

3-30-25 Courage Over Fear: God Sees All: Sin Consequences and Redemption

Week 5 (3 weeks till Easter)

Text Joshua 7:2-11; Ezekiel 1:15-23

Big Idea: God's all-seeing eye does not allow us to sin and get away with it.

Application Point: When we sin, God's desire for us is to make it right with him, move forward, and continue to victory for him.

Have you ever witnessed your favorite sports team losing to a team they should have clearly beaten with their hands tied behind their own backs? It's shocking. It's frustrating. That's exactly what the nation of Israel goes through in our story today.

They got beaten badly by Ai, after upsetting the land of Jericho. Joshua sent spies to search the land of Ai (**Joshua 7:2**), and everything on the briefing report indicated that they should have been able to manhandle them with minimal effort (**v. 3**). The results? Joshua lost thirty-six men, and his soldiers had to retreat (**vv. 4-5**). The nation was in shock. Joshua was in great distress (**Joshua 7:6**).

Wouldn't you be? What could have caused this?

Remember when your mom or your teacher would tell you that they had eyes on the back of their heads? Now as the parent, you know that they never did have eyes on the back of their heads. They just had enough life experience to predict something. God, however, does have an all-seeing eye.

Nothing can be hidden from God, and nothing can escape him. This can be an encouragement, or it can be dreadful depending on where you are in life. Why bring this up? Because God sees everything we do, even when we're doing it in the dark or in secret.

No one likes to talk about failure or defeat, about their greed and sin. Up until this point, Israel had been experiencing victories, one after another, from **chapter one** through **chapter six**.

Sadly **chapter 7** opens with a "**But**" "**But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things...**" ESV, "**But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things,**"

They failed God. They sinned against God and transgressed His clear command.

What was it God instructed of them? **Chapter 6:18-19**.

It would be easy for Joshua to drop this chapter and move on to **chapter 8**. It would be quite seamless if you see how **chapter 6** ends and **chapter 8** begins.

No one would have noticed. But Joshua did not. God would not. This book is inspired by His Spirit. God has a purpose. Without **chapter 7** we would miss out on God's lesson for Israel, and more importantly, for us today.

Read Joshua 7:1-26.

I. Be Vigilant, because we are all vulnerable.

“Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.” 1 Cor. 10:12

- We are all prone to temptation and sin. We are all capable of disobeying God's Word.
- No one is immune.

“When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” James 1:13-15

- The Word says **WHEN** tempted, not IF. It will come, and very often, at a time when we are least expecting it.
- There are so many lessons for us in this story. When you are on the mountain top be careful, pride and self-interests will trip you up.
- Do not steal from God. What are some ways we steal from God?
- I saw TWO DRIFTS here in **chapter 7** – two drifts away from God.

1. First, we see the soldier's gaining confidence. They had crossed the uncrossable river and overcome the insurmountable Jericho. Ai was next, but Ai was nothing compared to Jericho. It was a small city, with less people.

- **Read verse 3.**
- They were talking about numbers. They were referring to their strength. In the army, when they say “report strength” it means count the number.
- That was their first drift. They started to take their eyes off God and began to look at their strength and capabilities.
- The danger begins when we start to put confidence not in **WHAT GOD CAN DO** but in **WHAT WE CAN** achieve.

2. Then came the second drift – moving away from God’s clear instructions.

- One man, Achan, took what was forbidden by God – the “**devoted things**”.
- The command was given in **Josh 6:18-19**:

And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. 19 But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.”

- No reason was given for this. But it is clear that no one gains materially from these wars personally. Israel must continue to trust God to supply their needs.
- One man decided to go against God’s command. Achan took a beautiful Babylonian coat, 200 shekels of silver (2.26kg), and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels (1 pound).
- **Read Joshua 7:21.**
- The pattern of man’s sinful ways has not changed since the beginning, he saw, he felt (wanted), then he acted (took).
- Adam and Eve had the same experience in the Garden of Eden.

When the woman SAW that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also DESIRABLE for gaining wisdom, she TOOK some and ate it.” Gen. 3:16

- King David had the same experience on the roof of his palace (**2 Sam 11:2-4**).
- He SAW a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and he WANTED her. David sent messengers to GET her.
- The lesson is clear, be vigilant. Be careful what you SEE. Watch what you allow into your mind.
- What we see affects our affections and desires. If we take in garbage regularly, we will end up like trash. Garbage in, garbage out.

