

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE AND MOVE ON LESSON 6

Series Subject: Accept the Challenge and Move On!

Lessons 5-10: Conquest of Canaan Josh. 5:1-12:24

Lesson 6: The Failed Assault at Ai Josh. 7:1-26

Today's Study: Josh. 7:1-26

1. Concealed Contamination/Crushed Vv. 1-5
2. Conferring with God Vv. 6-9
3. Covenant Broken Vv. 10-15
4. Corruption Detected Vv. 16-21
5. Cleansing Enacted Vv. 22-26

Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.

INTRODUCTION

1. **A few highlights from Lesson 5**
 - (a) Due to the imminent invasion by the Israelites, Jericho was on a lockdown and the alert system was at its highest level.
 - (1) At the outset, at least from a human perspective, the city of Jericho seemed impenetrable and definitely impossible to conquer.
 - (2) As noted in Josh. 6:2, God gave Joshua the assurance that Jericho was a conquered foe and the city was delivered into the hands of Israel.
 - (3) **Jericho stood as a picture of power, the enormous strength of the enemy that God's people confronted as they sought to conquer the Promised Land.**
 - (4) "Vain worldlings think their ramparts and barricades can keep out the vengeance of God; their blindness suffers them to look no further than the means: the supreme hand of the almighty comes not within the compass their fear. **Every carnal heart is a Jericho shut up; God sits down before it, and displays mercy and judgment in the sight of the walls thereof; it hardens itself in a willful security, and saith, 'I shall never be moved,'"**
 - (b) The strategy that God gave for the conquest of Jericho didn't seem to have any military effectiveness.
 - (1) One of the lessons this strategy taught was to teach that: **Faith** is not by force; God's ways are beyond our comprehension and the walls of Jericho will crumble!
 - (2) The walls of Jericho could have been taken down without any procession, but Israel had to march around Jericho thirteen times. Among the lessons taught in this act was the importance of waiting on God; they had much ahead in

conquering of the Promised Land, and they had to remain steadfast and hopeful under all situations.

- (c) There was an invigorating composure and endurance with which Israel followed instructions, encompassing the city ... and then came the command to “**shout!**”
- (1) It was a shout for mastery (superiority)!
 - (2) It was a shout of triumph!
 - (3) It was a shout of prayer.
- (d) Complete victory, condemned city.
- (1) The entire city was destroyed, and a curse pronounced on it.
 - (2) The word “accursed” (Josh. 6:17 KJV) is derived from the Hebrew “*cherem*” meaning “separated for destruction or devoted to God.”
 - Everything in the city was destroyed, only the precious metals and stones were dedicated to the Tabernacle.
 - Also, Rahab and her family saved because of her hospitality to the two spies (Josh. 6:25).
 - (3) The curse pronounced by Joshua (Josh. 6:26) was fulfilled as noted in 1 Kings 16:34 when a man, Hiel, rebuilt Jericho and consequently lost his oldest and youngest sons.
 - (4) We are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ.
*One verse of: **Victory is Mine***
 Victory is mine,
 Victory is mine,
 Victory today is mine,
 I told Satan to get thee behind,
 Victory today is mine.

2. An Overview of Josh. 7

Quote from the NIV Study Bible

“The tragic story of Achan, which stands in sharp contrast to the story of Rahab. In the earlier event a Canaanite prostitute, because of her courageous allegiance to Israel and her acknowledgement of the Lord, was spared and received into Israel. She abandoned Canaan and its gods on account of the Lord and Israel and so received Canaan back. In the present event an Israelite, because of his disloyalty to the Lord and Israel, is executed as the Canaanites were. He stole the riches of Canaan from the Lord and lost his inheritance in the promised land. This is also a story of how one man’s sin adversely affected the entire nation. Throughout this account (as often in the OT) Israel is considered a corporate unity with and in the service of the Lord. Thus, even in the acts of one (Achan) or a few (the 3,000 defeated at Ai) all Israel is involved (see Vv. 1, 11; 22:20)”.

3. **The following quote, one paragraph, from the Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible, has much to be considered.**

“Remember that Joshua and the army of Israel had just experienced the glorious conquest of the fortress at Jericho. Joy and rejoicing were flooding their hearts, for they had witnessed the power of God acting on their behalf. They had seen the walls of Jericho crumbling under the miraculous power of God. The future looked bright for it seemed as though God would be with them as they marched forth to conquer the Promised Land. But then it happened when the army launched an attack against the second enemy, the soldiers were routed and beaten. Defeat was now staring the Israelite army in the face. And through this experience, a strong warning is issued to succeeding generations: sin will always lead to defeat in spiritual warfare.”

4. **Selected Verses Josh. 7:1, 4, 6, 10, 13, 19, 20, 25 NKJV**

“But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan ... took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel ... so about three thousand men went up there from the people but they fled before the men of Ai.

Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the Ark of the LORD until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. ... So the LORD said to Joshua: ‘Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have taken some of the accursed things and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. Get up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.’

Now Joshua said to Achan, ‘My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.’ And Achan answered Joshua and said, ‘I indeed have sinned against the LORD God of Israel and this is what I have done. ...’

And Joshua said, ‘Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day. So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones.’”

A. **Concealed Contamination/Crushed Josh. 7:1-5**

1. **Concealed Contamination (Josh. 7:1)**

(a) Achan's transgression

- (1) What we have here is a general mention of the sin of Achan, a detailed account is later given by Achan.
- (2) Achan's act was a direct violation of the command given in regard to the accursed things of Jericho.

- Jericho was “accursed” (Josh. 6:17) ... meaning the entire city was devoted to the LORD for destruction and the valuable metals and stones dedicated to the Tabernacle (Josh. 6:19)
 - Strict orders were given to Israel not to take anything for personal use (Josh. 6:18).
- (3) Remember also: not only God fought their battles, but Jericho was the First Fruit of conquest in Canaan. Whatever falls in this category (First Fruits) were sacred and belong to God (Ex. 13:1; 22:19; Lev. 27:26; etc.).
- (4) Another important lesson (noted in our previous lesson) is the necessity for consecration.
- **God demanded purity and separation from all defilement (Josh. 6:18-19).**
 - It was a divine command to stay away from the accursed things!!
 - It is a charge that is still binding today on all believers (Col. 2:13-23 NB Vv. 20-21; etc.).
- (b) Achan also displayed disobedience and greed . . . (please note some references without comments; read the context for deeper understanding if so desired).
- (1) **Disobedience:** Gen. 3:11; 19:26; Num. 20:11; 1 Sam. 13:13; Zeph. 3:2; etc.
- (2) **Greed:** 1 Sam. 8:3; Prov. 15:27; 21:26; Micah 3:11; 1 Tim. 6:10; etc.
2. **Cooperate Community** (Josh. 7:1)
- (a) One man transgressed but the entire camp was affected.
- Josh. 7:1a NKJV:** But **the children of Israel** committed a trespass so, the anger of the LORD burned against **the children of Israel.**”
- (1) There was a corporate guilt because it was a corporate community.
- Israel was meant to be a community wherein cohesiveness was a matter of top priority.
 - God looked upon the community as one body of people, who should love, care for and be devoted to one another.
 - It was God’s desire for them to be one nation and one people.
 - They were to nurture one another and develop a strong, righteous and just society.
 - The act by which Achan transgressed brought guilt upon the whole community of which he was a member.
- (2) **“No man is an island,”**
- The idea of this metaphor is that man himself does poorly when isolated from others and needs to be a part of a community to thrive.
 - Yet there can be adverse circumstances as we are witnessing in this situation regarding Achan.
 - It was one man that trespassed against God.
 - One man that was unfaithful to God.
 - One man who had broken his trust with God.

- But this one man lived within a community and as a result the community was affected.

