

7. Defeat At Ai

Quote: "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."

Joshua 7:11

Verse By Verse Marking:

JOSHUA 7:1 - "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing:" -

Achan's sin was committed secretly, yet the whole nation suffered because though made of many families and tribes, Israel was one body joined closely together in national unity (1 Cor 12:26; Jude 9). When one sinned, it was as though all sinned, and not until the whole nation rejected the sin by punishing the sinner, could Yahweh look favourably upon the nation.

"Achan" - means = "trouble".

"took" - LXX has "kept back" see Acts 5:1-2.

JOSHUA 7:3 - "make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few." -

Confident in their own ability to conquer Ai, and took it for granted that Yahweh would be with them. They failed to recognise their utter dependence on Yahweh.

NOTE: No reference of Israel seeking Yahweh's blessing before marching to Ai.

JOSHUA 7:4 - "and they fled before the men of Ai." - Their

defeat indicated that their covenant with Yahweh had been broken (Lev 26:13-17; Deut 28:25).

JOSHUA 7:5 - "the hearts of the people melted and became as water" - cp Josh 2:11.

Without Yahweh, Israel were without hope. Their enemies would hear of this, and seize the opportunity for revenge (see v9, Psa 124:2-3).

JOSHUA 7:11 - "Israel hath sinned" - Israel were ignorant of this, but not Yahweh. Achan's deliberate sin really was a challenge to Yahweh (Psa 139; Heb 4:13). For Yahweh to ignore this would be to abdicate to King Sin.

The King of Ai - Ai means "ruin", therefore it's king is typically the "King of Ruin" or "King Sin" (Rom 6:12,16) who desires to reign over us. In our warfare of faith, he must be brought to ruin, rather than allowed to ruin us. Therefore Joshua hanged him on a tree, as a public condemnation and repudiation of sin's flesh from whence all transgression comes (Mk 7:21-23). This foreshadowed the work of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:3; Gal 3:13), and taught that the flesh must be crucified (Rom 6:12; Gal 5:24; Col 3:5). The type ceases here - Christ rose from the dead because he had crucified the flesh by denying it in his life, and had literally crucified it in death (Phil 2:8-9; Heb 13:20), the king of Ai did not rise, because sin reigned over him, and therefore he received it's wages (Rom 6:23). In doing this, Joshua showed Israel that the cause of their failure was that they had not crucified the flesh, rather they had allowed it to reign.

(Mark at bottom of Joshua 7)

JOSHUA 7:12 - **“Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed”** - As a result of their sin, Israel had become ‘devoted’ to destruction (Josh 6:18).

“neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you” - If sin is not speedily dealt with, others are invariably drawn in (Ecc 8:11; 1 Cor 5:6,12-13; Gal 5:9,12).

Joshua 7:15 - **“he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire”** - The fate of Jericho clung to him (cp 6:24). It was a symbol of divine judgment (Lev 10:2; Deut 4:24; Heb 12:29).

JOSHUA 7:16 - **“the tribe of Judah was taken”** - ie by lot see Prov 16:33.

JOSHUA 7:18 - Yahweh ensured the guilty party was found - see Prov 15:3; Jer 32:19.

JOSHUA 7:21 - **“When I SAW among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I COVETED them, and TOOK them”** - Colour the 3 key words in red. Cp Eve’s sin (Gen 3:6; also Jas 1:14-15). See also Col 3:5; 1 Tim 6:6-8.

“a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight” - These represent false religion and wealth. They are the two main causes that make shipwreck of men’s lives.

“behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.” - note Psa 32:1,5; Prov 28:13. Had Achan confessed and forsaken his sin before it was found, he may have been saved. Instead he attempted to cover it up.

JOSHUA 7:23-25 - Colour the phrases “Joshua and all Israel” (vv23,24) and “all Israel” (v25). - It was a national rejection of sin. See Deut 17:2-7.

JOSHUA 7:24 - **“took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters”** - Those who condoned his action were punished with him (Exod 20:5; Num 16:27,31-33), the opposite is also true (Deut 24:16; Num 26:11; Ezek 18:14-17).

JOSHUA 7:26 - **“Yahweh turned from the fierceness of his anger”** - see margin (m) - Deut 13:17. See ch 8:1.

JOSHUA 8:2 - **“And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king”** - see Deut 9:5; 20:16-17.

“only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves” - If Achan had exercised patience, he would have benefited here.

Israel Guilty on FOUR Counts:

(colour them red)

1. “they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them for they have even taken of the accursed thing” - see Lev 26:14-17; Isa 24:5. This showed ingratitude for what Yahweh had done in delivering Jericho into their hand.
2. “and have also stolen” - See Matt 22:21; Mal 3:8-9.
3. “and dissembled also” - Heb ‘kachash’ = to deceive, to feign obedience. Cp Acts 5:1-2.
4. “and they have put it even among their own stuff” - ie considered it part of their own property.