

Flushed w/ victory over Jericho, Satan has them set up for defeat-

H. Keathley The distance between a great victory & a great defeat is only one step, & often only a short one at that. One sad truth of reality in a fallen world is that we can be riding high on the cloud of some great spiritual success & the very next moment find ourselves in a valley of spiritual failure & despair.

1 But the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully in regard to the things under the ban, for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some of the things under the ban, therefore the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel.

The people are saved & in promise land w/ victory over first enemy it looks like a *Cinderella story* going from victory to victory & living happily ever after. **But no!** There is sin in the camp. Achan stole from God...first city Jericho all was God's--under the ban—first fruits

One man's sin imputed to entire nation...*little leaven*...Thru one man's sin, Adam sin entered the world & we all made sinners. *Imputed sin--imputed righteousness.*

Achan's secret sin had public consequence--*A/S* sin & dropped dead—Achan's name means 'trouble' *36 die* – 4 generations listed--*shame*—*Judah* w/ Tamar *disgrace* for him--righteous for her **Gen 38:15-30.**

2 Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." So the men went up and spied out Ai. 3 And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up; only about two or three thousand men need go up to Ai; do not make all the people toil up there, for they are few." 4 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled from the men of Ai. 5 And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of their men, and pursued them from the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent, so the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

Victory one minute-defeat the next, on the run, hearts melted as water-*wax-*

Defeat is always a wake-up call--*what am I doing* or *what did I do to get things so wrong?* What do I need to change, adjust, do different. When defeated we get *disillusioned*--*which is good*—Dis (to do away w/) *illusion* (what is not real) – Can't live in illusion, something made up in own mind void of reality, void of God's plan.

Defeated at Ai '*heap of ruins*'—should have been but became Israel—backfired when secret sin came into camp. "*We are never more vulnerable to sin than when we are successful, admired by others and prosperous*"

Pride creeps in w/ success—victories don't make us inherently stronger—we are still the weak person God used to gain Jericho's victory. If proud our weakest enemy will bring us down. *Marylyn Hickey Bull elephant*

Spy's *overconfident*—we tend toward two extremes, '*all or nothing mentality*'. Moses sent spy's the first time, 10 gave bad report—giants—can't go in. Here pee-wee's no challenge. Difference in victory or defeat is taking the Ark into battle—they didn't in Ai depended on past victory & I can do it.

6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until the evening, both he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. 7 And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord GOD, why didst Thou ever bring this people over the Jordan, only to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? If only we had been willing to dwell beyond the Jordan! 8 "O Lord, what can I say since Israel has turned their back before their enemies? 9 "For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and they will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what wilt Thou do for Thy great name?"

Instead of *why*, seems to point the finger at God, they should have cried *what*. What did we do wrong? Personal responsibility is key to knowing what went wrong. What caused our defeat? Joshua & elders complaint is much like to unbelieving generation '*why bring in wilderness to die*'

Alan Redpath One of the greatest temptations that can come to you after you have proved that God is able to give you victory, is to neglect to pray. When you think that you are strong & don't need to pray any more, then you will have dulled your sensitiveness to sin. It is only prayer in the hour of victory that makes a man of God realize that he will face defeat again unless he maintains continuous contact w/ the Lord Jesus Christ. The moment of victory is the moment for humiliation. When one experiences the excitement & thrill of God giving him a new deliverance from sin, that should be the moment, not for pride, but for humility

If we won't do it God will do it for us as here w/ Joshua & the people.

Last four words of vs 9 is Joshua's main concern & qualifications for anyone who leads Gods people, who stands for the integrity of the ministry and Gods name. Joshua's concern is God be diminished in eyes of unbelievers and His glory & reputation be tainted.

This is Israel's only defeat yet other mis-steps & mistakes—we learn more from our failures than our successes. Failure humbles us, success puffs up. Sorrow and pain teach us more than happiness and ease. **"I walked a mile with Pleasure; She chatted all the way; But left me none the wiser For all she had to say. I walked a mile with Sorrow; And ne'er a word said she; But, oh! The things I learned from her, When Sorrow walked with me."** Rbt Browning

Defeat is not the norm or accepted practice of spirit lead life when seeking full blessings of Christian life. They are Gods training school, His obedience class. When we decide to live a victorious life in Christ the enemy mounts his biggest attacks. *Football player on bench cheering for team but off the bench in the game going for the goal full force of opposing team against to keep from goal.*

Reason for defeat, first is misplaced trust in own ability from past victory. Missed lesson of Jericho-weak shame strong, foolish confound wise. It was God's victory, miraculous--so man not boast. We imagine it something in us, some goodness, gifting, personality, faithfulness, diligence, tenacity, etc & next time we are not as desperate for God---**i've got this problem.**

Second prayerlessness—so excited about first victory failed to pray for next.