(b) Sin always comes with consequences.

Josh. 7:1b Amplified Bible

“And the anger of the Lord burned against Israel.”

(1) Israel was adversely affected because of Achan’s sin, which will be seen in more details in the verses below.

(2) While the Canaanites could not defeat a God centered Israel, Israel could be defeated by alienating themselves from God’s plan and power.

(c) Caring, loving and showing responsibility for one another!!

(1) Cain’s callous response was not adequate to deny the facts of his murderous deed (Gen. 4:1-15, NB Vv. 8-10).

(2) We are a corporate community and are responsible for each other (*Details not possible currently*).

- This reality of a corporate community is also applicable among all of society but **especially among God’s people**.
- Note carefully the “Great Command: Matt. 22:37-39; Mark 12:29-31.
 - First, we love God with **all** our heart, soul, mind and strength.
 - Second, we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.
 - This we refer to as “Christian Perfection;” because it is loving God sincerely with **our all** and genuinely loving others as we love ourselves.
- Indeed, we are to genuinely love others irrespective of color, class, country, creed or any other man-made distinguishing factors.
- I will summarize by briefly noting a few pointer (*This listing is not exhaustive*).
 - There must be genuine interest in and commitment to others (Phil. 2:4).
 - The believer’s new life is characterized by a heart of perfect love. There is an outflow of acts of kindness and readiness to forgive (Eph. 4:32).
 - In this community, God’s grace replaces jealousy and envy with a genuine concern for others; we rejoice in their blessing and weep in their misfortune (Rom. 12:15)
 - Just as Jesus Christ loved us even so we must love one another! This is the most essential way to communicate who we are in Jesus Christ (John 13:34-35).
 - We do not condone trespasses, but we also do not condemn the transgressor; instead, we seek to restore with gentleness. We do know that the individual(s) must exercise his/their will, but we also have an obligation to reach out with love (Gal. 6:1).
 - Etc.

- (3) As a community we have responsibilities and as a result there is accountability.
- Whether its righteousness or sin the community will be affected.
 - Whether it is society in general or the Church of Jesus Christ, righteousness builds up, but sin tears down and eventually destroy (Prov. 14:34).
- (4) We are a corporate community with responsibilities (Matt. 22:39; Rom. 12:5, 9; 1 Cor. 10:17; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 1 Peter 2:17; etc.).
3. **Campaign Strategy** (Josh. 7:2)
- (a) Joshua once more sends out men to survey the site for attack in order to prepare effectively for the assault, on Ai.
- (b) Sending the spies:
- (1) Joshua didn't consult God otherwise the sin of Achan would have been revealed.
 - (2) How cautious we all need to be because success can distract us because of overconfidence which may cause us to forget to pray.
 - (3) Seemingly, Joshua, sent the spies, acting on his own initiative, still glowing with self-confidence because of the overwhelming victory at Jericho.
4. **Confidence of Victory** (Josh. 7:3-4)
- (a) The spies reported to Joshua, they also being full of self-confidence.
- (1) Most likely they compared Ai with Jericho and noted that Ai's army was inferior to that with which they saw with their former conquered adversary.
 - (2) The recommendation they made was not to send a large delegation of soldiers because such was not necessary to realize victory over Ai.
 - The spies recommended a delegation of three thousand soldiers.
 - This reveals they were resting upon the arm of flesh and the strength of the army to secure the victory.
- (b) If you carefully observe, it is evident that God was left out.
- (1) There was no mention of the LORD and the need for His presence, guidance and power.
 - (2) There was no evidence of anyone seeking God. ...
 - Keep in mind the strategy implemented to conquer Jericho was given by God (Josh. 5:13-6:5).
 - Eventually, we will see God giving directives for their second assault on Ai (Josh. 8:1-2)
 - (3) It should be noted also that irrespective of how many soldiers they had the result would be the same.
 - (4) Israel's success depended on their relationship with God and at this time (Josh. 7), they were not in harmony with God and were subjected to defeat.

(5) With 3,000 men Joshua wanted to operate on the limit of strength. However, he soon realizes that military strength, minus God's assistance, only result in defeat.

5. **Conquered** (Josh. 7:5)

- (a) The three thousand troops dispatched for the attack on Ai were subdued, crushed and put to flight.
- (b) In general, the defeat would serve as a means:
- (1) To humble God's people, teaching them always to rejoice with trembling.
 - **1 Kings 20:11 ESV**
 "And the king of Israel answered, 'Tell him, Let not him who straps on his armor boast himself as he who takes it off.'"
(If necessary, read the full context for details)
 - See also Prov. 27:1; Ecc. 7:8.
 - (2) To harden the Canaanites, making them feel secure despite the terrors they have been struck with, and their ruin, when it come, might be more dreadful.
 - (3) To be an evidence of God's displeasure against Israel, and a call to them to purge the old leaven, this was the main cause of their defeat.
- (c) The effects of the defeat on the Israelites.
- (1) Thirty-six men were lost. From a military perspective this was a small number, but for Israel it was significant because it meant they could be defeated in the Promised Land.
 - (2) The defeat at Ai showed that what mattered most was not the strength of the enemy but the help of God. Without God's all would be lost.
- (d) "The hearts of the people melted and became as water" (Josh. 7:5b KJV).
- (1) **Hearts ... melted ...** means "panic stricken;" this we saw earlier among the people of Jericho (Josh. 5:1).
 - (2) Israel had good reason to be afraid because if God did not fight for them, all their battles would be lost.
 - (3) Joshua had assured the people the living God would surely drive out the Canaanites (see Josh. 3:10).
 - How can this experience of defeat be explained? It seems inconsistent with the promise made of victory over the enemies.
 - They were concerned that God was displeased with them, and, if so, then much worse is yet ahead for them!
- (e) The people were overcome by disarray (at least mentally); there was also discouragement, disappointment and dread and such was the result of sin.

Note Two Important Lessons ... Briefly:

- (1) **Self-confidence, acting in the arm of the flesh, will lead to failure and defeat.**
 - No one can all by himself conquer the many toils of life.
 - Trials do come in many ways such as a paralyzing accident or deadly disease, etc.

- The same is true to conquering temptations or facing the moment of death; no man is an island; no man stands alone. We all need somebody to lean on and beloved we have Jesus Christ and the blessed body of believers!!
 - Self-confidence collapse before temptations of life and self-confidence never conquers death.
 - Joshua and the Israelite army were defeated because of self-confidence, failing to place their trust in and dependence on God.
 - **Matt. 26:33 Amplified Bible**
“Peter declared to Him, Though all are offended and stumble and fall away because of you [and distrust and desert You], I will never do so.”
 - See also Luke 18:9-14; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 8:2; Gal. 6:3; 1 Cor. 10:12; Prov. 3:7; etc.
- (2) **When God’s people sin, it must be properly addressed and corrected as needed so that the work of God continues to be effective in its role.**

The following is a quote taken from Life in the Spirit Study Bible.

“The sin of Achan, its consequences within Israel, and the severe penalty upon Achan and his family reveal several principles of judgment when God’s people flagrantly sin.

- (a) When there is sin or the toleration of sin among God’s people, the blessing of God is diminished or lost altogether. God will not bless a people who refuse to remove sin from their midst (Josh. 7:1,11,13, 20, 21).
- (b) Open sin within the congregation of God’s people exposes its members to the destructive influence of the enemy from without (example Satan and the world; Josh.7:4-13).
- (c) If such sin is tolerated and not corrected, it will result in eventual judgment (Josh. 7:13). If, however, the sin is exposed, confessed and removed, then God’s blessing, presence and grace return (Josh. 7:22-26; 8:1, 18-19; compare with Acts 4:31-5:11).
- (d) Sin among the people of God, therefore, must be regarded with utmost seriousness. Purity must be guarded, and obedience demanded; otherwise, the spiritual development of the congregation will either be stunned or ceased altogether (compare with Rev. 3:1-3, 14-18).”

