

Joshua 8

JPS [\[Online\]](#)

The Conquest of Ai

1And the LORD said unto Joshua: 'Fear not, neither be thou dismayed; 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. **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; set thee an ambush for the city behind it.'

3So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up to Ai; and Joshua chose out thirty thousand men, the mighty men of valour, and sent them forth by night. **4**And he commanded them, saying: 'Behold, ye shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city; go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready. **5**And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city; and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them. **6**And they will come out after us, till we have drawn them away from the city; for they will say: They flee before us, as at the first; so we will flee before them. **7**And ye shall rise up from the ambush, and take possession of the city; for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. **8**And it shall be, when ye have seized upon the city, that ye shall set the city on fire; according to the word of the LORD shall ye do; see, I have commanded you.' **9**And Joshua sent them forth; and they went to the ambushment, and abode between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people.

10And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. **11**And all the people, even the men 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 him and Ai. **12**And he took about five thousand men, and set them in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai. **13**So the people set themselves in array, even all the host that was on the north of the city, their rear lying in wait on the west of the city; and Joshua went that night into the midst of the vale. **14**And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that the men of the city hastened and rose up early and went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at the time appointed, in front of the Arabah; but he knew not that there was an 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. **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 Beth-el, that went not out after Israel; and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.

18And the LORD said unto Joshua: 'Stretch out the javelin that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thy hand.' And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city. **19**And the

ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and entered into the city, and took it; and they hastened 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 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 back, and slew the men of Ai. **22**And the other came forth out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, 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.

24And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, even in the wilderness wherein they pursued them, and they were all fallen by the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all Israel returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword. **25**And all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai. **26**For Joshua drew not back his hand, wherewith he stretched out the javelin, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. **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**So Joshua burnt Ai, and made it a heap for ever, even a desolation, unto this day. **29**And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until the eventide; and at the going down of the sun Joshua commanded, and they took his carcass down from the tree, and cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raised thereon a great heap of stones, unto this day.

Joshua Renews the Covenant (Deuteronomy 27:1–10)

30Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD, the 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 unhewn stones, upon which no man had lifted up any iron; and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace-offerings. **32**And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote before the children of Israel. **33**And all Israel, and their elders and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, that bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger as the home-born; half of them in front of mount Gerizim and half of them in front of mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel. **34**And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, 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 assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that walked among them.