

Introduction

It is ironic to me when kids won't share their snacks with their siblings. Even more ironic, sometimes they balk at sharing their snacks with a parent. After all, I probably bought that snack for them. If I want a skittle, those skittles really belong to me anyway.

How much truer is that in relation to God? What do I have that does not belong to God? Everything I own is from God. My body and my life are from God. My family is from God. My circumstances are from God.

More often than not, we tend to view the gifts of God as something we deserve. We also tend to view the things God tells us to avoid as something we deserve. After all, my life is my own.

Fellowship with God

My life is not my own ([1 Cor 6:19-20](#)). God created me for His own glory ([Isa 43:7](#)). God gives me life ([Acts 17:25](#)). It is right for me to present myself as a living sacrifice to God ([Rom 12:1](#)).

Context: When God gave Jericho to Israel, He commanded them to devote everything to Him. Destroy everything except Rahab's household and the things that were devoted to the tabernacle treasury. Israel failed to fully devote Jericho to the Lord. [Joshua 7-8](#) describes that sin and the consequence of that sin.

Main Idea: [Joshua 7-8](#) reminds us that **To remain in fellowship with God, we must continually devote ourselves to Him.**

The Consequence of Sin

First, we read that **The consequence of sin is separation from God.**

Context - Ai

In [Joshua 7:2-5](#), Israel went to battle against a small city, Ai. Because it was so small, they sent only 3000 men to fight. Ai defeated Israel and 36 men died. God had given them Jericho, but not Ai. So Joshua prayed and asked God why He allowed this defeat.

Israel has sinned

So, what led to Israel's defeat? [Joshua 7:10-11](#) “10 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.”

(11) Who did God say had sinned? Although we will read that one man had sinned, the entire community was held accountable for sin. *Why was Israel guilty though only one man had sinned?* Although we tend to reduce fellowship with God to an individual relationship, Scripture frequently describes it as a community relationship.

Representation is an important teaching in Scripture. One sinner can represent the entire community. Adam represented all of humanity in the Garden. [Romans 5:12](#) “... sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin...” [Romans 5:15](#) “... many died through one man’s trespass ...” [Romans 5:17](#) “...because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man...” [Romans 5:18](#) “... one trespass led to condemnation for all men ...” [Romans 5:19](#) “... by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners ...” **Achan** represented the entire nation.

(11) Of what sin was Israel guilty? They had taken the **devoted things** from Jericho. [Joshua 6:18](#) “18 But you, keep yourselves from the things **devoted** to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel **a thing for destruction** and bring trouble upon it.”

God NOT with us

What would be the consequence of this sin? [Joshua 7:12-13](#) “12 Therefore the people of Israel **cannot stand** before their enemies. They **turn their backs** 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.”’”

(12) *What was the consequence of sin in relation to Israel's enemies?* Israel would not be able to **stand** against their enemies (including Ai). This is a reversal of [Deuteronomy 7:24](#) “24 And he will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under heaven. No one shall be able to **stand** against you until you have destroyed them.”

(12) *What was the consequence of sin in relation to Israel's fellowship with God?* God said He would not be with them. This is a major contrast to [Joshua 1:5](#) “5 No man shall be able to **stand** before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so **I will be with you**. I will not leave you or forsake you.”

One of the consequences of Adam’s sin was separation from God. [Genesis 3:8](#) “8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the **presence** of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.” When Scripture discusses the tabernacle or temple (even in reference to Jesus or the church), it usually points back to the Garden of Eden, the place where God dwelt among His people. [Genesis 3:23](#) “23 therefore the Lord God sent him **out from the garden** of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.” **The consequence of sin is separation from God.**

Coveting

Next, we read that **Achan’s sin began in his heart.**

Identifying the sinner

How did they identify who was guilty? [Joshua 7:14-15](#) “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.’ ””

(14) *How did God say they would know who had stolen the devoted things?* They would cast lots by tribe, clan, and household. *How could they trust something random like casting lots?* [Proverbs 16:33](#) “33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.”

(15) *What was to be done to the guilty man?* He was to be “burned with fire.” The consequence would be **death**. God promised that death would be the consequence of sin before Adam sinned. [Genesis 2:17](#) “17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the **day** that you eat of it you shall surely **die**.”” **Satan** promised the opposite. [Genesis 3:4](#) “4 But the serpent said to the woman, “You will **not** surely **die**.” Adam continued to live beyond the garden ([Gen 4:1ff](#)). *Was Satan right that Adam would not die if he sinned against God?* Although Adam’s body remained alive, spiritually he was eternally dead. [Ephesians 2:1](#) “1 And you were **dead** in the trespasses and sins” [Romans 5:12](#) “12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through **one man**, and **death through sin**, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—”

[Joshua 7:16–18](#) “16 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.”

(18) *Who did the lot identify as the guilty man?* Achan (from Judah, Zerah, Zabdi) was identified by lot.

Saw, coveted, took, hid

What led to Achan’s sin? [Joshua 7:19–21](#) “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, 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.””

