



The God Who Never Settles

Joshua 7

Getting on the Same Page

This week we conclude our Legendary God series with the story of Achan. The Israelites had finally made it to the promised land and had just experienced their first miraculous victory by seeing the formidable walls of Jericho brought to the ground. God had commanded that all of the “spoils of war” be either burned or put into the tabernacle treasury, devoting them to God. They were told that from their next battle they would be allowed to take whatever they wanted, but Jericho was to be a “first fruits” sacrifice to Him and Him alone.

Unfortunately, Achan was found to have taken some items from Jericho after the victory and hidden them under his tent. When the Israelites went into their next battle they were routed because of the “sin in the camp”. Joshua grieved before the Lord seeking to understand why? Eventually God told Joshua to get up and take action. Israel had violated the covenant and stolen from that which was intended to be devoted to God.

When it was discovered what had happened, the family was destroyed. Why is the consequence so severe? What is God doing here? God is once again protecting his people and protecting His name.

It is too easy and often the overly reductionist way that this passage is taught – God takes sin seriously and so should we. It isn't less than that, but indeed it is so much more than that. Yes, God takes sin seriously and yes, we should as well. But the last verse in the passage (Joshua 7:26) clues us in to the most significant element of this passage. Twice in the prophets the valley of Achor is referenced as a place where there will one day be flourishing (Isaiah 65 and Hosea 2).

Our Legendary God is never content to bring judgment on His people as the final act, but rather to bring judgment (discipline) in order that His plan and His purposes for His people will be fully realized, because they are what is best for His people. God's view is never myopic (reductionistic, limited, narrow), but rather holistic and broad enough to see the beauty and benefits that come on the other side of His punishment.

Discussion Questions

Getting Started

- Finish this sentence: "It was obvious that they had settled because..."
- Why is it that people often settle for the status quo or whatever is most familiar?

Study Read Joshua 7:1-26 Together

- Observations? Questions? Most significant?
- What is meant by "But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things." Why did God take this decree so seriously?
- Look at Joshua's prayer in vs. 7-9. He is crying out to the Lord after a great defeat but doesn't yet realize why God allowed the defeat to happen. Summarize Joshua's prayer in a sentence or two.
- In a sentence or two describe Achan's sin. Why do you think Achan's sin brought corporate judgment on the Israelites.
- How does this prophesy from Hosea 2:15 inform our perspective on this passage? "There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope."

Respond How have you seen each of these statements proven true?

- *Without consistent worship our confidence will always erode into arrogance.*
- *Sin distorts our appreciation for the magnitude of its consequences.*
- *God never settles for what is, but is always working to bring about what should be ... and eventually what will be.*

Apply

- In what area of your life or your sphere do you need to be reminded that God never settles?
- What do you need to do in the next two weeks to live into that truth?

What is your Next Step?

- What step would you say you are on in your SPIRITUAL PATHWAY?
 - Connect
 - Grow
 - Serve
 - Lead
- How can this group help you take your next step?