

Joshua 8

v2

“lay an ambush against the city behind it.”

- They are able to use their previous failure to advantage. Note that The Lord has given them the battle plan. It is not their own logic as before. We do not read of them consulting with The Lord for His leading/instruction to attack Ai.
- I believe that consulting The Lord before battle was not entirely necessary. They had been instructed to take the land. Had there been no sin I believe they would have had a victory. However, it does highlight how dependant and abandoned we should be on The Lord. Had they sought The Lord for His blessing maybe He would have warned them about the sin in the camp.
- The Lord instructs the ambush and through Joshua's details we can see how the previous loss and weakness could be used to cloak their advantage.
- This would seem to be a tender comfort and compassion to those grieving families. The loss of those men was not in vain and contributed to the final victory.
- It's important to remember that this was not at all necessary. There had been no need for the initial loss and defeat. There was no 'need' for an ambush now. Had there been no sin there would have been no defeat!

v8

“When you have taken the city, you shall set it afire; as the Lord commanded, you shall do. See, I have commanded you.”

- The inhabitants of the land were to be destroyed and all of their influence. Everything of their customs, religions, entertainment...
- The world is to be done away with!
- When The Lord gives us victory in an area of our life let us be thorough in purging that area and destroying the influence it has on our person.

v9-10

“Joshua lodged that night among the people.”

- Joshua didn't distance himself from them. He was not above them.
- We see here a type of Christ who desires to dwell amongst His people. The servant king. Not leaving them to their own devices but securing and encouraging them for the work/battle ahead.

“And Joshua rose up early in the morning”

- We see this phrase many times in Joshua's life as we saw it in Abraham's.
- The phrase denotes keen and immediate obedience. The Lord had spoken and Joshua swiftly obeyed the given instruction!
- No hesitation. No sluggishness.

v24-29

“until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.”

“And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day.”

- No one was left of Ai. There was no memory, legacy or heritage left. All people were slain and destroyed! This is the command of our God.
- There would/could be no future problems with Ai. The victory was conclusive, final.
- There was no place for the world or sin. There was no mercy, empathy or compassion shown toward sin and wickedness. It is to be totally and utterly removed!

v30-31

“Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal”

“As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel”

- After the victory they did not gloat in pride of their accomplishment.
- The battle was The Lord's and so was the victory.
- In the joy and celebration of victory Joshua erects an altar and acknowledges their dependence upon The Lord God.
- We can be so prone to forget The Lord when times are good and we experience/enjoy victory. This is the result of a sick and distant heart.

“and sacrificed peace offerings.”

- There is a significance in the type of offering. A peace offering was to symbolise communion and fellowship with God & man.
- Often given after a blessing, it was a sacrifice offered unto The Lord in acknowledgement and thanksgiving for His provision.
- It is precious that it is more than a thank you but a joyful praise of blessed fellowship, communion and peaceful relationship with The Lord.
- It is also precious to read of Joshua's consistency in obeying The Lord's commands.
- Joshua 1:7 Only be you strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded you: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.
- He built the altar obediently, according to the word commanded. Joshua's dedication to The Lord is a precious and beautiful testimony. May I learn to know, love and serve The Lord as Joshua did!

v33

“as well the stranger, as he that was born among them”

- Exodus 12:48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with you, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.
- I love this!! In the Old Testament there is provision made for the Gentile. The promise was not only for the children of Israel, though they were the chosen race/family to carry the messiah, but to all that would believe and would circumcise(separate) themselves unto The Lord.
- They were 'strangers' but they became as 'one born in the land' – They became citizens! Their nationality was changed, their identity was of Israel!
- It was always The Father's desire to have a people set apart unto Himself by faith, not by family/heritage, but by casting off the flesh and having a circumcision of heart unto Him!

“afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.”

“before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.”

- They had won a great victory. They had carried out a great retribution. But Joshua would make it clear to them that blessing and victory would only come from obedience to the word/law of God.
- Considering what they have gone through regarding the disobedience and curse of Achan it is fitting and poignant that Joshua remind the people again of the way of blessing and the consequences for disobedience.
- *2 Peter 1:12-13 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established in the present truth. [13] Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*
- Psalm 1:1-2 Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. [2] But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law does he meditate day and night.
- All ages listened to the law. It wasn't just for adults! All men, women and "little ones" listened to the law! If only we would have such a desire to let our children hear the word of God today!