

SPEAKERS

March 6 - Ken Storm, Holy Communion

March 13 - Mark Sunnarborg

March 20 - Ken Storm

March 27 - Charles Korhonen, Potluck Meal Following Service

CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Service: 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

CONTACT

Website:
www.tapiolachurch.org

Mailing: P.O. Box 531,
Houghton, MI 49931

Location:
17602 N. Lake Ave.,
Tapiola, MI 49916
(906) 334-2766

Contact: Ken Storm, Pastor
(906) 482-3234

Achan

"And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few." - Joshua 7:3

The children of Israel had just won a miraculous victory over Jericho without much effort on their part. So, brimming with self-confidence, they set out to take their next city, Ai, without consulting God. Predictably, instead of rolling over Ai, they were soundly defeated and humiliated by Ai. The Israelites could not imagine why they had lost to someone seemingly weaker and inferior to them. They lost because God was not with them. Had they petitioned the Lord before attacking Ai, they would have learned from God that there was sin in their camp that first needed to be forgiven.

It wasn't so much that there was sin amongst the Israelites, for we all sin every day, but it was that God had specifically prohibited anyone from taking anything from Jericho for personal benefit *"...lest ye make yourself accursed...and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it"* (Joshua 6:18). Apparently, this was a one-time prohibition as God allowed the personal taking of spoil when Ai was finally defeated: *"... the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves"* (Joshua 8:2). The chief problem was that Achan had outraged God by ignoring His Word and had secreted away some of the spoils of war for himself. Although he knew that he had transgressed God's Word, Achan chose to ignore the pleading voice of God within his heart, thinking that no one would know, much less care.

At first glance, it appears that everyone was held equally accountable for Achan's sin: *"... for Achan...took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel"* (Joshua 7:1). However, because each person is responsible for his own sins and not that of someone else, the Israelites must have committed another sin that also angered God. They did. Their sin was not in the taking of spoil (which they didn't) but it was in their neglect to pray to God for guidance before they advanced on Ai: *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"* (Philippians 4:6). As already mentioned, all would have been well had they followed this guidance.

As it happened with Adam and Eve, Achan eventually found it necessary to confess his sin too: *"...I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done"* (Joshua 7:20). We see that he openly admitted to the others what troubled his conscience, as the Word of God tells all people to do: *"And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing"* (Leviticus 5:5). God, therefore, forgave Achan: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9). But, as with King David who was punished his entire life for committing adultery with Bathsheba and causing Uriah's death, Achan, though forgiven, was also punished when *"...all Israel stoned him with stones"* (Joshua 7:25).

We learn from this account that believers will face many trials and tribulations throughout their lives and some of us, like Achan and David, may face an untimely

death or a life-time of punishment though the sin was forgiven. But we have God's promise that despite what happens in life He will never eternally forsake us if we, like Achan and David, "*...lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and...run with patience the race that is set before us*" (Hebrews 12:1). Clearly, believers are to consult God about every facet of their life because it is He who will lead them and will, most importantly, let them know if there is sin in their life that needs to be addressed. Therefore, we are to openly confess only those sins that God brings to our attention; we are not to search for sin on our own. King David, a life-long child of God, lived by this maxim; "*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*" (Psalm 139:23-24). So should we.

God's Peace,
Charles Korhonen