B. Conferring with God Josh. 7:6-9

1. Passionate Plea (Josh. 7:6)

Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the earth upon his face before the Ark of the LORD.

As a declaration of the depth of the intensity of sorrow for the loss experienced, the consequential catastrophe feared and sin which he suspected. The external evidence of sorrow manifested as in this situation by Joshua and the elders was a general

practice in ancient days when people were afflicted with grief on account of any great calamity or as otherwise experienced.

(a) **Sign of great sorrow**

Josh. 7:6a NKJV: “Then Joshua tore his clothes ...”

- (1) This act was done in testimony of the great sorrow being experienced, the consequent evil feared from the enemies, the loss experienced at Ai for the sin he suspected (Gen. 37:34; 44:13; Lev. 10:6; etc.)
- (2) “Rent his clothes” (KJV) because the defeat made it evident clear that God had turned His hand against them; if this were not so then the enemy would not have prevailed.
- (3) He was experiencing a **loss of** thirty-six men as well as the blessing and guidance of God.

(b) **Sign of humility**

Josh. 7:6b NKJV: “... and fell to the earth upon his face ...”

- (1) Thus, displaying deep humility and fervent supplication. For deeper understanding we are referring to such terms as: meekness, lowliness, abasement, etc.
- (2) In other words, he displayed a modest or low view of his own importance.
- (3) He had no time to think of or focus on any unfavorable statements against him as he laid so low before the great God!!
 - He totally disregarded himself and directed his reverence and submission to God.
 - His focus was solely on the living and true God, he remained fixed on Him facing the Ark, the **symbol** of the presence of God.
- (4) In the “Conditions for Healing the Land;” one of God’s first conditions, out of four, for healing and restoration was the essential need for “**humility**” (See 2 Chron. 7:12-22, NB v. 14).
 - Note: “My people” and such is applicable to all generations of all times.
 - Beloved, **humility and repentance remain God’s continued conditions for forgiveness.**
 - Note the four-fold conditions for revival and restoration noted in verse 14: humility, prayer, seek God, and turn from evil (2 Chron. 7:14)

(c) **Sign of humiliation**

Josh. 7:6c NKJV: “... before the Ark of the Lord.’”

- (1) “Humility” and “Humiliation”
 - **Humility:** The quality of being humble or having a low opinion of one’s self, meekness, etc. It is the opposite of pride or haughtiness.
 - **“Humiliation:** It is a painful emotion that we feel when we’ve been shamed. Some synonyms are crushed, demean, shame, disgrace, etc.
- (2) Joshua and his officers not only humbled themselves but displayed deep humiliation, putting dust upon their heads.
 - They were not only mourners, but they were genuinely penitent.

- God will hear the cry of the penitent (Psa. 34:18; Luke 15:7; Acts 3:38; etc.).

(3) They did not only express their depth of humiliation, but it was not a concealed matter and they maintained their focus steadfastly on God ...
“...before the Ark of the Lord ...”

(d) **Sign of solemn persistence**

Josh. 7:6d NKJV: “... until evening ...”

(1) They continued the whole day in a period of solemn prayer and fasting.

(2) Their prolonged praying showed it was no hyper external fleshly display but that it proceeded from a deep conviction of their misery and danger if God was in anyway provoked to depart from them.

(3) Jacob on returning home, expecting to meet an angry brother, Esau, was overshadowed by fear and uncertainty ... just what will their meeting be like?

- Read Gen. 32
- Observe his experience during that dismal, emotional disturbing final hour before meeting Esau ... **A few brief highlights:**
 - Angels of God met Jacob Vv. 1-2
 - Note Jacob’s fear Vv. 3-8, etc.
 - Jacob’s prayer Vv. 9-12, etc.
 - Jacob wrestles with God and his determination to receive a blessing, Vv. 24-32, NB v. 26.
 - Beloved, at those special moments we cannot give up! We must not give up!! We must persevere in prayer and supplication ... we call it **importunity!!**
- Abraham preserve in his request (Gen. 18:23-33, NB v. 32).
- The Syrophoenician Woman (a Canaanite woman) did (Matt. 15:21-28).
- Jesus our Savior did (Matt. 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46).
- The Nobleman from Capernaum did (John 4:43-54).
- Etc.

(e) **Sign of grief and mourning**

Josh. 7:6e NKJV: “... and they put dust on their heads.”

(1) Briefly stating: Dust, earth and ashes were symbols of mourning among the ancient Hebrews.

(2) It is believed to be a higher expression of great grief, mourning and a deep sense of unworthiness to be relieved.

(3) See 1 Sam. 4:12; 2 Sam. 1:2; 13:19; Jonah 3:6; Micah 1:10; etc.

(4) Joshua and his officers were omitting nothing in seeking God for restoration of His presence and guidance.

2. **Perplexity** (Josh. 6:7-8)

I will agree that their “Passionate Plea” noted above is intertwined with this pointer, “Perplexity”. I am looking at their intercession noting their inability to deal with or to understand the defeat experienced by their army at Ai.

(a) Despondency sets in!**Josh. 7:7a NKJV:** “And Joshua said, alas Lord God ...”

(1) Earlier we saw a different Israel.

- They were high spirited, overzealous and self-confident. They were so assured of victory that it was decided on using a small contingent of soldiers (Josh. 7:2-4).
- Now they are characterized by low spirits because of lost hope and courage.
- Before their defeat they did not consult with God but relied on the strength of their army to defeat Ai, a small city.
- However, despite it all, it is commendable to see them seeking God wholeheartedly.

(2) Obviously, the leaders of Israel were in deep despair as discouragement sets in.

(3) However, through this experience of despondency, within the darkness there are some rays of light.

(4) Their faith in divine power has been evident in the fact that they are seeking God in earnest prayer.

(b) Despair tends to linger**Josh. 7:7b NKJV:** “Why have you brought this people over Jordan at all ...?”(1) The East Jordan Tribes seem OK on the other side of Jordan (*Keep in mind a large delegation of these tribes was with Joshua in securing the Promised Land*).

- He taught it would have been better to be cut short (i.e. short of possessing the Promised Land) than to be cut off (destroyed by the enemy).
- Almost sounded like the previous generation of mummies (Ex. 14:11, 12; 16:3; 17:3; Num. 14:2); but He who searches the heart knew that these words came out of a heart of despair and **not from a heart of unbelief.**

(2) Even in their despair they continued to recognize the work of God. It was by His power that they came across the flooded Jordan river (Josh. 3:9-17; 4:10-14; 7:7).

(c) Defeat will be inevitable without God!**Josh. 7:7c-8**

(1) Joshua sees the danger Israel was now in.

Josh. 7:7c NKJV: “... to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.”

- Joshua and his officers saw the defeat by the enemy as a national calamity.
- The defeat that they experienced was not taken lightly; for them it was not a “win a few, lose a few mentality.”
- Every battle fought was a matter of importance and there is always a reason for defeat, it just didn’t happen.

