

Conquest of Canaan – The Sin of Achan Josh. 7:1-8:29

Thesis: To better understand the destructive nature of sin.

Introduction:

Israel has just taken Jericho. They think that they are well on their way to defeating all the nations and cities of Canaan. However, they do not know that there is sin in the camp of Israel. Because of this sin, there is going to be a terrible defeat for Israel at the hands of Ai.

I. Retell the entire story of Israel and Ai (7:1-8:29).

- A. Israel is defeated by Ai (7:1-5).
- B. Joshua questions the Lord because of this defeat (7:6-9).
- C. God informs Joshua about the sin in the camp (7:10-15).
- D. Joshua follows the command of God and Achan is chosen as the one that has brought the sin into the camp (7:16-26).
 1. Tribes – Judah chosen (7:16-18)
 2. Family of the Zarhites
 3. Man of Zabdi.
 4. Achan was chosen.
- E. Ai is destroyed by an ambush of Israel (8:1-29).
 1. All of the people of Ai were destroyed.
 2. The people were allowed to keep the treasures of Ai.
 3. The king of Ai. Was “hanged on a tree until evening” (8:29).

Practical Application:

II. Sin destroys.

A. Sin destroys our lives.

1. Because of the sin of Achan, he was stoned to death.
 - a. This was an immediate punishment based upon his actions.
 - b. His sin destroyed his life.
2. Sin can destroy our lives while we are here.
 - a. We have all seen what alcohol and drugs can do to a family.
 - b. Pr. 14:9 - Fools mock at sin, but among the upright there is favor.
3. Sin will destroy our eternity.
 - a. Lk. 9:25 - For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?
 - b. Js. 1:14-16 - But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. { 15 } Then, when desire has

conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. {16} Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

- c. **Ezek. 18:4** - Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine; the soul who sins shall die.
- d. **Rom. 6:23** - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

B. Sin also destroys those we love.

- 1. Notice who was hurt by the sin of Achan.
 - a. 36 men who died at Ai (**7:5**).
 - b. The family members of those men.
 - c. Joshua and all the people (**7:6-9**).
 - d. Achan's sons and daughters who were killed with him (**7:24**).
 - 1) God had told Moses that the son was not responsible for the sin of the father (**Deut. 24:16**).
 - 2) The implication is that the children of Achan knew of what Achan had done.
 - e. Achan's other family members who remained alive.
 - f. Thousands upon thousands of people were hurt because of one man!
 - 1) Achan is referred to later on in Joshua.
 - 2) **Josh. 22:20** (context of the altar created by the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh on the other side of the river – Joshua is warning them of corrupting their land with unclean living and worship) - **Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.**
- 2. When we sin (live in sin), we hurt those that love us.
 - a. When we see sin as it truly is, we see the destruction that it causes.
 - b. When we see a loved one living in sin, it hurts (at least it should hurt!).
 - c. No one likes to see their loved ones in a state where they are separated from God.

C. Because of the dangers of sin, we must learn to stay away from it.

- 1. *Illustration to remind us of the danger of sin:*
 - a. A young college student was serving as a camp counselor, and thought that he knew more than he did.
 - b. In his devotional to the young children, he emphasized the point that there was a purpose to everything that God made.
 - c. One young camper asked, "What is the purpose of poison ivy?"
 - d. After some thought, the counselor replied, "The reason God created poison ivy is because He wanted us to know there are certain things we should keep our hands off of."
- 2. We must call sin what it really is.

- a. Abortion – not murder, but a woman’s right to choose.
- b. Homosexuality – not condemned by God, but an alternate lifestyle that is not subject to our judgment.
- 3. Sometimes, we are more like the Pharisee than the publican in Lk. 18.
- 4. **Pr. 6:27-28** (context of a adultery, but it is applicable to all sin) - *Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? {28} Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?*
- 5. **Eph. 5:11-12** (Paul writing to Christians) - *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. {12} For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

III. It is not until sin is resolved that we can obtain a great victory.

- A. It was not until the sin of Achan was resolved that Israel was able to obtain the victory over Ai.
 - 1. Perhaps the good part of this story (if there is a good part) is that Achan did not try and offer a lame excuse for what he did.
 - 2. He freely admitted it when Joshua questioned him about it.
- B. Today, if we are going to obtain a great victory, we must resolve our sins.
 - 1. Because of the destructive nature of sin, we must make sure that our sins are not held against us.
 - 2. There is only one way that we can have our sins forgiven, and that is through the blood of Christ.
 - a. **Eph. 1:7** - *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*
 - b. **I Pet. 1:19** - *[we are redeemed] with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*
 - c. **Rev. 1:5** - *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,*
 - 3. We come into contact with that blood through our obedience in baptism.
 - a. **I Jn. 1:7** - *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*
 - 4. After baptism, we remain in contact with His blood by living faithfully to Him.
 - a. **Rev. 2:10** - *Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*
 - 5. It is only when our sins are forgiven that we can inherit eternal life.

Conclusion: