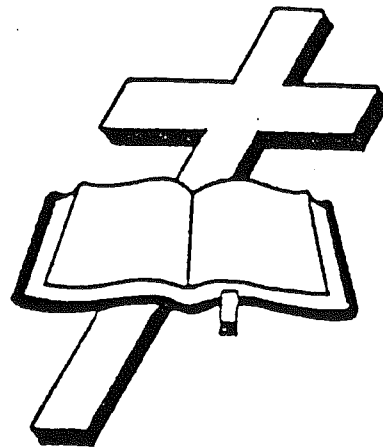


MINISTRY INSIDE THE TENT

(Secrets From Inside The Tent Of Achan)
Joshua 7:1-27



CONQUER THE ENEMY WITHIN:

- ◆ The Defeat Of Israel (Vs. 1-5)
- ◆ The Dismay Of Joshua (Vs. 6-9)
- ◆ The Directive Of God (Vs. 10-15)
- ◆ The Disclosure Of Achan (Vs. 16-27)

“You Cannot Stand Before Your Enemies Until You Remove The Sin From Among You”
(Joshua 7:13)

Bill Kirk

“ACHAN, AI AND THE TENT”

Text: Joshua 7:1-26; 8:24-26

Subject: “Let God Come In The Tent”

Introduction

- In chapter 1, **“The Spirit Of Courage”** (How God pours into your heart a courageous spirit to march forward).
- In chapter 2, **“The Legacy Of Rahab”** (How God saved a harlot and used her for His glory).
- In chapter 3, **“Crossing Over Jordan”** (How the Ark of The Covenant) (The presence chamber of God, makes all the difference in your life).
- In chapter 4, **“Ministry At Gilgal”** (How the memorial stones still speak faith to us today).
- In chapter 5, **“The Captain Of The Host”** (How the battle is the Lords so rest well).
- In chapter 6, **“The Jericho Walls Come Down”** (How faith, obedience and absolute surrender lead you from victory to victory).
- In chapter 7, **“The Defeat At AI”** (How Achan reveals to us the weakness of the flesh and the power of God’s Grace).

(Our Theme In Joshua Is Chapter 1:9)

“Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest”.

- ◆ Joshua is a book of new beginnings.
- ◆ It’s a book of conquest, battles, invasion and progress.
- ◆ It covers issues that face every one of us.
- ◆ It’s a book for overcomers (people who want to grow, change, make progress and excel in Christian living).

(Joshua Was Called To Do 3 Things):

- #1. Move forward into the Promise Land.
- #2. Defeat every enemy that opposes forward progress.
- #3. Divide the inheritance that God had provided for His people.

(But What About Me Pastor?)

- #1. Joshua reveals how to say no to the old life (in the wilderness).
- #2. Joshua reveals how to say yes to the new life (in Canaan).

Question?

- ◆ How many of you want to keep marching forward in your Christian life?
- ◆ How many of you want to live victorious over the world, the flesh and the devil?
- ◆ How many of you want, not one thing, to hinder you from growing in the Lord?
- ◆ How many of you want to live transparent before God, void of all pretense and all pretending?

(Notice Our Setting In Chapter 7)

- #1. Joshua chapter 6 ends with a glorious note of victory in (v. 27)
“So the Lord was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country.

#2. Joshua chapter 7 opens with that little word “But” and signals that things are about to change.

(Remember)

#3. Only three opposing enemies withstood Israel in the Promised Land; Jericho, Ai and the Gibeonites:

- ◆ These 3 enemies wanted to hinder Israel’s progress.
- ◆ They sought to rob Israel of joy and rest.
- ◆ They stood in the way of marching forward.

(But Isn’t It Interesting)

- ◆ That the only battle that Israel lost in possessing the land was at Ai,
- ◆ And, the only defeat came, not from without, but from within.

(Pastor, What’s The Big Deal?)

The Big Deal Is:

#1. Joshua 7 and 8 represent the flesh nature of every believer.

#2. The sin of Achan was sin within the camp.

#3. The Lord recorded this to reveal to us that the worst enemy that you can ever have is yourself.

- ◆ It is confirmation again that an enemy in the heart is worse than 10,000 in the field.

(and)

- ◆ I can only make progress with God, to the extent that I deal with sin within my own heart.

(But Pastor)

- ◆ “I want to hear a positive Gospel this morning”
(this is a positive Gospel).
- ◆ “I need to be encouraged and built up”
(this does encourage and build up).
- ◆ “I desire victory over my carnal flesh nature”
(this does lead to victory over self nature).
- ◆ “I don’t want to repeat the same sins over and over again”.
(this moves us beyond shallow medicine).
- ◆ “I don’t want to deal with the symptoms and surface stuff I see in me”.
(this moves us to the root of all behavior).

