

220810-4 Jos 8, Ai Falls & Israel Arrives to Mounts Gerizim & Ebal—CThurman

The LORD had declared Jericho an accursed thing to the nation of Israel except for those that had gathered to Rahab's house. All the silver and gold, and the vessels of brass and iron He also dedicated to the treasury or storehouse. So Israel fought against Jericho and it fell, but one man named Achan caused Israel to sin by taking to himself the accursed thing.

For this the LORD would not let Israel stand in their conflict against Ai. Israel was defeated there and 36 of their warriors died that day. The LORD said to Joshua, *thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing frm among you.* (Jos.7.13) So, the LORD commanded Joshua to bring every tribe, and Judah was taken. Of Judah, every family, and the family of Zerah was taken. Of every family the household of Zabdi was taken. Then of the household, man by man and the man Carmi, and then his son Achan was taken. Then Achan confessed his sin and told where the accursed things were. For this Achan, his family, his livestock were put to death by stoning and everything burned by fire, including all his possessions, and the accursed things.

Jos.7.26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. (The witness of which was till standing at the time of the close of this book of Joshua.) So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

Chapter 8

1 ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed:

fear, אָרַח, yah-reh, to be afraid, to fear, to reverence, to dread.

dismayed, חָתַח, chah-thath, to be dismayed, to be amazed, to be afraid, to be chapt, to break down, to go down, to be affrighted, to be beaten down, to be confounded, to be terrified.

take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land:

war, מִלְחָמָה, mil-chah-mah, a fem. noun tss. *war, battle, fight; vss. 1, 3, 11, war, 14, battle.*

2 And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves:

spoil, שָׁלַל, shah-lal, a masc. noun always tss. with the English *spoil.*

shall ye take for a prey, the verb בָּזַז, bah-zaz, tss. *take the spoil, to catch, to take, to rob, to gather; so 'to seize.'* (Jos.8.2, 27; 11.14)

The spoils would be divided according to that which the LORD commanded in Nu.31.25-29.

The spoils were divided into two equal parts, one for the warriors and the other for the congregation. Of the warrior's part a levy of 1/500th of all living things was to be given to the sons of Aaron. jAnd the congregation was levied 1/50th and given to the Levites.

In effect the Levites received the equivalent of a tithe of all the spoils, and the Aaronic priesthood a tithe of the Levites portion. To say it another way, the LORD gave to the Levites 1/10th of the total sum of the spoils, and to the Aaronic priesthood 1/10th of the sum of that which the Levites received.

lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

ambush, אָרַב, a verb tss. *to lay wait, to lie in wait, to ambush.*

The LORD laid claim to the first city that Israel would take in the conquest of Canaan. It was His to do with as He pleased. He was pleased to dedicate everything to destruction but for those of Rahab's house that came to stay with her in house where the scarlet thread was placed in the window, and the gold, silver and vessels of brass and iron. (These metals were put into the LORD's treasury.) But this time Israel may take of the spoils of the city of Ai.

3 ¶ So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night.

mighty, גִּבּוֹר, gib-bor, adj. tss. mighty, mighty men, mighty one, champion, strong, valiant men, giant, strong men.

valour, חַיִּל, chah-yil, a masc. noun, wealth, activity, army, host, able, valiantly, goods, host, substance, valour, virtuous, strength, power.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, be an ambush

even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready:
(to the west [v.9]) prepared

commanded, the verb פָּקַד, tss. to command, to bade, to appoint, to order, to charge.

go ... far, the verb פָּקַד, tss. to flee far, to be far, to go far, to go far away, to be far removed, to refrain, to loose.

ready, tss. from the Hebrew verb כָּוַן, coon, with the English to be established, to prepared (Jos.1.11; 4.4, he had prepared), to fashioned, to be firm (Jos.3.17; 4.3), to be fitted, to be ready (Jos. 8.4), to be meet, to stand, to order, to direct, etc.

5 And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city:

will approach, קָרַב, a verb tss. to be at hand, to approach, to stand by, to be ready, to bring, etc.; cf. Jos.3.4, come ... near; 7.14, shall come; 7.16, 17, 18, he brought; 8.5, will approach; 8.23, and brought; 10.24, come near; 17.4, and they came near.

and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first,

... as they did the first time when they came out against us.

that we will flee before them,

that we will flee, the verb נוּוּ, noos, tss. to flee, to abate, to flee away.

