

WHO TOOK THE GARMENT?

Joshua 7:19-26

INTRODUCTION: Do you think Achan's action in stealing the accursed things was worth it? No! His temptation and sinful acts were very costly to Achan, his family, and all the Israelites. When we consider Achan, we learn the heavy cost of sin regardless of how big or small we may think it is.

I. THE CRIMES OF ACHAN

A. THE SERIOUSNESS OF SIN. (v. 11-13)

As we know, all sins are against God, and they are very serious. It is a fact that everyone has sinned, and therefore, all are sinners. We cannot hide our sins from God or fool ourselves or others. Achan was a sinner by nature, but, he was also a sinner by practice.

Joshua was told to lead Israel to destroy Jericho which they did. The Lord said to the Israelite in Joshua 6:18, "And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it." The Bible tells us in Joshua 7:1 that the children of Israel took of the accursed thing. The anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

The act of sin and the stupid choice of Israel caused them to lose the favor of God and the battle with the men of Ai. Judgment came upon all of Israel because of one man's sin and the foolishness of the military.

B. THE SEARCH FOR THE GUILTY. (v. 11,14-18)

The Lord confronted Joshua by saying in Joshua 7:11, "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."

Achan thought that Joshua and Israel would never know about the accursed things that had been stolen. God knew of Achan's evil thoughts and plot before the sin was ever committed.

God said in Joshua 7:13, "Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." The consequences were told by the Lord in advance.

In verses 14-18, the Bible details the search for the guilty. Joshua began his search under the instruction of the Lord. God told Joshua to first call the tribe, then the households, and from the household the Lord would call man by man.

II. THE CONFESSION OF ACHAN

A. ACHAN CONFRONTED BY JOSHUA. (v. 19)

In Israel's attack against Jericho, Achan fell into the temptation of taking some costly things for himself. The Bible lists a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold that Achan stole. Achan transgressed against God and took of the accursed thing that all Israel had been warned not to do. Joshua and the other Israelites did not know of Achan's disobedience to God until after their destruction of Jericho and their defeat at Ai.

God said in Joshua 7:11, "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."

Achan was tempted by the forbidden items that he found in Jericho. Joshua said to Achan in Joshua 7:19, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me."

B. ACHAN CONFESSED TO JOSHUA. (v. 20-23)

Joshua confronted Achan and asked him if he took the spoils from Jericho. Achan responded in Joshua 7:21 by saying, "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; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." Achan gave in to the lust of the eyes and the desires of the flesh.

III. THE CONDEMNATION OF ACHAN

A. SENTENCING OF ACHAN. (v. 25-26).

God had already told of the judgment for the person who took the items. Achan admitted and confessed his sin. Joshua 7:24 states: "And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor."

In Joshua 7:25, Joshua said to Achan, "Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones."

B. SHAME OF ACHAN.

The action of Achan brought disgrace and punishment to his family and to Israel for his transgression. Achan's sin serves as a reminder to us of the importance of obeying God's law, and the dangers of disobeying them. The Christian being under grace does not release him or her from the consequences of sin.

Achan's actions brought trouble for his nation and judgment for his family. Joshua 7:26 states: "And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day."

Sin brings a curse on the sinner. It affects his family members as well as other people. Sin is a reproach on the holy and loving God of glory. We must confess all sin to God because all sin is against Him. If we desire to stay in a perfect relationship and walk with God, we must repent of our sins.

When we sin against another person, we must confess and apologize to that person. When we sin against a group of people, everyone who is impacted by the sin should hear the confession. The Bible gives examples of confession to other people. Achan's sin is a lesson for us of the serious consequences of disobedience and the curse of sin on ourselves and others around us.

David sinned against God, Bathsheba, her husband, and all of Israel. He was a king and a strong man of faith. Nathan the prophet confronted David in 2 Samuel 12:9 when he said, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight?"

God forgave David, but Nathan told him in 2 Samuel 12:10, "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife."

In Psalms 51:3-4, we read David's confession, "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

God's judgment of Achan and David highlights the justice and mercy of God. The Lord is willing to forgive and redeem the fallen if they repent. Confession and repentance are the keys to seeking forgiveness from God and restoring broken relationships.

Achan and David's confession and repentance show the importance of taking responsibility for our sins and seeking to repair our broken relationships. God forgives those who confess and ask for forgiveness when they have a heart of true repentance.

From this story, we learn that obedience to God is paramount. Disobedience always has consequences. It shows that we cannot hide from the all-knowing God and that sin will always eventually find us out. Confession and repentance can lead to redemption, but obedience to God's commands is the key to avoiding the consequences of sin.

LESSONS FOR LIFE:

1. The issue is not the price of the items stolen, but the fact that stealing is a sin against God.
2. God sees and knows everything we do and the reasons behind why we do them.
3. Don't steal because God said we are not to steal.

Joshua 7:19-26

19. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

20. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done.

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; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

22. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.

24. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

25. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us: The LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

26. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day, So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, the valley of Achor, unto this day.

Easter comes once a year. How often do you come?

Wal-Mart is not the only saving place.

Now is a good time to visit. Our pastor is on vacation.

Jesus is coming. Look busy.

Whoever stole our AC units, keep one. It is hot where you're going.

