

EPISODE NO. 101

Joshua 7:1-15

The Sin of Achan

1 However, the Israelites sinned regarding the forbidden things. There was a man named Achan, from the tribe of Judah. (He was the son of Carmi and the grandson of Zimri and the descendant of Zerah.) Because Achan stole some of the things that belonged to Yahweh, Yahweh became very angry at the Israelites.

2 Joshua sent some men from Jericho to Ai. (Ai was near Beth-Aven, east of Bethel.) He told them: “Go up to Ai and spy on that area.” So, the men went to spy on Ai.

3 Later, they came back to Joshua. They said to him, “There are only a few men in Ai. We do not need all of our army to defeat them there. Merely send up two or three thousand men to strike it down. There is no need to send all of our forces there.” 4 So, only about 3,000 men of the army went up to Ai. But the people of Ai defeated the Israelites badly. 5 The men of Ai chased them away. They chased them from the city gate all the way to the Shebarim. They killed about 36 Israelites. They struck them down on the slopes, as they were going down the hill. The courage of the Israelite army failed. They became very afraid.

6 Then Joshua tore his clothes to show how upset he was. And, he laid on the ground face-down in the presence of the Holy Chest of Yahweh. He stayed there until evening — Joshua, along with the elders of Israel. They also threw dirt upon their heads showing how depressed they were.

7 Then Joshua said, “O Lord Yahweh, You clearly brought our people across the Jordan River. Why did you bring us this far and then permit the Amorites to defeat us? I wish we had been content to settle down on the other side of the Jordan River! 8 O Lord, there is nothing I can say. Israel has been beaten by its enemies! 9 The Canaanites and all the other people who live in this country will hear about this. They will surround us and kill all of us! Then what will You do for Your own great Name?”

10 But Yahweh interrupted Joshua, “Stand up! Why are you lying down on your face! 11 Israel has sinned! They have also broken My covenant which I commanded them to obey! They violated the ban! They have stolen from Me. They have lied, too. They have taken those forbidden things and put them among their own possessions. 12 That is why the Israelites cannot defeat their enemies. Instead, they will turn from the fight

and run away. They have come under this condemnation. I will not be with you people again if you do not destroy these forbidden items from among you!

13 “Now go! Have the people make themselves holy for Me. Tell them: ‘Dedicate yourselves to God, in preparation for tomorrow. The Always-Present One, the God of Israel, says: “Forbidden items are among you, O Israel! You will never defeat your enemies until you get rid of those things from among you!”

14 “ “Tomorrow morning, you must all stand accountable to God. All the tribes must stand in His presence, one-by-one. The Always-Present One will show which tribe it is. Then that tribe must stand alone before Him. Then Yahweh will show which clan it is from that tribe. Then that clan must stand alone before Him. Then Yahweh will choose which family it is from that clan. And that family must stand alone in His presence. Then Yahweh will look at that family, person-by-person. 15 The one who has stolen the forbidden items will be set on fire! And, everything that belongs to him will be destroyed along with him! HE has broken the Covenant of Yahweh. HE has done a shameful thing among the people of Israel!” ’ ”