

The Sin Of Achan

Introduction:

Context

- Israelite conquest
 - Joshua is the leader to the people
 - The destruction of Jericho is seen as the first step in the conquest
 - Jericho was the first fruits of the conquest – It was to be totally destroyed by God, but part of it was to be reserved to the treasury of the house of the Lord (this will be important later)
- We are also introduced to the character of Rahab at the same time.

Rahab

- Rahab is seen as this prototype of a Israelite gentile convert
- Rahab shows a lot more faith and obedience than some the Israelites
- This seems in contrast to what we read about Achan in chapter 7

The first issue: Israel is defeated at AI

Joshua 7.1

- The reader is told that Achan, an Israelite, acted out of selfish intent by stealing some of the portion given to God. We're not told that anyone else knew this though.

7.2-9: failed attempt to take AI, and Joshua's reaction

- Joshua decides to take AI
- Seems similar to when they took Jericho, but one thing is missing – they didn't consult God. Joshua assumed they were ok, but failed to make sure there wasn't an sin in his camp.
- This miscalculation cost people's lives
- Joshua seems to blame God for their situation. He promised that they would be protected and find success if they followed God. Joshua assumed they were in the right, and didn't do the work to ensure they were in the clear.

7.10-15: God's message

- This isn't a time to mourn
- This isn't God's fault
- There's sin in their camp
- Instead of wallowing they need to fix their sin
- God also gives them a process for handling the sin, casting lots

7.16-21: Joshua follows their direction

- They follow the lots
- They find Achan
- Achan admits his sin, but was it at the right time?

7.22–26: Joshua handles the sin

- The find the stolen goods
- They are destroyed, as well as Achan and his family
- Sin is completely blotted out of the camp

Summary of chapter 8

- They consult God before attacking AI again
- God gives them victory
- After the victory they renew their covenant with God

Application:

Hidden Sins are not Hidden

- Achan got away from his in among the people, but God knew. Nothing is hidden from Him
- It is easy to operate as if he does not know, but we cannot fall into that trap
- We need to exhibit true faith, which is willing to obey God when no one else is watching

Our sins affect others – there are consequences to rebellion from God

- 36 people died because of Achan's sin at the battle of AI, his family is also killed
- The people are also discouraged from the conquest because of their failed battle
- We need to think about what our sins do to others

From our failing, God can bring about good

- Hosea 2.14–15 : Hosea's wife was out in the wilderness of sin, and God tells Hosea to allure her back to him. This is an example of what God does for his people. This is illustrated by saying that she's in the Valley of Achor, a place that epitomizes sin, and out of that place comes a door of hope.
- In Joshua, the people recognize the sin in their camp, cleanse it, and are brought into a better relationship with God. A relationship that is expressed in them gaining victory over AI and renewing their covenant with God.
- We have an even great example of this in Christ. That from the valley of Achan, his death, which takes on our sin, we have his resurrection, we have a hope to be with him for eternity.