people would ultimately corrupt them. And despite having done all these things, after Joshua died, Israel quickly became corrupted by the surrounding nations and everything they sought to do came upon them.

Online Audience: He sought to impose a curfew, like we all experienced four years ago, to stop the disease. And it only ultimately made it worse in the long run, as is inevitable when you do not have the correct tools.

Pr. Adrian: So, are we making this up about dashing infants against rocks? Do we really have to focus on these things? Here we see in Psalm 137 verses 7 to 9, it says,

Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem;
who said, Rase *it*, rase *it* [level it], *even* to the foundation thereof.

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy *shall he be*,

that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.
(Psalm 137:7-9)

So, this is what Babylon did to Israel. And Israel is saying, it's going to happen to you, and when it happens to you, we will be happy. And to meet this, Adam Clark, the well-known commentator that we use, he says this,

These prophetic declarations contain no excitement to any person or persons to commit acts of cruelty and barbarity; **but are simply declarative of what would take place in the order of the retributive providence and justice of God**, and the general opinion that should in consequence be expressed on the subject; therefore praying for the destruction of our enemies is totally out of the question. (Adam Clarke Commentary)

Now, we understand God's retributive justice to be to withdraw and to allow the consequences of man's actions to play out. Yes, that is God's justice. He turns aside; it is His strange act. He does not get directly, He does not directly order these things, but He allows them to happen. So, he's saying this is a statement of fact.

So, this statement is often used to talk about the barbarity of the Old Testament. A psalm written about being happy about dashing small children against rocks. But this is what they did back in those days. And by the time of the Romans, they were offended by such barbarity, even though they were a barbarous nation themselves in what they did to people. But we ask ourselves these questions. Was it God? Well, let's come to the questions. I'll put the questions up for us so we can have a look at them.

1. Did God command the slaughter of infants in Ai?

And this is the question we need to put before people. Are you saying that God commanded his people to pick up small babies and throw them full force into a rock? And I'm sorry for the graphics, but this is what happened. And if we don't address what happened, we can gloss over these stories and say, "Oh, they died and let's move on." But this is

what happened, brothers and sisters. And if we believe that God commanded it, then we believe that God wanted babies to have their skulls crushed and for them to bleed out. Which is the most barbarous thing imaginable. And if people believe this, then I can only say, "Heaven help you."

And that's why I asked the question:

2. Is this consistent with the character of God?

Jesus never did this when he was here on Earth. He never revealed this. It cannot be consistent with God's character. And anyone who believes this is experiencing a level of temporary and possibly permanent insanity. And yes, I'm known for speaking straight on this topic. I make no apologies to anyone because this, what the Christian doctrine teaches, is a direct attack on my God and the God that I serve. And I will not lay down and just take it. I'm going to press back and say, no, this is not the God of Jesus Christ. This is not what God ordered. This is God allowing these things to take place according to the dictates of men.

3. Where in the story did God explicitly tell Israel to kill any person?

You cannot read that in the story. He never says, with an imperative statement, kill all the people of Ai. It doesn't exist. It's not in the text. There is only a statement of God saying I know what's going to happen. I know what you're going to do. And now we come to the next point of our understanding of the Cross.

4. If Christ feels all the suffering of humanity, would He self-harm in commanding death if Jesus is commanding the death of these people, which He then is going to suffer?

Is Jesus the first of the *emos*? Is He the one that starts cutting Himself with a razor blade and this is what He's doing to Himself? Should we glorify people who cut themselves as this is what Jesus is doing? He's cutting himself, because He's ordering the death of these people, which is going to inflict upon Himself tremendous pain and suffering. Again, this is crazy. It doesn't make any sense whatsoever.

5. If Jesus is the resurrection and the life, how can he inflict death?

And many of the things that we've studied on this story, brothers, and sisters, it is impossible for the God of the Bible to be ordering these things. But He is expressing, "I know what you're going to do" in the *Qal perfect* form.

6. If death is the enemy of God, how can He inflict death?
7. If death is the enemy of God, how can God use His enemies to achieve His purposes?
8. Wouldn't this present God and Satan as working together?

It says in 1 Corinthians 15 that death is the last enemy to be conquered. And if death is the enemy, then,... let's flip the tables a little bit. People accuse us of saying, that we say that God and the devil work together; because they make the assumption that we believe that God wants people dead. So, He employs Satan to do the deed for Him; so that Satan and God are working together. But actually, the opposite is correct. Because to say that God uses death, which is His enemy, to achieve this purpose, is to say that God works with Satan. If you say that God wants death and commands death, you are saying that God is in complete harmony with the author of death, which is Satan, **which means that you believe that God and Satan work together for the same objective, for the same outcome, which I utterly oppose and reject.** I look at all these stories through the lens of Jesus Christ.

This is what happened – 12,000 people! 12,000 people slaughtered. Yes, God delivered them into the hands of Israel. And we looked at the point when we look at "deliver into the hand," that God had forsaken the people of Ai and He had abandoned them to the consequences. Because they had chosen to rise up and to fight, rather than to flee or to submit, God couldn't protect them anymore. They brought this upon themselves. And they brought destruction to their wives and to their children, who paid the price with them for this foolish action.

I wanted to raise this point of Josephus to show that there is a desire to gloss over these stories. It's funny how when I have presented these

stories in the past, showing actually what has happened, people feel that I am attacking their killing God, and they feel offended by this; by going into the actual details of what happened. But the simple response I give is, "Give up your killing God. Believe in the God that is like Jesus Christ." And as I pointed out to you in this presentation the Hebrew grammar allows for a different interpretation. And you cannot show me anywhere in this chapter where God explicitly, with an imperative Hebrew command to slaughter and kill the men, women, and children of Ai. It's not anywhere in the text. It doesn't exist. Only a statement of what He knew Israel would do.

So, I hope that you are encouraged by these thoughts. As I go through these stories I am, greatly encouraged to see that our God is not a destroyer.

Online Audience: There is no connection of life and death. Therefore, if Jesus is life, He cannot cause death.

Online Audience: The sin of the people of Ai punished with the sin of Israel. Israel didn't show them mercy.

Pr. Adrian: Exactly. Thank you. And it's interesting that later on, that as Israel showed no mercy, they received no mercy. "As you sow so shall you reap." And they were utterly slaughtered, as they had slaughtered. And God gave them into the hand of other nations, as He had given other nations into their hand. "As you sow so shall you reap."

And we remind ourselves once again that God had said in Exodus 23 that God would disquiet the inhabitants of Canaan, as in like in the cleansing of the temple the people would be terrorized by the vibration of the true Spirit of God and His followers. They would have been overwhelmed with terror, and they would have fled, or they would have humbled themselves and pled with God because of the hornets of conviction.

Online Audience: Joshua is an allegorical representation of Jesus.

Pr. Adrian: So, you've just opened a can of worms there Adam. I know that Joshua and Jesus/Yeshua is the same word that's being employed

there. And I guess, if Jesus was there, and it was His Spirit, that He would have cleansed the temple in Ai, cleansed the city. Those who didn't want any part of Him would flee, and those who wanted to repent would fall at His feet, like the woman caught in adultery, and they would have begged for mercy.

Online Audience: So what happened is God issuing statements that resulted in the exposure of the gruesome evil nature.

Pr. Adrian: Yes, exactly. It caused sin to abound. God makes a statement which brings out the sinfulness of what is in man, but God causes sin to abound, that grace might much more abound. But God is not saying anything that had not already been predetermined in the heart of the Israelites. They had already determined they were already going to do this. Same as we see in the story of Saul and the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 14 and 15. It's the same process taking place.

So now, we can start to look out for the *Qal perfect* form being used for future events, but this might alert us to the fact that it could be simply a statement of fact or a prophetic utterance of what God knows will happen. Again, it can be read the other way, because *Qal perfect* can be employed to denote, "I'm certain on this, I want this done." You can read it that way, but you can also read it this other way, as simply as a statement of fact.

So, I hope that you've been blessed by this. I'm really enjoying this series as we go through Joshua, and as we go through each of the stories, ultimately I'll bring these together and put these in the book, which I'll call *The Kingdom of Heaven*.

I thank you again for your prayers. I will just say in closing that, since July, since we had our prayer—ten days of prayer season in July—I've hardly watched any news, and with the recent news of what happened in Venezuela, I've briefly ventured out into the news sphere. Within a very short period of time, I was reminded of what a waste of time it is, and how much rubbish and junk. When you stop watching news for a while, and then you go back and you look at it, oh, it's quite a shock, and all these horrible things taking place. So, I've retreated once again.

I'm going out of that sphere, and I leave that to my Father, and as much as possible, I know He'll take care of me. I trust He'll take care of you. Let us, whatsoever things are good, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are noble, think on these things. Let's focus on our wonderful Father.

And I again hope you're being blessed by some of the music. I don't have to listen to music that is produced by people that worship a different God or have a different understanding of atonement. It's music that we've produced, and it has a different vibration.

I'm glad that it's given you plenty to think about. These are preliminary thoughts, so there might be some calibration that's needed on this particular point. But I became immediately curious when I'm reading: Imperative, Imperative, Imperative, and then all of a sudden, this statement of something normally used to describe something that's happened in the past. And I'm like, "What is this?" So, this is what came out.

Online Audience: Yes, cannot stomach the news anymore after our fast. Let's fast leave the news behind. I've just said, "Lord, you'll bring things to me if I need to see them."

Pr. Adrian: Yes. I'm going to kneel, and we will close with a prayer.

Closing Prayer:

Father in heaven, we thank you again that when we dig into the word of God, the Scriptures explain themselves. As we put the pieces together, we see a picture emerging of how you dealt with a wayward people, who said to you at Sinai, "Do not let God speak to us. But let Moses speak to us." They broke the covenant, for You said to them, "If you listen to my voice, then you have kept my covenant," and they refused to listen to your voice.

Lord, may we listen to your voice. Please help us to walk with you. Give us your Spirit. Lord help us to carry our cross, to be crucified with Christ, to bear with the failings of others. Give us grace to bear it, and

not to become impatient. We need your help to do this because we cannot do it of ourselves.

I thank you, Lord Jesus, that you do not destroy little babies, and small children; children, women, or even men, you don't destroy them, but you love them, and you give them grace.

So, I thank you again, Father. I'm just so delighted to know the beauty of your character. And I pray that we all will praise you, and that we will, in our hearts and minds, kiss your hand and thank you that you are so great and so wonderful. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DESTRUCTION OF AI

The city of Ai had humiliated the forces of Joshua after their great victory over Jericho. Plans had been laid without divine guidance and Israel suffered the loss of 36 men as a result. There had been a breach in the defences of Israel, through the rebellion of Achan, which was dealt with swiftly.

Then Joshua returned to Ai to deal with it. How do we read this story in the light of the loving character of Jesus? Does the mystery of the cross explain all mysteries including the story of Ai?

In this presentation we take a look at some aspects of Hebrew grammar that give clues to this story to a different view of God's involvement.

Why is it important to revisit this story? Because Israel not only killed the men of the city, they killed everyone; all the women and children. Is this the God of Jesus Christ? Slaying women and young children; completely destroying the entire town? Does this meet the specification of driving out the inhabitants with hornets?

Several points are considered in this presentation to shed light on these questions.