



8 | JOSHUA 7

SIN IN THE CAMP

The only thing holding you back from total victory in Christ is you.

Outline

Spiritual Failure is Avoidable

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Call to Worship

1 John 5:4-5, "For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Songs

All Creatures of Our God and King
Only a Holy God
O Sacred Head Now Wounded
There is a Fountain Filled with Blood
His Mercy is More

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME: Welcome visitors

GIVING: You can still give over Zelle through your bank with no fees. We also have a collection box on the Welcome Center.

MEMORIAL: Service for David Beakey September 5, Saturday 10am.

DADDY-DAUGHTER BBQ: Sept 12, Saturday, 3pm.

Introduction

We continue in a series in the book of Joshua called “Footsteps of Faith.” Our title this morning is: “Sin in the Camp”.

Key thought: Today we are going to learn that the only thing keeping you from a life of total victory is you. You are your own worse enemy. If you will get out of the way, Jesus will transform you. Spiritual disaster is avoidable. Let me say that again: spiritual disaster is avoidable.

SPIRITUAL FAILURE IS AVOIDABLE

Spiritual failure is avoidable.

The date was June 1, 2009. Air France Flight 447 which took off from Rio de Janeiro and was headed to Paris, France, but it never made it. It crashed into the Atlantic Ocean, killing all 228 people on board. It would take two years for the black box to be found. When it was opened up, investigators found out something shocking: The crash was avoidable. It didn't have to happen. Apparently, the pilots ignored the “engine stall” warnings. And don't miss this: they didn't follow the manual. The crash happened because they ignored the signs and didn't do what they were trained to do.

I mention this because in Joshua 7, we are going to see a crash. It was avoidable. It happened because they didn't do what they were told. This theme is a major contrast from the previous chapter. The battle of Jericho is a great victory. The battle of Ai is Israel's greatest defeat. It's the only battle where Israel's army loses any soldiers: 36 to be exact. So Israel goes from the highest spiritual high of crossing the Jordan, defeating Jericho, and then total defeat by a city that was quite a bit smaller and less formidable than Jericho.

Jericho was a formidable victory. Jericho is in the middle of Israel, not terribly far from Jerusalem. This meant so much to the invasion: it meant that they could in essence split Canaan in two so that their enemies could not rally together. The mood is high in Joshua 6. God promised a victory, and God kept his promise.

Little did they know that as they were on this high at the battle of Jericho that they were more vulnerable to defeat than they had ever been. Only the threat was not outside, but inside the camp. Why is that?

The greatest single challenge any person will face is his own success. Why? Because success can become a fertile breeding ground for pride and self-reliance. We become complacent in victory, and we begin depending on the flesh. **Before we know it a Christian can go from being on fire to stagnant and stuck.**

God's people were on a spiritual high. The Bible says the hearts of the Canaanites melted. The nations in Canaan all knew that God had parted the Jordan River. They knew he crumbled the walls of Jericho. But the spiritual high would not last. Spiritual failure would come to Israel. But it was totally avoidable.

1. THE LESSON OF SIN'S HOOK (7:1-15)

In the first 15 verses, we are going to look at the hook of defeat. You fisherman know how a fish loses. It goes for the bait. The hook of defeat is hidden by the bait.

I want to teach you a powerful principle of the works of the flesh. The promise everything, and they even feel good for a short time, but defeat is inevitable. Because behind the bait, there is a hook. And here's my advice: "Don't take the bait." Before we look at the bait, I want you to see the hook behind the bait.

THE HOOK BEHIND THE BAIT (1-5)

The Bible says in **Romans 6:23**, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Theirs the hook. The bait of sin might be pleasurable for a short time, but there is always misery and destruction that follow the bait. Bitterness feels good and justified until it starts eating you away, consuming you like a cancer. Foolishness feels like a great escape until it robs you of your family, your finances, your conscience, and your soul. Despair and self-pity feels right until it paralyzes you and robs you of your vitality. Worry and fear feel productive until you realize your ability to handle life in your own power has a shelf life. The bait of sin is so tempting. But stay far away because a hook of death is sure to closely follow. We see this in the first 15 verses.

Joshua 7:1-5 | But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel. ²Joshua 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." And the men went up and spied out Ai. ³And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few." ⁴So about three thousand men went up there from the people. And they fled before the men of Ai, ⁵and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six of their men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

Thirty-six men died. That's the hook. The little city of Ai was much less respectable or renowned than Jericho.

