

WE CAN HANDLE THIS!

Joshua 7

Have you ever made a plan to do something, started to carry it out, and about half way through it, suddenly thought: **“Maybe I’d better ask my mother?”**

Have you made a plan at work, . . . **“I should have checked with my supervisor?”**

Have you tried making a plan for your life, . . . **“Maybe I should have checked with GOD first?”**

Joshua came to that point a couple of times in his life!

“I wish it had only happened to ME a COUPLE of times!”

We don’t have ALL the details of Joshua’s life either!

At least OURS aren’t written down in the book for people to read about 3-4,000 years later!

DOMINATION OF THE LAND 6-12 CONQUEST

After Joshua leads Israel into Canaan, the hardest task remains

They must take the land away from the Canaanites who live there.

Jericho was just the first—there were LOTS of others ahead.

God will use Israel to destroy these perverted pagan peoples.

Israel must trust God and obey His commands in order to do it.

Defeat of Jericho 6 => Conclusion 6:37

[Sin of Achan 7]

Chapter 7—they move on to the next town.

Joshua inserts a . . .

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF THE OFFENSE 7:1

God wants us to know right up front what the issue is

—everything else in the chapter flows out of this issue!

God’s instruction 6:17-19

The people’s obedient response 6:21

The offense of one person affects the nation 7:1

“They” acted unfaithfully

The whole nation is held accountable for the disobedience of one person!

The unfaithfulness involves less than total obedience to God’s orders.

ALL the spoils were to be given to God!

Just one person decides to keep just a little for himself:

(A beautiful robe; about \$35 worth of silver; about \$500 worth of gold)

The whole nation suffers because of one person’s disobedience! . . .

God’s anger burns against the nation.

A false implication:

“If there’s ‘sin in the camp,’ God can’t work among His people.

“If someone in the church sins, God can’t be glorified in the church!”

There’s ALWAYS sin in the camp!

If sin in the church will stop God’s work, or His blessing in the church, then it’s dead before it starts. There will always be sin among the people of God.

That's not to belittle the significance of sin, it's just an acknowledgment that Pleasant View is composed of people who sin (EVERY church is) !

"If you ever find the perfect church, DON'T join it!"

1 John 1:8-9 *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves ... but if we acknowledge our sin [if we agree with God about it], He is faithful and just to forgive us ... and to cleanse us!"*

Sin in the church MUST be acknowledged and dealt with, but the fact that God's people sin won't stop Him from working in His church.

It will break fellowship until it's dealt with.

If allowed to run rampant and undealt with, God will intervene and judge.

But committing a sin won't stop God's work in His church.

A valid implication:

So why is THIS sin so significant?

It was central to everything God was doing in Israel.

God's launching a new age in life of His people—they're just getting started in the land.

God wants an obedient people that acknowledges His authority and submits to Him.

He establishes ONE condition for blessing—*destroy every living thing and bring the precious valuables to my storehouse! **The spoils belong to God!***

It's an acknowledgment that HE defeated Jericho.

He deserves the fruit of the battle!

On this principle there can be no compromise!

Achan violates the ONE condition God established to bless His people.

His violation must be dealt with.

It's a severe offense and the response is radical (Cp. Ananias & Sapphira in Acts).

Both cases are related to money—keeping for yourself what belongs to God.

Even more significant is the public statement—in starting a new epoch in the life of God's people—a statement of the importance of the fact that GOD is in charge and all we have belongs to him.

Eventually word of the offense will get out and God's name will be blemished.

THE DEFEAT 7:2-5

Israel's self-confidence. 2-3

The spies check it out and bring their report:

We can handle this!

Don't bother sending the whole army.

A couple of thousand of our men can handle this.

They have already forgotten that **THEY didn't take Jericho!**

It isn't about THEM! This is STILL God's battle.

4a What's missing? What's wrong with this picture?

Joshua's failure to check with the Commander-in-Chief

Joshua also forgets what he learned just before Jericho:

Joshua isn't the Commander of God's army!

He dispatches the troops without checking with *the Commander (God)* first.

Had Joshua stopped to talk to God about the plan first,

he could have dealt with the problem before the defeat at Ai!

Joshua fails to confirm his plans with God.

One man's failure to obey God's orders results in the defeat of God's people. 4b-5

Three kinds of failure lead to Israel's defeat—the same failures we face!