- (2) Joshua knew that if God’s blessing and guidance were not going to be with them, it would have been better not to come to the Promised Land. If God did not deliver them all would be lost.
- Today we see a different situation within the Church (Universal).
 - We are so filled with man’s programs and power, that if God withdrew His blessing and guidance, it wouldn’t be missed at all.
3. **Preservation—God’s honor** (Josh. 7:9)
- (a) **Considerable Consideration**
- (1) Joshua’s major concern was the honor of God’s name.
- He feared the enemy would soon wipe out Israel and ridicule God’s name.
 - In mocking, their objective would be to disrepute the honorable name of God.
 - They would claim that the LORD is weak and powerless.
 - They would say that He doesn’t have what it takes to save and deliver His people as promised.
- (2) In essence, Joshua saw that God’s great name and reputation would be slanderously declared among the enemies.
- The real facts of God and who He really is was at stake.
 - This was the motivation that was compelling Joshua to beg God to protect His own name.
 - He wanted God to protect the powerful witness of His wonderful name among the people of the earth.
- (b) Confirmation of hope
- (1) Despite the darkness hanging over Israel, we continue to see rays of light confirming faith in God.
- There are some who claimed that Joshua’s prayer was only an expression of complaint and unbelief but evidently, we are witnessing bold language of wrestling with God in prayer—a faith which could not comprehend the ways of the LORD.
 - Joshua’s laments their defeat, as he feared it would reflect on God’s wisdom and power, its goodness and faithfulness.
- (2) Joshua’s concern was for the glory of God!!
- Our greatest disappointment when we stumble should be that we have caused reproach on the **great name of God.**
 - We cannot at any time advocate a better appeal than this: **“Then what will you do for your great name?”** (Josh. 7:9b NKJV).
 - Oh, beloved! Let God be in all we do. Let Him be glorified! Let us welcome and be delighted to do His perfect will!
 - The name of God is the great name above every name!
 - We must never forget; we must always believe that He will work on behalf of His own!!

- Upon this we must build all our hopes and aspirations ... God is not slack concerning His promises (2 Peter 3:9-11).
 - We honor Him because He is honorable!! He is indeed worthy of our trust, our admiration and placing all our confidence in Him!! (Rev. 5:9-14, NB v. 12).
 - Maintain your assurance in Him (2 Tim. 1:12).
 - **Rev. 4:11 ESV**
 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”
- (3) Joshua’s main concern was for the glory of God’s name!! Oh!! Beloved may He be magnified in all that we are and do!!

The song: “We Magnify Your Name! ... Partial Quote

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord He is worthy
 Sing unto Him a new song with one accord
 For He is worthy
 So we lift our hands in praise
 Knowing all things work for good always
 You’re worthy
 We magnify Your name

You are King and Lord of Lord
 We shall lift your name forever more
 You are worthy
 We magnify Your name.

May our daily lives magnify Him in thoughts, words and deeds as there is no other way!!

C. Covenant Broken Josh. 7:10-15

1. Compose Yourself (Josh. 7:10)

- (a) In addressing our moments of crises, whatever they may be, we must first seek God in prayer and supplication (Phil. 4:6; James 5:13-16; etc.); we need to hear the Word of God (1 Peter 1:22-25; Psa. 119:9; John 15:3; etc.).
- (1) Joshua did well in seeking God, in such an attitude of humility, mourning and grieving as a result of the perplexity confronting Israel.
- (2) Now God told him it is enough!
Josh. 7:10 NKJV: “So the LORD said to Joshua: ‘Get thee up! Why do you lie on your face?’”
- **Matthew Henry puts it as:**
 “Get thee up, suffer not thy spirits to droop and sink thus, wherefore liest thou upon thy face? ...”

- God was saying: “Calm down;” “Get yourself together!”
 - God would not have Joshua continue any longer in that depressed and hopeless attitude.
 - It was not God’s desire for an unnecessary prolong period of grief: “Arise, shake thyself from the dust!”
 - Joshua must get up because there is work to be done!
 - Weeping must not hinder sowing, nor the duty of religion thrust out another, you need to maintain a balanced approach.
 - Ezra was confronted with a similar situation (See Ezra 10, NB Vv. 2-4).
- (b) **Ray of sunshine continues to shine through despite the hour of darkness.**
- (1) Good News!! Bad News!!
- The good news is that God had not failed Israel!! The bad news is the defeat was a result of Israel’s sin!!
 - Joshua had no need to fear that the problem was with God and while it is not a most welcomed discovery; it was somewhat comforting to know that the problem was with Israel and there must be a solution.
- (2) The encounter with God was straightforward and direct: it was now time to act ... arise and begin to handle the situation.
- An unforgettable lesson for Israel to remember: **Bearing the name of Israel’s God was never a guarantee of divine protection. If the heart was far from God, His blessings must not be presupposed.** (*Presupposed: required, necessitated, supposed, assumed, etc.*)
 - God was not interested in having His great name given any superficial support.
 - Those who were to be known as His people **should not practice sin.**
 - Any program of life short of sinless life would grieve God (carefully Note Josh. 7:12). **Believers do not habitually sin (1 John 3:1-10)**
 - God’s provision is for us to live a life of increasing victory.
 - He always makes it possible for us not sin, unfortunately as in this account (about Achan Josh. 7), Israel sinned but they didn’t have to.
 - Oh! Beloved, let us **remain in Christ** (John 15:1-8) in Him there is victory!!
 Oh victory **in Jesus**, my Savior forever
 He sought me and He bought me with His redeeming blood
 He loved me ‘ere I knew Him and all my love is due Him
 He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.
- (3) We must **hear** the Word of God and **do** exactly what God tell us.
- Obeying God, heeding His Word is the remedy for sin and defeat.
 - See John 15:3; 17:17; Rom. 15:4; Eph. 5: 26; 6:16-17; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12; etc.

2. Cause of Failure (Josh. 7:11-12)

- (a) “The Why” is always important and in this situation, as observed above, the underlying cause for Israel’s defeat is: “Israel has sinned!”
- (b) The Covenant was broken!
- (1) As noted above: God had not forsaken Israel; the people of Israel had forsaken God.
- (2) Note again Josh. 6:17-19, NB Vv. 18-19.
- Jericho was the: “First Fruit” of the conquest of Canaan; First Fruits are sacred and belong to God.
 - Everything in Jericho was dedicated to God for destruction or dedication to the Tabernacle, all else was strictly forbidden.
- (3) **They have taken for themselves that which was devoted or was to be destroyed; this act was done despite the curse so solemnly censured against anyone who violated the charge from God!! (Josh. 6:17-18)**
- It was an act of greed and robbing what duly belonged to God
 - Such an act was a challenge to God’s authority, as if the curse pronounced would have no adverse effect on the transgressor.
- (c) They did it secretly as if they could conceal it from the all-seeing God (Josh. 7:11), and they were ready to say that God would not see it neither would miss so small a matter.
- (d) “Israel have sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them ...” (Josh. 7:11 NKJV)
- (1) God said “Israel” not one man or one family.
- We previously discussed “Corporate Community,” when we discussed verse 1.
 - Achan’s sin adversely affected **all Israel**.
 - He was an active part of the community.
 - It is somewhat staggering but indeed the whole nation was affected.
 - Thirty-six men died and their families overtaken with grief.
 - The entire army felt the reproach of the defeat.
 - The whole nation was found guilty.
- (2) We witnessed a similar situation within the church at Corinth ... for example:
- **1 Cor. 5:6 Amplified Bible**
 “[About the condition of your church] your boasting is not good [indeed, it is most unseemly and entirely out of place]. Do you know that [just] a little leaven will ferment the whole lump [of dough]?”
 - For context read 1 Cor. 5:1-6:20.
 - **1 Cor. 5:6 ... Briefly Note: Just a little leaven (raising agent) makes the whole lump of dough rise; so, any sin in the church tends to corrupt the whole church.**
 - You may have heard the familiar saying: “One bad apple spoils the bunch.”
- (3) A very important lesson here is: **The acceptance and tolerance of the sin is worse than the sin itself, therefore it must be dealt with strictly.**

(4) Another important lesson: Achan coveted and rob God; Oh! Beloved! We likewise rob God when we refuse to give unto Him what He directs us to do, give, go, etc. ... When we fail to give what is due Him!!