Illustration

- ◆ Alexander The Great was probably the greatest military genius to ever lead armies in victory.
- ◆ Before the age of 35 he had conquered the world.
- ◆ But Alexander The Great died a drunkard.
- ◆ He could conquer the world but couldn’t conquer Alexander The Great.
- ◆ He didn’t lose his battles from an enemy without; he lost his battle from the enemy within.

(Joshua 7 Is A Revelation)

- ◆ Of, how to conquer the enemy within

(This Morning: Secrets From Inside The Tent)

I. The Defeat Of Israel (Vs. 1-5)

- ◆ In v.2, Joshua sent men from Jericho to spy out the city of Ai.
- ◆ In v.3, the spies returned with a positive and confident report.

- #1. "We don't need the whole army to win this one".
- #2. "Let the rest of Israel stay back and chill out".
- #3. "There are only a few to deal with in Ai".
- #4. "Since we won in Jericho, Ai will be a piece of cake".

(After All)

- ◆ "Ai is a smaller city than Jericho".
- ◆ "Ai is in the hill country only 15 miles from Jericho".
- ◆ "Ai can be taken with just 3,000 soldiers".

(And What Happens?)

(v. 4) "Israel ends up fleeing from Ai". (v. 5) "36 Jewish soldiers are slain in defeat".

(Why Was Israel Defeated?)

- #1. They trusted in the past victory at Jericho.
- #2. They didn't seek God for His enablement.
- #3. They never recognized their own weakness.
- #4. They allowed sin to destroy them from within.
- #5. They thought they could win in the flesh, but Israel was defeated by the flesh.

(2 Little Secrets In This Defeat) That Speak To Us All

In this first battle at Ai you'll notice:

- #1. That Israel never went back to Gilgal which was their camp of refreshment.
(They went on the momentum of Jericho's win)
- #2. Israel never took the Ark along (the presence chamber of God) as they had in Jordan and in Jericho.

(In Other Words)

- #1. We can fail by going on the momentum of past victories (but it's foolish).
- #2. We can fail by not asking the Lord to go with us.

II. The Dismay Of Joshua (Vs. 6-9)

Question: What happened when Israel's heart melted?

Answer: (v. 6) Joshua went from magnified in (6:27) to mortified in one short battle.

- ◆ In (v. 6), he sings the blues and falls on his face.
- ◆ In (v.7), he moans and murmurs foolish words, "God, why did you bring us over here?"
- ◆ In (v.8), he blames God for the reproach and defeat at the hands of Ai.
- ◆ In (v.9), he appeals to God and God's name; he's concerned about the glory of God for Israel.

(In Other Words)

- ◆ Joshua pours out his heart in prayer because things didn't go as he had planned.

Question: Have you had any unfulfilled expectations?

Question: Have you been surprised by an unannounced setback?

Question: Has something brought you to the end of yourself like Joshua?

III. The Directive Of The Lord (Vs. 10-15)

Question: How did the Lord respond to Joshua in prayer?

Answer: Very specifically in (v. 10)

“Joshua, get up, why are you lying upon your face?”

(In Other Words)

#1. “Quit whining over the consequences of losing, I want to get to the root cause”.

(and)

#2. “You’re praying at the wrong time Joshua: You’re praying after you’ve been defeated instead of praying before you ever sent out the soldiers.”

(“Joshua Get Up”)

- ◆ “It’s not time to moan, pray, pout or lie down”
- ◆ “It’s time to act and see change take place”.

(Look At The Lord’s Directive)

- ◆ In (v. 10), “Get up Joshua, Get up now”.
- ◆ In (v. 11), “Israel has sinned and stolen what belongs to me”.
- ◆ In (v. 12), “You can’t stand before your enemies, and neither will I be with you anymore until (until what?) until you destroy the accursed from among you”.
- ◆ In (v. 13), “Up, sanctify the people and announce this:
“You cannot stand before your enemies until you remove the sin from among you”.
- ◆ In (v.14), “Tomorrow morning there’s going to be an assembly gathering to find the guilty party”.
- ◆ In (v. 15), “Since you can’t see evil within your own ranks, I’ll show you myself who is causing folly in Israel”.

Question: Do you think Achan got any sleep on this night before his exposure?

Question: Do you think the Lord was giving Achan on last night to repent and come clean?

Question: Do you think God’s heart was bleeding with mercy as long as He could wait?

(Pastor What’s The Big Deal Here?)

I Corinthians 11:31

“For if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged”

(In Other Words)

- ◆ If I fail to judge myself (or repent of my sin) then I force God to judge my sin.
- ◆ If I don’t deal with it, then I force God to deal with it.
- ◆ If I fail to address what needs to be addressed, I’m setting myself up for impending surprises.