6 (For they will come out after us) till we have drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them.

we have drawn, the verb נָתַק, nah-thaq, tss. to draw, to pluck, to break, to lift up, to break off, to root out, to break asunder, to burst, to pull; vss. 6, 16.

7 Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city:
possess, inherit

and seize upon, the verb יָרַשׁ, yah-rash, tss. to possess, to succeed, to enjoy, to inherit, to drive out, to come to poverty, to consume, to expell.

for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.
נָתַן, nah-than
give

8 And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire:

when ye have taken, the verb תָּפַס, tah-phas, tss. to lay hold, to lay hold on, to apprehend, to catch, to handle, to lay over; vss. 8, 23.

according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. See, I have commanded you.

9 Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to lie in ambush, and abode between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai:

As Joshua charged the 30,000 mighty men of valour, they went around to the other side, the west side of Ai and waited for Joshua, and the warriors with him, to come and give a pretense of fleeing before them.

but Joshua lodged that night among the people.

***10 And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people,
mustered***

and numbered, the verb פָּקַד, pah-qad, tss. to visit, to number, to appoint, to remember, to charge, to count, mustered.

rose up early, the verb שָׁכַם, shah-kam, tss. to be early, to rise up early, to be up early, to get early; v.14.

and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

11 And all the people, even the people of war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between them and Ai.

12 And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city.

13 And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

14 And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that they hasted

hasted, the verb מָהַר, mah-har, tss. to carry headlong, to be rash, to be fearful, to be quick, to haste, to be soon, to be swift, to fetch quickly; vss. 14, 19.

and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but he wist not that there were liers in ambush against him behind the city.

15 And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.

made as if they were beaten, the verb נָגַע, nah-ga[g], tss. to touch, to smite, to reach, to plague, to strike, to beat.

by the way of the wilderness – probably in the valley leading east back to where the camp of Israel was located.

16 And all the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city.

17 And there was not a man left in Ai or Bethel,

Evidently the king of Ai solicited for help from the men of Bethel as they thought another attack was imminent.

that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city.

spear, כִּידּוֹן, kee-dōhn, a masc. noun, tss. speak, target, shield, lance.

19 And the ambush arose quickly out of their place,

quickly, מְהֵרָה, m'hey-rah, a fem. noun tss. quickly, hastily, speedily, make speed, swiftly, with speed, shortly.

and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire.

20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned
(of Israel)

back upon the pursuers.

21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.

22 And the other *issued out of the city against them;*

(the warriors of Israel that entered into the city and set on fire then ...)

so they *were in the midst of Israel,* **some on this side,**
(of Ai) (surrounded)

and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape.

23 ¶ And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

24 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword.

25 And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai.

So the numbers of them that were slain reveals that this was a small city in comparison to the 600,000+ soldiers that constituted the army of Israel. Reasonably speaking Israel should have been able to easily overthrow the city of Ai. But as we saw, there was sin that the LORD would not allow Israel to prosper in until it was resolved.

There might be times when the LORD will not prosper a church because of certain sins. Like accursed things to Israel there are things for which the LORD will bring the whole church into judgment when they will not judge themselves. (This is not an all encompassing list. (Murder, abortion, lying, drunkenness [things which offend God and the church for the publicness of the issue].)

Eph.5.3 ¶ But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

26 For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

We read something similar to this when Israel fought against Amalek. Sometime between the 2nd and 3rd months after Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage, before they had arrived to Sinai in the third month, Amalek attacked Israel.

*Ex.17.8 ¶ Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.
9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.
10 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.
11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.
12 But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.
13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.*

*Deu.25.17 Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;
18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.
19 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it.*

**27 Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded Joshua.
28 And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever,**

heap, הֵל, tehl, tss. heap, strength,

even a desolation unto this day.

waste

desolation, הַשְׁמָמָה, sh'mah-mah, tss. a desolation, a waste. Only this once in the book of Joshua.

Place-names, like this (Ai) are given in the narrative early. In this case it is very likely that Ai received its name after this destruction which left the city in a ruined *heap*.

unto this day – (see the next verse) the time of the death of Joshua and the end of this book.

29 And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass
dead body

carcase, הַבְּלֵיָהּ, n'veh-lah, a fem. noun tss. carcase, beast that dieth of itself, a body, a dead body.

down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.

heap, הַגֵּל, gal, a masc. noun tss. an heap, the waves, the billows, and a place called Gallim.

that remaineth unto this day – meaning that at the time of Joshua's death this great heap of stones at the gate and upon the dead body of the king of Ai was still there to witness what the LORD had done for Israel at their entering into the land of Canaan.

