**When Sin is Present**

*Joshua 7*

**Introduction**

1. When the faithless generation perished in the wilderness, the next generation of Israel which heard the reading of the law by Moses in Deuteronomy crossed the Jordan, and entered the land promised Abraham by God.
2. **Jericho** – the fortified city saw its demise as its walls fell flat by the faith of the people in obedience to God’s commands – God gave Jericho into their hands.
3. Ai – **cf. Joshua 6:18-19** – instruction to leave the accursed things.
   1. **7:1** – Achan took of the accursed things.
   2. **Cf. vv. 2-5** – Israel was defeated in battle by the smaller Ai.
   3. **Cf. vv. 6-9** – Joshua laments Israel’s defeat, and cries to God.
   4. **Vv. 10-12** – God explains that sin was in the camp, and He was not with them because of such.
   5. **V. 13** – God instructed Joshua that the sin had to be dealt with, and taken away in order for Israel to have fellowship with God, and for Him to ensure victory in the Canaan land.
   6. Achan was exposed as the one who took of the accursed things. He was stoned along with his family.
   7. Israel gained victory over Ai because God was with them.
4. **Many things can be learned from this passage, one of which is that sin affects our relationship with God, and MUST be dealt with.**
5. Let us consider what must be done when sin is present 🡪
6. Must Sin Be Dealt With?
7. Once Saved Always Saved?
   1. **P in T.U.L.I.P – Perseverance of the Saints** – Calvinism – the elect cannot do anything to lose their salvation.
   2. **Once saved always saved** – a version of the Calvinism tenet – when one becomes a Christian they cannot lose their salvation.
      1. **If this is the case, then sin is inconsequential.**
      2. After professing belief in Christ (faith only error), one does not need to do anything else.
   3. **Hebrews 3:12-14** – One can depart from God.
   4. **Hebrews 6:4-6** – One can fall away into a hardened state that cannot be renewed to repentance with the gospel, for they have rejected it.
   5. ***“[look] carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God” (Hebrews 12:15*** – like Esau).
8. Continuous Cleansing?
   1. **Doctrine** – There is continuous cleansing by Christ’s blood from sin even as it occurs for one who is walking in the light.
      1. **This ultimately becomes a different way of saying “once saved always saved.”**
      2. **If sin is cleansed as soon as it is committed then one can never lose his soul after obeying the gospel.**
   2. **Proof text** **– 1 John 1:7**.
   3. **False assumption leading to the doctrine** – it is not within man’s nature to cease sinning. Sinning will be continual; thus, cleansing must be continual.
      1. **1 John 2:1** – may not sin – reason for John’s writing.
         1. **Vv. 3-6** – Cease from sin by keeping His commandments, i.e. His word.
         2. **3:9** – Cannot sin when God’s seed remains in you. (Seed = word – ***“born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever” 1 Peter 1:23***).
      2. **2 Peter 1:8-11** – As we grow in the Divine Nature, adding to our faith by practicing God’s word, we will ***“never stumble.”*** I.e. so long as we are walking in that way.
   4. **Distinction between sins?** – Claim that the cleansing is continuous for sins that are of weakness, and ignorance, not of rebellion.
      1. ***“All sin”*** – **1 John 1:7** – the proof text actually destroys the concept – no distinction in sin.
      2. **Weakness –** **Galatians 6:1** – “overtaken” implies weakness, but he needs restoring. (**Why if sin is already cleansed?)**
         1. **Peter – Galatians 2:11-13** – played the hypocrite and withdrew from Gentiles. (**Weakness – succumbed to peer pressure.)**
         2. Knew and taught truth – ***“In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:24).***
         3. **Withstood to face – sin addressed – why if already cleansed?**
      3. **Ignorance** – **Acts 17:30** – God demands repentance from sins of ignorance. (**Why if sin is already cleansed?)**
         1. **Leviticus 4:13, 22, 27** – Sins of ignorance render the sinner guilty, and they must be dealt with.
         2. **1 John 3:4** – Sin is lawlessness – whether in weakness, ignorance, or rebellion.
      4. **Conclusion – *“all sin”* is continuously cleansed even as it is committed, or no sin is. God makes no distinction between sins.**
   5. **How is the cleansing accessed?** – **1 John 1:7-10** – There must be confession of those sins, and a request for forgiveness. (Implied in confession is the need to repent – ***“unless you repent you will all likewise perish” Luke 13:5***).
      1. **Condition** – he who ***“walk[s] in the light as He is in the light.”***
      2. **Sin = darkness** – so how is one in the light for cleansing even as he sins?
      3. **V. 9** – This is the light one walks in.
         1. Sin occurs – fellowship w/ God broken.
         2. **Sin repented of and confessed – cleansing of sin (v. 9) – walking in the light (v. 7).**
   6. **Continuous cleansing is not biblical – if it were, then sin need not be addressed. However, sin MUST be dealt with.**
9. When Sin is Present
10. Individually
    1. **2 Corinthians 13:5** – Constant introspection is necessary in order to maintain fellowship with God. (This coupled with study – ***“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God” 2 Timothy 2:15.)***
    2. **As we study and look inward, what do we do when we find that we are in sin?**
       1. **Sorrow and repentance** ***– “godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted” (2 Corinthians 7:10).***
       2. **Confession and request for forgiveness** – **1 John 1:9; 2:1-2** – We are to confess those sins to God, approaching Him through our advocate who shed His blood to cleanse us of such.
11. Brother to Brother
    1. **What do we do when a brother sins against us personally?**
    2. **Matthew 18:15-17** – We must approach him to gain him back as a brother.
       1. There is longsuffering, and steps in progression.
       2. However, the sin MUST be dealt with.
       3. **Cf. James 5:19-20** – TURN HIM BACK!
12. Congregationally
    1. **Note: Withdrawal is not the first step, but longsuffering is not tolerance. The sin must be exposed, and reproved.**
       1. ***“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).***
       2. **2 Timothy 4:2** – convince, rebuke, exhort, longsuffering in Timothy’s preaching.
    2. **2 Thessalonians 3:6** – Withdraw from disorderly – last step to save their soul, and maintain church purity.

**Conclusion**

1. Sin is not a matter of inconsequence.
2. Sin separates man from God, and possibly entire congregations.
3. **Sin MUST be dealt with!**