- We do not only rob God in our tithes and offering but our time, talents, treasures, etc. also when we fail to sincerely love Him with **ALL** our hearts, soul, mind and strength. Let us lay ALL on the altar of sacrifice!!
- Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

(c) An awesome challenge is noted in Josh. 7:12 ... please read it.

(1) A holy thing must not be defiled. It must be destroyed if it cannot be kept pure. Israel had now become **doomed to destruction** unless the accursed thing (Josh. 6:18; 7:12) was removed from their midst.

(2) Let us repeat! God would not protect Israel's army again until the sin was removed, and the people returned to obeying Him without reservation. **God is not content with our doing what is right some of the time. He wants us to do what is right all the time. We are under His orders to eliminate any thoughts, practices, or possessions that hinder our devotion to Him.**

3. **Conduct an Inquiry** (Josh. 7:13-14)

(a) The need for the people to sanctify themselves (v. 13)

(1) As used in this text: refers to ceremonial requirements (Josh. 3:5). They were to be prepared when God comes among them.

- Such a rite not only prepared the people to approach God but reminded them of their sinfulness and God's holiness.
- This was discussed in Lesson 3 Part A, pages 10-13, NB page 12.

(2) As noted in Lesson 3 Part A, it was stated that: "The Old Testament does not use the term 'sanctify' in the full spiritual explanation of the New testament, **however, the eternal principle has been made clear.**

NOTE BRIEFLY ... SOME FACTS ABOUT SANCTIFICATION (BRIEFLY)

- In the Old Testament it was more of ceremonial process and as noted in Lesson 3 Part A, page 12, several factors of importance were associated with this act of sanctification resulting in them being set apart to the glory of God.
- As used in the New Testament we are referring to a "purging experience."
 - In this experience three changes occur:
 - Separation from the world unto God.
 - Purging from the pollution of sin.
 - Crucifying of the carnal nature.

- This has been briefly discussed in “The Righteous Pursues Holiness,” Chapter 1 Lessons 1 and 3 ... available on our website.
- (b) The source of the problem had to be acknowledged (Josh. 7:13)
- (1) Detecting the root cause of any problem is something so many stays away from.
 - In their denial, they blame others, make vain excuses, etc. all of which never bring about the necessary solution.
 - There are so many ways to illustrate this matter; take for example if your waste water stops flowing freely; it makes no sense falsely blaming sources that have nothing to do with the clog; the right thing to do is to address the need or continue to experience the inconvenience that may result in the loss of such service.
 - (2) As seen in our text, it was urgent and compulsory for Israel to realize that the accursed thing in their midst would make them powerless before their enemies (Josh. 7:13).
 - It was also important for them to realize that once the problem was addressed, God’s power can be fully realized.
 - Similarly, confession and forsaking sin will make way for God’s power to once more flow into the Christian’s life (2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:21; James 4:8; 1 John 3:3; etc.)
- (c) God gave directions how to conduct the inquiry (v. 14).
- (1) The people, overnight, were prepare themselves to meet with God and submit to divine scrutiny.
 - (2) Joshua would bring them under the scrutiny of the “lot.”
 - **“Lot”**: In ancient Israel, the High Priest used the tradition of casting lot for certain decisions.
 - The system varied from marked sticks or stones with symbols, etc.
 - It amounted to consulting God for the answers. The objects were cast into the lap, but the answer was from God (Example see Prov. 16:33).
 - This was done by the Apostles before Pentecost (Acts 1:26)
 - The primary reason for casting lot was to provide impartial, unbiased decision on important matters. Once the lot was cast, no one could argue that the decision was the result of human intervention such as favoritism, partiality and so on.
 - Some examples are Lev. 16:8-10; Num. 26:55-56; Josh. 18:10; Prov. 16:33; Acts 1:26.
 - (3) The people were to condition themselves to accept a shakedown trial.
 - Joshua did not know the identity of the sinning family, but God did (Psa. 94:9-10; 139; Isa. 40:28; etc).
 - God would reveal the tribe, family, and household, and finally the **man with the accursed thing**.
 - God knows it all Prov. 28:13; Isa. 29:15; Jer. 16:17-18; Ezek. 11:5; Hosea 7:2; Amos 5:12; Luke 8:17; 12:13; etc.

- Beloved, secret sin on earth is an open and outrageous wrongdoing before God ... with His help and obedience, victory can be realized daily!!
- (4) Note, the shakedown was man by man (Josh. 7:14).
- Someone noted: “We are born one by one; we die one by one; we shall stand before God one by one.”
 - **Rom. 14:12 Amplified Bible**
“And so each of us shall give an account of himself [give an account in reference to judgment] to God.”
 - See also 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 1:17; Rev. 20:12.
4. **Corrective Action** (Josh. 7:15)
- (a) The guilty person must be put to death without mercy (Heb. 10:28 and Deut. 17:2-6).
- (b) Keep in mind the facts of the case against the accused.
- (1) Jericho and all its contents were accursed, meaning devoted to God for destruction or service (Josh. 6:17-25).
- The precious metals and stones were dedicated to the Tabernacle.
 - Everything else were to be destroyed except Rahab and her family.
- (2) As a result of the transgressor, Israel’s army was defeated, and thirty-six soldiers were killed.
- (3) The transgressor had taken what was forbidden and thus identifying himself with the curse placed upon Ai and was worthy of death and burning. The fire would consume all the remains from the accursed city.
- (c) This is indeed a severe judgment but consider the two-fold nature of Achan’s sin.
- (1) **His great desecration to God.**
- Josh. 7:15 NKJV: “... because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD.”
 - The LORD is jealous and in particular to His holy covenant (Ex. 4:14; Deut. 4:24; Isa. 42:8; 2 Cor. 11:12; etc.).
- (2) **The great offense to the people of God.**
- “And because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel” (Josh. 7:15 NKJV).
 - See the listing above: “The facts of the case against the accused.”
 - He had executed great folly in Israel and shame to a nation so highly revered by other nations.
 - He contaminated the nation that was sanctified to God and wrought great havoc to that nation of which he was a protector.
 - His act was sacrilegious:
 - He was invading God’s rights
 - He was separating God’s property for personal use and devoted to his glory.
 - The severity of his punishment is a warning for all people of all ages to take heed.

D. Corruption Detected Josh. 7:16-21

1. Determined ... Establishing Who the Guilty Person is (Josh. 7:16-18).

God settled the issue of the source of the transgression.

(a) As noted, before, God already knew who, but here we have the revelation made public.

(b) Here is another example in which we see Joshua “rising early” to be about the Master’s business (Josh. 3:1; 6:12, 15; 7:16).

(1) As noted in Lesson 3: Rising early was an evidence that he was wholeheartedly committed to his service and willing to exercise care and pain in performing his task.

(2) The situation here in Josh. 7 needed his utmost and urgent attention and his rising early show his eagerness and earnest desire to see Israel restored to divine favor.

(c) The method implemented in detecting the guilty person was the “casting of lot,” which was briefly discussed above (page 17).

(d) The guilty tribe was that of Judah, one of the most honorable and illustrious tribes.

(1) There was silence among Achan and his family during the entire investigation.

- His silence indicates that he was unwilling to confess his sin unless he was caught.
- Too many are not genuinely sorry that they did wrong, they are sorry only when caught.
 - Amazingly true! There are some today even when caught will make excuses, blame others, become upset, etc.
 - Such is the work of the sinful nature of man: Gen. 3:12-13; Ex. 32:24; 1 Sam. 13:12; 15:21.

(2) The result of the lot cast, said to Achan, “Thou art the man!!” (2 Sam. 12:7).

