

# THE OLD PATHS

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## “Who Pays When I Sin?”

Joel Raulerson

It’s my life, why can’t I live it the way I want to?” “What does it matter if I sin? It’s not as if my actions affect others.” These are just a few of the excuses I have heard over the years in regard to sin. This is not a new concept. This mentality has been around as long as mankind has been committing acts of sin. Let’s take a look at an example of a man by the name of Achan who had this mentality, and see what the consequences of his sin were.

Achan was an Israelite, living in the time of Joshua. After the Israelites had crossed the Jordan River, they were commanded to conquer Jericho. They were given specific instructions about how the city was to be destroyed, and were told that the treasure from the first city belonged to God. Joshua 6:18-19 says, “*But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.*” All of the Israelites knew what God’s commands were regarding the treasure of Jericho. They had just witnessed the miraculous sacking of this great fortified city! Yet, Achan decides to go against what God had commanded and take some of the spoils of the city of Jericho. No one would miss a few trinkets from such a great city, would they (Josh. 7:21)? Who would even notice a few things missing from a whole city? Achan could have easily justified what he did in these ways. However, that does not make it any less of a sin.

After Achan steals from God, he probably never thought that others would suffer for his sin against God. Yet, that is exactly what happened when Israel attempted to take the city of Ai. Joshua 7:1 reads, “*But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan...of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the*

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***LORD burned against the people of Israel.*** ” Because of Achan’s sin, the anger of the Lord now burned against all the people of Israel. This caused their defeat when they attempted to take Ai (Josh. 7:2-5). Surely, Achan didn’t plan to be the cause of thirty-six of his fellow countrymen losing their lives. Ai was a far lesser city compared to the fortified city Jericho. By man’s standards, the destruction of Ai should have been simple. Yet, because of one man’s sin, the Lord was not with the children of Israel when they went into battle. The sin of Achan affected far more people than he would have imagined. However, it didn’t stop there. Achan’s sin also affected his family (Josh. 7:23-25). Achan’s sin caused the death of his sons, daughters, wife, and livestock. The children of Israel didn’t even spare his belongings. After Achan and his family were killed, they burned it all.

When we commit sin, we tend to see the consequences as minimal. Sometimes we think that “if” we do get caught, we can handle the consequences. Would we stop and reconsider our sin if we knew that we could cause harm to those closest to us? Do you realize that you hurt your family, friends, and brethren when you sin as Achan did? Perhaps your sinful actions help to lure others away from following God? You would be partly responsible for the lost souls who follow your example. You bring shame upon the Lord’s church and tell others in the community that following God is no longer important to you. You can cause harm to your physical family because now they’re missing a father, mother, son, or daughter who should be fulfilling their godly role. You bring harm and heartache to your spiritual family. You disappoint them and you hurt the efforts of the church when they are attempting to spread the gospel. Make no mistake, we all have to answer for our sins. The reality of that should cause us to turn from sin and error when we stop to ponder just how much harm we may cause those around us when we sin.

## Satan Is Active

Joel Raulerson

**S**hould we sit back and wait for opportunities to present themselves to teach the gospel? Or, should we be actively seeking souls to save? Our enemy, Satan, is active today (1 Pet. 5:8). Satan is seeking souls that he can lure away from Christ and devour. This is not a new attitude of

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Satan. This was his attitude during the time of Job as well. Job. 1:7 says, *"The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."* Satan was prowling the earth in the Old Testament, looking for souls to devour. Notice, that Satan is not sitting back, waiting for an opportunity to present itself. He is not a lazy lion, lounging about, waiting for the prey to come to him. Satan is actively seeking souls to lure away from Christ and destroy. We can see this evidence in about every facet of our society.

## **Satan Is Active In Our Families**

Look at the make-up of the average family in America today. A large percentage of families do not fit the godly mold. They are missing fathers or mothers due to fornication, divorce, abuse, and men and women not holding marriage in honor (Heb. 13:4). Children have a lack of respect for their parents because they have not been raised right by their parents (Eph. 6:1-4). The definition of "marriage" and "family" has even begun to change in today's society because of Satan actively working to destroy it. Marriage is no longer comprised of one man and one woman in many countries anymore. You can have two men or two women in a marriage in today's society. Are we waiting for our family members to come and ask us what they need to do to be saved? We know that Satan is active in their homes. What are we doing to teach them? Is the devil active in our home? This isn't only in someone else's family. Satan is actively working in your home to take every foothold he can. Are you proactively dealing with him and constantly on guard, or are you only reacting once the sins have already been committed?

## **Satan Is Active In Our Government**

It doesn't take long to look at government to see that Satan has been incredibly active there. It is obvious that Satan has been incredibly active in every facet of government; from the laws that promote gambling, drinking, abortion, homosexuality, divorce, etc., to the attitudes of greed, malice, pride, lying, and hatred for their fellow man that many politicians have. This was evident in the Old Testament as well. From the wicked kings of the Jewish nation, to the wicked kings in the New Testament, such as Herod, Agrippa, and Caesar. We can find our leaders falling prey to Satan's wiles time and time again. What are we doing about it? Are we

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active in praying that they will follow God's will (2 Tim. 2:1-2)? Are we active in showing our hatred for sin when laws are passed that promote sinful conduct? Or, have we grown calloused against it all?

## Satan Is Active In The World

Satan is going to continue to hunt and devour every soul that he can find. He will prey on every individual's weakness (1 Jn. 2:15-17). We see our friends, family, and neighbors constantly caught up in all manner of sinful conduct. We see folks caught up in alcoholism, abusive behavior, lying, stealing, pornography, being unfaithful to God, ignorant of His word, not praying, not living as we should in Christ, etc. What are we doing about it? We cannot sit back and wait for the lost to come to us seeking salvation. Yes, when the opportunity arises, take advantage of it. However, we also need to be active in seeking and saving the lost. Make no mistake, Satan is actively seeking souls to destroy (1 Pet. 5:8). We also need to be active in teaching every soul that we meet.



**“I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!”**

**Please visit with the Caneyville church of Christ....**

**Location:** 103 N. Main St. Caneyville, KY

**Website:** <http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com>

### **Times Of Services...**

**Sunday:** 10:00 am (Bible classes), 10:45 am & 5:00 pm (Worship)

**Wednesday:** 7:00 pm (Bible classes)

### **Other opportunities for Bible study:**

**“The Ancient Landmark”** Radio Program airs Mon-Fri on 99.9 FM, WXMZ (10:30-11:00 AM) & 101.5 FM, WLBQ (5:30-6:00 AM)

**“The Ancient Landmark”** television program airs on:

[www.youtube.com/theoldpaths1994](http://www.youtube.com/theoldpaths1994)

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