We can do much after we pray.....' can go thru the motions of prayer w/o really praying. *Like on device while talking to mate* Doing ritual of prayer w/o connecting w/ the person praying to. **Prayer** would have exposed the problem. If pray before not beg after defeat. Neglect of prayer blinds us to issues at hand. *"If you pray in the time of victory you will never have to plead in the time of defeat" Alan Redpath*

F B Meyer The experience of defeat is far too common to the majority of Christians. They are constantly turning their backs before their enemies. They are defeated by indwelling sin & the assaults of Satan, & by the mighty evils which they assail in the name of God. But instead of taking their defeats to heart, they become used to them.

10 So the LORD said to Joshua, "Rise up! Why is it that you have fallen on your face? 11 "Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. And they have even taken some of the things under the ban and have both stolen and deceived. Moreover, they have also put them among their own things. 12 "Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become accursed. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy the things under the ban from your midst. 13 "Rise up! Consecrate the people and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, for thus the LORD, the God of Israel, has said, "There are things under the ban in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you have removed the things under the ban from your midst."

Stop wallowing & rise up consecrate yourselves--be set apart **2Cor 13:5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?**

Didn't invite Ark, Lord's presence to lead them into battle

Remove the sin—repentance is not just feeling sorry but feeling sorry enough to do something about it—turn away and turn to.

14 'In the morning then you shall come near by your tribes. And it shall be that the tribe which the LORD takes by lot shall come near by families, and the family which the LORD takes shall come near by households, and the household which the LORD takes shall come near man by man. 15 'And it shall be that the one who is taken with the things under the ban shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has committed a disgraceful thing in Israel.'” 16 So Joshua arose early in the morning and brought Israel near by tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. 17 And he brought the family of Judah near, and he took the family of the Zerahites; and he brought the family of the Zerahites near man by man, and Zabdi was taken. 18 And he brought his household near man by man; and Achan, son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19 Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, I implore you, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and tell me now what you have done. Do not hide it from me.” 20 So Achan answered Joshua and said, “Truly, I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel, and this is what I did:

Forced confession is a shallow confession—because caught not God working on consciousness bringing to repentance for wrongs done.

Confession is to speak the same as God speaks about the situation.

21 when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it.”

I saw, I coveted, I took – lust of the eyes, flesh, pride of life—Stealing from

God is a serious condition. Malachi says *you robbed God in tithes and*

offerings. Achan was hoping he could cover his sin and no one find out—

God knew. He could have been forgiven if confessed and gave it up—Be

sure your sin will find you out—Nu 32:23

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and behold, it was concealed in his tent with the silver underneath it. 23 And they took them from inside the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the sons of Israel, and they poured them out before the LORD. 24 Then Joshua and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the mantle, the bar of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent and all that belonged to him; and they brought them up to the valley of Achor. 25 And Joshua said, “Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day.” And all Israel stoned them with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. 26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones that stands to this day, and the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the valley of Achor to this day.

Family complicit in Achan's sin—Heap of stones as reminder of sin purged from camp—a criminal is buried here—common for passerby to throw stones on graves of criminals—casting stones as hatred of sin

Another pile of stones after crossing Jordan stones a reminder of God's faithfulness & miraculous crossing. What legacy are we leaving?

Forsake sin – some remove it for a while but not forsake it & as dog returns ot vomit & sow to mire go back to it. **Matt 18:8,9** *“And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the eternal fire. 9 “And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into the fiery hell.*

Col 3:5 *Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him*

Valley of Achor – ‘*valley of trouble*’ one man's sin brought trouble & failure to a nation. And yet God is a God of redemption—doesn't leave us in failure but gives a future and hope.

Years later Hosea 2:15 mentions this same valley ‘*And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.*’ The promise is *the place of trouble* becoming *a door of hope*. It will be when Israel is in the Promised Land during the millennial reign of Christ. Our *place of trouble* becoming a *door of hope* is true for us today. **2Cor 1:20** *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*