

Joshua 7:10-26 – Dominion requires Purity II

Maclaren, TSK, Bezuyen, HebrewLexicon, Gill, Trapp, Geneva, JFB, Poole, Clarke, Henry, INT, Calvin?

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: We have already seen the **Sin of Achan – which was sacrilege and a corruption of God’s worship**, the **Suffering of Israel – 36 died, 36 families mourned and Israel fled from their weak enemies**, and the **Supplication of Joshua – which had many complaints**. Today we will see how purity was established in the church.

Our headings are:

The Summons: Summons for the Wicked

The Sentence: Death by Public Stoning.

Our goals are: That **you will see how important it is for the church to be pure, especially in worship, that you will see if anything is hindering its purity, and equipped by God’s Word and Holy Spirit, that you work will to remove any hindrance to purity.**

The Summons – Searching for the Wicked

10 So the LORD said to Joshua: "**Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face?**
11 "Israel has sinned, and **they have also transgressed My covenant** which I commanded them 违背了我吩咐他们的约定 For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff.¹² "Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you. 13 "Get up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel: "There is an accursed thing 当毁灭的物 in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you."

1. The Lord ordered Joshua to stop praying. You get the sense that God was irritated 恼怒 with Joshua. He said: “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face.”

2. Why does God stop Joshua from prayer? Everything is beautiful in its season, and the season for prayer was passed, so God stopped him. The truth is, sometimes prayer can be a hindrance, like when someone keeps praying for a spouse doesn't spend any time looking for a spouse, or when someone who prays to be an apologist, but doesn't take time to study the Bible. **So why did God stop Joshua from prayer? Joshua had other work to do.** God could have stopped Joshua because he had made many bad accusations and insinuations 暗讽 about God. But gracious God didn't do it. (Isn't it good that sometimes God ignores your prayers?) In this case, God **ordered Joshua to search out for a sinner within the camp** to purify worship again. Joshua never considered this in his prayer.

3. Isn't this very much like what the Apostle Paul said to the church in Corinth on a number of occasions:

a. At one time people were dying (1Corinthians 11) because of their abuse of the Lord's Supper and the Love Feast attached to it. Hear the Apostle Paul's stinging rebuke:

1Corinthians 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you. He called on the church to wake up and deal with the prevailing 现行 sin.

b. Another time in Corinth there was a man who had taken his father's wife. Remember Apostle Paul's words:

1Cor 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 **deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh**, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 你们不知道一点面酵能使全团面发起来吗

God's holiness is not to be trifled with! You must get rid of the sin in the camp!

4. Then God warned Joshua that he could not expect to find any blessing until the matter was dealt with completely. Why? Sin separates man from God. Sin hinders worship. Corrupted worship brings curses.

14 'In the morning therefore you shall be **brought according to your tribes**. And it shall be that the tribe which the LORD takes shall come according to families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man.

5. Then God gave directions how to find the sin and the sinner. God didn't have to do this, but he is a gracious God.

15 'Then it shall be that he who is taken with the accursed thing 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 a **disgraceful thing 耻辱的事** in Israel.'"

6. Then God gave instructions on how to remove the sin from their midst after the sinner was found. This was the only way Israel could be restored to favor with him. This makes it clear that Achan's sin was not simply stealing, as some argue – far from it. It was sacrilege 褻瀆

The Sentence – Death by Public Stoning

16 So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. 17 He brought the clan of Judah, and he took the family of the Zarahites; and he brought the family of the Zarahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. 18 Then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

1. Following God's instructions, God identified the guilty man, by his providence 护理 to Joshua and the whole congregation. Exactly how God made this known, we do not know. Maybe it was done by casting lots or by the Urim or Thummim. What was sure, was that God clearly identified the guilty one. And Achan was condemned!

Ecclesiastes 10:20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought; Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom; For a bird of the air may carry your voice, And a **bird in flight may tell the matter**.

19 Now Joshua said to Achan, "**My son**, I beg you, **give glory to the LORD** God of Israel, and **make confession** to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me."

2. Before the sentence was carried out, Joshua gave Achan, his spiritual son, the chance to confess his sins and make his life right with God. Joshua did not call him "fool" or "raca," but he called him "son." **Joshua did not hate Achan.** He probably thought of his own sins. Punishment of God's children must not be viewed as vengeance 复仇. This was why Joshua was so calm. Punishment was justice and justice gave glory to God.

3. Achan's confession would have been a great benefit to the covenant people as they witnessed it. They would have seen the graciousness of God and they would have been witnesses to the seriousness of sins against God – especially sins against his worship.