THE BAIT

Ai was a humble city they should have easily defeated. So what was the problem? We see it in verse 1.

Joshua 7:1 | But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel.

Achan had to take the bait. Easy escape. Easy pleasure. Sin is so easy, but the price is steep. Thirty-six men suffer death because of one man's sin. I want to focus on how a New Testament Christian can suffer defeat.

Obviously, we have the victory in our Lord Jesus Christ, but we also must stay away from those things that are devoted to destruction. I want to emphasize that all that the flesh offers is empty: it can only lead to misery and destruction. Anything you put in the place of the Lord is an idol, and it cannot fulfill you. This could be a marriage, a job, the desire for obedient children. All these things are good, but they are not to be made a demand. If your highest desire is anything but Jesus, it's an idol, and it will leave you and your family in shambles.

Dan Wakefield: Another Drink

In the 1970s, Dan Wakefield wrote the best-selling book, "Going All the Way". He quickly sold 800,000 copies. This is what he had always dreamed. But when he got to the top and achieved all his dreams, what he found surprised him. He said:

"The dream of a lifetime had been realized, and I was delighted. I was also nervous and anxious... I learned what people have testified since the beginning of time, but that no one really believes until he has the experience—success and achievement and rewards are all fine, but they do not transform you, they do not bring about a state of built-in contentment or inner peace or security, much less salvation... The novel was not The Answer to all life's problems. So I went out and had another drink."¹

—Dan Wakefield

The bait of the flesh never satisfies. It can never calm your conscience. Sin can only kill your conscience. You have to have a clean conscience to be happy.

The Christian cannot stay stuck in this emptiness for very long. We have the Spirit of God in us. **We know that the world will offer you everything and leave you hungry.** We know that true rest and satisfaction comes from Jesus alone.

Jesus says, "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28).

¹ Dan Wakefield. *Returning: A Spiritual Journey* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 198-199.

Stuck

We learn today about one man named Achan who thought he could gain some riches, but he ended up in complete defeat. That's how the sinful world works. It offers you everything, but leaves you empty every time.

Are you stuck? Have you chased after the world, but you feel empty? We are going to learn that the soul can only be satisfied by gazing on the perfection of deity. You have to not only have a good theology to be happy—you have to engage with what you believe. You have to live a life of faith, trusting God implicitly without the prejudice of your own bent heart or the world's noise, discouragement, and distractions.

THE CATCH (7:6-9)

Like a fish caught by the hook, sin paralyzes us. Now for Joshua and the elders, they know they have lost their power. There is sin in the camp. There is compromise. The power and the confidence are gone. That's what sin does. It robs the child of God of assurance and power. It doesn't have to be that way. Joshua is dismayed.

Joshua 7:6-9 | Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they put dust on their heads. ⁷And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord God, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan! ⁸O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies! ⁹For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?"

The small army of two to three thousand men were faithful to God. They followed God's instructions as we see from the account. Yet God's anger is set against the nation for one man's sin. **The anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel (7:2).** This is a great shock to Joshua. He had waited his whole life for this.

Remember, he's **eighty years old**. He had gone through this before in the wilderness (Num 13). He was one of the twelve spies. Ten of the spies were fearful of entering the land, but Joshua stood with Caleb. They were the only two of that generation that got to enter the Promised Land. Now Joshua is completely confused. He is faithful. He's done nothing wrong. Yet God holds him and the nation accountable. After this surprising defeat and understandable dismay, Joshua prostrates himself before the Lord.

Joshua was shattered by the catastrophe at Ai. He and the elders of Israel put dust on their heads and fell before the ark of the Lord. Give them credit for taking the defeat very seriously and for going to the Lord!²

Joshua was so strong when they fought Jericho, but now he and the whole army have no strength and no confidence. Why? Because they have no power.

You see when we're not doing the thing God wants us to do, we will lack the confidence that God wants us to have. Everything falls apart. Everything turns against us when we

² Roger Ellsworth, *Opening up Joshua*, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2008), 72.

are not walking right with God. Nothing can be right when you dear child of God, are walking in the flesh.

DEAL WITH SIN TOGETHER (7:10-15)

Deal with sin together.

Sin will occur in the believer's life. That wasn't the problem. Achan's problem was not that he sinned, but how he hid his sin. As a result, God puts Joshua and the entire nation to the test. The only way to get victory for Israel is to deal with the sin in the camp. If the believer won't deal with sin, his community will have to.

