

ISRAEL AND AI

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JOSHUA 7-8



The STORY

Read the following Bible Story of Achan and the battle of Ai (Joshua 7 – 8):

Before the battle of Jericho, God instructed the Israelites to set aside for the Lord any silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron that was found after the battle and put it in the Lord's treasury. A man named Achan found a wedge of gold, a robe and some silver and secretly hid them away under his tent, disobeying the Lord's command.

During the next battle at Ai, Israel lost though they should have easily won. Joshua knew the Lord was not with the men who fought and he cried out to the Lord. The Lord told Joshua that Israel had sinned and had taken some of the devoted things.

The next day the Lord helped Joshua figure out which man took the devoted things. Achan was found out. Joshua asked him to confess and he did. That day Achan and others with him were killed for their sinful disobedience of God's law.

Then God gave Joshua a plan. God told Joshua to take his whole army out and attack Ai. This time Israel won the battle. God's plan worked and everyone in Ai was killed in the battle.

Please note: *The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.*

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- What happened in this story? (Achan disobeyed the Lord's command and stole the gold, silver, and robe that were to go into the Lord's treasury, see Joshua 6:19.)
- Did Achan think he could get away with his stealing? (Yes, Achan hid these items under his tent thinking no one would know.)
- How was Achan found out? (When Joshua prayed, God told him that Israel had taken some of the things that were to be devoted to the Lord. God gave Joshua a plan to discover exactly who had disobeyed.)

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CRAFT QUESTIONS

**Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: Israel defeats the soldiers of Ai
Engage the children by asking:**

- What happened to the Israelites the first time they fought the city of Ai? (Because of Israel's sin, God was not with them. So, some of the Israelites were killed and the others got scared and ran away.)
- What happened to the Israelites when they fought the second battle with Ai? (They had obeyed God and so He helped them to win the battle.)
- What do you think the men of Ai were thinking when their city was being destroyed? (They were mad, scared, etc.)
- What do you think Ai was thinking about the God of Israel? (That He was strong, no one could stop God, that God was really smart, etc.)

SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- Did you ever sin and hide what you did from your parents? (Accept any answer.)
- Why isn't that a good idea? (Though your parents do not know, God can see everything and He knows. He can help your parents discover what you did wrong. God is all-knowing, there is nothing he does not know.)
- What should we do when we realize we made a mistake? (We should freely confess and ask for forgiveness.)



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Where Is Jesus?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Take time to remind the children that God always punishes sin. Achan was killed for taking the gold and silver. He deserved to be punished for his sin. We all deserve to be punished for our sin as well. The penalty for even one sin is death.

Jesus took the penalty for our sin at the cross so we can be forgiven. All those who trust in the Lord had their sin paid for on the cross. The Bible says, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Joshua offered a sacrifice to God for a peace offering. One day, God would offer up His son Jesus as the ultimate peace offering. Jesus said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." With the sacrifice of Jesus, there is no longer a need to offer peace offerings for we have peace with God, see Romans 5:1.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

