

## Joshua Chapter 8

Notes and Questions for Sunday, January 6, 2019

- Note the familiar pattern of: God speaks → Joshua acts → Israel obeys.
  - God speaks (v. 1 & 2), Joshua acts (v. 3-9), Israel obeys (v. 10-13)
  - And again...God speaks (v. 18a), Joshua acts (v. 18b), Israel obeys (v. 19)
- 8:1 – Compare the reassurance given to Joshua to God’s statement to Joshua before the conquest of Jericho (6:2)
- 8:2 – What is the difference between God’s instructions regarding Jericho’s destruction and Ai’s?
  - Compare it to the destruction of Sihon (Deut 2:34-35)
- What was the scouting report regarding Ai? (Chapter 7:3)
  - What would explain Joshua’s fear or hesitation that God addresses in 8:1?
- 8:3 -- This verse mentions an ambush party of 30,000 men. Some note a possible contradiction with the ambush party of 5,000 men mentioned in v. 12.
  - Consider that there may have been two separate ambush parties. What other explanation might there be?
- 8:4 – The ambush party waits “behind the city.” The ambush would be to the west of the city between Ai and Bethel. Ai’s gate is evidently on the eastern side of the city.
- 8:4-8 How does the strategy described here capitalize on the prior defeat at Ai?
- 8:18 God instructs Joshua to hold outstretched his spear or weapon during the battle. Note the similarity to Moses’s upraised staff in Ex. 17 in the battle against Amalek.
  - Also note that the conquest of Jericho and Ai began with Joshua’s introduction to the Commander of the army of the Lord (5:12-14) who appeared to him with sword drawn in hand. Now it is Joshua who stands during the battle with weapon outstretched.

- 8:20-22 -- The result of the ambush and surprise attack on the city is that Ai's army is caught between the ambush party and Joshua's counterattack.
- 8:29 – What is done with the king of Ai's body?
  - What did the law say regarding this? Deut 21:22-23
  - Paul cites this law regarding Christ's death on the cross in Gal 3:13 "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree)."
- 8:30-35 -- The scene suddenly shifts to Shechem between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim. Note that Israel had to go out of the way to travel to Shechem because by Ch. 9 they have returned to Gilgal.
- 8:32 – What did Joshua write? (8:34-35) What was read? Note the emphasis of the word "all." All the words of the law; all that Moses had commanded; all the assembly of Israel.
  - Recall the instructions regarding this event in Deut 11:26-32 and Deut 27:2-3
- Chapters 5-8 form a thematic block describing the initial conquests of Jericho and Ai. Chapter 5 begins with the covenant signs of circumcision and Passover and Chapter 8 ends with the reading of the covenant law.
  - In chapter 7 Israel experiences the curses of God's anger and in chapter 8 the blessings of God's faithfulness and help.
- The placement of this section at the end (and the circumcision and Passover of ch. 5) emphasizes that Israel's success is not measured in military victories, but in submission to the word of God and covenant law.
- What else happened at Shechem? Gen 12:6-7 and Gen 33:18-20.