What follows is the commandment which Moses gave to Israel of coming to Mounts Ebal, the mount of cursing, and Gerizim, the mount of blessing.

Evidently, shortly after this victory, Joshua leads the nation of Israel north to these two mountains. Once they arrive the nation parts into two companies, one to the side of Gerizim and the other part to the side of Ebal. There, with the ark of the covenant in the valley between them, the Kohathites carrying the ark, it seems that they begin to proclaim the twelve curses, which if the rule is obey is turned to a blessing. (cf. Deu.27.15-26) What those curses and blessings are in light of these twelve laws are given in Deuteronomy chapter 28.

**30 ¶ Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal,
31 As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.**

Joshua built an altar –This altar represents Jesus Christ. The altar was made of stones upon which no iron tool was lifted. The altar is a means for approaching unto God. It is not possible for any man to approach unto God by his own merit. God can only be approached by the Person of Jesus Christ and based upon the righteousness that He worked during His earthly ministry in behalf of His people.

Joh 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Eph 2:18 For through him (Jesus Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Upon this altar Joshua offered both burnt offerings and peace offerings. Burnt offerings were made of the herd (the most costly offerings), the flock (the most precious sacrifices), and of birds (the least esteemed), all of which points to Jesus Christ. By the word of God Christ gave Himself up to the Father for an atoning, sin offering for us.

Eph.5.2 ... Christ ... hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Tit.2.14 Who (Christ) gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity (that's atonement), and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

The burnt offering especially refers to the sacrifice of the *body* of Christ for sins. He gave His life wholly to God for us.

He.10.8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The peace offering is always offered upon the burnt offering.

Lev.3.5 And Aaron's sons shall burn it (the peace offering) on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The basis for peace is the sacrifice once-for-all sacrifice which Jesus Christ made for sinners. Christ reconciled us to God by the sacrifice of His body for sin.

Col.1.21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

The meat of the peace offering is partaken of by the offerors. In other words he gets to eat of this sacrifice. The peace offering is to give thanks, to praise God for His faithfulness, or to demonstrate the willingness of the offerer to offer sacrifices of worship to God.

Le 7:12 If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and

unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.

...

15 And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning.

16 But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten ...

Read Deu.27.1-8 (cf. 27.7, offering peace offerings were to be eaten. It was a time for thanksgiving and praise. [Lev.7.11-17]).

32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

It could be that the part of the law of Moses that was written upon the large stones is the twelve curses given in Deu.27.15-26. They are cursed if they disobey and blessed for obedience. So, six of the curses could be written upon each large stone and places on each mount..

Deu.29.1 ¶ These are the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

33 And all Israel, and their elders, and officers,

officers, of the verb שָׂטַר, shah-tar, officer, officers over, rule, overseer; cf. 1.10; 3.2; 8.33; 23.2; 24.1.

and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD,
(*which, describing which Levites are under consideration here*)

These priests would have been the four which had the charge to carry the ark of the covenant, the Kohathites. (cf. Nu.3.29-31)

as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

On the side of Gerizim, to the south, to bless, (Deu.27.12): Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, Benjamin	On the side of Ebal, to the north, to curse, (Deu.27.13): Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali
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34 And 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.

35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, children

little ones, תַּפּוֹ, taph, a masc. noun tss. little ones, families, children.

and the strangers that were conversant among them.

aliens walking

that were conversant, the verb הִלְכָה, tss. to go, to walk, to come, to follow, to run, to pass, to be conversant.

So it seems that once Israel arrived to the valley between Gerizim and Ebal he set up an altar to the Lord and had the sons of Aaron offer the burnt offerings and peace offerings. Of this they would all eat and give thanks to God. Once this was done the twelve curses, which are curses for disobedience and blessings for obedience, were written on large stones that were plastered with lime to witness against Israel how it shall be for them as they live in the land of Canaan and under this covenant. These stones were then put in place to their respective mountain, Gerizim (blessing) and Ebal (cursing). Then it was probably the Levites, particularly the Kohathites which carried the ark of the covenant, that recited these before all the tribes of Israel as they stood in their appointed places on each side of the valley. And finally, Joshua read over every word again so that everyone, young and old, the natural born Jew as well as the foreigner (the proselyte) would hear it.