- The account (Josh. 7:16-18) also shows the irrationality of those who promise themselves secrecy in sin.
- We note this fact before but must repeat for emphasis: **The righteous God has many ways to bring to light the hidden works of darkness!**
 - Those who continue their fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness will experience ruin.
 - **Ecc. 10:20 ESV**
“Even in your thoughts, do not curse the king, nor in your bedroom curse the rich for a bird of the air will carry your voice, or some winged creature tell the matter.”
 - Keep in mind we serve the all-knowing God (omniscience): Psa. 139, NB Vv. 1-4; 1 Sam. 2:3; Psa. 69:5; Isa. 40:28; Dan. 2:22; 1 Cor.3:20.

(3) These final moments were extremely difficult for Achan and his family!!

- How different if he had walked in obedience.

- Through it all his memory was fully engaged, reflecting his activities in the entire transaction.
 - He remembered what he had taken, how he felt fortunate to be in possession of these valuable items.
 - How he took them back to camp and secretly buried them.
 - How he shared with his family and how they responded.
 - **But how important for all to remember the regrets of sin before we sin and not after we sinned!!**
- No one can deny the fact that Satan makes sin appear pleasurable and because of man's depraved disposition he craves for Satan's enticements (Rom. 5:12; John 3:19); unfortunately sin has been so widely accepted as been worthwhile but the result is destruction (Prov. 14:12; Rom. 6:23; James 1:1-15; etc.).

(4) How we need to daily seek God and to walk in the light, one day at a time:

One day at a time sweet Jesus that's all I am asking of you
 Give me the strength to do everyday what I have to do
 Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus and tomorrow may never be mine
 So for my sake teach me to take one day at a time.

2. **Disclosure Made** (Josh. 7:19-21)

(a) Joshua urged Achan to confess the truth before God and that he no longer hides the terrible sin (v. 19).

(1) The sin had been committed against God; therefore, confession must be made to God.

- Achan need to give glory to the LORD and humble himself before the LORD.
- Up to this moment Achan has not openly acknowledge his transgression.
- The sin was against God's covenant; therefore, the only way for this sin to be forgiven was that confession be made to God.

(b) Note the tenderness with which Joshua address Achan:

"My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession to Him ..." (Josh. 7:19 NKJV).

(1) He did not approach him with a demeaning attitude or belittling manner.

- Joshua approached him with seriousness and tenderness.
- He might have adjured him as the high priest did to our blessed Lord and Savior (Matt. 26:62-63).
- Instead Joshua exercised love and compassion:
"My son, give, I pray thee, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto Him" (Josh. 7:19 KJV).

(2) Note two other examples—without comments:

- Ananias to the converted persecutor of the believers: "Brother Saul ..." (Acts 8:17)
- Paul's advice on helping the weak believer—see Gal. 6:1.

- (3) Joshua was actually saying to Achan: “Give glory to the LORD God” or “Recognize His authority and righteousness.”
- (4) Achan confessed his sin.
- Unfortunately, the confession was somewhat forced out of him.
 - In his confession we observed that he took steps that lead to death and destruction.
 - **Notice:** Achan **saw ... coveted ... took ... hid** the items in the ground inside his tent.
 - Below, I have used a simple chart to illustrate these downward steps to sin also seen with Adam and Eve, David and Gehazi. I have entitled this illustration **“THE PROGRESSION OF SIN.”**

CHARACTERS AND REFERENCES	SEE WITH THE EYES	ENTERS THE MIND ENTERS THE HEART	GOES INTO ACTION	EFFORT TO CONCEAL
Achan Josh. 7	“I saw ...” v. 21	<u>Coveted</u> “goodly Babylonian garment ... the silver & gold.” v. 21	“... took them...” v. 21	“hidden in the earth of my tent” v. 21
Adam and Eve Gen. 3	“the woman saw ... it was pleasant to the eyes.” v. 6	<u>Coveted</u> “was good for food ... a tree desirable to make one wise.” v. 6	“took of the fruit and ate ... gave to her husband.” v. 6	“Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of God.” v. 8
King David 2 Sam. 11	“he saw a woman bathing” v. 2	<u>Coveted</u> “the woman was very beautiful to behold” v. 2	“inquired about her ... sent messengers and took her ... he lay with her.” Vv. 3-4	Great efforts to conceal Bathsheba’s pregnancy ... ended with Uriah’s murder” Vv.6-26 “his sin revealed 2 Sam. 12:1-23
Gehazi 2 Kings 5	Gehazi saw his master refused Naaman’s gifts Vv. 15-19	<u>Coveted</u> His innermost deep desire for the gifts Elisha refused Vv. 20-23	He took the silver and garments Vv. 23-24	He stored the items in their living quarters. v. 24

These steps taken in yielding to sin are easily seen: (1) **It is seen ...** remember the eyes are a gate to the mind. (2) From the eyes it **enters the mind and goes to the heart** (3) Then **action is taken** (4) And as it generally happens **effort is made to conceal the sin.**

Beloved, it is Satan's nature to seek who he may devour but with the help of God we can be overcomers!!

The Word of God has warned us against worldliness: 1 John 2:15-17; Rom. 12:2; Gal. 6:14; 2 Tim. 2:4; etc.

We must be watchful, remain vigilant and abstain from evil: Matt. 26:41; 1 Thess. 5:22; 1 Peter 5:8-9.

This I cannot repeat too often: **It is compulsory for us to ABIDE IN CHRIST John. 15:1-8.**

"When we are at the terrible place Achan is (Josh. 7:22-26), we feel terrible about our sin; wishing we had never done it—may God help us to feel terrible about sin before we do it!!

E. Cleansing Enacted Josh. 7:22-26

1. Proof of Guilt (Josh. 7:22-23).

(a) Immediate action was taken (v. 22).

(1) Upon Achan's confession, Joshua immediately assigned men to search Achan's tent to verify the confession that he made.

(2) "... and **they ran** unto his tent ..." (v. 22) **NOTE: "THEY RAN"**

- It showed their willingness to obey orders.
- It also showed how uneasy they were with the prevailing adverse situation and their anxiety to have the accursed thing removed so they can regain divine favor.
- **Those who find themselves under wrath must make sure there is absolutely no delay in putting away sin.**

(3) Joshua and his men were attesting what we all know:

- For Israel, they were saying, delay is dangerous, and it is no time to trifle, there is too much at stake!!
- We will do what must be done for our restoration and we will do so expeditiously!!

(b) Indisputable evidence was found as was confessed by Achan (Vv. 22-23).

(c) Intervention of God sought, as to the next step.

"... brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel and laid them before the LORD." (Josh. 7:23 NKJV)

(1) Brought the evidence to where Joshua and the camp were waiting and spread the evidence out before the court.

- (2) The items were shown to all Israel; this was the indisputable evidence of Achan's transgression!
- Oh, the folly of those who promise themselves the secrecy of sin!
 - Moses' caution to the tribes of Gad and Reuben ... Num. 32, NB Vv. 20-24
- Num. 32:23 NKJV**
 "But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD **and be sure your sin will find you out.**" (Ecc. 12:14; James 1:13-15).
- (3) "... and laid them before the LORD ..." (v. 23).
- They acknowledge His sovereignty and who He is to them.
 - They were now waiting on God for His directions (although Joshua was already instructed what was to be done (Vv. 13-15). They were seeking His confirmation of the action to be taken.
 - Those who think they can cheat on God only deceive themselves.
 - What is taken from the LORD, He will recover, and He will not be a loser to any man (Hosea 2:9).
 - The things taken from Jericho were already dedicated to the LORD.
 - They were either for destruction or service to God.
 - All these items, including the silver (stolen by Achan) along with Achan and his family were now dedicated to be destroyed.

2. Price of Sin (Josh. 7:24-25)

(a) Profoundness of the matter on hand.

