

The Miracle or the Message Week 5

Let's pick up where Jordan left off. Last week Achan was disobedient to God's command, he took a cloak, and then silver and gold. What happened because of his disobedience to God's message? The Israelites were overcome and defeated by their enemy. What biblical principle is this teaching us? There is a greater message here and principle be reiterated again. Disobedience to God's message will end in defeat by the enemy. Is this the only time God has revealed this message? Nope, God knows the pattern of sin and he wants us to understand it's significant impact on our lives. So he repeats the same thing over and over again so we have an example. Nope

<u>Adam and Eve</u> –	Disobedient to God's message, overcome by the enemy
<u>Cain</u> –	Disobedient to God's message, overcome by the enemy.
<u>Humanity pre flood</u> –	Disobedient to God's message, overcome by the enemy
<u>Achan</u> –	Disobedient to God's message, overcome by the enemy.

To me I think I see a pattern developing, don't you? It's not like God is hiding his message here or the consequence of not being obedient to it. God is and has been very clear with his messaging. For goodness sake we have an entire Manuel to follow. Before I read all these verses don't make the mistake to think that the Old Testament lesson doesn't apply to our New Testament mentality of grace. We're going to reframe these circumstances to relate to our current situation.

Exodus 23:23-24, 32-33 : ²³ My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out. Remember the Land of Canaan was a cursed sinful land. Remember after the flood God told Noah's son Ham, that your son Canaan will be cursed. God, was going to restore this land. How does this relate to our situation today. Each of us are still living in a sinful land not just a physical piece of land, but we live in a sinful environment. **What is God saying, "God said I will promise to fight your battles if you remain obedient to my message."** What's the opposite? God doesn't have to fight your enemy if you are disobedient to his message. You see we want God to fight our battles even in our disobedience. We think that our belief in his existence is enough for him to protect us regardless of our obedience. **²⁴ Do not bow down before their gods or worship them or follow their practices. You must demolish them and break their sacred stones to pieces.**

³² Do not make a covenant a treaty or an alliance. Do you know what an alliance means? a formal agreement to work together for shared goals or mutual benefit. Do not partner with this sinfulness even though you think partnering with this sinfulness will benefit your life it will end up being a detriment. It will never produce what you are longing for. **with them or with their gods.** **³³ Do not let them live in your land or they**

will cause you to sin against me, because the worship of their gods will certainly be a snare to you.”

Numbers 33:51-52, 55-56 : ⁵¹“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, ⁵²drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places.

⁵⁵“**But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land, those you allow to remain will become barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides.** Wait what is a barb? It’s a thorn, and a thorn represents what? Sin, remember God cursed the ground with thorns because of Adam’s sin. Think about barbs in your eye, or what, SIN? Two things this would cause:

1. It’s going to be a nagging consistent pain until you remove it.
2. It will hinder your vision, and you won’t be able to see as clearly. Woah, so your telling me if I let sin linger in my life it will affect my vision and how I perceive or see things and I will no longer consider these people evil. So, if I let sin in my life it will affect how I see what sin is, and because of this it will do what? **They will give you trouble in the land where you will live. ⁵⁶And then I will do to you what I plan to do to them.”**

Look at again in: **Deuteronomy 7:1-4: When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you— and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, God said, “I will defeat them, but I need you to finish it. then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.** Remember this isn’t about people as much as it’s about sinfulness. It’s a dangerous place when you start feeling sorry for sin. When you start trying to show grace to sinfulness you are already on path to defeat. Maybe I can manage sin in my life, maybe I don’t have to totally get rid of it like God said. Show it no mercy. **Do not intermarry with them.** Do not willfully create a relationship with sinfulness. You know what’s going to happen if you show grace to sinfulness in your life? **Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD’s anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.**

