

## **Joshua 8 Devoted to The Lord**

“God should treat everyone the same way, no matter what they've done.”

Do you agree, or disagree? Why?

Read Joshua 8:18-29 and Exodus 17:8-13

1. You will have noticed that in Joshua 8:18-26, Joshua's actions bring back memories of a similar incident involving Moses. Why do you think these parallels between Joshua and Moses matter (1:5, 3:7)?

### The defeat of Ai

The result of the battle against the city of Ai is bloody and decisive. Every inhabitant of the city is killed by the sword (Josh 8:21-25). After the city burns to the ground, leaving it a permanent heap of ruins, we read about the fate of one man: the King of Ai. He is brought to Joshua, executed and hung on a tree until sunset.

2. According to Exodus 23:23-33, why is the mass slaughter of Ai's inhabitants necessary?

3. What is symbolized by hanging a defeated king on a tree (cf. Deut 21:22-23)?

4. What does Joshua do next with the King of Ai's body, and why (Josh 8:29)?

5. The King of Ai is humiliated in his death as his body is displayed, hung before the people. How is this death similar or different to the death referred to in Galatians 3:13?

6. What will the Israelites remember when they look at the rock pile marking the King of Ai's grave?

7. What would a Christian remember if they looked at the rock marking out Jesus' tomb?

Read Deuteronomy 27:1-8 and Joshua 8:30-35.

7. How well does Joshua follow through on God's instructions?

8. As they consider their victory over Ai, why is there no place for smugness within Israel (8:1)?

9. What do you think is the point of the altar and the ceremony?

## Implications

Israel has learned that God's judgement is fierce. As the people recite the law, the covenant curses follow the covenant blessings, reminding them of the cost of disobedience. If Israel is not faithful to God's law, they will forfeit God's blessing and their fate will be just as terrible as that of the king of Ai.

However, Christians have the great assurance of the gospel: another (much later) king has taken away the curse of the law.

Give thanks and pray, for Christ has borne the shame that we deserved.