

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

A man named J. R. Miller once wrote, "The truth of personal responsibility is one of tremendous importance. We don't escape it by being in a crowd, being part of a family, or of a congregation. No one but ourselves can live our lives, do our work, meet our obligations, or bear our burdens. And no one will stand for us at last, before God, to give an account of our deeds."

A great biblical example of this principle is the story of Achan, in the early chapters of Joshua. The nation of Israel had just won a fantastic battle at Jericho and now were at the footsteps of a city named Ai. It should have been an easy win for the army of the Lord. But the people of Ai trounced the Israelites, slaughtering hundreds.

When Joshua went before the Lord for an explanation, God's answer was simple: **Joshua 7:11-12 "Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. And they have even taken some of the things under the ban and have both stolen and deceived. Moreover, they have also put *them* among their own things. "Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; ..."**

Back at Jericho, God gave the Israelites a very simple instruction, destroy everything and take no treasure for yourselves. But Achan decided he would disobey that edict, take some of the city's riches, and then hide his disobedience within his tent. He figured no one would find out, trusting the number of people involved and the chaos of battle to cover his sin. But Achan hadn't considered the all-seeing, all-knowing eyes of God. And the harder he tried to conceal his sin, the bigger a mess he created for himself, his family, and his nation.

Each of us is responsible for our own tasks and obligations. And one day, we will all stand alone before God to give an accounting for our own obedience or disobedience.