20 And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: 21 "When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

4. Achan confessed his sins and brought glory to God and good to the covenant community 群体 He confessed that he lusted for and had stolen a beautiful Babylonian garment (They were quite desirable, and exquisitely 精致 and colorfully made), some silver, and literally, a "tongue" of gold. (If only that "tongue of gold" could talk!) Can you imagine how sorry he was for his sin against God? Can you imagine how he wished he had been contented with his clothes that God had given to him and that he had trusted God concerning his future? Could it be that he thought of Adam and Eve watching over Abel's grave and wondering why they had rebelled and eaten the forbidden fruit and brought death into the world? You see, brothers and sisters, sins have deadly consequences and when done, they cannot be undone. But it is our prayer that as we witness people being removed from the church through discipline, that they will repent of their sins and be restored. And it does happen!

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and **they ran to the tent**; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it. 23 And they took them from the midst of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.

5. Then notice Joshua's careful demand for evidence. God pointed out the guilty one. Achan confessed his guilt. Others searched out his tent to see if what he had stolen was there. And notice their zeal 热心 for justice. **They ran!**

24 Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they **brought them to the Valley of Achor**. 25 And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day." So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. 26 Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. **So the LORD turned from the fierceness**

of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.

6. Then Joshua ordered the execution of this impurity in the Valley of Achor (Valley of Trouble)

from Israel. He ordered the execution of all that Achan had (family and animals) for sacrilege – taking what belonged to the holy God. The garment he had stolen was burnt...even the gold that he has stolen from God. Did God forgive Achan for his sin? Absolutely. But forgiveness by God does not mitigate the punishment you deserve in this world.

Proverbs 28:13 He who covers his sins will not prosper 遮掩自己过犯的, 必不亨通 But whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy.

7. Why did Joshua execute all Achan's family with him? No doubt Joshua did this at the direction of God. Man's justice forbids him from executing the child for the sins of the father.

Deuteronomy 24:16 "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, **nor shall the children be put to death for their fathers**; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

God does do that, however. He puts the sins of the parents upon the children to the 3rd and 4th generation.

Numbers 14:18 'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the **children to the third and fourth generation.**'

8. Now I know that some people balk at the thought that God that demanded such severe justice.

They are upset at the destruction of the men, women, and children of Canaan, and they are even more seriously upset that that Achan was executed for stealing. And they are even more upset that his family was executed with him. Was God wrong to do this? Was the writer of Joshua not telling the truth? The truth is, God is a God who loves justice, but one sick sheep taints a flock – especially with this disease. A drop of ricin 蓖麻毒素 can kill many. And the sins of the father always hurt the family. Positively, **consider the benefits of this judgment later. Imagine a child walking by the Jordan** River 75 years later and saw the pile of stones there. Imagine him then asking his father: Why are those stones there? Can you imagine how helpful that would be to the child? What a priceless visual lesson!

9. Isn't it the reason the church has the keys to the kingdom? We call on people to give glory to God.

And when there is sin, we move to remove the unrepentant 不悔改 sinner from the church.

Matthew 16:19 "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

In doing this we bring glory to God and good for the people in the covenant. Can you see the danger if your elders compromised 妥协 here and refused to call people out who are living in sin? Suppose they tell baptized members that they don't have to make profession of faith? How harmful!

Conclusion:

Through finding the impurity and destroying the impurity **outside of the camp**, Israel was restored to God's favor and were able to go about their business of conquering the land for Jesus Christ. There is a sweet similarity here. Your Joshua, the **Jesus Christ, took the impurity of the world** so that his people could be restored to God and then set about to conquer the world. (Mt 28:19). And remember these words: Hebrews 13:12: Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, **suffered outside the gate**. This is why you now have hope, even in the Valley of Trouble: Isaiah 65:10 Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, And the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, **For My people who have sought Me. What a reversal!**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Having been restored to the Father through Jesus, and through whom you can now properly worship, keep your hearts, home, and church pure. When you do, you can advance Christ's kingdom. How can you stay pure? Stay close to Jesus and listen to him and experience his love. The one who is satisfied at home is less likely to go wandering looking for love. Christ is your all in all. He meets your greatest need 最大的需求 now and has reserved heaven for you.

Finally: If you find something missing in your life-that you are not satisfied with all that you have-the thing you are missing is peace with God. That peace only comes through Jesus Christ. If you call on God and ask him for true peace, he will give it to you because Jesus paid for peace for all those who desire it.