

Joshua 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel.

Analysis

Achan is identified through the lot process, demonstrating that nothing is hidden from God. Joshua's address—'My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him'—combines pastoral compassion ('my son') with covenantal urgency. The phrase 'give glory to God' means to acknowledge God's righteousness by confessing sin. Confession glorifies God by admitting He is right to judge. Joshua's approach models confronting sin with both firmness and dignity—he doesn't humiliate Achan but calls him to honor God through truthfulness. The command 'tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me' presses for full disclosure. The semicolon creates urgency—confess now, hide nothing. This reflects biblical principle that genuine confession requires specificity—not vague admission of 'mistakes' but honest acknowledgment of particular sins. The passage shows that even when sin is divinely exposed, human confession still matters—it's the path to whatever restoration is possible.

Historical Context

The public identification of Achan through lots before all Israel served multiple purposes: demonstrating God's omniscience, validating the judgment process, and teaching the entire community about sin's seriousness. Joshua's phrase 'my son' shows leadership marked by relationship, not merely authoritarian command. In

ancient Near Eastern culture, confession before execution served both spiritual (reconciling the guilty with deity) and social (validating justice before the community) purposes. The requirement to 'make confession' wasn't for God's information—He already knew—but for Achan's soul and Israel's instruction. Church history shows this pattern: even manifest sin requires personal confession for spiritual health. The Reformers emphasized that confession glorifies God by acknowledging His justice and our dependence on His mercy. Achan's case is complicated because while confession is commanded, no reprieve from judgment follows—some sins bear temporal consequences even when spiritually confessed.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does confession 'give glory to God' even when consequences remain?
2. What does Joshua's pastoral approach (calling Achan 'my son') teach about confronting sin with both truth and compassion?
3. Why does God require verbal confession even when He already knows our sin?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה H1961	הַנִּלְכָּד H3920	בְּחַרָם H2764	יִשָּׂרף H8313
And it shall be	that he that is taken	with the accursed thing	shall be burnt
וְאֵשׁ H784	אֶת H853	כָּל H3605	אֲשֶׁר H834
with fire			
וְהָיָה H3588	לְכָל H0	אֲשֶׁר H834	יִשָּׂרף H8313
he and all that he hath	because he hath transgressed	the covenant	of the LORD
וְהָיָה H3588	אֶת H853	בְּרִית H1285	יְהוָה H3068
and because he hath wrought	folly	in Israel	
וְהָיָה H3588	אֶת H853	בְּרִית H1285	יְהוָה H3068
and because he hath wrought	folly	in Israel	
וְהָיָה H3588	אֶת H853	בְּרִית H1285	יְהוָה H3068

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 34:7 (References Israel): And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

Judges 20:6 (References Israel): And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and folly in Israel.