

Joshua 7

A Costly Lesson

Jericho defeated! Last verse of chapter 6:

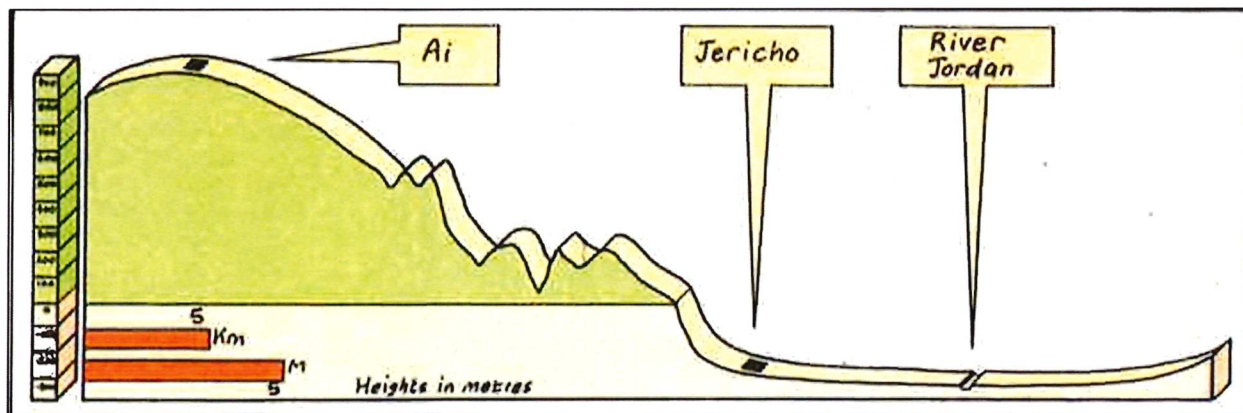
²⁷ So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

First verse of chapter 7:

But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel.

Lord's command before entering Jericho (from chapter 6)

¹⁸ But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. ¹⁹ But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord."



Israel Defeated at Ai

7 But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel.

² Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went up and spied out Ai. ³ And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few." ⁴ So about three thousand men went up there from the people. And they fled before the men of Ai, ⁵ and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six of their men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

⁶ Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they put dust on their heads. ⁷ And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord God, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan! ⁸ O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies! ⁹ For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?"

Principle #1:

When God introduces a crisis that confounds your faith and understanding, cry out honestly and directly to Him. But never doubt God's:

- Power to help you
- Involvement in your life
- Unchanging love for you

The Sin of Achan

¹⁰ The Lord said to Joshua, "Get up! Why have you fallen on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings. ¹² Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you. ¹³ Get up! Consecrate the people and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says the Lord, God of Israel, "There are devoted things in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you."' ¹⁴ In the morning therefore you shall be brought near by your tribes. And the tribe that the Lord takes by lot shall come near by clans. And the clan that the Lord takes shall come near by households. And the household that the Lord takes shall come near man by man. ¹⁵ And he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with fire, he and

all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and because he has done an outrageous thing in Israel.’”

“Holy” means:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apartness, otherness, separateness, transcendence• Pure• Different from common pagan humanity | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- God is this.- God wants His people to be like this- To reflect who God is |
|---|---|---|

¹⁶ So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel near tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁷ And he brought near the clans of Judah, and the clan of the Zerahites was taken. And he brought near the clan of the Zerahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. ¹⁸ And he brought near his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. ¹⁹ Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.” ²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, “Truly I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and this is what I did: ²¹ when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”

²² So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and behold, it was hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. ²³ And they took them out of the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the people of Israel. And they laid them down before the Lord. ²⁴ And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and daughters and his oxen and donkeys and sheep and his tent and all that he had. And they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. ²⁵ And Joshua said, “Why did you bring trouble on us? The Lord brings trouble on you today.” And all Israel stoned him with stones. They burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. ²⁶ And they raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his burning anger. Therefore, to this day the name of that place is called the Valley of Achor.

“The severity of the judgment is an index to the enormity of the sin. Our problem here is—sinners that we are—we don’t think breaking Yahweh’s covenant is all that big a deal. We cannot understand God’s wrath because sin doesn’t bother us much. That’s why we are mystified when we read passages like [this]. That’s why we cannot understand Jesus when he tells us we should be willing to go to any extreme to avoid sin (Matt 5:29-30). It is baffling to us because we do not share Jesus’ alarm over sin. The testimony of Joshua 7 is that we cannot treat cancer with vitamin pills; it requires radical surgery. We may think cancer is not big a deal, but that does not alter God’s estimate.”

Dale Ralph Davis
No Falling Words

Principle #2

When we fool ourselves into thinking we can simultaneously (1) live with our sin without consequences and (2) keep it hidden, our sin will find us out every time. The consequences run further & deeper than just ourselves.



The Valley of Achor

¹² And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees,
of which she said,

'These are my wages,
which my lovers have given me.'

I will make them a forest,
and the beasts of the field shall devour them.

¹³ And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals
when she burned offerings to them
and adorned herself with her ring and jewelry,
and went after her lovers
and forgot me, declares the Lord.

The Lord's Mercy on Israel

¹⁴ **"Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
and bring her into the wilderness,
and speak tenderly to her.**

¹⁵ **And there I will give her her vineyards
and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.**

**And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth,
as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.**

¹⁶ **"And in that day, declares the Lord, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.' ¹⁷ For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.**

Principle #3

God has already turned our "Valley of Trouble" (whatever it has been), into a "Valley of Hope" by turning His wrath on Jesus with force enough to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now, walk with Jesus, redeemed.