Joshua â?? (A Personal Encounter) 4

Description

A Personal Encounter from the book of Joshua

After our victory at Jericho, well to be more precise Jehovahâ??s victory because all we did was circle the walls on foot in obedience to Joshua, we found ourselves in a very buoyant mood, WE, we thought had won a great victory and we were certain that God was on our side and that nothing could or would stand in our way. In hindsight it would have been beneficial to do some reflection and offer thanks to our God Jehovah, but oh no off we set, taking matters into our own hands against the next settlement Ai. Well what a grave mistake, not only were we well and truly beaten we were humiliated (Joshua 7:1-9) .

As we returned to our tents, with our tails between our legs and good men lost, both dead and disillusioned, our company, that is our community was in pieces, asking why has God allowed this?

This was our first experience of failure since the miracle of salvation from the wilderness via the Jordon river.

On reflection we realised that our failure was due, in part to the fact that we did not operate in unity but acted out of brazen exuberance, but also because of one manâ??s greed, in short, sin. He saw, he coveted, he took and he hid. I was reminded of the stories of Adam, (a Hebrew word meaning mankind) that had been handed down to us about how they had sinned against God the Almighty and had paid the ultimate price of separation and who were banished from His presence.

Oh were we really in need of revival at this point. We had no idea what to do, even Joshua, our leader was in despair. He was on the ground, covered in dust as a sign of remorse and humility before God. Then, as if revived he stood up and said â??go and sanctify yourselvesâ?• (Joshua 7:13) . In other words we were told to examine our own hearts and see if we were justified, that is centrally aligned to Gods ways. This was a real personal challenge to me as I had begun to realise that, whilst I did not always have the answers to who our God was and what He was like, I knew that He required my full attention and that my life was not here on this earth for my own greed and self satisfaction. So we went to our tents and we searched our inner self to make peace with God.

We all returned the next day fully expecting Joshua to say â??it is ok God has heard your cries of repentanceâ?• but he just said there is sin in the camp and we have to deal with this before we can move on. What transpired was that one man, yes just one man, had contravened the command â??not to covet and take what is not yoursâ?• (Joshua 7:16-26) . We did what was right in our culture at the time and purged this transgression from our midst, we put him, his family and all he had to death. I remember thinking at the time if only one man could die to put an end to this barbaric, self destruction. Our only way of redeeming ourselves was to sacrifice, it was all we knew. It is unthinkable that one man would even contemplate death for all of depraved humanity. But then I stopped dreaming and started to focus on the fact that we worshipped a mighty God and that ALL things are possible to those who

â??seek first the kingdom of Godâ?•.

Dealing with this kind of failure as an individual and as a community was a very hard lesson but one that was necessary as what we learned was that God was on the side of the man or woman who puts their trust in Him. We began to realise that God was more concerned with His people, His â??called out onesâ?• than He was with victories and personal triumphs. Again we realised that God primarily wants worshippers before He wants workers.

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Category

1. Joshua - A Personal Encounter

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