**THE FOLLY AT JERICHO**

***(SIN OF ACHAN)***

*Wandering in the Wilderness*

SS Lesson 26 - 7/6/2025

Joshua 7

**Lesson Review:** Last week, we looked at the fall of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. First, we considered that the daily blowing of the trumpets announced God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Jericho’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and Israel’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to fight. The announcement of God’s presence was not intended only for Jericho. It was also a reminder to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that God was with them. We noticed also that Jericho was given a week to consider the warning signs of God’s judgment. This shows us how \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God is. Regarding Israel’s willingness to fight, we noted that the trumpets made public God’s command to Israel to fight. This put needed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on them to follow through. After looking at the trumpets, we next observed the walking around the city. Their walking announced that God’s purpose for Israel had not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ since the exodus. They were still expected to walk by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Israel’s willingness to walk around Jericho showed that they were finally ready to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord and His power and plan. Our final observation revolved around the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the congregation. Their silence revealed their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In studying Joshua 6, we noted that the Bible never shows any command given to Joshua for the people to remain in silence. Yet, Joshua commanded the people to remain silent until he had given them instruction to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ instead. Amazingly, none of the Israelites \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Joshua’s order that he gave them. The Israelites were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the command of silence, and they showed great discipline for all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ days. Their silence was a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in itself.

1. **ACHAN’S DECISION SHOWS US THE SELFISHNESS OF SIN.**
2. **Notice that Achan knew that his decision was going to hurt more than just himself.** *Joshua 6:18 And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.* The defeat at Ai and the death of Achan’s family should not surprise us. The Lord told the Israelites what the cost would be if they took of the accursed items of Jericho. Achan’s selfishness led him to take something that would bring great pain to those around him. Sin is selfish. Disobedience is selfish. No one lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. Sin hurts others.
3. **Notice that Achan knew that the first fruits of the Promised Land belonged to God.** *Joshua 6:19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.* The principle of giving our first fruits is found all throughout the Bible. It’s because it shows a picture of what God has done for us. He gave up His only begotten Son to pay for our sins. It’s also because it shows our surrender and submission to the Lord. Jericho was the first fruit of the Promised Land. Thus, the city belonged to God. Achan did more than just steal the accursed thing. He stole from God. Think of all that God had done for Israel. He was giving them that land, but that wasn’t enough for Achan.
4. **ACHAN’S DECISION SHOWS US THE FOOLISHNESS OF SIN.**
5. **Notice that Achan thought he could hide his sin.** *Joshua 7:21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.* *Numbers 32:23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out.* Achan’s decision was foolish because he thought that he could hide it. God had already issued the warning, and he somehow expected that God would have just missed something that was obviously important to Him. This shows us just how foolish sin is. We think that we can hide it from God. He knows, and He sees!
6. **Notice that Achan’s theft was pointless – He could never use the items. He would never use the items. He could have received better items.** *Joshua 7:22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. 23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord.*What was Achan going to do with the items? Could he have worn the Babylonian garment in the camp? I supposed he could have used the money at some marketplace down the road. For the time being, though, he could only sit on what he had taken. Ultimately, he would never use it, and he missed out on the rewards that awaited them.
7. **ACHAN’S DECISION SHOWS US THE DEVASTATION OF SIN.**
8. **Notice that Achan’s sin came with a tremendous personal cost.** *Joshua 7:24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.* He traded his life, the lives of his family members, and all of his possessions for items that he would and could never use. He traded the blessings for the accursed thing. The same happened at the fall of man. Adam and Eve traded the blessing of God’s presence for the accursed fruit. Sin is so abundantly foolish that we ought to be ashamed when we fall prey to it. Its consequences are devastating and destructive.
9. **Notice that Achan’s sin brought embarrassing failure to a nation that had just seen incredible victory.** *Joshua 7:5 And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.* The sin of Achan hits home the principle of sin in the camp. Israel suffered because of Achan. They had just witnessed God’s mighty power and deliverance. They had just seen their greatest victory since leaving Egypt. They had just won their first battle in the Promised Land. The confidence in Israel was very high at that point. Achan’s sin turned Israel upside down. It was a devastating defeat for them, and lives were lost.
10. **JOSHUA’S DECISION SHOWS US THE DANGER OF PRESUMPTION.**
11. **Notice that while it was reasonable for Joshua to expect victory, he did not consult the Lord before battle.** *Joshua 7:3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. 4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai..* There are three main elements of the story of the fall of Jericho. The parts of the story included in chapter seven make it clear to us that Joshua had some error in his judgment. Joshua was a man of great faith. He believed that the Lord would deliver all of the enemies into their hands. Yet, he was presumptuous in this encounter. At Jericho, the children of Israel waited for the Lord to show them the way forward. It seems that Joshua thought that with a lesser enemy there was no need to wait and seek God’s guidance. This led to a foolish decision on his part.
12. **Notice that Joshua’s presumption caused him to be ignorant to a serious problem in the camp.** *Joshua 7:11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.* Joshua was the one who had commanded the Israelites not to take anything from Jericho. He noted how important it was for them to listen to this command from God. One would think that he would have been on guard for such a thing taking place, but he was totally ignorant to what had occurred. I believe that if he would have sought God on the matter, the Lord would have revealed it to him before they went to battle. Leaders must be sensitive to what is taking place under their field of leadership. We must seek wisdom from the Lord to reveal challenges and problems. We all have the potential for blind spots, but God sees everything.
13. **JOSHUA’S REACTION SHOWS US THE DANGER OF SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE.**
14. **Notice that Joshua’s faith was shaken, and he had the attitude of the disbelieving children of Israel.** *Joshua 7:7 And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!* Joshua’s cry to God is shocking in chapter seven. This is a man of tremendous faith, but he appears to call out to God with the attitude of one of the Israelites who died in the wilderness. He laments that they had ever crossed over the Jordan River! How could faithful Joshua say such a thing to God? His spiritual ignorance left him confused. He had faith and zeal, but he lacked awareness of what was taking place.
15. **Notice that Joshua’s presumption had been replaced with fear, and it ended with embarrassment.** *Joshua 7:9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name? 10 And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?* Imagine how foolish Joshua felt after his prayer! The Lord told him to get up. He questioned why he was lying there upon his face. God had the answer for Joshua. There was sin in Israel that had to be dealt with. The Lord had not forsaken or forgotten Joshua. Had Joshua already forgotten that the Lord is the Captain! We must be on His side to have the victory. Sin separates us.