

“Is God Mean?”

Text: I John 4:16

“...we know the love that God has for us, and we trust that love. God is love. Those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.”

Joshua 6:1-5; 16-21,24: **“6** The people of Jericho were afraid because the Israelites were near. They closed the city gates and guarded them. No one went into the city, and no one came out.

2 Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Look, I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its fighting men. **3** March around the city with your army once a day for 6 days. **4** Have 7 priests carry trumpets made from horns of male sheep and have them march in front of the Ark. On the 7th day march around the city 7 times and have the priests blow the trumpets as they march. **5** They will make one long blast on the trumpets. When you hear that sound, have all the people give a loud shout. Then the walls of the city will fall so the people can go straight into the city.

16 The 7th time around the priests blew their trumpets. Then Joshua gave the command: “Now, shout! The LORD has given you this city! **17** The city and everything in it are to be destroyed as an offering to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and everyone in her house should remain alive. They must not be killed, because Rahab hid the 2 spies we sent out. **18** Don’t take any of the things that are to be destroyed as an offering to the LORD. If you take them and bring them into our camp, you yourselves will be destroyed, and you will bring trouble to all of Israel. **19** All the silver and gold and things made from bronze and iron belong to the LORD and must be saved for him.”

²⁰ When the priests blew the trumpets, the people shouted. At the sound of the trumpets and the people's shout, the walls fell, and everyone ran straight into the city. So the Israelites defeated that city. ²¹ They completely destroyed with the sword every living thing in the city—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys. ²⁴ Then Israel burned the whole city and everything in it, but they did not burn the things made from silver, gold, bronze, and iron. These were saved for the LORD.”

Joshua 7:1-11,13,15,19-25 - “.....the Israelites did not obey the LORD. There was a man from the tribe of Judah named Achan.... Because Achan kept some of the things that were to be given to the LORD, the LORD became very angry at the Israelites. ² Joshua sent some men from Jericho to Ai.... He told them, “Go to Ai and spy out the area.” So the men went to spy on Ai. ³ Later they came back to Joshua and said, “There are only a few people in Ai, so we will not need all our people to defeat them. Send only 2 or 3,000 men to fight. There is no need to send all of our people.” ⁴ So about 3,000 men went up to Ai, but the people of Ai beat them badly. ⁵ The people of Ai killed about 36 Israelites and then chased the rest from the city gate all the way down to the canyon, killing them as they went down the hill. When the Israelites saw this, they lost their courage.

⁶ Then Joshua tore his clothes in sorrow. He bowed face down on the ground before the Ark of the LORD and stayed there until evening. The leaders of Israel did the same thing. They also threw dirt on their heads to show their sorrow. ⁷ Then Joshua said, “Lord GOD, you brought our people across the Jordan River. Why did you bring us this far and then let the Amorites destroy us? We would have been happy to stay on the other side of the Jordan. ⁸ Lord, there is nothing I can say now. Israel has been beaten by the enemy. ⁹ The Canaanites and all the other people in this country will hear about this and will surround and kill us all! Then what will you do for your own great name?”

10 The LORD said to Joshua, “Stand up! Why are you down on your face?” **11** The Israelites have sinned; they have broken the agreement I commanded them to obey. They took some of the things I commanded them to destroy. I will not help you anymore unless you destroy everything as I commanded you.

13 “Now go! Make the people holy. Tell them, ‘Set yourselves apart to the LORD for tomorrow. The LORD, the God of Israel, says some of you are keeping things he commanded you to destroy. You will never defeat your enemies until you throw away those things.’ **15** The one who is keeping what should have been destroyed will himself be destroyed by fire. Everything he owns will be destroyed with him. He has broken the agreement with the LORD and has done a disgraceful thing among the people of Israel!”

The LORD chose Achan son of Carmi. **19** Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, tell the truth. Confess to the LORD, the God of Israel. Tell me what you did, and don’t try to hide anything from me.” **20** Achan answered, “It is true! I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. This is what I did: **21** Among the things I saw was a beautiful coat from Babylonia and about 5 pounds of silver and more than 1 1/4 pounds of gold. I wanted these things very much for myself, so I took them. You will find them buried in the ground under my tent, with the silver underneath.”

22 So Joshua sent men who ran to the tent and found the things hidden there, with the silver. **23** The men brought them out of the tent, took them to Joshua and all the Israelites, and spread them out on the ground before the LORD. **24** Then Joshua and all the people led Achan.... to the Valley of Trouble. They also took the silver, the coat, the gold, Achan’s sons, daughters, cattle, donkeys, sheep, tent, and everything he owned. **25** Joshua said, “I don’t know why you caused so much trouble for us, but now the LORD will bring trouble to you.” Then all the people threw stones at Achan and his family until they died. Then the people burned them.”

1. In the Old Testament, God seems preoccupied with justice and _____, while the New Testament He seems more oriented toward _____ and reconciliation.
2. The God who pours out his wrath against _____ in the Old Testament is the SAME God who will inflict the vengeance of eternal punishment on those who do _____ believe in his Son Jesus (2 Thessalonians 1:5–10).
3. Jesus shows us that God will judge _____ sin (Luke 13:5). God is angry with those who live falsely and refuse to acknowledge the truth (Matthew 23). God certainly will judge their sinfulness. (Psalm 5:5).
4. When Jesus entered our world, He showed us _____ (John 14:7-9). Through Jesus, we understand that God seeks to SAVE people that have NO relationship with Him (Luke 19:10). He is compassionate (Matthew 14:14), He is merciful (Luke 6:36), and He is forgiving (Matthew 9:1-8; Psalm 130:4).
5. Micah 6:8 summarizes the top 3 qualities God wants to see reflected in us: “The LORD has told you, human, what is good; he has told you what he wants from you: to do what is _____ to other people, love being kind to others, and live humbly, _____ your God.”