Deuteronomy 20:16-18 ¹⁶However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. ¹⁷ Completely destroy^[e] them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you. ¹⁸Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the Lord your God. Some people struggle with these verses, because what they see on the surface is God instructing murder of people. What kind of a loving God would do that, but you forget to see two murders instead of one. What are you talking about. God knows if you don’t completely kill sinfulness then it will completely kill your relationship with him. He cares more about

preserving your relationship with him then he does your relationship with sinfulness. These clans were evil people and they sought destruction of the Israelites. Each of these clans were given the opportunity to surrender and follow the God of Israelites and they rejected it. What would you do if you knew that someone wanted to destroy murder your children. Would you want to become their friend. Would you want to have a relationship with them, would you look the other way and be ok with it? What would you do? You would protect your family at all costs. What do you think God is doing, he is protecting his children at all costs. If you don't preserve the children, then they won't produce the savior who ultimately conquers the sin.

Judges 2:2-4 The angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land I swore to give to your ancestors. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, ² and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.' You are suppose to get rid of everything that represents sin in your life, but you didn't go all the way. **Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this?** ³ **And I have also said, 'I will not drive them out before you;** What is God saying, "I'm not going to force you to surrender your sin, you have to do that on your own. **If you are unwilling to surrender, then I am not responsible to conquer.** This unsundered sin will what? they will become traps lure, bait for you, and their gods will become snares to you."⁴ **When the angel of the Lord had spoken these things to all the Israelites, the people wept aloud, ⁵ and they called that place Bokim.^[a] There they offered sacrifices to the Lord.**

Disobedience = Defeat

At 110 years old Joshua died, what do you think happened next? ¹⁰ **After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, (THE FAITHFUL GENERATION OF BELIEVERS DIED) another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel. ¹¹ Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals. ¹² They forsook the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They aroused the Lord's anger ¹³ because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. ¹⁴ In his anger against Israel the Lord gave them into the hands of raiders who plundered them. He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist.**

We often see it as overkill, ok God don't you think that's a little too much. I think we are strong enough to leave some sinful influence in my life and still resist it. We legitimately feel like God's message is a little too extreme, and we don't have to listen to all of it. How crazy is that. We have biblical evidence of what happens when we don't listen to his message.

Remember the definition of a miracle from several weeks ago? A miracle is

This is why we always see people crying for the miracle because, they need God to save them from their disobedience. If you would've stayed obedient to the message then you wouldn't be as desperate for the miracle. Often, we start crying for a miracle because sin has placed ourselves in a situation that our own strength can't get us out of.

Now God has to raise up judges to deliver people from situations that their sinful decisions created.

¹⁶ Then the Lord raised up judges,¹⁶ who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. ¹⁷ Yet they would not listen to their judges What, so you cried out for deliverance and the miracle, and then you went right back within weeks or months to the very circumstance you cried out for God to deliver you from. You know how God describes this process in our lives? **but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. They quickly turned from the ways of their ancestors, who had been obedient to the Lord's commands.** Prostituted! Spiritual prostitution is when you are willing to do something sinful in order to get something in return. Doing something sinful in order to fulfill an need or desire in your life. Here is an easy spiritual prostitution example. You are will to commit a sexual sin, to receive a feeling of love or belonging in return. Sacrificing biblical commands for cultural narratives.

In the Old Testament Israel had borders and they were to keep all pagan worshipers out of their physical land, but in the New Testament we don't have physical land borders, but we have spiritual borders. It's our mind, our hearts, our lives, our families. In the New Testament instead of keeping people out and preventing people from invading our nation, it says we are to go to all nations. We are to invade the darkness with the gospel light. In the Old Testament they were protecting and reacting. In the New Testament we are to be proactive and to take the fight to the enemy. When we take the fight to the enemy then we put ourselves in a position to be overcome by our sinful enemy and it's darkness, therefore we have to stay completely surrendered. The land we protect now is Mind, Heart, Soul

Any time we intermarry with sinfulness, we become defeated and God removes his protection. Protection isn't the absence of problems, it's the prevention of being help captive by sinfulness.