



May 14

Achan Sinned

3rd-5th

Big Picture Question: How does God feel about sin?
God hates sin and punishes sin.

Bible Passage: Joshua 7

Christ Connection: Joshua was a representation of Christ, leading the Israelites to victory in overcoming Canaan as Jesus leads us to victory in overcoming the world.

TEACHER BIBLE STUDY

When the Israelites conquered Jericho, God told them not to take anything. Everything in the city was to be destroyed and set apart for God. Achan must have assumed no one would notice if he kept a few things for himself. The cloak was beautiful, and he sure could use some pieces of silver and a bar of gold. No harm, no foul. Right?

Wrong. God had commanded complete obedience from the Israelites. God knew what Achan had done, and His anger burned against all of the Israelites.

Joshua sent spies into the land of Ai. There were only a few people in Ai. Joshua sent a few thousand men to fight, but during the battle, the Israelites ran away in fear. About 36 of them were killed. Joshua knew something was wrong. He suspected God had lied to the Israelites about protecting them against their enemies. He cried out to God, "Why did you bring us across the Jordan to die at the hand of the Amorites?" (Josh. 7:7).

Joshua had it all wrong. God explained that the Israelites had sinned against Him—that was why they had not won the battle.

The next morning, God revealed that it was Achan who had sinned. Joshua brought Achan forward to confess his sin. Achan's possessions were destroyed, and Achan and his family were stoned to death. The Israelites covered their bodies with a large pile of stones as a reminder of the consequences of sin.

God hates sin. (See Prov. 6:16-19.) God deals with sin by punishing it. We are all sinners. Here's the bad news: "For the wages of sin is death," but here's the good news: "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). We all deserve to die for our sin, but Jesus came to bear the consequences for us by dying on the cross in our place.

THE BIBLE STORY

Achan Sinned *Joshua 7*

When the people of Israel attacked Jericho, God gave them one rule: Destroy everything. Keep nothing for yourselves. But one man, Achan (AY kuhn), disobeyed God. God was angry with the Israelites because of Achan's disobedience.

Joshua sent men from Jericho to a city called Ai (AY igh) to spy out the land. The men went and spied out Ai. They came back and said, "Do not send all of the men to attack Ai. There are not very many people there; you only need to send two or three thousand." So about 3,000 men went to Ai. They ran away from the men of Ai, and about 36 of them were killed. The men were very afraid.

Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the ground before the ark of the Lord. The elders did the same thing, and they all put dust on their heads. Joshua asked God, "Why did you bring us across the Jordan River just to have us killed by these people? We should have been content to stay out of the promised land! When the other people living in this land hear that we ran scared from the men of Ai, they will surround us and attack us!"

The Lord said to Joshua, "Stand up! Israel has sinned and disobeyed My covenant. They have taken some of the things I told them not to. This is why they cannot defeat their enemies. I will no longer be with you until you remove from you the things I told you to destroy."

God continued, "Go and tell the people to make themselves clean. In the morning, they should present themselves by tribe. When I pick out a tribe, that tribe should present itself clan by clan. I will select one clan; that clan is to come forward family by family. I will select one family, and that family should come forward man by man. You should punish the man who is caught with the forbidden things. Destroy him and everything he has because he has disobeyed God."

Joshua got up early the next morning. Israel came forward tribe by tribe, clan by clan, family by family, and man by man. Achan was chosen from all the people. He was the one who had taken the forbidden things.

"Confess to the Lord. Tell me what you have done," Joshua said to Achan. "Don't hide anything from me."

Achan replied, "It's true. I have sinned against God. When we overtook Jericho, I saw a beautiful cloak, some pieces of silver, and a bar of gold. I wanted them very badly, so I took them. They are buried in the ground in my tent."

Joshua sent messengers to Achan's tent to collect the things. They laid them before Joshua. "Why have you caused trouble for us?" Joshua asked.

"Today God will trouble you!" The people of Israel killed Achan and his family. They covered their bodies with a big pile of rocks. God was no longer angry with Israel.

Christ Connection: The punishment for Achan's sin was death. It seems harsh, but the Bible says that the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) Because we sin, we deserve to die too. Jesus came to die in our place. When we confess our sins and trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and saved from spiritual death.

BIBLE STORY REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS [about 15 min]

Review the timeline. Help kids connect Achan to the story of Jericho. Prior to small group, write the answers to the following review questions on index cards. Place the cards where all the kids can see them or distribute cards to kids. When you ask a review question, allow kids to find the answer in the Scripture passage and identify which index card has the right answer.

