

What is the significance of the Valley of Achor in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Valley-of-Achor.html>

The Valley of Achor, situated northwest of Jericho on the northern border of the tribe of Judah, is the place where the Israelites executed Achan and his household. Achor means “trouble,” “affliction,” or “taboo” and implies a severe kind of trouble. To understand how the “Valley of Trouble” received its name, we turn to the book of Joshua and the story of Achan’s sin.

After Israel experienced a great victory at the battle of Jericho, Achan, a member of the tribe of Judah, directly disobeyed the Lord’s command and kept some of the spoils from Jericho for himself. God had ordered all the spoils to be consecrated to the Lord (Joshua 6:17-19).

Next Israel fought against Ai, a much weaker city than Jericho, but the battle ended in terrible humiliation and defeat (Joshua 7:2-5). The Lord revealed to Joshua the reason Israel had lost the battle: God’s anger had been provoked because of Achan’s act of disobedience (Joshua 7:10-23). Achan, “the troubler of Israel,” brought trouble on the whole nation: “Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions” (Verse 11).

Israel stood guilty before God because of the sin of Achan. Only one person had acted in disobedience, but all Israel was held responsible. Why would God fault the whole nation for the transgression of one man? Because Israel was one people in the Lord. Today, God’s children are one body in Jesus Christ. We belong to each other, we need each

other, and our actions affect one another (1 Corinthians 12:12). Achan's sin had a profound impact on the whole community as our sin today affects the entire body of Christ.

Achan's crime was the first recorded act of disobedience after Israel had crossed the Jordan, and his death was the first divinely commanded punishment in the new land. God made it clear that corruption in His family is damaging and disastrous. He would not tolerate disobedience. The sin had to be identified, judged, and purged, and the punishment in the Valley of Achor was severe.

Achan and his family were stoned to death and burned in the Valley of Achor: "Then Joshua, together with all Israel, took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the robe, the gold bar, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent and all that he had, to the Valley of Achor. Joshua said, 'Why have you brought this trouble on us? The LORD will bring trouble on you today.' Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day. Then the LORD turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been called the Valley of Achor ever since" (Joshua 7:24-26).

Once Achan's sin had been dealt with, the Lord turned from His anger, and the people were restored to His favor. Later, the Valley of Achor, the scene of Israel's trouble, is called "a door of hope" to the future restored nation: "There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt" (Hosea 2:15).

When communion with the Lord is restored, there is hope for the future. The troubles of

the past are reversed and replaced with blessings: “Sharon will become a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a resting place for herds, for my people who seek me” (Isaiah 65:10).