

# A TIME TO EXAMINE THE CAMP

By Men's Ministry of Harmony Hill

## SCRIPTURE

Joshua 7

*[19] Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I implore you, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and tell me now what you have done. Do not hide it from me." [20] So Achan answered Joshua and said, "Truly, I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel, and this is what I did: [21] when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it."*

## OBSERVATION

The men's group here on The Hill began this year with the ambitious plan of reading through the Bible. We invite you to jump into this journey with us today as we look at the book of Joshua where the Israelites have emerged from their wilderness wanderings of 40 years. What an amazing story! God rescued His people and plucked them from bondage to bring them to the land of milk and honey with daring miracles and world-changing revelations to Moses after 400 years of silence. In Joshua 7, this new generation of Israelites hit their first real setback in the battle of Ai. They began to grumble with the sentiment of "at least in Egypt we had a normal life." This struck me in a fresh way as we wonder, "Can't we just say this is all a hoax and go back to a pre-pandemic way of life?" We rarely see ourselves as the complaining, whining, stubborn Israelites. We prefer the grand vision of the Red Sea parting and manna that just shows up to sustain us.

This generation of people went to the insignificant town of Ai and were soundly defeated. It was through this struggle that the Lord revealed the sin in the camp. Achan had buried treasure from Jericho that the Lord specifically forbade them to touch, and he concealed it in his tent. The result was that the Lord directed the leaders of Israel to stone Achan, his family, and their possessions. The hair on my neck stands on end as I read those words in Scripture. Didn't Achan just want what we all want...a comfortable life with nice clothes, a little jewelry, and nice nest egg? Is it possible that God wants to use this time to have us confess that we, too, have buried treasure in our tents that causes us to not rely on the provision of God? Does He want to expose my unfaithfulness to His commands and remove those things from the Lord's camp? Like the good Father that He is, God knows what is best for us. God knew that the Israelites needed to experience the defeat at Ai so they would understand the importance of full obedience to Him. God may be using this pandemic to lovingly remove those things in your life, my life, our church's life, and our country's life so that we may know Him fully.

## **OBEDIENCE**

- Praise the Father for His gracious dealing with us! While we are like Achan and buried treasure under our houses has turned our hearts from Him, He has not stoned us to death but instead crushed His own Son. How can we not through tears of repentance turn from our wicked ways and allow this holy God with Whom we covenanted to heal our hearts, our homes, and our land?
- This is our time, and we are the people who through God's sovereign plan are alive for one of those rare moments where He is shaking the whole globe simultaneously. Just as Joshua had to lead a new generation of Israelites to learn how to rely solely on God, we must teach a new generation that He is trustworthy. When people around us are asking, "Where should we turn? Where should we go? Where can we look to get away from this death and pestilence?" — let us point them to the cross of Christ where sin, hell and death were defeated. We are the generation that God in His mercy has brought to this historical moment!

## **PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your patience and grace with Your people. May we use this time of reflection to remove false idols from our hearts and from the camp of the Lord. Forgive us, Father, for thinking we could hide our iniquities from You. Heal our hearts, our homes, and our country, and restore us to faithful worship of Your Son Jesus. Help us to be a generation of the church that will obey You. Bring to our planet an Awakening to Your holiness and Your Great Name. In the Power of Jesus' Name. Amen.