

Do Not Yoke Up!

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together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" II Corinthian 6:14

The double-negative "not unequally yoked" can be somewhat confusing to our modern vernacular, but it simply means "do not be yoked together with



unbelievers". The yoke spoken of here is referring to the wooden implement that binds two farm animals together. It was common that two oxen or mules would be joined together with this device, so they could plow a field together. We are not to be going in the same direction as the world is going. We should not be plowing the same "field" as they.

We should not be yoked to unbelievers in marriage, business relationships, friendships, or other close relationships. When we are yoked together closely in such a relationship, we end up going the wrong direction. We are in the world, and we naturally may be in close contact with unsaved. That happens and is a

good opportunity to be a witness and an example to them, but getting into the position that we are going in their direction is what God is warning us against

A child of God is on the winning side. Why in the world would he want to go in the same direction as the losing side? We have a Leader that will take us in



the right direction. We should not be following those that do not know the way. We should be guiding others in the right

direction, not following their wrong pathways through life.

The Bible says there are two spiritual sides in this life: God's and the devil's (also called Belial). What can we possibly have in common with an unbeliever's thinking and goals?

"And what concord [agreement, union in opinions, sentiments, views or interests] hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." II Cor. 6:15-16

The Bible View



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There Are Accursed Things Among Us!

Bill Brinkworth

"Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you."

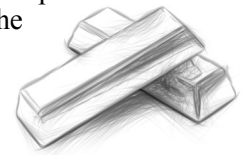
Joshua 7:13

Joshua and the people of Israel had seen God's hand in giving them the victory over Jericho. All marveled at how that mighty fortress collapsed with God's help (Joshua 6).

The leader's further instruction to the people was to enter the flattened city and not to spare any lives (Josh. 6:17, 21) of the enemy. All were to be killed. Israel was also strictly forbidden to take any of the riches of the city for themselves. All the treasures of the fallen city were to be given to Israel's treasury.

As Israel's army entered the city and did to it as they were commanded, one man could not

resist the temptation of all the valuables he saw, and took some for himself.



This man, Achan, took a Babylonian garment, silver, and some gold. He took it back to his tent and buried it there. The thief thought no one knew, but God knew of the man's disobedience.

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One of the principles that will distinguish a strong Christian from a weak one, when practiced, is taught in II Corinthians 6. Not adhering to God's teaching on this doctrine has ruined many Christian lives and testimonies. It is the number one robber of joy for a child of God. The doctrine Paul teaches here is the separation of a Christian from those who are not saved (II Cor. 6:14-17).

"Be ye not unequally yoked

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There Are Accursed ...

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Later, when a small, force of Israel's army went to attack the nearby, small town of Ai, they were easily defeated. Joshua and the people were horrified over the defeat and the death of some of their soldiers. The thrashing by a weaker enemy led Joshua to believe that God's hand was no longer with His people.

Joshua was grieved. He prayed, and God revealed that the defeat was due to one man's disobedience (Josh. 8:13). Because of one man's sin, all of Israel was guilty (Josh. 7:1, 11) of rebelling against what God had commanded them to do. One man's iniquity cost the lives of others; Israel's testimony was tarnished, and God's hand was no longer helping His people.

Later, with God's help, Joshua was able to discern who was responsible (Joshua 8:17-19). Achan was revealed to be the culprit. He confessed, and what had not been put into Israel's treasury was recovered. Because of the sin that cursed the people, Achan and his family were killed (Joshua 8:25). Many suffered

greatly because of one man's sin.

Today, that principle still applies. Others suffer great loss because of an individual's sins. Families are split up because of an adulterous parent's sin. Friends innocently riding along with a friend that commits a crime, often see jail time for being accomplices of the wrongdoing. New laws rob many of freedoms, because of others doing wrong. A family can get a bad reputation because of one misbehaving child. Whole communities have been looked down upon because of the behavior of some. Sin's tentacles often reach further than the one sinning.

In Joshua 6-8, one individual's sin affected all of Israel. Perhaps two million people suffered loss of God's guidance and protection! It was not a "little" sin.

With Achan's treachery in mind, and how it affected so many, imagine how the sins that are rampant today are harming nations. Although many are ignorant of God's commandments, and many refuse to obey the ones they know, God has not changed. What was sin in Joshua's day and biblical days is still sin today. What sin cost nations in the past is causing much suffering today.

God is aware of today's national tolerance of sins such as

abortion, sexual deviancies, acceptance of man-made religions, mockery of God and biblical morals, lessening punishments for crimes, reliance on government rather than God, attacks on Christianity, and scores of other "acceptable" behaviors. Although much of society accepts current immoralities, God does not. He did not tolerate it with Achan, and He will not put up with it today.

Because of Achan's transgression, Israel could not stand against a smaller insignificant enemy. Today we have small, terrorist cults creating great havoc on very powerful nations. Small minorities seem to have controlling power over vast majorities. Common sense is dumped for philosophies that have failed countless times previously. Nations that were once great are now cowering under pressures from small groups of radical extremists.

Why all the chaos? Why is sin prevailing and righteousness failing? As a nation was judged because of one man's disobedience after the Battle of Jericho, so are some being judged today for sin. No one person or country gets away with sin. There may be no thunderbolts being hurled from the heavens or earthquakes swallowing the sinning individuals, but unless sin is dealt with directly, God's helping, and protecting hand will be withdrawn

from many. It is far past time we learn the lesson that Israel learned the hard way, that unless sin is judged, halted, and repented of, many will suffer — even today!

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chron. 7:14

Do You Really Want What It Has To Offer?

J. Mason

If you love your soul, beware of what the world has to offer. It has slain its millions.

✿ What ruined Lot's life? The world!

✿ What ruined Haman? The world!

✿ What ruined Judas? The world!

✿ What ruined Demas? The world!

And you really believe you can survive what the world will give you unscathed?

"The pull to have what the world temporarily has to offer has cost countless Christians their joy, testimony, and futures!"

Oil and water do not mix; neither do the saved and the unsaved.