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. Prov. 4:23 NLT

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. Philippians 4:8

- Sin is present, God is absent. Israel lost to a smaller city and a weaker enemy.
- Yesterday’s victory did not guarantee today’s, it won’t. Our past victories will not ensure today’s. We need depend on God constantly and stay faithful to Him.

II. Don't compromise, because we/you will lose out.

- You can never gain from compromising. The abundance we experience in life today can only come through the cross, where sin is eradicated.
- Every compromise is a step backwards.
- Listen to what God says in **Joshua 7:11-13**.
- Israel must make right what they have done wrong.
- Tell the people, this is what God says – this is the reason for your defeat – “That which is devoted is AMONG you, O Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove it.” You cannot move on until you resolve this.
- Think about this. If you are feeling stuck in your life, not growing, not moving, you've lost the peace in your heart or the joy of life, ask yourself this. Is there something I'm holding on to, some sin or bad habit or a wrong relationship that I cannot let go of?
- The key is to come back to God and, with all honesty, agree with Him. He knows it. There is nothing to hide.
- Achan brought this punishment to himself. He was not willing to let go.
- GOD SHOWED HIS GRACE. God gives Achan the chance to repent but he did not take it up. I see God's grace amongst the sin and transgression.
- In **verse 13**. God made the announcement: TELL THEM, consecrate yourselves in preparation for TOMORROW...
- They were told, but it's going to be TOMORROW that God starts the sifting. TODAY they are going to consecrate the people.
- Achan has the chance. I believe if he owns up TODAY, he would be among the people “consecrated”. God would have forgiven him. But he did not.
- The next morning, the sifting starts, done according to God's way.
- Joshua begins this long process of identifying the culprit, scanning the nation tribe by tribe, clan by clan, family by family, and then man by man. God revealed the selection at every step.
- He could have cut the whole process short and simply tell Joshua the identity of the man, directly. God did not. Here again we see God using unusual ways and not giving us any explanation.
- But one thing is clear, Achan had the time to repent. This process buys him time. God is merciful.
- Achan was caught. He remained silent throughout the time. God has given him the chance, but he did not take it up.
- Treasure every opportunity we must do the right thing, the good thing, and the righteous thing.

- It never pays to compromise on God's Word. You lose the joy and peace and the blessings of life.
- Let me close with this. You know what God said next? Listen to the tone here:
- **Read Joshua 8:1-2.**
- Take the whole army with you (you underestimated them the first time).
- This time around, you can take the plunder and the livestock for YOURSELVES.
- Just do it God's way, we will be blessed. It pays to heed His Word.

Conclusion

Rise up and take back your victory

Sin will always take you further than you ever intended to go. It will keep you longer than you ever planned to stay. And it will cost you more than you ever expected to pay.

Achan learned this too late. He had time. He had an opportunity. But he held onto what was destroying him instead of surrendering to the God who could restore him.

Imagine for a moment, what it was like to be in Achan's position for a moment.

Church, some of us are doing the same thing. We're holding onto something the Spirit told us to surrender. We're sitting on gold, thinking we've got a secret stash. But it's not a blessing, it's a ticking bomb. You can't keep in step with the Spirit while holding what He told you to let go of."

What about you?

God sees what is hidden. He knows what you're holding onto. And yet, in His mercy, He still calls you back to Him. He still offers you a way out. He is not here to condemn you—He is here to restore you!

But make no mistake, **you cannot move forward while holding onto the very thing that is keeping you in defeat.**

Look at Israel—once they removed the sin from their midst, God led them back into battle, and this time, **they won.**

Your failure does not have to define you. Your past does not have to cripple you. Your sin does not have to be your end.

But you have a choice to make.

Will you hold onto your sin and suffer defeat?

Or will you humble yourself before God, confess, and step back into the victory He has waiting for you?

Get up! Make it right! Step forward! The victory is still yours—but only if you fight God's way.

This is your moment. This is your chance. Don't waste it.

If there's gold buried in your tent—it's time to dig it up and lay it down.

What's keeping you from fully walking in step with the Spirit?

Whatever it is, it's not worth your peace. Not worth your calling. Not worth your future.

Surrender it today... before it costs more than you're willing to pay.