

## Restored, Refocused, Renewed Joshua 8

### Restoration and Encouragement—vv. 1-2

Once the sins were atoned for, relationship between God and Israel is restored

Emphasis once again is on the promise—*the land is given into Israel's hand*

Compare this with what came in chapter 7...*no word of the promise, etc.*

The contrast between the openings of chapters 7 & 8 are stark

God's own plan is set forth

### Plans explained and carried out—vv. 3-29

Ambush explained

God's presence promised (v. 7)

*Full obedience commanded* (v. 8)

(Are verses 11-13 a flashback? Grammatically possible...)

Ai comes out against Israel—v. 14

At the sight of Israel, Ai comes out ready for battle

At the sight of retreat, *Ai comes out in full force with Bethel's men as well*

**Joshua's Javelin**—*important signal and symbol*—vv. 18-26

Cf. Exodus 17:8-16

Signals the people to start the ambush

Symbolizes God's presence and role

In Exodus 17, Joshua was reminded: *The LORD is my banner* (when they built the altar)

*Also acts as a reminder—obey in full*

Obedience—

Devoted the inhabitants of Ai to destruction (v. 26)

Plundered the city for spoil and livestock (v. 27)

*"according to the word of the LORD that he commanded Joshua* (v. 27)

Took the body of the king down at sunset (v. 29; cf. Deut. 21:22-23)

On the king's death:

"The hanging of the king of Ai is probably to be viewed in this light. Here is a solemn sign that he and his people (in fact, all Canaan) stand under Yahweh's curse and judgment. Why? See

Leviticus 18:24–25 and Deuteronomy 9:4–5. Certainly, it is gruesome. But perhaps the living God must stoop to such spectacles; else we might never fear sin. Even at this moment you and I may not be overwhelmed by the gravity of God’s judgment—it is only something that happened to the king of Ai back in 1400 BC. Yet for the hardness of our hearts God has given us still another picture of his judgment—the King of the Jews hanging on a tree, ‘having become a curse for us’ (Gal. 3:13). Perhaps we will not take that so lightly. Perhaps we will not say that is only something that happened back in AD 30.” **Dale Ralph Davis**

## **Back to the Basics—vv. 30-35**

Joshua builds an altar (Mount Ebal)—*this is about God as central*

An altar is about worship

An altar is about sacrifices

*Mount Ebal?* This is some 20 miles north of where Ai/Bethel were. Why this detour?

Cf. Deuteronomy 27-28

This is not about military victory or worldly pursuits, it is about the relationship these people have with the living God.

Yet again, Joshua and the Israelites take a course *less than strategic* but focused on the Lord and His Word.

Why Ebal & Gerizim?

“One feature of the place between the mountains is its fine acoustical properties. A person on one mountain can easily hear a person on the other, and both can clearly hear what goes on below. One former visitor to Palestine, Canon Tristram, told of putting two of his traveling companions on the sides of the opposing mountains and having them recite the Ten Commandments antiphonally. Each could hear the other perfectly.” **James Montgomery Boice**

What about these offerings?

Burnt offerings—*for sin* (all of it burnt and offered to the Lord)

Fellowship/peace offerings—*joyful offerings*

(part eaten by the ones offering, as though they are fellowshiping with the Lord)

The Law read, the people listen, *the covenant renewed*

**Mount Ararat Bible Church**

All-Church Bible Study

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