

A Door of Hope in the Valley of Achor

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Recovering from Failure on the Inheritance Side of the Jordan

Hosea 2:14-15 (ESV)

14 “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.

15 And there I will give her her vineyards and **make the Valley of Achor a door of hope**. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.

Hosea reveals the dealings of the Lord with His unfaithful people will be to:

1. draw them
2. speak tenderly to them
3. give her vineyards
4. turn their low place of trouble into access to hope

Achor means "trouble". What “trouble” is this Achor?

Joshua 7 is where we first see this Valley of Achor.

Joshua 7:1-13, 18-21, 24-26 (ESV)

1 But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel.

2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, “Go up and spy out the land.” And the men went up and spied out Ai.

3 And they returned to Joshua and said to him, “Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few.”

4 So about three thousand men went up there from the people. And they fled before the men of Ai,

5 and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six of their men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they put dust on their heads.

7 And Joshua said, “Alas, O Lord God, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan!

8 O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies!

9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?"

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.

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."

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.

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."

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.

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.

The "trouble" was the trouble of personal sin which had led to a defeated experience against Ai.

We must learn how to Recover from Failure on the "Inheritance Side" of the Jordan.

Hint: it's all about God's presence.

It is one thing to recover from failure on the desert side of the Jordan.

But quite another thing to recover from failure on the inheritance side because the shame and guilt are stronger!!

They were in the Promised Land, eating it's amazing provision, and winning stunning battles.

All is good and successfull, until the failure and defeat at Ai.

Oh, the anguish of Joshua - cloths-tearing, dirt-bathing, all day lament with his elders. But is God satisfied with this? No!

God's response to the day-long groveling in despair is - GET UP!!!

God shows them what the "trouble" is.

STOP! LAYING THERE IS DEFEAT! GET UP, DESTROY WHAT IS DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION AND LET'S GET MOVING!!

Achan is found with:

1. a robe from Shinar (Babylon)
2. 200 shekels of silver
3. a 50 shekel bar of gold

The call against sin is aggressive because sin separates us from God's Presence (Romans 8 – the Law of Sin and Death).

After these things devoted to destruction are destroyed (as they should have been in the first place) Israel goes again to face the enemy, Ai, which ends in a powerful victory!!

The shame is actually stronger after moments of defeat that follow seasons of breakthrough and revival.

Neither despair, guilt, heart condemnation, nor self-loathing has ever delivered anyone from the defeated position.

It is only total surrender, yielding to the Spirit, and aggressive faith in Christ as your righteousness that leads to victory.

Jesus never asks for your help to pay fully for your sin. You don't PAY for sins! You receive the benefit of payment for sins.

He never asks for your help to OVERCOME sin! He asks for you to receive HIS POWER so you can receive HIS overcoming of sin.

Bottom line: God's not looking for the Christian to get "better" at battling sin. He's looking for the believer to get better at ALLOWING JESUS, the non-sinner and overcomer, to live through the believer and it's JESUS who overcomes the sin.

You do not deal with failure on the inheritance side of Jordan by laying down in groveling defeat lamenting your situation.

You deal with it by swiftly removing and destroying the "devoted to destruction" things in your life and head right back into the battle to gain the victory that is yours in Christ.

1 John 2:1-2 (ESV)

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The Lord's word to you, if you have had this experience is - GET UP!

1. Repent and confess to the Lord openly!

1 John 1:9 (ESV)

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. Destroy the devoted-to-destruction area in your life.

Matthew 3:8 (ESV)

8 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

3. Do not dwell in heart condemning despair.

1 John 3:20 (ESV)

20 for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

4. Face your enemy-temptation in Christ by the Spirit with confidence, expecting and believing for victory.

Galatians 5:16 (ESV)

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

5. Prophecy to the enemy is what is about to happen

Micha 7:8 (ESV)

8 Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me.

Today, the Lord wants to make your "Valley of Achor" a "Door of Hope"!

Psalm 51:10-12 (ESV)

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your **Holy Spirit** from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.