

Joshua 7

FIRST DAY: Introduction

In our increasingly permissive culture, people fail to realize the devastating effects of sin. Sin not only adversely affects the sinner, but also the sinner's family, friends, community, and nation. Paul related the pervasive nature of sin to leaven when he asked the Corinthians, *Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?* (1 Corinthians 5:6). This principle is clearly illustrated in the story of Achan. Before the conquest of Jericho, Joshua warned the people, *And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse and trouble it* (Joshua 6:18). Achan thought he could disobey God, hide his sin, and still enrich his life. He learned the hard way that sin exacts a heavy toll on the sinner and affects even innocent people. As you study Joshua 7, let Achan's story move you to a greater understanding of the exceeding wickedness of sin.

*Ask God to make you more aware of the danger of sin
and increase your appreciation for God's forgiveness
of your sins through Jesus Christ.*

SECOND DAY: Read Joshua 7:1–6

1. After the Lord had given the *children of Israel* victory over Jericho, what *trespass* was committed? Joshua 7:1a
 - a. Link this with Joshua 6:18 to comment on the deliberate nature of this *trespass*.

b. How did the Lord respond? Joshua 7:1b

(1) What does this convey to you about sin?

2. Following the battle of Jericho, *Joshua sent men to spy out* the city of Ai (Joshua 7:2). Cite their report from Joshua 7:3.

a. Flush from victory over Jericho, the Israelites failed to seek God's battle plan. Link this with Proverbs 16:18 and share your thoughts.

3. Describe what happened when Israel attacked Ai. Joshua 7:4–5a

a. From Joshua 7:5b–6, record and remark on the reaction of:

(1) The *people* (verse 5b)

(2) Joshua and the *elders* (verse 6)

b. How might this outcome have been different had they sought the Lord?

4. How has today's lesson ministered to you about the importance of seeking the Lord? See Proverbs 3:5–6.

THIRD DAY: Read Joshua 7:7–13

1. After their surprising defeat at Ai, Joshua cried out to the Lord. From Joshua 7:7–9, note and comment on Joshua's:

a. Cry (verse 7)

b. Concern (verses 8–9a)

c. Conclusion (verse 9b)

(1) How did Achan's sin affect Joshua's faith?

2. In Joshua 7:10, God told Joshua, *Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face?* The Lord then revealed that He hadn't failed to keep His promise to Israel, but there was a specific reason for the defeat at Ai. From Joshua 7:11–13, identify and remark on:

a. The sin (verse 11)

(1) Notice that God attributed Achan's sin to the whole nation of Israel. Connect this with Galatians 5:9 and Hebrews 12:15b and share your thoughts.

b. The consequences (verse 12)

(1) What do you find most sobering about these consequences?

c. The remedy (verses 12c, 13)

(1) To *sanctify* means *to set apart*. In order to gain victory over sin, why is it essential to sanctify yourself to God? See Romans 12:1–2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24.

3. From your study today, cite the effects of Achan's sin upon:
 - a. Joshua
 - b. The Canaanites and inhabitants of the land
 - c. The children of Israel
4. Share your greatest takeaway from your lesson today.

FOURTH DAY: Read Joshua 7:14–21

1. After revealing Israel's sin, God prescribed the specific way He would deal with the guilty. Use Joshua 7:14–15 to describe this.
2. From Joshua 7:16–18, trace the process by which Achan was exposed as the culprit.
 - a. Why do you think God chose this process to expose him?

b. Notice that throughout the duration of this process, Achan never came forward. What does this convey to you about Achan's disposition?

(1) Link this with Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:9. What do you see?

3. Use your own words to write Joshua's exhortation to Achan. Joshua 7:19

a. What can you infer from the way Joshua addressed Achan?

4. From Joshua 7:20–21, follow the downward spiral of Achan's sin.

a. Link this with James 1:14–15. Write your insights here.

(1) Share an example you have personally observed of this sinful progression.

- b. What would you identify as the root of Achan's sin?
5. How would you use what you studied today to warn someone about the danger of sin?

FIFTH DAY: Read Joshua 7:22–26

1. According to Joshua 7:22–23, what followed Achan's confession?
 - a. Why do you think it was necessary for the accursed things to be shown to all the children of Israel ?
2. Having exposed Achan's sin, the Israelites brought *all that he had* to the Valley of Achor for judgment. From Joshua 7:24, list all of Achan's possessions.
3. From Joshua 7:25a, print Joshua's last words to Achan.
4. Describe the scene presented in Joshua 7:25b–26.

a. What do you find most tragic about this scene?

5. Notice that Achan's sin led to the death of *thirty-six men* (Joshua 7:5) and the loss of all that he had. How does this speak to you concerning sin?

6. Why do you think sin is such a serious issue to God?

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. From your study this week, note the devastating effects of Achan's sin upon:

a. The army of Israel (verse 5)

b. Joshua's faith (verse 7)

c. The enemies of Israel (verse 9)

d. The children of Israel (verse 12)

e. Achan's family (verse 24)

2. Use this week's study to contrast the outcome of Rahab's faith (Joshua 2:9–15, 6:25) with the outcome of Achan's disobedience.

3. From Ephesians 2:12–13, note how it is possible that we, as sinners, are still able to possess God's promises.