

GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 21

QUESTION 1

- a) Joshua was wrong to suggest that the attempt to conquer Canaan has failed and they would have been better off not trying in the first place (**verses 7-9**).
- b) Joshua was looking in the wrong place for an explanation for this disaster. It was not a matter of the faithfulness of God but the faithlessness of the people.
- c) The people had been warned in **6:18**.

QUESTION 2

- a) God had made a covenant with the Israelites on Mount Sinai. It was a continuation and development of that made earlier with Abraham.
- b) A covenant made between two parties usually had conditions attached to it on the part of each.
- c) On one hand we can confidently state that the covenant is unilateral on the part of God. His purpose was to redeem a people for Himself; a purpose and plan determined before the creation of the world and finding its fulfilment in Christ's death and resurrection.
- d) However, there is an obligation on the recipient of the promises. The Israelites were required to obey God and keep His Commandments (**Exodus 24:7-8**).
- e) Of course ultimately they could not keep their side of the covenant (neither can we); and therefore God provides for this by sending His Son who perfectly kept the law and became the sacrifice on behalf of those who didn't.

QUESTION 3

- a) God does not leave Joshua and the people floundering. He reveals to them the cause of His displeasure.
- b) This shows that God is looking to restore His people.
- c) Verse 12 shows the consequences of sin. First of all separation from God. How terrible when God removes Himself from their presence.
- d) Notice that the whole nation is affected. Verse 1 tells us that *“the people of Israel broke faith...”* and we see in verse 12 that *“therefore the people of Israel cannot stand...”*
- e) Until this is resolved they will live forever in defeat. Verse 13 *“You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you”*.

QUESTION 4

- a) Whilst his sin has affected the whole nation, Achan nevertheless has primarily sinned against God!
- b) Repentance can only come when we realise that we have displeased the Creator of all things; the Sovereign God.
- c) We also note here the definite breaking of the commandments not to steal or to covet.

QUESTION 5

- a) Breaking God’s covenant is a big deal. God is a just God and cannot overlook sin (Rom 6:23 the wages of sin is death).
- b) The extreme nature of the punishment reveals that sin has to be dealt with in proportion to it. The problem had to be purged from among the people.
- c) God requires full obedience from His people.
- d) The problem is that we are not able to give that.
- e) Jesus took our place and turned God’s wrath away at the cross. The cross is the proportionate response to God’s wrath on sin. That is why the sacrifice of Christ is so central to the theme of God’s justice.

QUESTION 6

- a) We see here that once dealt with, the people are in fellowship with him again. There is restoration when sin is dealt with.
- b) A sneak preview of **8:1** will help us see more of this!
- c) God turns this valley of Achor (trouble) in a door of hope (**Hosea 2:14-15**).