

## HIDDEN SINS

### Proverbs 28:13      Joshua 7

**Introduction:** Covered up sin cannot get by: sin unconfessed, unlamented, sin with an excuse, sin with an alibi, sin with no self-judgment, all are certain to bring repercussions from God. In the 7th chapter of Joshua there is the account about a man who tried to hide a sin from God. What led to this man's sin?

For seven days Israel marched around the city of Jericho and on the 7th day they blew trumpets of ram's horns, then they shouted and the walls fell down. They took the city of Jericho. However, God had commanded: *"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. 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..."* This account describes how the city of Jericho was taken without the loss of a single man however one man had not obeyed God's command, he had sinned.

#### I. SIN BRINGS DEFEAT, FAILURE AND RUIN (*Joshua 7:2-5*)

1. There was a sin undiscovered, unrepented, unconfessed between God and Israel. God left his people because of this sin. 36 men were killed in the next battle at Ai.
2. *Proverbs 28:13* speaks of covered sins bringing failure. Failure is caused by sin. Failure and defeat are God's red light warning of danger which incurs His wrath, anger as His heart is grieved, therefore God does not allow one to prosper who has hidden sins.
3. *James 5:16* says to *"Confess your faults one to another and pray for one another, that ye may be healed."* This indicates, as does other passages, that sickness is often the natural and inevitable result of sin. People do not prosper because they have not confessed and forsaken their sin. Financial failure, poor crops, broken homes, accidents, disease, all these and more are sometimes results of unconfessed and unlamented sin.
4. If one does not prosper materially, it is sometimes because of unconfessed and unforsaken sins. If one does not prosper spiritually, it is always the result of hidden sins.
5. It is sin, unconfessed sin in the hearts of God's people, sin in the Churches, in the pastors, in the teachers, in the deacons, in the members that block the power of God.
  - If the Holy Spirit does not move in worship services, it is because of unconfessed and unforsaken sin.
  - If the unsaved do not hear the gospel message, it is the fault of the Christian.
6. Many do not like to hear sermons about their sinning and many pastors do not preach on sinning being afraid they might hurt some church member's feelings.
  - There is no way to get God's favor in the Church except by all the Church family confessing their sins, hidden sins, and then forsaking them.
7. Sin in the Church family keeps the church from growing.

## **II. THERE ARE TIMES WHEN SOMETHING MUST COME BEFORE PRAYER (Joshua 7:8-13)**

1. There was sin in the camp. All the praying they could do was useless until the wrong done had been remedied. *"Neither will I be with you anymore, except ye destroy the accursed from among you..."* There are times when God will not hear. There are occasions when repentance and restitution are far more important than any words uttered in a prayer. There are times when God demands action instead of words, even in prayer.
2. **Matthew 5:23-24** speaks of trying with an honest heart to make things right for the sin you have done before you even sing for God or give money to God, or even pray to God. Confess and forsake that sin.
3. There is no use to ask God for His blessing, His power, or His presence when there is sin unconfessed, sin covered up in your life. There is no need to pray to read the Bible, to try to serve God until you uncover the sins in your life and clear these with God.

## **III. WE MUST FIND THE SIN OURSELF (Joshua 7:14-18)**

1. It is we who have broken the contact, the fellowship with God. If God had wronged us, it would be His part to correct it, but it is us and it always our responsibility to find the hindering cause and make it right.
2. Somebody had sinned in Israel and Israel must find and punish that sinner. The whole nation was brought out, tribe by tribe, family by family, household by household, finally man by man.
3. If you do not have an overflowing life of blessing, if you do not win souls, if defeat and failure are yours, then you need to be honest with God. Find that sin in your life, in your heart that has caused you to be powerless. Make no excuses, do not cover it up any longer, drag it out before God, confess it and forsake that sin.

## **IV. SOMETHING HAD BEEN DELIBERATELY HIDDEN AWAY (Joshua 7:22-23)**

1. In public this man, Achan, seemed as good and devoted as any other man. He kept all the laws, was of good reputation, but what he did that was wrong was in secret, private and nobody knew about it. (Many church leaders have been convicted of stealing from their church finances or of immoral conduct.)
2. Do not think that there is nothing wrong with your life (or anybody else's) because you attend Church or sing in the choir or because you tithe or that you are involved in the Church activities. It is not so much the public things but the private, secret things (sins) that bring failure and defeat.
  - Are there things in your life that you hope that nobody ever finds out about? Are you willing for anybody to examine your thoughts, your actions? Your hidden sins?

3. Do you love your sin? At first you will say "NO! No way!" However, are you willing to let Jesus cleanse you of all your sins? Even your hidden sins? Will you give up all your sins?

## V. SIN HAS IT'S WAY: I SAW, I COVETED, I TOOK, I HID (*Joshua 7:19-21*)

1. Note the progress of Achan's sin: "*...when I saw among the spoils...*" It is far better for us never to see some things because then perhaps we wouldn't want them. It is the devil's game to make us think it is necessary for us to "*know the ways of the world..*" and as we say, "to sow a few wild oats..."
2. Seeing led to Achan's coveting. Think about yourself. What have you seen that caused you to want it? What do you have right now that you wouldn't have if you had not seen it? What about those things you have done that you knew were wrong? Why did you do them? One step into sin always leads to another, and another, and another and so on.
3. Achan then took the forbidden thing. When he heard the instructions of things everyone was to do and not do, he never gave a thought that he would violate God's instructions. However, when he saw what was forbidden, he wanted it. How many are slaves to something they wanted to "try only once?" If we allow ourselves to even be tempted, we will fall. If we do not allow ourselves to be tempted, we therefore will not fall.
4. Achan then hid the forbidden thing. After we commit sin, we then try to make excuses for what we have done and try to hide that sin. All sorts of excuses are made, blame is passed on, put it behind us and move on as if we had not done anything wrong.
  - The serious thing about sin is that when you try to hide it, deny it, ignore it, refuse to confess it, we separate ourselves from God and bring on His anger.

## CONCLUSION:

1. Achan sinned, hid what he had done and he died for what he did. He refused to give up and confess his act of sin.
2. If Achan had confessed what he had done and brought out that which he had hidden, he would no doubt have lived. But he didn't.
3. Take a look at your life. Only you and God know about your deeply hidden sins. It makes no difference that nobody else knows about them, you are separated from God and can feel God's anger at any moment. God cannot use you as you are.
4. Why not get off by yourself with pad and pencil and begin to write down all those sins that nobody but you and God know about and ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind all those things you have forgotten about as you write. Then begin to confess those sins to God, one by one since you committed them one by one, marking through that written down sin once you have confessed it until you have confessed and repented of every single hidden sin. Only when all is clear between you and God will you have real peace.