

Joshua 7:1–3, 10-12, 19-21, 25-26 (ESV) But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel. ² Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, “Go up and spy out the land.” And the men went up and spied out Ai. ³ And they returned to Joshua and said to him, “Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few.”... ¹⁰ The Lord said to Joshua, “Get up! Why have you fallen on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings. ¹² Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you..... ¹⁹ Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.” ²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, “Truly I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and this is what I did: ²¹ when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”..... ²⁵ And Joshua said, “Why did you bring trouble on us? The Lord brings trouble on you today.” And all Israel stoned him with stones. They burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. ²⁶ And they raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his burning anger. Therefore, to this day the name of that place is called the Valley of Achor (Trouble.)

Life Principle: Secret Sins And “Small” Sins Are Not Safe From God’s Judgment.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 (NLT) ¹⁴God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad.

Psalms 90:8 (ESV) You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.

Isaiah 29:15 (ESV) Ah, you who hide deep from the Lord your counsel, whose deeds are in the dark, and who say, “Who sees us? Who knows us?”

Hebrews 4:13 (ESV) And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Life Principle: Our Personal Sins Have A Very Negative Impact On Other People, Including Fellow Christians And Our Families.

Joshua 9:3–7, 12-19, 22-23 (ESV) ³ But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, ⁴ they on their part acted with cunning and went and made ready provisions and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, ⁵ with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes. And all their provisions were dry and crumbly. ⁶ And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant country, so now make a covenant with us.” ⁷ But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?”..... ¹² Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey on the day we set out to come to you, but now, behold,

it is dry and crumbly. ¹³ These wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they have burst. And these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey.” ¹⁴ So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the Lord. ¹⁵ And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore to them. ¹⁶ At the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and that they lived among them. ¹⁷ And the people of Israel set out and reached their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁸ But the people of Israel did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. Then all the congregation murmured against the leaders. ¹⁹ But all the leaders said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel, and now we may not touch them.” ²² Joshua summoned them, and he said to them, “Why did you deceive us, saying, ‘We are very far from you,’ when you dwell among us? ²³ Now therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall never be anything but servants, cutters of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.”

Life Principle: We Need To Always Seek The Lord’s Counsel Because Every Decision Has The Potential To Be A Bad Decision.

Proverbs 2:6 (ESV) For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

Proverbs 3:5-7a. (ESV) Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. ⁷ Be not wise in your own eyes;...

Jeremiah 10:21 (ESV) For the shepherds (Leaders) are stupid and do not inquire of the Lord; therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock is scattered.

Life Principle: You Don't Make A Bad Decision Better By Making Another Bad Decision.

2 Samuel 21:1-2. (ESV) Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year. And David sought the face of the Lord. And the Lord said, “There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death.” ² So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not of the people of Israel but of the remnant of the Amorites. Although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had sought to strike them down in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.

Psalms 15:1-4. O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill? ² He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart; ³ who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend; ⁴ in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but who honors those who fear the Lord; who swears to his own hurt and does not change;

Life Principle: God Can Redeem A Bad Decision So That He Brings Good Out Of It.