Joshua 7:10-15 | The Lord said to Joshua, "Get up! Why have you fallen on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings. ¹² Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs [and run] before their enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you. ¹³ Get up! Consecrate the people and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says the Lord, God of Israel, "There are devoted things in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you." ¹⁴ In the morning therefore you shall be brought near by your tribes. And the tribe that the Lord takes by lot shall come near by clans. And the clan that the Lord takes shall come near by households. And the household that the Lord takes shall come near man by man. ¹⁵ And he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and because he has done an outrageous thing in Israel.

One Body

When one member of the Body of Christ sins, all are affected. We must begin with an understanding that God's people are one. The church always has to be a body who deals radically with sin, or it dies.

Who stole? Who lied? All Israel? No, just Achan. Why does God accuse the nation as transgressing his covenant? Because God treats them as one. God insists that they act as one, or he is leaving them. The New Testament also has this kind of talk.

Paul says, "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened" (1 Cor 5:6b-7).

God is dealing with one immoral man, but he calls them to act as one in purging out sin. Why? Because the yeast of sin spreads rapidly through the whole church.

Holiness in the Camp

God's people must take sin seriously in their camp. We must learn from this that God takes sin seriously, even if we do not, and that sin is the real cause of defeat for God's people.³ They were to all come to account together before God. God takes sin very seriously. We are all going to be brought to account, not just for our own sin, but also how we maintained holiness in the camp. The camp in our context is the local church. Are you taking not only your sins but others' sins seriously?

2. THE LESSON OF SIN'S BIRTH (7:16-22)

In the next verses we see what happens. How is sin birthed into existence in the heart? James gives us the conception and birth of a sin.

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. —James 1:13-15

Sin begins with enticement in the heart. That's where it has to be cut off. Every Christian has the responsibility to put away sin at the root. That's what James is saying. Once sin is conceived and birthed, it brings forth a misery that ends in death and eternal damnation.

Not so for the Christian. The Christian quickly becomes skilled in cutting off sin in the heart. Let's look at what Achan did to see how we can cut sin off before it starts. Look how it started for Achan.

Joshua 7:16-21 | So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel near tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁷ And he brought near the clans of Judah, and the clan of the Zerahites was taken. And he brought near the clan of the Zerahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. ¹⁸ And he brought near his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. ¹⁹ Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." ²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, "Truly I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and this is what I did: ²¹ when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar [*Babylon*], and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

What was it that led Achan to this sad act of disobedience? I suggest the following root elements.

³ Boyce, 58.

SIN'S CONCEPTION

Why was Israel defeated? What is the key to constant and perpetual victory? How did they miss it? What happened? Sin conceived in the heart of a man named Achan.

Conceived by Self-Satisfaction

Sin is conceived when we want what we want, and we are willing to sin to get it. Achan was a rich man. He didn't need anything. The Scripture says he had lots of herds of animals. But he wanted what he wanted, and he was willing to sin to get it.

Well use your imagination. I can imagine a scene like this. It's midnight now. Over the ruins of Jericho, the city lies in rubble, there are broken columns and crumbled walls, disarray. Outside Jericho the camp of Israel is pitched and here is each tribe in its place and the tents are there. The moon is looking down on that scene, of desolation, as the walls came tumbling down. Everybody is asleep, it's quiet. Did I say everybody was asleep? There's one man who's not asleep. You already know Achan. He got sinned against the Lord, and got his family involved in the cover up. **He's a rich man** who really needed nothing. **Yet he let sin conceive.** He could have avoided this defeat personally and for his family and for his nation. That's how sin is. It knows no boundaries.

I see him as he comes to the door of his tent and opens it, quietly, stealthily makes his way from that tent and out of the place where his tribe is encamped. He makes his way over those fallen brick and rock, over that fallen wall. He makes his way into the city there, into the marketplace, and he begins to look around and the moonlight shines down on something that is silvery. And he notices that there's a bag there and the mouth of that bag is open. He picks up the bag and looks and there are two hundred, **two hundred shekels of silver.** He's a soldier, he's never held that much money in his hand in one time. He picks it up and it runs through his fingers like, like water. He puts it back in the bag and holds it in his trembling hand and there he sees something flashing like fire. Is it a piece of cheese? No! It's a **wedge of gold, pure gold!** He picks it up, shines it, holds it. He's never seen that much gold at one time. He's got the silver, he's got the gold. And then there's something else, flashing, sparkling. It's an ornament, a beautiful ornament. It, it's on **a garment,** he picks it up, shakes the dust off it, why, that came from Babylon, why that's, that's beautiful. He holds it up. His heart is beating wildly. He says, This I want, this I will have, and he, he takes the silver and the gold, wraps it up in the Babylonian garment, makes his way back over the rubble, back to his tent, looks around, nobody has seen him yet he thinks. He goes into his tent and rolls back his sleeping mat and scoops out the dirt and he puts the Babylonian garment in there and he puts the 200 shekels of silver and he puts the wedge of gold and he covers it, then rolls out his sleeping mat and lies down and goes to sleep, at least he tries to sleep. There's a smile on his face, he says, I have done it, and nobody has seen me.