1. Which of God's commands did an Israelite break when the people destroyed Jericho? (*Do not take anything for yourself; Josh. 6:17-19; 7:11*)
2. Which city did Israel try unsuccessfully to defeat? (Ai; Josh. 7:2,5)
3. Why did Israel lose the battle of Ai? (*An Israelite had disobeyed God, Josh. 7:11-12*)
4. Who disobeyed God? (*Achan, Josh. 7:18-20*)
5. What did Achan take? (*a cloak, pieces of silver, a bar of gold; Josh. 7:21*)
6. Where did Achan put the things he took? (*He buried them*)

Bonus questions:

7. ***How does God feel about sin? God hates sin and punishes sin.***

8. Who came to die in our place? (*Jesus came to die in our place. When we confess our sins and trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and saved from spiritual death.*)

PRAYER STATION [about 15 min]

We really desire for kids to learn to pray, so we have created activities to go along with different aspects of prayer. Choose a Prayer Station box and walk through the activity with the kids. Each will have a set of instructions or "Teacher Card" for you to talk with the kids about as you do the prayer activity and pray with your group of kids. If you find it helpful, you can always split your group up between both volunteers to provide a smaller group for a more meaningful prayer time.

Remember, kids are learning to pray by your example. The importance and energy you put into prayer will be directly reflected in your class!

KEY PASSAGE/ BIBLE MEMORY TIME [about 10 min]

It is our desire for the kids to begin to hide God's Word in their hearts, so we would like the kids to work on memorizing the Key Passage for the Unit, other verses in the Bible and the Books of the Bible. Tickets will be rewarded for memorization, as well as bringing Bibles to church. Tickets will be used in a drawing at the end of each Unit.

Choose any of the following activities to start the fun! (Award tickets as you see fit!)

- Have kids work on the key passage in fun ways (say it loud, soft, jumping up and down, with motions, etc. Any way to make it come alive!)
- Have kids look through the Key Passage Notebook to review and state for memory past key passages.
- Have kids look up Key Passages and highlight them in their Bibles.
- Play Bible Drill Games. Call out a book of the Bible and the first to locate it wins!
- Allow kids to put the books of the Bible in order. (Game materials provided)
- Challenge kids to memorize new verses and retell them to you from memory!

Be creative and get the kids into God's Word!

SINK IN ACTIVITY [about 10-15 min each] (Choose one or both!)

Activity #1: Obey Actions

Guide kids to form two or three teams. Each team must think of an action to perform silently for the other teams to try to guess. The action must be a rule to obey or something a kid does to obey. (Examples: vacuuming, dusting, putting away toys, ironing clothes, no running inside, no talking while someone else is talking)

Say: “*How does God feel about sin? God hates sin and punishes sin.*”

••Do you ever have trouble following any of the rules you demonstrated? Has anyone broken one of these rules? Sometimes it is easier to sin than to follow God, or at least we think that. But God always promises to help His people. When we are tempted to disobey, we can ask God for help.

••What do you think could have happened if Achan had stopped and asked God to help him resist the temptation? Maybe that would have happened. We don't know. But we do know that God will forgive us when we ask Him to forgive us for our sin. And He will help us resist sin if we ask.”

Activity #2: Sin Wall Art

Guide boys and girls to write on pieces of scrap paper sins people commit. Notify kids that you will read each one aloud. Lead kids to wad up each sin into a ball and toss them into the bowl. Open and read each paper one at a time.

Discuss each sin and why the kids think people commit that sin. Tape the pieces of paper on the wall backward (no print showing) in the form of the word *sin* or *death*. Lead kids to open their Bibles and read Romans 6:23. Explain to kids that sin leads to spiritual death or separation from God.

Say: “Sin separates us from God. It leads to a spiritual death or separation. Sin keeps us from knowing and loving God. Sin has serious consequences. We have hope because Jesus came and died for our sin. We can be forgiven of our sin. In today's Bible story we heard the horrible price of sin. God doesn't want His people to sin. God wants His people to be holy because He is holy.

••Who came to die in our place? (*Jesus came to die in our place. When we confess our sins and trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and saved from spiritual death.*)”

Review how to become a Christian and allow kids to ask any questions. Ask kids to share how they would tell a friend about how to become a Christian. What would they say first? Call on multiple kids to respond.

****THE HANDOFF****

As children are picked up, briefly state one of the things that were talked about in class today. You can do this by asking the child a question in front of their parent, or remind them of something they learned.

Christ at home!

Supplies Needed: review questions on index cards, slips of paper (half sheets) and masking tape, writing instruments