

Joshua Chapter Seven (Part Two) - Teaching Notes

Introduction: A key idea in the book of Joshua is that God blesses obedience. Today, we hope to continue our discussion of the defeat at Ai because of Achan's sin.

Body:

Read Joshua 7:13-26

2. Defeat of Ai: Achan's sin (continued). The people are called to consecrate themselves. There is a pruning down from tribe to Achan. After Achan's confession is confirmed, he is stoned and burned. Then the Lord turned from His anger.

Applications -

- **Consecration and God's favor.** Notice in vs. 13 that consecration of the people and God's favor were needed, in order to defeat the enemy. First, to be consecrated is to be set aside for the service and/or worship of God. As believers, we can consecrate ourselves, by first of all making sure we are saved. And then we need to give our best to loving God and others, as we love ourselves. Second, God's favor is necessary. Without God, we can do nothing. But with God, there is nothing that is impossible. Favor has a way of following those who are consecrated. *Let's work on being consecrated and praying for God's favor.*

- **Following God's instructions and leadership.** Notice in vss. 14-18 that it was essential that Joshua followed God's instructions and the people followed leadership. First, no matter how smart or whatever a leader may be, if he/she is not following God's instructions, there will always be a problem. Thus, leaders should stay connected to God, no matter what else is calling for their attention (e.g., family, church, and community crisis and urgent matters). Second, the helpers and members need to follow leadership. There are too many who hold their followership hostage until their emotional needs have been satisfied by the leader. They want to feel understood, important, safe, and informed. Well, there are times when things are moving too fast to deal with all of this. The choice is to either trust God and follow the leadership that He provided or resist leadership. *Let's pray for our leaders' discerning and obeying God's instructions and our following leadership.*

- **Get your mind right.** Notice in vss. 19-21 that Achan came clean about how his seeing led to lust, and his lust led to sin. First, we have to give Achan a little credit for coming clean. There are too many who lie and deny their wrong doing with their dying breath. Second, notice the progression for seeing, lusting, and sinning. James 1:14-15 talks about how temptation coupled with evil desires leads to sin, and sin leads to death. In like manner, we need to work on keeping our minds and desires right, so that we do not fall into the same trap. There are some things that we are bound to see, but we don't have to lust after them. If we don't lust then we can fight off sin. *Let's work on being honest about what we lust after and work on getting our minds focused on God and His will for our lives.*

- **Confirmation and sendable people.** Notice in vss. 22-23 that Joshua confirmed the facts with sendable people, before he took action. First, it is so important to make sure you understand the facts before you act. Especially when emotions are high, we can make bad

decisions. We cannot believe everything we hear. Second, it is so important for leaders to have sendable people around him/her. The leader cannot do everything. To be sendable, one must have humble and reliable character and be competent to do the job. *Let's work on confirming facts and being sendable for the sake of God's work.*

- **Sin has consequences.** Notice in vss. 24-25 that Achan's sin had a negative impact on his family, his nation, his ancestors, and himself. As sorry as Achan may have been, he and his family were still severely punished. First, It doesn't seem as if we think about how far reaching our sins are. The devil has us to believe that "a little bit will not hurt" and no one is really going to get hurt. Second, sin had to be dealt with. On one hand, we should be honest with our sins and strive for forgiveness, especially when our best is not good enough. On the other hand, we should not be surprised when our sins still lead to negative consequences, especially when others have been harmed (i.e., 36 Israelite soldiers were killed). But even with this, it is good to know that believers still have a place with the Lord forever, on the other side of death. Unbelievers do not have this hope. *Let's work on counting up the high cost of our sins and avoiding them, so we can avoid the discipline and punishment that it may lead to.*

- **The turning of God's anger.** Notice in vs. 26 that the Lord's anger was stopped as soon as the sin was dealt with. For those who are willing to repent, this is great news. God doesn't hold grudges. He is angry as long as we sin. He turns from anger, when we turn from sin. However, for those who are not willing to repent, this news is not as great. God doesn't want lip service about how sorry we feel and what we are going to do next time. He wants change - now. *Let's work on obeying God, so God will turn from anger to favor towards us.*

Conclusion: Let's work on obeying God. God has much for those who obey His will.