And he was right almost. There was one who had seen the whole thing—Almighty God, watching from heaven. What had he done? He had committed a trespass and a terrible trespass.

Conceived by Self-Reliance

Israel lost the battle as well because of self-reliance. Instead of bringing their full team, they instead gave an encore performance. They didn't bring their A-game to Ai. They didn't come prepared. Ai was a small city of 12000 people, 3000 soldiers. 15 miles away.

It looks like after their victory, they didn't seek the Lord. **They didn't worship before war.** They went out in the power of the flesh. The Ark of the covenant isn't mentioned until after their defeat.

Saints, we have to constantly worship in complete dependence and self-surrender to God. We cannot go in our own power.

SIN'S DECEPTION

Achan was one of Israel's soldiers in the battle of Jericho. We find out later that he's **a rich man already**, with great herds. He didn't need the money. But that's how the flesh is. It's deceitful.

...put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. —Ephesians 4:22-24

Why would a rich man think he needed more? And where was he going to spend that massive amount of gold and silver. And what about the Babylonian garment? Would his wife wear it to dinner? That's be suspicious. Sin was so deceitful that Achan was willing to get his family involved. He buried it *inside* his tent, not *outside* the camp.

One of God's commands was that the entire city of Jericho be destroyed. All metal articles (gold, silver, bronze, iron) were to be taken to the treasury of the Lord as the spoils of the conquest, but everything else was to be consumed by fire. The people were to be killed. Achan heard those commands along with everyone else. But when he entered the city and actually saw some of the forbidden spoil before him, he coveted what he saw and took it.⁴

SIN'S DISSATISFACTION

Another obvious fact is that Achan dissatisfied. There's a hunger for more and more and more, but you can never be filled. The sad thing is that God was in the process of leading Achan, along with the other members of the nation, into a new land of great wealth and opportunity. The godly, in normal circumstances, will prosper financially because of good decision making. He could have had it all, but with sin, nothing is ever enough.

Achan was inheriting a country in which each family was to possess its own land, own its own house, and sit beneath its own vines and fig tree. But Achan's mind was not on the blessings that lay ahead, but on what he could get now.⁵ Like Adam and Eve in the garden, he doubted God's goodness in fulfilling his promise. Achan's dissatisfaction, which was itself a sin, gave birth to disobedience.

⁴ Ibid., 58–59.

⁵ Ibid., 59.

This was a rich man that just wanted more. Sin will never be satisfied. The flesh can never have enough.

The Foolishness of Stealing from God

The foolishness of wanting more can ensnare any of us. It will halt your victory. Don't steal from God. You always get more out of less. You put God first and all the rest will follow (Mt 6:33). Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness!

God cares about what we give. God owns it all, but in the Old Testament they gave 10% at minimum. If they did that in the Old Testament, that's a good place to start, not out of compulsion but out of love. But listen to what God told them in the Old Testament.

Malachi 3:8, "Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and offerings."

If we hold anything back of our time or our treasure, we rob God. We to be completely satisfied and invested in him.

God cares about how we give. Remember Ananias and Saphira (Acts 5). They gave for show. We don't give for show. We don't let our left hand know what our right hand is doing. We give privately, but generously.

Giving means you are invested.

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is that's where your heart is and will be" (Mt 6:21).

You invest in a stock you will pay attention to the stock. It's wonderful to be satisfied in God alone, because it frees us up to give generously! We don't have to steal from God.

SIN'S BETRAYAL

Under the rules of war, a conqueror can seize the possessions of the one he defeats, and perhaps Achan was thinking along these lines. But this was his error. Achan may have been part of the invading army and may have wielded his sword effectively, but he was not the conqueror of Jericho. Nor were the other Jewish soldiers' conquerors. **God was the conqueror.** God was giving the city of Jericho to Israel's armies, and it was he (not Joshua or any of the other generals) who had demanded that spoil from the battle go into the temple treasury and that everything else be destroyed.⁶ That is why God explained the defeat to Joshua by saying, "Israel has sinned; they have **transgressed my covenant** that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have *stolen* and lied and put them among their own belongings" (7:11, *emphasis mine*).

