

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

Achan was a soldier of Israel under the command of Joshua and his actions caused a problem to the advancement of the Lord's army. The instructions of God to Joshua was that the Israel Army was to utterly destroy all the enemies and their possessions and to bring back no spoils of the battle. However Achan could not resist the temptation and secretly brought back silver, gold and beautiful garments and hid them in the floor of his tent -- thus going directly against the direction of God and Joshua.

The selfish action of this one man led to a set-back at the hands of the enemy, the death of thirty-six men, and the loss of courage of the Israel Army (Joshua 7:5). Achan, one man, went against the direct orders of his superiors and God and many others suffered because of it. The entire story can be found in Joshua chapter 7. Achan and his entire family paid the price for his foolishness.

There is a very important lesson to be learned by us today from this story, and it echoes the words of the Prophet Samuel to King Saul -- "*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice*" (1 Samuel 15:22).

There is no substitute for obedience -- when God in His Word gives a Command it must be followed completely and without question. What happened to Achan in our story, and King Saul in the Samuel account, both point to absolute obedience for any victory -- on the battle field or in the lives of the Lord's followers.

How often have you witnessed the failure of some portion of the Lord's work because of one or two people wanting their own way and forsaking the unity of the group? How often personal desires or wants block the blessings of the Lord and affects the entire group?

The words "*one accord*" repeat over and over in the success of the early Church as recorded in the Book of Acts -- they "*had all things in common*" -- total unity -- and the Lord poured out His blessings on them. They were empowered by the Holy Spirit when they obeyed the final words of the Lord before His ascension to Heaven (Acts 1:8).

There are also examples of those who were selfish and lied about their part in the Church -- (Ananias and Sapphira -- Acts 5:1-11). This is all recorded in the Bible as a warning and an encouragement for us to be above board in all our dealings in the body of Believers.

Take a look at God's 10 Commandments (Exodus 20) -- a simple set of rules for the betterment of us all -- in fact we could trace most of the laws on the books of today's governments to these 10 items. Success in our lives, success in marriage and child rearing, success in business -- all have their bases in them.

God is a God of Love -- in fact it is stated twice in 1 John chapter 4 -- "GOD IS LOVE" (vs. 8 & 16) -- and if God Loved us so much that He was willing to allow the sacrificial death of His only Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sins (John 3:16) -- then we had better consider Him in our every decision if we want a fulfilled life.

The earth, the universe, every thing in His creation was supplied for us to enjoy -- IF -- we simply follow His plan. Don't ever feel that God is some sort of "big bully up there" waiting to zap us for wanting our own way and messing up our lives. He has given us a free will to do whatever we want -- BUT -- He has also set parameters to insure our success.

Before we go our own way -- before we mess up our lives -- consider the very heart of God -- open your eyes and heart and let Him come into your life and bless you Abundantly -- it is all part of His perfect plan --

AND IT IS NEVER TOO LATE!

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