

THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE MELTED JOSHUA 7

Text: Joshua 7:5

(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."

Introduction:

I want you to realize that out in the world there is an individual by the name of Satan, whose main goal in life is to wreck your life. Now let me say that Satan is not the Boogie Man, and he is not someone with horns and a pitchfork. The Bible says that Satan is an angel of light. And one thing that you can rest assured of is that Satan is cruel. He's consistently cruel. It doesn't make any difference to him if he takes you to Hell through a liquor bottle or through drugs, or through aids or through a liberal church; he just wants to take you there.

Satan is consistently cruel. If he gives you an apple, he wants to choke you on that core. If he gives you some

corn, he wants to choke you on the cob. Satan is consistently cruel.

That is why we are reminded in Eph 6 to put on the amour of God.

(Ephesians 6:11-13) "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. {12} For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. {13} Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

But I also want you to realize that the Devil does not always do his work out in the world. Sometimes we allow him to come in our doors at home and at church and the enemy is no longer without, the enemy's within. Such is the case with Israel. It was the enemy within the camp that caused the defeat at Ai.

It is important to know that prior to this defeat God had been performing some amazing miracles.

1. Leaving slavery in Egypt and all the plagues.
2. Crossing the Red Sea.

3. Daily food from Heaven.
4. The crossing of the Jordan
5. (Josh 6) Jericho

Notice:

1. ISRAEL'S COMMANDS (6:17-19)

(Joshua 6:17-19) "And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. {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. {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."

A. We too need to leave the accursed things alone.

2. ISRAEL'S COMPROMISE (VSS 1-5)

(Joshua 7:1-5) "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of

Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel. {2} And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. {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. {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."

A. When Achan sinned Israel sinned.

1. This shows why it is important for us to deal with sin in our own lives.
2. Sin affects more than just us.

B. Joshua and Israel didn't consult with the Lord concerning Ai.

1. We are sure to have trouble when we become self confident, and over confident.

Notice the Pride and Arrogance.

a. They had just destroyed Jericho without lifting a weapon, and losing a warrior.

b. We don't need everyone. (vss 3)

(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."

3. JOSHUA'S COMPLAINT (VSS 6-9)

(Joshua 7:6-9) "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. {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! {8} O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! {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?"

- A. Stuck his head in the sand instead of addressing the sin problem
- B. Tried to blame God for the defeat.
- C. Backslid to the point of even wishing that they would have stayed in Egypt.
- D. Forgot the past blessings of God, and the promises of God.

4. GOD'S COMMAND (VSS 10-15)

(Joshua 7:10-15) "And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? {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. {12} Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. {13} Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you. {14} In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according

to your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which the LORD taketh shall come according to the families thereof; and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man. {15} And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel."

A. Get up.

1. Stop lying around and do something about the problem.

Illustration:

Oh God the world is so wicked and everything is so bad. Get up and do something about it.

Oh God our nation is so wicked and Dr's. are killing babies. Get up and do something about it.

Oh God our country is so wicked that kids are killing kids in schools. Get up and do something about it.

B. Get busy.

C. Carry out my orders.

5. JUDGMENT'S COMPLETION (VSS 16-26)

(Joshua 7:16-26) "So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: {17} And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarhites: and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: {18} And he brought his household man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. {19} And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. {20} And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: {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. {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. {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. {25} And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. {26} And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day."

A. We can see God's intense hatred of sin

1. Stoned him

2. Burned him and his family

B. God cannot look upon sin, and God cannot overlook sin.

(Proverbs 6:16-19) "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: {17} A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, {18} An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, {19} A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

(Romans 1:18) "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"

(Nahum 1:2) "God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies."

(Nahum 1:6) "Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him."

Close:

And the hearts of the people melted. What can we learn from Achan and Ai. Be obedient, and the results of sin.