We don't belong to ourselves. Our heart and our lives and our fellowship are God's.

"You were ransomed... not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." —1 Peter 1:18-19

Christian, everything you are and ever will be is God's. Walk in the Spirit. Sin steals that worship and that walk from you because ultimately, it's a betrayal of our loving heavenly Father and it is a betrayal of the cross.

⁶ Ibid., 60.

Now if you are sinning, come back to the Lord. Come clean. Don't stay silent. Don't let sin remain in your heart. It's a betrayal of the highest love possible.

3. THE LESSON OF THE STONES (7:22-26)

Here we see an awful price for sin, and we see a lesson from the stones.

Joshua 7:22-26 | So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and behold, it was hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. ²³ And they took them out of the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the people of Israel. And they laid them down before the Lord. ²⁴ And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and daughters and his oxen and donkeys and sheep and his tent and all that he had. And they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. ²⁵ And Joshua said, "Why did you bring trouble on us? The Lord brings trouble on you today." And all Israel stoned him with stones. They burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. ²⁶ And they raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. **Then the Lord turned from his burning anger.** Therefore, to this day the name of that place is called the Valley of Achor [*Trouble*].

THE MISERY MONUMENT

Here is a lesson from the pile of stones that were a monument to misery. Not just the man, but his sons, his daughters, his wife, they're all stoned and burned with fire. You say that's not fair, that's not right! Well you see, what happened is, he corrupted his family. Where did he hide this? Not outside the tent, in the tent. They had become partakers of this crime and now his children are destroyed because of his lie. And, mister, if you go to hell, that's one thing, but God have mercy upon you if you drag your sons and daughters into hell, too, because of your sin. Hidden sin, wicked sin, vile sin destroys loved ones.

"To whom much is given, much is required."

Judgment is always the harshest where revelation is the fullest. Achan had been given much. He saw the Jordan River parted. He saw God take down the walls of Jericho. How could Achan think that he would get away with his sin?

"Judgment always begins at the house of God."

We as a people have had more access to the truth and the Gospel than anyone in the history of the world. We have reaped the blessings as a result. There in the Valley of Achor, Trouble Valley, learn this lesson: sin always brings suffering and misery. It can lead to eternal damnation if a person won't repent and put their faith in Christ.

THE MIRACLE MONUMENT

We need to learn from these stones. Now the nation of Israel has two piles of stones. They piled up rocks as a monument of God parting the river. That's the Miracle Memorial of 12 stones at Gilgal. This is what happens when we follow God in faith.

Valley of Achor pile of stones is what happens when we live in unbelief. With unbelief you can only reap destruction. If you live in the flesh, you can only get misery. Foolishness will harden your heart and lead your life to tear apart. Bitterness and anger, of which we have all experienced, never got us one step closer to God or righteousness. Worry never helped any situation get better. Your despair and depression cannot get you out of the pit. But Jesus can. Stop living in the flesh. Stop living in unbelief. Walk in the Spirit. Walk in his joy, his love, his peace. Learn from the stones.

You need to be putting up Miracle monuments, not Misery Monuments.

Conclusion

I want you to imagine a scene that did not happen. I want you to see Achan as he plants all of that in his tent there and covers it up, rolls out his bed mat over it and tries to sleep and then he says, “Oh Lord, what have I done? How could I have been so foolish? Wife, wake up, children, get up. Pray, look what we've done, how could we do such a thing? Dig it up, put it, give it to me. Where's Joshua's tent? Joshua, get up, get up, Joshua. Joshua, let me tell you what I've done. Oh, Joshua, I was a fool! God said not to do this but I've done it. Joshua, here's the silver. Joshua, here's the gold, here's the garment. Pray for me, Joshua, I've sinned against God. Pray for me, Joshua, I've sinned against God. Joshua, let's get an animal, let's make a blood sacrifice. I need to be forgiven.” Would God have forgiven him? Absolutely.

“He that covers his sin shall not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes it shall have mercy.” –Proverbs 28:13

Justice is God giving us what we deserve. Mercy is God not giving us what we deserve. We don't need justice, we need mercy. Look to the cross, and with the blood of Christ comes rivers and oceans of mercy! Our sin is great, but his mercy is more!