

Lesson 5

Losing, then Winning at Ai



Theme: Obedience – Thinking about the consequences of sin

Sunday Morning Lesson

Pre-Class Activity

Bible Facts: Operation Bible Facts

Memory Verse: Make or purchase heavy card stock footprints, both right and left. Print each word of the memory verse on a footprint, alternating right and left. Arrange the footprints in order to make a trail, so that a student can step on the words and say them. Have students walk the trail and say the Memory Verse. Since you are introducing a new Memory Verse, have them walk the trail and say the verse a few times. Place sentence strips in the pocket chart to show the verse. Talk about Who? What? When? and Where? in connection with the verse.

Prayer

Note: This lesson includes the Battle at Ai and the ceremony at Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. For more balanced instruction, the Ai episode will be covered on Sunday morning and the events at the mountains, on Wednesday night.

Teaching Today's Lesson

1. For non-reading students, read Joshua 7:19-22. Have reading students find and mark Joshua 7:19 in the classroom Bibles.
2. Ask students to bring the Bibles and move to the Bible Story Bunker.
3. Establish the setting of the lesson by asking a student to point to the place on the time line when today's events took place.
4. Further establish the setting by asking a student to show the city of Ai as well as Mounts Ebal and Gerizim on a map.
5. Introduce *Lesson Graphics* using the Lord's Army Ammo Box.
6. Use the *I'm in the Lord's Army Lesson Graphics* and other props such as silver coins and a blanket to hide the coins to tell the story of Achan's sin against God.
7. Tell the story and teach the lesson emphasizing the following scenes and points, tailored to the students' ages:

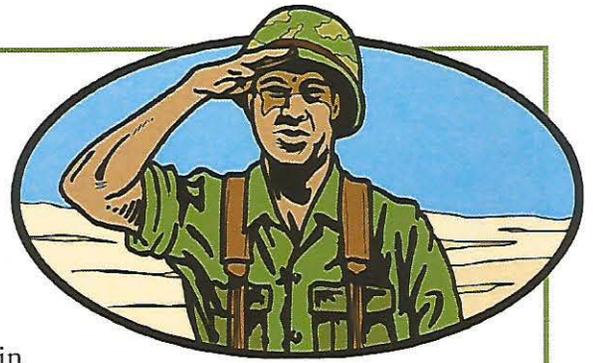
- Joshua sent soldiers to take the city of Ai, but the men of Ai chased them away.
 - Joshua was upset and talked to God about why they lost the battle. God explained that someone had stolen things from Jericho that were supposed to be destroyed.
 - Joshua led the people to discover that Achan had sinned and brought trouble on the nation. Achan was punished and Israel went up a second time to Ai and won the battle.
 - Israel came to Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim where God's law was read and people agreed to keep it.
8. Discuss Achan's actions following the battle of Jericho. On four cards print the following key words: saw, coveted, took, hid. Lead the students in a discussion about temptation and sin allowing them to help place the cards in their logical order. Help them learn that sin often involves these actions. Talk with the students about how Achan's actions were his own but affected the whole nation.
 9. Read Joshua 7:19-22. Talk about the consequences of sin and how Achan's sin affected more than just him.
 10. Using the Table Top Map, identify the locations of Jericho and Ai. Read the account of the battle at Ai from Joshua 8, reading as much as is appropriate for your students. Discuss the strategy of an ambush. Have small army men of two different colors and use them to demonstrate the battle. Discuss with the class how God helps us with our battles, but that we must also be a part of the fighting. For example, God provides a way of escape from temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13), but we are involved in fighting temptation in thinking, making good decisions, and taking the way of escape.
 11. Use the "shoe box city" from lesson 4 of this Guide to represent the city of Ai. Lead the students to attack the "city" just as the Israelites did. Talk about Israel's strategy when attacking the city of Ai. Talk to the students about God's plan for Israel and why it was important for them to obey Him completely.