- (1) It was an overwhelming situation, involving all Israel, Achan along with his family and all his possessions, include the stolen items, and most importantly the LORD was involved.
- (2) "Why have you troubled us?" (Josh. 7:25 NKJV).
- The charge given in Josh. 6:18 was a strong warning.
 - At this time, we can state that it was given so that no one would meddle with the accursed thing, for fear that they would make the camp of Israel a curse and plagued with trouble.
 - Sin is a very troublesome thing, not only to the sinner himself, but all those with whom he is associated
 - **He that is greedy of gain as Achan was, trouble his own house (Prov. 15:27) and all the communities to which he belongs.**
 - Achan was severely dealt with not only because he robbed and affronted God but because he troubled Israel (Josh. 7:25).
 - Ahab did not see the effect of his sin upon Israel, so he blamed Elijah (1 Kings 17-18)
 - Condemning others has always been easier than acknowledging our own sin.
 - Carefully note 1 Kings 18:17-18. We saw similar response when Adan and Eve transgressed (Gen. 3, NB. Vv. 12-13).

- The righteous God will certainly recompense tribulation to those that trouble His people (2 Thess. 1:6).
- (b) Place of his execution.
- “... and they brought them into the valley of Achor.” (Josh. 7:24 NKJV).
- (1) “Achor”: The Hebrew meaning “trouble.”
- The place was “**The Valley of Achor**” or “**The Valley of Trouble;**” because of the trouble brought upon Israel because of his sin.
 - The valley lies between Ai and Jericho and was thus named in memory of Achan.
- (2) Because of Achan’s sin they brought him out of the Israelite’s camp, putting far from them the wicked person (1 Cor. 5:13).
- (3) Our blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, was made a curse for us, bearing our reproach and the full weight of our sins; He suffered outside the city gates to secure our salvation (Heb. 13:12-13).
- (4) Achan’s execution was at a distance so that the camp which he disturbed might not be defiled by his death.
- (c) Persons that were involved in his execution.
- (1) All Israel was involved (Josh. 7:24-25).
- (2) All Israel consented to his death and those who were capable to do so partake in his execution (stoning him).
- (3) Unanimously they had a dislike of his sacrilegious attempt and their dread for God’s displeasure against them.
- (d) Partakers with him in his punishment (Josh. 7:24-26).
- NOTE:** All that were destroyed are: Achan, his sons and daughters, his livestock, his tent, and all that he owned and the stolen items.

*There are some who teach that only Achan was executed and his family was there as spectators. Our text does not indicate nor verify such theory. **Please note the following:***

Read Josh. 7:24-26

- (1) God punished the family of Achan because the narrative clearly implies that they knew about his sin and probably condoned it.
- (2) We observe that Deut. 24:16 prohibits the punishment of children for the sins of their fathers.
- As a close-knit unit, all members of the family had mutual responsibility to encourage, warn and exhort one another so that all would remain committed to God and His Word.
 - Obviously, the family failed in this regard; eventually they will suffer the same consequence as Achan.
- (3) Let us look at our text and note a few facts:
- God had expressly ordered that the transgressor and **ALL** that he had be destroyed by fire (Josh. 7:15).

- Note: Achan, his family and everything else were taken to the execution site (Josh. 7:24).
 - Note in verse 25: "... they burned **them** after they had stoned **them** ..." (Josh. 7:25 NKJV)
- (4) It was destruction for Achan and his family and all that he had so that no trace of the sin would remain in Israel.
- In our permissive (liberal, unrestricted, etc.) and individualistic (unorthodox, independent, unconstrained, etc.) culture we have a hard time understanding such a decree, but in ancient culture this was practice.
 - The punishment fits the crime: Achan had disobeyed God's command (Josh. 6:17-19) to destroy everything in Jericho, except what would go to the Tabernacle; everything that Achan had, were subjected to destruction and because of his violation he would also be destroyed.
 - **Sin has drastic consequences, so we should take drastic measure to avoid it!!**
- (e) **Payment of Sin ... A Brief Overview** (Josh. 7:22-26)
- (1) Achan doubtlessly found sin to be temporarily thrilling.
- There was the thrill of acquiring something secretly.
 - He had the thrill of knowing something others did not know.
 - He had the thrill of being sought.
 - Finally, there came the thrill of being the center of attraction of having "the headlines of the day."
- (2) But the thrills were short-lived.
- What he had done was soon known to everyone.
 - What was hidden was soon made manifest to the entire nation.
 - What had been a prized, proved to be powerless to minister to him.
 - That over which he had been proud became his shame.
 - His fun was turned to sorrow. His momentary thrill ended in violent death.
- (3) With him perished both what he had stolen and that which was legitimately his. **He received sin's wages!** "**He departed without being desired**" (2 Chron. 21:20).
- **2 Chron. 21:20 KJV**
"Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, **and departed without being desired.** ..."
 - A brief account of Jehoram who succeeded his father Jehoshaphat (*Details not possible ... if desire read 2 Chron. 17-21*)
 - Jehoram decided to live contrary to his father's example (2 Chron. 20:32; etc.) and led an apostate derogatory life (2 Chron 21:6).

- How sad it is that a person with such opportunity for good, so much opportunity to impact his nation, would **died without being desired!!**
- Achan had it all in his hands to contribute to the well-being of his nation but he did the opposite and they had no regret in his departure from their midst.

3. Propitiation (Josh. 7:26)

(a) Précis (Summation)

- (1) In other words, we are presenting a concise summary of the essential points of this legal action ... at least some of the essential points.
- (2) The transgression of Achan, and its result:
 - Achan deliberately violated the command to abstain from plundering Jericho (Josh. 6:18-19 and Josh. 7).
 - Israel's only alternative for the broken covenant with God to be resumed was to have the accursed items destroyed (Josh. 7:11-12).
- (3) The justice and judgment of God had to be executed.
 - Achan and his family and all his possessions and the stolen items were taken out of camp (Josh. 7:24).
 - They were then executed (Josh. 7:25).
 - The family members were executed because they were accomplices in the crime: they knew about the stolen goods that were hidden in the tent.
 - They were guilty as Achan in bringing the judgment of God upon the nation.
 - Note that everything was burnt.
 - Achan and his family were dead before they were burnt.
 - **The burning in this situation was a symbol of purifying, cleansing the evil of the sin from among God's people.**

(b) Perpetual Warning!!(Josh. 7:26a)

- (1) Care was taken to preserve the remembrance of Achan's execution as a warning and reminder to future generations.
- (2) At Gilgal, a memorial was established to remind future generations of the miraculous power of God manifested on behalf of His people (Josh. 4:19-24). In this account (Josh. 7:26) the heap of stones was a reminder of the consequences of disobeying God and doing the forbidden.
- (3) It served as a monument of sin and judgment so that others might be warned by example and as a trademark of corruption (also see Josh. 8:28).

(c) Pacified (Josh. 7:26b)

- (1) The result of having Achan, his family and all his possessions destroyed was: **the anger of the LORD was turned away from His people.** "Then the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger" (Josh. 7:26b Amplified Bible).
- (2) The putting away of sin by true repentance and reformation, which is the only sure and effectual way to recover divine favor.

See the brief presentation below, our closing pointer: “Pathway to Restoration.”

(d) Place of Execution Renamed (Josh. 7:26c)

“Therefore, the name of the place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day” (Josh. 7:26c NKJV).

- (1) As noted earlier “Achor” means “trouble;” as a result the valley was renamed “Valley of Achor” or “Valley of Trouble.” It signifies the trouble Achan brought upon Israel because of his sin.
- (2) The Valley of Achor was an everlasting brand of disgrace upon Achan’s name. and an everlasting warning to all people not to invade God’s property. It stands as a warning against sin and its consequences.
- (3) **The Valley of Achor is said to be given for a door of hope, because when we put away the accursed thing then there begins to be hope in Israel** (Hosea 2:15; Ezra 10:2).

