

“Trading Places”

Lessons for Life from Joshua, Jericho, Rahab & Achan Joshua 1-7

I. Reading Old Testament Narrative

Read Carefully, Observe Closely, Grasp Intendedly – Joshua 1:8

- A. Joshua 1 – God exhorts Joshua to be courageous and to lead Israel across the Jordan River to victory in the Promised Land = Conquest!
- B. Joshua 2 – The story of the Conquest slows down, interrupted by the episode about _____ the _____.
- C. Joshua 3-5 – The Israelites prepare to attack Jericho, Rahab’s city.
- D. Joshua 6 – The miraculous capture of Jericho.
Rahab appears again; with her family and her possessions (6:17, 23, 25).
Her fate contrasts that of everyone else in Jericho (6:21).
- E. Joshua 7 – A new character named _____ appears.
An Israelite; steals the loot devoted to God; causes Israel to lose next battle; Joshua finds out; he and family and “cattle, donkeys, and sheep” are executed.
 - 1. “Cattle, donkeys, and sheep” also specifically mentioned in 6:21 regarding the destruction of Jericho.
 - a. Is the death of Achan being _____ to the destruction of Jericho?
 - b. The ***destruction*** of his family is emphasized, but the ***deliverance*** of Rahab’s family is emphasized in her story.
 - c. Is there a connection? Are Rahab and Achan perhaps being contrasted with each other?

2. In Joshua 7, we realize that Achan is the _____ of Rahab.
- Rahab and Achan are the only two new characters introduced into the story in the first 7 chapters of Joshua.
 - Their stories form _____ around the chapters dealing with the fall of Jericho.
 - The details of Rahab's story in Joshua 2 *intentionally* contrast with the details of Achan's story in Joshua 7, with the destruction of Jericho as the background.

Rahab – Joshua 2	Achan – Joshua 7
	Man
	Hebrew, Tribe of Judah, best
	Respectable
	Should prosper, but died
	Family & property perished
	His nation prospers
	Hides loot from God
	Hides loot under his tent
	No fear of God of Israel
	Seen God's work, disobeys
	Tent is burned
	Cattle, sheep, donkeys perish
	Dies like a Canaanite

3. In essence, Rahab and Achan _____. She becomes like an Israelite and lives among God's people. She even shows up in the genealogy of _____. Achan, by contrast, a member of Israel, dies like a Canaanite.
- The destruction of Achan and his family and possessions, parallels the destruction of _____.

b. The major difference between Rahab and Achan is their _____.

1. Rahab takes God _____, placing her faith in Him and risking her life to protect the two Israelite spies.
2. Achan treats God as if He _____ and assumes he can blatantly disobey God and not suffer any _____.

F. The stories of Rahab and Achan bracket the destruction of Jericho. Note the irony: the book of Joshua begins with the Conquest and annihilation of the Canaanites by the Israelites, but the first two people we meet in the story are _____ to the _____.

1. The Canaanite Rahab lives and the Israelite Achan dies.
2. There is more to the Conquest than just the destruction of the Canaanites.
3. There are critical issues of individual _____ and _____.
4. There is more to faith in God than just nationality or _____.
5. Regarding faith and obedience to God: A Canaanite harlot can _____ it and a respectable Israelite can _____ it.

II. Theological Principles in Joshua 1-7

- A. God sees past _____ and saves unusual people who place their faith in Him.
- B. Deliverance is based on true faith, demonstrated in _____, and not by mere externals such as race or religious tradition.
- C. Mere association with the _____ (for Achan, it was his association with the nation of Israel), rather than true faith in Jesus Christ will not result in salvation.
- D. God is a God of _____, but _____ comes on those who trivialize God and treat God as He does not exist.

III. Application for Life from Joshua 1-7

- A. We tend to judge people based on externals. We meet a clean-cut, middle-class American and think “what a great Christian he or she would make.”

Likewise, when we see someone involved in open sinful activity like drugs, gambling, stealing, immorality, we tend to write them off and assume “*they* could never become a Christians.”

This attitude is wrong because God delights in saving the _____
_____. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, says “such were some of you, *but* were...”

- B. God wants us to have the same attitude toward people as He does. There are no _____ candidates for coming to salvation in Christ.
- C. As God’s people we must approach God, and the things of God, with Rahab’s serious attitude, not with Achan’s cavalier attitude.



“Trading Places”

RAHAB & ACHAN IN JOSHUA 2 & 7

True or False?

“All fruitful time in the Word of God leaves us with something to **believe** and something to **obey**.”

(The two legs of walking with God!)

Food for Thought

“Biblical narratives force us to do something with God, for better or for worse. They leave us to believe or disbelieve, to obey or disobey. They draw us to the Lord or repel us. Either way, we’re forced to think, feel, say, and do something in relation to God.”

Conquest Interrupted

The story of
Rahab the *Harlot*

Joshua 7

A new character appears
named *Achan*.

Compare - Contrast

Is the death of Achan
being compared to the
destruction of Jericho?

Joshua 7

Achan is the

exact opposite of Ruth!

Their stories are **bookends**
around the fall of Jericho.

Intentional Contrast

Woman, Canaanite, prostitute,
should die but prospers, family &
property saved, nation destroyed,
hides spies from king, hides spies
under flax on roof, fears God of
Israel, only heard but obeys, city is
burned, cattle-sheep-donkeys perish,
like an Israelite, she lives.

Rahab & Achan

“trade places”

Rahab even appears in
the genealogy of

Jesus.

Parallels

The destruction of Achan and his family and possessions parallels the destruction of *Jericho*.



Major Difference

between Rahab and
Achan is their

attitude toward God.

Attitude:

Rahab takes God *seriously*.

Achan treats God as if He *does not exist*; and assumes no *consequences* for his sin.

Irony

Book of Joshua begins with great Conquest; first two people we meet are exceptions to the rule.

Critical Issues

Faith and Obedience:

More to faith in God than
just nationality or
respectability.

Faith & Obedience

A Canaanite harlot can *find* it and a respectable Israelite can *miss* it.

Theological Principles

God sees past *superficial*
externals and saves
unusual people who
place their faith in Him.

Theological Principles

Deliverance is based on true faith, demonstrated in **actions**, not externals like race or religious traditions.

Theological Principles

Mere association with the **church**, rather than true faith in Jesus Christ, will not result in salvation.

Theological Principles

God is a God of grace,
but judgment comes on
those who trivialize God
and treat Him as if He
does not exist.

Application for Life

God delights in saving the
most unusual people.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Application for Life

There are no
unlikely candidates for
coming to salvation in
Christ.

Trading Places

Rahab and Achan
“traded places.”

Christ appeared in order
to “trade places” with
sinners at the cross.

Fruitful Time in Word

Something to *believe*?

Something to *obey*?

Food for Thought

Biblical narratives force us to do something with God, for better or worse. What will you think, feel, say, and do in relation to God?

Encouragement

“The promise of change we have been given does not guarantee a great velocity, but a great destination.

People sanctify slowly, from an earthly perspective.”

1 Corinthians 15:51-52