(21) *What did Achan take from Jericho?* He took a cloak, 200 shekels of silver, and a 50-shekel bar of gold. [Joshua 6:18–19](#) “18 But you, keep yourselves from the things **devoted** to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you **take** any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. 19 But all **silver and gold**, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are **holy** to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord.”” God **warned** against this. [Deuteronomy 7:24–26](#) “24 And he will give their kings into

your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under heaven. No one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. 25 The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not **covet** the **silver** or the **gold** that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. 26 And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your **house** and become **devoted to destruction** like it. You shall utterly **detest and abhor** it, for it is devoted to destruction.”

(21) *What four verbs describe the process of Achan stealing the devoted things?*
Achan saw, coveted, took, and hid the devoted things. This is a great description of sin. Achan sinned by **taking** the devoted things ([Josh 7:1, 11](#)). But Achan’s sin began in his **heart**.

We see similar actions in the Garden of Eden. Eve saw, desired (coveted), took, then hid. [Genesis 3:6](#) “6 So when the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be **desired** to make one wise, she **took** of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.” [Genesis 3:8](#) “8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife **hid** themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”

We cannot always determine what temptation we **see**. However, we **can** determine what we **set our eyes on**. Temptation that leads to sin does not come from others. Temptation only produces sin when we **set our desires on sin**. [James 1:14–15](#) “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**.” **Sin begins in the heart.**

Judgment

Third, we read that **God condemned Achan to death**.

Death Penalty

How did God address Achan’s sin? [Joshua 7:22–25](#) “22 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.”

(24) *Who died because of Achan's sin?* First, 36 men died fighting against Ai because of Achan's sin ([Josh 7:5](#)). Once Achan's sin was discovered, he was killed, along with his animals and his children. Just like Achan **represented** the nation by his sin, he also **represented** his family by his sin. I suspect that Achan's family actually shared in his sin because God had specifically commanded that children should not be put to death because of their father's sin ([Deut 24:16](#)). [See dissertation]

God relented

How did God respond to Israel purging the sinner? [Joshua 7:26](#) “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.”

(26) *From what did God turn away after Achan's death?* God turned from His anger. That is, God burned with anger (wrath) against Israel because of Achan's sin. After Achan had been killed, God's wrath was satisfied (propitiated).

We will not read [Joshua 8](#) that describes Israel's victory over Ai and Bethel. However, there is an important detail in that battle. [Joshua 8:2](#) “2 And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its livestock you shall take as plunder for yourselves....” [Joshua 8:26–27](#) “26 But Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had devoted all the inhabitants of Ai to destruction. 27 Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their plunder, according to the word of the Lord that he commanded Joshua.” **God always intended to give Israel the plunder of the land.** [Deuteronomy 6:10–11](#) “10 “And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good **cities** that you did not build, 11 and **houses full of all good things** that you did not fill, and **cisterns** that you did not dig, and **vineyards** and olive trees that you did not plant...”

New Covenant

Adam

What are some similarities between Achan's and Adam's sin? They saw, desired, took, and hid what God forbade. They were separated from God because of their sin. They died because of their sin. They were representative of the group, so others died as a result of their sin.

All of these things apply to our sin as well. We sin because we desire sin. The outcome of our sin is separation from God and eternal death.

Jesus

How was Jesus's response to temptation different than Achan's response? Jesus was tempted by sin like every human ([Heb 2:18](#); [4:15](#); [Matt 4:1-11](#)). Jesus did not sin ([Heb 4:15](#); [1 Pet 2:22](#); [1 John 3:5](#)). Jesus submitted to the Father in perfect obedience ([Phil 2:8](#); [Heb 5:8](#); [10:9](#)).

Why did Jesus die if He did not sin? Jesus died **representatively**. [Isaiah 53:11](#) "... he shall bear their iniquities." [Isaiah 53:12](#) "... he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors." [Hebrews 9:28](#) "...Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many ..." [1 Peter 2:24](#) "24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree ..." [1 Peter 3:18](#) "18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous..."

In Christ

How does Jesus's representative death affect the consequences of your sin? Through faith in Jesus we are **reconciled with God**. [2 Corinthians 5:18-19](#) "18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them..." [Romans 5:10](#) "10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." [Romans 5:1](#) "1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Through faith in Jesus we have **eternal life**. [John 3:16](#) “16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” [Romans 5:17–18](#) “17 For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. 18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.”

[Romans 5:21](#) “21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” [Romans 6:23](#) “23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Response

Practically speaking, how should we respond to what [Joshua 7-8](#) teaches about devotion to God and the consequences of sin?

First, we should **continually repent** of sin. [1 John 1:6](#) “6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.” [1 John 1:9](#) “9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Second, we should **continually obey** God. [1 John 2:3](#) “3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.” [1 John 2:5](#) “5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him:”

Third, we **continually desire** God. [1 John 2:15–16](#) “15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.”

To remain in fellowship with God, we must continually devote ourselves to Him.