

Joshua #13 17067-A August 20, 2017

**Joshua 7-8
Spiritual Treason**

I. Jesus taught us to fear and trust the Father in the midst of spiritual tension. Matt.10:26-33

- A. The Truth of the Lord will come out.
- B. The Fear of the Lord is good (prov.1:7; 9:10)
- C. The Plan of the Lord is gracious. Sparrows and Sons
- D. *We see all of this in Joshua 7-8*

II. Joshua: Crucial in the story of redemption for three reasons. It tells us...

- A. How God keeps a promise to Abraham. Gen.12:1-2
 - 1. There would be a people and a land.
 - 2. This people would have a geographical location: Canaan.
- B. How God fulfills a threat against the Amorites. Gen.15:16; Lev.18
 - 1. Their depravity ripened for some 400 years. (Albright quote)
- C. How God evicts the demon gods of Canaan. 1 Cor.10:20
 - 1. Baal, Molech, Chemosh, these were demon-idols that actually influenced the entire Canaanite society toward evil. Lev.18
 - 2. The Lord told Israel to destroy the shrines and cult centers and all people who worshipped them (everybody in the Canaanite culture)

III. The Paradigm for Spiritual Victory: Jericho.

A. The Lord is actively in charge. 5:13-15

- 1. They can't start or progress without him.

B. Israel's "strategy" is to

- 1. Listen to Him.
- 2. Trust Him.
- 3. Do what he commands.
 - a) Destroy the demonology
 - b) Don't touch the evil
 - c) Save Rahab and her family

C. But Israel broke faith with the Lord...

IV. The Danger of Spiritual Treason: right during the victory at Jericho. Chapter 7

A. Summary indictment – Israel breaks faith. 1

- 1. Israel broke faith, Acted unfaithfully = dealt treacherously, violating the covenant with regard to the devoted things – stole stuff from Jericho.

B. Discipline: Achan's treason affects everybody. 2-26

- 1. Disorienting defeat. 2-5
 - a) Not that big a city
- 2. Angry intercession. 6-9
 - a) Joshua is disoriented, confused, angry, and afraid.
 - b) We're all going to die!!!
 - c) *The defeat has made Joshua see everything only from earthly perspective.*
- 3. Firm response. 10-15
 - a) Joshua! Get a Grip!
 - b) It's Israel's disobedience, not My faithlessness that's the problem.
- 4. Guided Investigation. (!)
 - a) By lot they found Achan
 - b) This would have taken time. Why didn't Achan come forward?

5. Required Execution.

- a) *Note that Achan did not actually “repent” but rather waited until he was caught and then admitted.*
- b) The ‘admission’ was neither willing nor repentant.
 - (1) why did he wait until they were at his door
- c) But the execution would have had to happen either way.
 - (1) But even if it had been repentant, the execution would have had to happen. This was High Treason during a war at the most important battle of the war. No way could God let this go.

C. Victory. A do-over. Chapter 8:1-2

- 1. Do not be fearful or discouraged! 1-2
 - a) Forward with God, now that the sin is dealt with.

V. Questions that open up this passage for us:

A. Why this whole sordid episode? The Lord could have stopped it early on. Why didn’t he?

- 1. *To demonstrate that faith, not ethnicity, is the real issue.*
 - a) The Canaanites were being driven out of Canaan not because of their race, but because of their unrepentant evil. Lev.18
- 2. *To impress upon Israel their responsibility to stay loyal to YHWH*
 - a) This is why they re-dedicate themselves to the Lord in 8:30-35
 - b) They don’t have a free pass to do anything they want.
- 3. *To show that obedience is the real proof of faith/ trust. John 3:18-21. Jas.2:14*
 - a) *Only those who obey believe, and only those who believe obey. Bonhoeffer*
 - b) Rahab defected from Canaan and came to the Lord.
 - (1) She came into the light.
 - c) Achan defected from the Lord and became a Canaanite.
 - (1) He went into the darkness.
 - (2) By his actions he demonstrated that he didn’t actually trust YHWH at all.

B. Why the big investigation? Why not just finger Achan directly?

- 1. *Because in a covenant community, the people have a responsibility to keep faith with each other. 1 Cor. 5:9-13*
- 2. *We owe it to each other to try to help each other not to sin, to repent, to come into the light. Gal.6:1*

C. Why the violent judgment? (couldn’t Achan just return the stuff?)

- 1. Because Achan committed High Treason against God and Israel.
 - a) This was not a “normal” sin. It was blatant, knowledgeable (high handed) repudiation of the Lord’s command (only recently reiterated to the whole group)
 - b) AND *stealing from God Himself* (since Jericho was under the ban)
 - c) AND it was in the most crucial battle of the Canaanite Campaign.
 - d) In our own country, when capital crimes occur, no amount of confession or repentance removes the need for the punishment.
- 2. Because his whole family was implicated.
 - a) Deut 24:16 says family members shall not be put to death for each others’ sins. What about this?
 - b) They were in on it.
 - c) Our idolatries drag out kids into the vortex of our vices.
- 3. *Don’t fall in love with what God hates ...*

D. Why the *immediate* encouragement? 8:1-2

1. Because the atonement happened!
 - a) The Lord's wrath was turned away by the death of Achan. 26
2. **Note how God deals with Israel as one person. Ex.4:22**
 - a) He gave them victory (Jordan, Jericho)
 - b) They failed (as so often)
 - c) He disciplined them. (loss at Ai)
 - d) He atoned for them. (Achan)
 - e) He gave them victory (Ai again)
3. The Guilty Person Paid—that is the only way it really works!
 - a) The curse of the Law was poured out on Achan, the guilty party **Gal.3:13.**
 - b) **Herem is the direct application of God's holiness to unrepentant human sin without an atonement or a mediator.**
4. The gospel is that God in Christ became Achan for us.
 - a) He really truly took the blame for our sin so that we could walk with him.
 - b) No Pretending! The Father blamed the Son totally and completely for your sin.
 - c) Don't pretend to be forgiven or pretend to be a disciple.

E. 1 John 1:8-2:2