



SCRIPTURE

Joshua 7

OVERVIEW

After such a tremendous victory at Jericho, Joshua chapter 7 marks a sudden shift in the narrative for the Israelites, a detour off the winning path and a taste of their first failure and casualties in war at Ai. Ai was a smaller, less renowned city and the next stop in the strategic route the Israelites had chosen, and defeating them was not only vital to the conquest of the entire Promised Land, but was also assumed that it would be easy and quick (vs 2-3),

But Israel is defeated and humiliated at Ai. What went wrong? God shines a light and exposes the fact that sin had entered the camp! Achan had disobeyed God by taking some of the forbidden spoils of war, and his sin had tainted the entire nation – Israel had sinned (vs 1).

The consequence is severe, and we see that the Lord's anger burned against not just Achan but the people of Israel. Achan brought trouble on Israel and the Lord brought judgement on his unrepented sin. The call to faith (a resilient faith) is also one to holiness, and God's standards haven't changed.

From the account of Chapter 7, we see that:

1. Sin offends God
2. Sin compromises and corrupts us
3. Sin is no secret to God
4. Sin makes us more vulnerable to the enemy
5. Sin affects others besides you
6. Sin is dealt with through confession and repentance

The concluding message of the chapter is strong and clear there are consequences to sin, eg. fractured relationships, hurt and pain etc and God desires us to live in repentance when we fall into sin.

DISCUSSION

1. Why is tolerating sin (living in sin) such a big deal to God?
2. What does it mean to deal with sin in our lives and to walk in holiness? How have you been doing that? (share as an encouragement to the group).
3. How does sin affect others besides ourselves? Why should this matter to us in our walk with God?
4. Read 1 John 1:9. What encouragement can you draw from this? And how does this change your attitude to dealing with sin?

PRAYER

Read Psalm 139:23-24 and spend some time in reflection and prayer, for repentance that restores our relationship with God.