IV. The Disclosure Of Achan (Vs. 16-27)

(Notice God’s methodical exposure in v. 17)

- #1. The Lord singled out the tribe of Judah.
- #2. The Lord then singled out the family of the Zerahites.
- #3. The Lord then singled out the household of Zabdi.
- #4. The Lord then singled out the man called Achan. (v. 18)

(Notice Joshua's Passionate Words)

(v. 19) "Tell me Achan, what have you done?"

(v. 20) "I have sinned against the Lord"

(v. 21) "I saw, I coveted and I hid the Lord's silver in my tent"

(Roman's 6:23 Is Fulfilled)

In (v. 22), Messengers run to Achan's tent.

In (v. 23), They bring the evidence forward.

In (v. 24), Achan's whole family is taken to Achor.

In (v. 25), Achan and family suffered the consequences of unrepented sin (death).

In (v. 26), The Lords anger was stopped when sin was finally judged.

Question : But pastor how did Achan steal from God and lie about it?

Question: Why did Achan suffer the consequences of sin?

Question: Why couldn't Israel go forward in victory with unconfessed sin?

Question: How does Achan speak to me in my walk with God?

Question: How does his example warn me and alert me?

(Hear The Steps To Default)

#1. The snare of "Curiosity"

- ◆ Achan's first mistake was to look and look again at the spoils he would take.
- ◆ Maybe he couldn't help the first look, but his eyes wandered back into territory off limits.
- ◆ Achan forgot that what enters the eye sinks into the heart. (I repeat)

Question: Are your eyes looking at any forbidden material?

#2. The snare of "Compromise"

- ◆ In (v.21) Achan called the treasures he stole "the spoils".
- ◆ They were not the spoils; they were the Lord's portion dedicated to Him.
- ◆ But Achan compromised in calling it what it was to justify his disobedience.

Question: Have you compromised in any way, shape or form?

#3. The snare of "Covetousness"

- ◆ Achan failed to thank God for the victory in Jericho.
- ◆ Instead, he entertained thoughts of keeping what belonged to God.
- ◆ Achan's insecurity with God caused him to sin with excessive greed.

Question: Do you have anything that belongs to another?

#4. The snare of "Covering Up"

- ◆ (v.21) "I hid in my tent the silver of the Lord".
- ◆ He forgot that God sees everything and knows everything.
- ◆ He covered up what God wanted to dig up so that progress could be made.
- ◆ He ignored some absolutes we must never forget:

#1. Numbers 32:23 "Be sure your sin will find you out"

#2. Son of Solomon 2:15 "The little foxes spoil the vine"

#3. Galatians 5:9 "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"

Question: Is there anything questionable we are covering up

(that needs to surface and be confessed and forsaken?)

(Remember)

- ◆ Just a little sugar in the tank will stall a car.
- ◆ Just a little hole in the boat will sink it.
- ◆ Just a little poison in the bloodstream will stop the heart.

**Last Night I Saw Some Things
(I'd Never Seen Before)**

- #1. Concealing sin does not erase it?
(Achan hid the stuff but couldn't hide his sin)
- #2. Sin will never allow you to suffer alone!
(Achan's whole family (and Israel) suffered because of his own sin).
- #3. The consequences of sin may be delayed but can never be ignored!
(There was a season of time that seemed to tell Achan "you got away with it".)
- #4. What is committed in secret will be manifested in public!
(Achan sinned alone, but the whole assembly would eventually know it).
- #5. The sting of sin is sharper than its pleasure!
(Achan's pain far outweighed his pleasure).
- #6. To delay in repenting is to hasten God's anger!
(While Achan delayed and covered up, the anger of the Lord was kindled).
- #7. To conceal any known sin, is to lose the help of God in battle!
(v. 12) "...I won't be with you anymore until...(until what?)...until you destroy the sin that is among you".

Illustration

- ◆ Money missing from the soda machines at the old E.B.I. Campus at Green Lane, Pennsylvania.
- ◆ Someone was stealing the coins and no one could catch the culprit.
- ◆ Then one morning in chapel, the refiner's fire came in and the Holy Spirit descended.
- ◆ A student stood to his feet and said, "I am Achan, it's me that stole what belongs to God". (He sat down).
- ◆ Then another stood, and another, and another and repentance led to revival and a clearing of the record! (Chapel all day, tears of repentance, hearts cleansed and changed) by God's grace.

Question: Pastor, will God give me a second chance?

Answer: Joshua 8:24 "Israel returned to Ai again (the second time) and 12,000 of the enemy were slain in battle (God honored those who were transparent).

(Why?)

- ◆ Because I can never live victorious in battle as long as I cling to forbidden things.
- ◆ Because when I agree with God and come clean, he gets to the root, blesses my repentance and leads me forward in victory again!

(Proverbs 28:13)

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy"

(I John 1:9)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness".

AMEN!

Bill Kirk, Pastor