

# Lessons From Achan

Intro: Joshua 7:1-26 This chapter readily divides itself as follows:

1. Verses 1-5: The hidden sin and the effects of that sin.
2. Verses 6-9: The prayer of Joshua.
3. Verses 10-12: The answer of God revealing the cause.
4. Verses 13-26: The results.
  - a. The sin removed.
  - b. The punishment of the sin.
  - c. Victory.
5. Let us now notice the lessons to be learned from this chapter.

## I. GOD'S SOLDIERS MUST BE OBEDIENT.

### A. Since God is our leader, our commander, and we are His followers we must be subject to His commands.

1. Luke 6:46 <sup>46</sup> And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
2. Luke 11:28 <sup>28</sup> But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it."
3. Jam. 1:22-25 <sup>22</sup> But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. <sup>23</sup> For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: <sup>24</sup> For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. <sup>25</sup> But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
4. This is why humility is encouraged.
  - a. Jam. 4:6-8 <sup>6</sup> But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. <sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded."
  - b. 1 Pet. 5:5-6 <sup>5</sup> Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. <sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

### B. When we subject ourselves to His command's He is with us.

1. Psa. 118:6 <sup>6</sup> The Lord *is* on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"
2. Heb. 13:5-6 <sup>5</sup> *Let your conversation be* without covetousness; *and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>6</sup> So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."
3. Jos. 1:5-7 <sup>5</sup> There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>6</sup> Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. <sup>7</sup> Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to* the right hand or *to* the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

### C. When we fail to follow God's command's He withdraws His presence.

1. God, in our text, left Israel and will leave us today if we are not obedient.
  - a. Jos. 7:12 <sup>12</sup> Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you."

- b. 2 Chr. 15:2 <sup>42</sup> And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the Lord *is* with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you.”
- c. 2 Chr. 24:20 <sup>20</sup> And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.”
2. When God withdraws His presence, the strength of the people fails.
  - a. Israel took Jericho because God was with them.
  - b. They failed to take small Ai because God’s presence had left them.
3. How often do we as Israel fail because of sin in the camp?
4. If our efforts seem fruitless, let us look for the shekels in our tents.

## II. TEACHES THE POWER OF ONE MAN TO INFLICT A WHOLE COMMUNITY WITH DISASTER.

### A. One rotten tomato affects all in the basket.

1. 1 Cor. 5:6 <sup>6</sup> Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?”
2. Gal. 5:9 <sup>9</sup> A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
3. Achan sinned—Israel sinned; Josh. 7:11 <sup>11</sup> Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put *it* even among their own stuff.”

### B. When a Christian lives in sin the whole church is harmed.

1. Shame came upon the Israelite army because of Achan.
2. Shame comes upon the church because of Achan’s in our midst.
  - a. The church in Pergamos; Rev. 2:14-16 <sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. <sup>15</sup> So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”
  - b. The church in Thyatira; Rev. 2:20 <sup>20</sup> Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

### C. As Israel we should not condone sin but put it to death (by disfellowshipping those engaged in sin).

1. 1 Cor. 5:7 <sup>7</sup> Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:”
2. Rom. 16:17 <sup>17</sup> Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”
3. 2 The. 3:6, 14 <sup>6</sup> Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.... <sup>14</sup> And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”

## III. GOD’S EYES SEE HIDDEN SINS.

### A. Another well worn lesson never too thread-bear to be repeated until it is realized.

### B. No one saw Achan carry the spoil to his tent to hide it.

1. His friends probably walked over the floor of his tent without suspecting.

2. No doubt Achan was regarded as an honorable man.
3. No one connected the defeat at Ai with Achan.
4. Possibly it was startling to Achan to find out that God knew.

**C. Our God sees all.**

1. Pro. 15:3 “<sup>3</sup> The eyes of the Lord *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”
2. Psa. 139:7 “<sup>7</sup> Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?”
3. Because God is Spirit, He cannot be confined to a specific local, but is in every place and sees all; John 4:23-24 “<sup>23</sup> But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.”
4. Thus God knows our sins, even if no one else does.
  - a. Num. 32:23 “<sup>23</sup> But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out.”
  - b. Ecc. 12:14 “<sup>14</sup> For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good or whether *it be* evil.”
  - c. Luke 12:2 “<sup>2</sup> For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”
  - d. Rom. 2:16 “<sup>16</sup> In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”

#### IV. ACHAN’S SIN WAS COVETOUSNESS.

**A. He coveted and robbed God as did Ananias and Sapphira.**

1. Acts 5:1-10 “<sup>1</sup> But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, <sup>2</sup> And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles’ feet. <sup>3</sup> But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? <sup>4</sup> Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. <sup>5</sup> And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. <sup>6</sup> And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*. <sup>7</sup> And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. <sup>8</sup> And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. <sup>9</sup> Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband *are* at the door, and shall carry thee out. <sup>10</sup> Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband.”
2. Covetousness was stoned in Israel.
3. Covetousness was struck with sudden death in the early church.

**B. The church now should be stricter concerning this sin.**

1. We may be robbing God today; Mal. 3:8 “<sup>8</sup> Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”
2. Mat. 13:22 “<sup>22</sup> He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”
3. Luke 12:15-21 “<sup>15</sup> And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. <sup>16</sup> And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: <sup>17</sup> And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? <sup>18</sup> And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. <sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine

ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. <sup>20</sup> But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? <sup>21</sup> So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

4. Eph. 5:3-5 “<sup>3</sup> But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; <sup>4</sup> Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. <sup>5</sup> For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”
5. Col. 3:5 “<sup>5</sup> Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

**C. We must be good stewards of the things God allows us to use.**

1. 1 Cor. 4:2 “<sup>2</sup> Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”
2. Keep money and material possessions in their proper light, to use to God’s glory and praise.
  - a. Mat. 6:19-20 “<sup>19</sup> Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: <sup>20</sup> But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.”
  - b. 2 Cor. 8:5 “<sup>5</sup> And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.” With the result; 2 Cor. 8:2-3 “<sup>2</sup> How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. <sup>3</sup> For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves;”

**D. Anything we covet above the Lord is sin.**

Conclusion: Also, we can learn the lesson that we can confess our sins as did Achan and still not be truly penitent. Achan was forced into his confession, it was not his predetermined desire.