- * **Failure to obey** what we already *know* God wants us to do [Achan's sin].
- * **Failure of self-confidence**—assuming we can handle this ourselves [Spies' error].
- * **Failure to check-in** with the Commander—to ask God about our plans [Joshua's failure].

THE LAMENT 7:6-9

Joshua laments the loss before Yahweh because His Name is at stake.

[Listen in on his lament:]

He blames God for the failure! 7a

"Why did YOU bring us across the Jordan . . . just to destroy us!"

Why did you do this to us?

He laments following God in the first place 7b

"If only we had been content to stay back in the wilderness!"

We never should have trusted God to bring us over here!

We were wrong to do what God told us to do!

He's denying everything God told him previously!

He [rightly] realizes that God's Name is at stake. 8-9

Right assumption: It's not about US; it's about God.

If God's people are defeated, God's Name—HIS reputation—is damaged.

Wrong assumption: God would let HIS reputation be damaged.

The Canaanites will come after us.

Your people will be wiped out.

Your reputation will be affected.

Why doesn't Joshua start with the assumption that God is trying to get their attention?

Maybe they need to adjust their plan?

"O.K. God, what are you trying to tell us? What do we need to do about it?"

Is that how WE respond when things don't work out the way WE thought they would?

Do we listen for His lesson? Or, do we just start out blaming God for our troubles?

Do we trust Him first?

THE ACCUSATION 7:10-13

God corrects Joshua, indicating that the problem was sin in the camp.

This was the logical starting point.

Was God UNABLE to defeat the enemy?

Joshua knew better than that!

Did God deliberately lead them out there to kill them?

Joshua should know better than that!

Did God change His mind about giving them the land?

It was based on His promise—He couldn't change that!

What other explanation was there? **They didn't obey His instructions! 10-12**

So get up off your face!

Stop lamenting the loss! Stop *whining about your defeat*!

Deal with the cause!

God's people will always suffer defeat

when they deliberately disobey God's revealed will,

or when they tolerate sin in their midst.

If God is going to fulfill His promise to bless His people,

we must obey His revealed will.

God's people must commit themselves to obedience! 13

Prepare the people to search for evidence of anyone who has kept for himself what God says is supposed to be His—*it belongs to Him!*

THE DESIGNATION 7:14-18

God leads the people to the source of their problem: Achan. 14-18

THE CONFESSION 7:19-23

Joshua's instruction to Achan calls for him to do what He should have done in the first place: 19

He should have acknowledged God's greatness—His right to rule.

He should have submitted to God's authority and obeyed.

His act of obedience would have acknowledged God's glory and resulted in praise.

God receives glory and praise by His dealing with sin among His people also.

Achan stored up just *a few of the spoils* of the battle for himself.

(A beautiful robe; about \$35 worth of silver; about \$500 worth of gold; that's all!)

The process Achan went through on the road to failure.

It's the pattern people always follow! **20-21**

1. I saw it.

2. I wanted it. Desire/coveting

3. I took it.

4. I hid it. Attempt to keep it secret

They discover the things that belonged to God, hidden away among Achan's possessions, as he said. **22-23**

THE JUDGMENT 7:24-26

The severe judgment of God, first on all the people, then on Achan himself, demonstrates that God demands total obedience.

God will not be mocked nor taken lightly.

Achan, his entire family, all his possessions, including the things he had kept from Jericho were all destroyed together.

Achan's disobedience brought "*trouble*" (<=Achor) on all Israel, therefore God brought "*trouble*" on him, and he was buried in the Valley of "*Trouble*"

His selfish act of disobedience didn't accomplish what he hoped for.

Disobedience to the revealed will of God *always* works out that way.

Disobedience never produces what we're hoping for.

Disobedience never satisfies.

Disobedience to the revealed will of God leads to destruction of everything! (<= "Achor" –trouble)

Perhaps not as conspicuously as Achan's case—but just as surely!

WHAT ARE THE LESSONS FOR US FROM JOSHUA'S EXPERIENCE AT AI?

1. Danger of self-confidence. –thinking we can handle this ourselves

2. Danger of acting on our own. –not checking with the commander to get our orders.

3. Danger of ignoring the revealed will of God. (Disobeying Him)

What battles do you expect to face this week?

We may not even know what we're going to face!

How do you propose to fight the battle?

What are the risks?

How should we respond to remove the risks up front?

What do YOU propose to do about it this week?