**Things to Get or Do
for Sunday Morning**

-
-
-
-
-

Lesson 5

Losing, then Winning at Ai



Theme: Obedience – Thinking about the consequences of sin

Wednesday Evening Lesson

Pre-Class Activity

Bible Facts: Operation Bible Facts

Memory Verse: Using the footprints from Sunday, place them in a trail but pull out several key words, scattering the missing words around on the floor. Have students work together to place the footprints in the correct order to complete the trail. Have students walk the trail and say the verse. Place sentence strips in the pocket chart to show the verse.

Prayer

Note: This lesson includes the Battle at Ai and the ceremony at Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. The Sunday morning teacher covered the Ai episode, the Wednesday night teacher should show how Israel moved into the land and went to Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal and committed themselves to the Lord.

Starter

Suppose you get a new bicycle for your birthday, or you get a new notebook to begin a school year. When the item is brand new, we want to keep it in this way as long as we can. We don't want other people to handle our new object. We try to protect it from getting scratched or damaged. Until the new wears off, we are more careful and protective.

When Israel crossed the Jordan River and entered the land of Canaan, the nation was in a new place. It was a good land given by God. The Israelites obeyed God carefully in marching around Jericho, and they successfully took the city. God was with them fighting their battles. Joshua provided good leadership. The nation successfully defeated Jericho. But then everything changed.

The Israelite army marched up to Ai to take the city, and they were pushed back. Thirty-six Israelite soldiers died and the army was chased away. What happened?! God told His people that someone in Israel had sinned. For the first time in Israel's new land, someone did not follow God's will, and this caused trouble for many people. We need to understand why Israel lost the battle at Ai.

Briefly review the lesson from Sunday morning and read Joshua 7:19-22.

Illustrations and Applications

1. **Objective:** *Demonstrate what happened on Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.*

Divide the class into two groups, one to stand in front of Mount Gerizim and the other to stand in front of Mount Ebal. Act out the scene on the two mountains as detailed in Joshua 8:30-35 and Deuteronomy 27-28. Use the blessings and curses from Lesson 2, Activity 1, on page 18. Have the students stationed near Mount Gerizim read the blessings and students stationed near Mount Ebal read the curses. Have all students say "Amen" at the appropriate times to show they agree with and are entering the covenant. Make application to our agreeing to do God's will.

2. **Objective:** *To help students understand that one person's actions can affect other people both in positive and negative ways.*

In the earlier activities of the class period, the teacher whispers something to a student and then keeps teaching. A little later the teacher whispers something to another student and then keeps teaching. Pause to talk about the effect this whispering had on the class. It involved just two people but it made an impact on others who wondered about what was said or why it was said in a whisper. Lead into a discussion of how Achan's actions were his own but affected the whole nation.

Achan disobeyed God and took valuable items from Jericho and made them his own. God knew this, though no one else did. As the result, "the anger of the Lord burned against the sons of Israel" (Joshua 7:1). This is the way sin often works. What one person does against God affects other people and brings trouble to them. Each person must stand on his or her own before the Lord (Deuteronomy 24:16), but what we do can involve and impact other people, whether or not we think it will (Deuteronomy 5:9).

3. **Objective:** *Learn how sin works and how it can be stopped.*

Create an activity called "Draw and Discuss." On 3 x 5 cards, write various scenarios:

- John went to the store and saw his favorite candy on the shelf.
- Kelly went to her friend's house, saw her pretty ring and tried it on.
- Sharon found \$1.00 under her desk, folded it up and put it in her hand.
- Robert "borrowed" his friend's video game without his friend's permission, intending to return it the next day.

One at a time, have students draw a card and read the scene. Ask if he has sinned so far. Finish the story with a bad ending. Finish the story with a good ending. Discuss the process of sin — saw, coveted, took, and hid.

Things to Get or Do for Wednesday Night

-
-
-
-
-