4. Pathway to Restoration (Briefly Noted)

(a) The sin of Achan, **when it is dealt with**, can be a way to secure victory again.

- (1) As seen in the situation with Israel, they were once more in a position to experience the power and guidance of God, because they were conquered by God and submitted to His full control.
- (2) This kind of victory can only be experienced after death.
 - We need to die to the belittling sin (Rom. 6:1-2, 7, 11).
 - All those in Jesus Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Gal. 5:24).
- (3) The power and victory of Jesus’ resurrection are ours as we crucify our flesh and yet live because of Jesus Christ (**Gal. 2:20**; Col. 3:3; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Cor. 15, NB Vv. 12-22, highlight Vv. 6-11).

(b) The process is not complicated ... note the following:

(1) **Sin must be routed out, gotten rid of, removed, forsaken, turned away from!!**

- Only as we rout (“**rout**”: *dispel, defeat, conquer, crush, overthrow, etc.*) our sin and forsake it, God will forgive us.
- To have our relationship with God restored means . . .
 - . . . to have access into God’s presence.
 - . . . to have our sins forgiven and cleansed.
 - . . . to be accepted by God, to renew our covenant and promise with God
 - . . . to rededicate and recommit our lives to God; beloved, **sin MUST be routed out of our lives!!**

(2) **For a relationship to exist between God and us, sin must be removed, taken away from us!!**

- God is holy, and He cannot dwell in the midst of sin!!

- Based on the fact of God’s holiness, it is imperative that sin be removed if He is going to dwell with us!!
- If we want the favor of God and access into His presence, sin must be routed out!!
- We observe these facts in Josh. 7, once the sin factor was removed the relationship between God and Israel was restored!! (Josh. 7:26).
- Repentance is **“godly sorrow”** (2 Cor. 7:10; etc.) but it also involves **“stop sinning”** (John 8:11; etc.). repentance is not only a ‘U Turn’ but it is a **“U Turn” from the world, from sin to God!”**
 - Beloved, sin MUST be removed!!
Eph. 4:22 Amplified Bible
“Strip yourselves of your former nature [put off and discard your old unrenewed self] which characterized your previous manner of life and becomes corrupt through lust and desires that spring from delusions.”
 - Also see 1 Thess. 5:22; 1 Peter 2:11; Heb. 12:11; Psa. 34:14; 97:10; Isa. 55:7.

A song by The Clayton Spirituals: **“Clean Up”**

I’ve gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again
 I’ve gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again
 I made up my mind I ain’t lying no more
 Cause a liar and a cheater can’t make it through the door
 I gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again
 I gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again
 I made up my mind I aint running no more
 I’m going back to church I’m gonna walk right through the door
 I gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again
 I gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again
 I made up my mind I ain’t cheating no more
 Because a cheater can’t make it through the door
 I gotta clean up what I messed up
 I’m starting my life over again.

A great hymn by James Nicholson: “Whiter Than Snow”*The First, Second and Third Verses and the Refrain*

Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;
 I want Thee forever to live in my soul;
 Break down every idol, cast out every foe-
 Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Lord Jesus, let nothing unholy remain.
 Apply Thine own blood and extract every stain;
To get this blest cleansing, I all things forego-
 Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Lord Jesus, look down from Thy throne in the skies,
 And help me to make a complete sacrifice;
 I give up myself, and whatever I know-
 Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Refrain

Whiter than snow, yes whiter than snow,
 Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

2 Tim. 2:15**KJV**

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Amplified Bible

“Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.”

LESSON 6 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Briefly explain the contrast between Achan and Rahab as it relates to their actions to Israel.

2. Why was the action of one Israelite so important and devastating to the entire nation of Israel? (In reference to Achan)

3. Complete the following (*This statement was noted in regard to Israel's defeat by Ai*).

“(a) _____ was now staring the Israelite (b) _____ in the face. And through this (c) _____, a strong (d) _____ is issued to succeeding (e) _____: sin will always lead to (f) _____ in spiritual (g) _____.”

4. In what way was Achan's transgression a violation, give reference?

5. Regarding Achan's transgression what are some important factors to be noted especially as it relates to God?

6. As a corporate community, what are some of our responsibilities required for one another, give references?

7. What was the general attitude of the spies who surveyed Ai (before the first attack)?

8. In Israel's first attack on Ai (a) what was the most essential factor missing? (b) Why was this so important?

9. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer.
"Israel's first attack against Ai would have been successful if they had used more soldiers."

10. Explain what is meant by this statement "... the heart of the people melted and became as water" (Josh. 7:5).

11. Israel's first attack on Ai failed because of sin, which led to despair, etc. What two important lessons were taught as a result of this experience?

12. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

"When God's people sin it must be _____ as needed so that the work of God continues to be effective in its role."

- (a) seen as human weakness
- (b) instantly overlooked with love
- (c) properly addressed and corrected
- (d) properly noted and documented

13. Briefly list, with references, some principles of judgment (discernment) necessary when God's people flagrantly sin.

14. We noted that Joshua's response to Israel's defeat as seen in Josh. 7:6 were signs conveying different levels of his response. Briefly list these signs noted in our lesson.

15. (a) Define "importunity". (b) Give five Scriptural examples with references.

16. Despite what some have stated, Joshua's plea in Josh. 7:6-8 **was not** an expression of doubt or complaint. Assessing the passage carefully, what danger did Joshua observe threatening the nation of Israel and why would this be a possibility?

17. As observed in Joshua's prayer in Josh. 7:6-9, what was his major concern, briefly explain?

18. Complete the following:

“In addressing our moments of crises whatever they may be we (a) _____
(b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____ in prayer and
supplication (Phil. 4:6; James 5:13; etc.); we need to hear (e) _____ (f) _____
(g) _____ (h) _____ (1 Peter 1:22-25; Psa. 119:9; John 15:3;
etc.).

19. What is the remedy for sin and defeat?

20. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“The acceptance of sin is _____, therefore it must be dealt with strictly.”

- (a) something that can delay
- (b) not as bad as it looks
- (c) worse than taken needed action
- (d) worse than the sin itself

21. Briefly explain: “The scrutiny of the lot.”

22. Briefly explain the twofold nature of Achan’s sin.

23. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“For those who continue their fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness _____
_____.”

- (a) will be overlooked
- (b) will experience ruin
- (c) will find deliverance
- (d) will obtain mercy

24. (a) We noted “The Progression of Sin” in our lesson. List in sequence these phases without using the chart. (b) Note one example with references.

25. Complete the following:

“When we are at the terrible (a) _____ Achan is (Josh. 7:22-26), we feel (b) _____ about our sin, (c) _____ we had (d) _____ done it—may God help us to feel (e) _____ about sin (f) _____ we do it!”

26. They brought the stolen items from Achan’s tent “... and laid them before the LORD (Josh. 7:23). What were some lessons taught by this act (laying the items before the LORD)?

27. Complete the following by choosing the correct answer:

“ _____ of gain as Achan was, trouble his own house (Prov. 15:27) and all the communities to which he belong.”

- (a) He that is caution
- (b) He that is greedy
- (c) He that is generous
- (d) He that willingly abstain

28. In regard to Achan’s execution, briefly explain the facts relating to: (a) profoundness of the matter (b) place of execution (c) persons involved in the execution and (d) partakers with him in the execution.

29. After the execution, the bodies of Achan and his family and all else were burnt, then stones were placed over the remains leaving a monument. What was the perpetual warning conveyed by the pile of stones?

30. (a) What was the name given to the place where Achan was executed? (b) What was its significance?
