

Joshua 7—The Tragedy of Sin

- **Intro**
 - Don't like watching news—because we grow weary of all the bad/sad news when it's "OUTSIDE" of us/"out there". So long as it's not a threat to us, we steer clear.
 - Glued to weather/news when it implicates us—constant storm footage on Weather Channel; constant footage of attacks in certain cities/escaped inmates in our area
 - The issue isn't whether or not we will HEAR warning and bad news but whether we identify with it personally and consider it relevant to our own lives.
- **We Must Reckon with the Reality of God's Wrath (v.1-5, 26)**
 - **Theme and category of focus—the wrath of God against sin (v.1, 26)**
 - **Joshua 7 Chiasm: v.1 = Yahweh's Wrath; v. 26 = Yahweh's wrath; v.12b = Middle/Hinge (repentance)**
 - **v.1**—Israel's failure and the devastation that happens, happens BECAUSE of God's anger/wrath against their blatant disobedience
 - This isn't mere bad war/leadership tactics...this is blatant sin and just judgement!
 - The 36 who died were a sign of God's wrath toward sin and a discipline on Israel, not an indictment on Joshua's leadership skills.
 - ESSENTIALLY—if you don't get rid of sin...this will happen to every single one of you!
 - **v.5**—Irony—Israel who was just standing on the promises of God as the NATIONS melted before their God, have now crashed into blatant disobedience, experienced the judgement of God's wrath and now THEMSELVES melt before him.
 - **The reality of God's anger toward, hatred of and wrath against sin isn't merely a theme to be recognized but a reality to be understood and responded to—in fear and trembling!**
 - **The POINT is not the complacency or overconfidence of Israel. The POINT is that experiencing God's grace/victory can lead us to an overconfidence/complacency/apathy of soul that makes TOLERATING and ACCOMMODATING sin seem like a viable option for us and, if we aren't careful, we will DOMESTICATE our sin and, in so doing, invite the harsh, devastating, destructive wrath of God toward sin onto ourselves and our community!**
 - **We Must Respond to the Certainty of God's Wrath (6-9)**
 - **Joshua hears of the loss and goes in brutal honesty to the Lord to gain understanding!**
 - NOTE—Joshua does not yet know about v.1—Israel had walked in blatant disobedience.
 - **v.9—Joshua's prayer = God, I don't know what is going on here, but DO SOMETHING FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR NAME!**
 - Joshua's prayer is a prayer of glory and honor—"God, in all things in my life, do what is most glorifying to your name!"
 - Joshua had the right instincts—take despair, confusion, doubt, etc to the Lord
 - Joshua had the wrong words—he was doubting the promises of God and forgetting the salvation of God.
 - **Lesson—when in a similar situation, GO TO GOD (honestly, openly, transparently) and pour yourself out there but then LISTEN and allow Him to reveal truth and lead you!**
 - **v.10-13**—in light of the CERTAINTY of God's wrath toward sin, we run FROM it and TOWARD righteousness
 - v.10-11—SIN brings WRATH and SIN is FRACTURED relationship with God.
 - **"transgressed my covenant"**—the problem isn't mainly WRONG ACTION but BROKEN RELATIONSHIP! This is ALWAYS at the core of sin and is the TRAGEDY OF SIN
 - **KELLER—sin isn't just breaking God's rules but breaking God's heart!**
 - Sin = failing to esteem the worship of God and the pursuit of him above all things!
 - v.19-21—the anatomy of sin
 - **"I have sinned against the Lord God"**—as with David, all sin is, foremost, against God!
 - Process of sin—"saw...coveted...took...it is hidden"—exact same sequence as Gen. 2

- What we see and desire will determine what we do and, to the degree that is in opposition to God's will and Word, Achan's issue is MY issue!
 - What to do when God's say, "NO" and my heart/desires say, "BUT I WANT IT!"?
- 12b = the hinge of the whole chapter—what do we do when sin is exposed?? REPENT!!!
 - In the entire book, the whole hope and confidence of Joshua and Israel is the PRESENCE of God with them!
 - Unless serious, INTENTIONAL repentance happens, "I will be with you no more."
 - For Israel, repentance, "removing the devoted things" will be COSTLY—it will cost lives!
 - Not only COSTLY, but it is CRITICAL—without it, they CANNOT continue to have God's presence with them, which is their only hope and their entire lives!
- v.14-15—We must Revel in God's Mercy Amidst Wrath
 - "in the morning THEREFORE"—because, unless you REPENT and purge the sin/devoted things from among you I am going to pull my presence, I am providing a way for you to expose that sin and purge it!
 - Thanks be to God that he doesn't simply visit full annihilation onto Israel but mercifully provides a pathway to purity and his presence!
- We Must Recognize the Personal and Corporate Nature of Sin (1-21)
 - This text provides an insightful interplay between the sin of "ONE" and the recognized sinfulness of "MANY"
 - v.1—"sons of Israel" committed treachery; but "Achan took"; but Yahweh's anger burned against "the sons of Israel"
 - v.11-12—"Israel has sinned"; "they have transgressed my covenant";
 - v.15—insists the offender be burned because "he transgressed the covenant"
 - v.20-21—Achan's use of "I" make it clear that this was HIS SIN!
 - v.24-25—Achan and his family and all his livestock are stoned and burned
 - If God knew the offense and the offender, why go through this whole process?
 - Because the whole nation was implicated and needed to feel the weight of judgement, purification, consecration, God's seriousness toward sin and his work to purify and preserve his people
 - Lesson—your relationship with Jesus isn't just "your personal relationship with Jesus" and your willingness to walk in willful blatant sin isn't just "your personal decision"—there will be and are unique personal consequences but WE CORPORATELY experience the resulting judgement and wrath of God against sin!
 - Harvest Members—We are a family...we are an interconnected body! If you gash your head open, your whole body goes into shock, response, fight/flight/survival mode!
 - Why is church discipline in our covenant?—Because corporate HOLINESS matters to God! Not some sort of scale where as long as we have "more loving Jesus than not" we are in good shape...no! The pursuit is comprehensive, faithful obedience to God!
 - The redeemed community, rescued from the devastation of sin by the blood of God's appointed sacrifice, now live out our lives as REFLECTIONS of our holy and righteous God, amidst a crooked and depraved generation (Phil. 2:15)
- We Must Revel in the Wrath-Absorbing Work of Christ (22-26)
 - These paragraphs SHOCK and STUN us at the ruthlessness with which God treats sin and with which he roots out and punishes sin!
 - If the death and severity of these paragraphs grabs you/offends you, remember what our sin did to the perfect Son, the Lord Jesus!
 - 1 Peter 2:24—he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."
 - The perfectly Righteous One, eternally with the Father, came to bear the full punishment of our sin, separation from the presence of the Father, so that we, the sons of Achan, might know only the blessing of his presence, grace and glory!
- Close