

CHOOSE YOUR MOUNTAIN CAREFULLY

Joshua 8:30-35

(Josh 8:30-35), "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. {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. {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, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, 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. {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, and the strangers that were conversant among them."

(The only outline for this message is the title itself. If an outline is to be followed, it will consist of the verses of the text following one after the other.)



IN **JOSHUA 6** ISRAEL experienced **GREAT VICTORY** at **JERICHO**.

IN **JOSHUA 7** ISRAEL experienced **HUMILIATING DEFEAT** at the city of **AI**. They had **36 CASUALTIES** and **RAN** from the battle in **great humiliation**.

- **THE REASON** FOR THEIR DEFEAT was a soldier named **ACHAN** had taken **spoils from Jericho** that God had **FORBIDDEN**. He hid those spoils in his tent thinking that no one knew of his sin.
- Once Israel discovered the reason for their defeat, they **CORRECTED THE PROBLEM**. Later they gained **VICTORY** over **THE CITY OF AI**.

GOD HAD TAUGHT ISRAEL MANY VALUABLE LESSONS FROM AI which we considered in great detail in our previous study. By way of **REVIEW**, SOME OF THOSE LESSONS WERE:

1) **FAILURE TO PRAY ALWAYS MAKES US VULNERABLE TO SIN NO MATTER HOW SMALL THE BATTLE MIGHT BE.**

- **WITHOUT PRAYER, ANY "AI" is too big for us!**

2) **YESTERDAY'S TRIUMPH OVER MIGHTY JERICO DOES NOT GUARANTEE TODAY'S VICTORY OVER INSIGNIFICANT AI.**

- **AI APPEARED INSIGNIFICANT** in comparison to Jericho. That was a horribly wrong conclusion.

3) **AN OBVIOUS OUTWARD CONNECTION BETWEEN DEFEAT AT AI AND THE SINS BURIED IN OUR TENT ARE NOT ALWAYS CRYSTAL-CLEAR.**

- **WHO WOULD HAVE EVER THOUGHT** that the sin of Achan burying forbidden objects in his tent would have resulted in the defeat of the entire army.
- **HOW OFTEN** does the sin of one person keep the blessing from the entire **family? Church?**
- **WE DO NOT SIN IN ISOLATION!**

4) **THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS SECRET SIN.**

- We may have **BURIED** that sin **so deep** that we have concluded everyone, God included, has forgotten it.
- Jesus' said:
(Luke 12:2), "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

5) **NO FAILURE NEED BE FINAL.**

- God is the God of **A SECOND CHANCE**

BEGINNING IN **VERSE 30** of today's text, **THE VICTORY OF AI WAS COMPLETE. WORD OF ISRAEL'S VICTORIES** had spread throughout the land of Canaan. **ALLIANCES** were being formed among the inhabitants of the land in an attempt to defeat Israel. **THE DAYS AHEAD** for the army of Israel were going to be **long, hard** and **exhausting**. The land was full of fortified cities **greater** and more **formidable** than Jericho and Ai. **MANY OTHER BATTLES STILL HAD TO BE FOUGHT** before there would be rest in the land.

S CONSIDERING THAT REALITY, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE

GUESSED ISRAEL'S NEXT MOVE to have been? What they actually did is something no one would likely have guessed. Because what they did appeared to be a very **UNWISE MOVE** in light of the hostility in the land.

S **AFTER THEIR VICTORY AT AI**, Israel traveled to **MOUNT EBAL & MOUNT GERIZIM** in order **TO WORSHIP GOD**.

(V. 30), “Then Joshua built an altar unto the **LORD God of Israel in MOUNT EBAL**,”

S **VERSE 33 MENTIONS BOTH MOUNT GERIZIM and MOUNT EBAL**. Those two mountains were the approximate **GEOGRAPHICAL CENTER** of the Land of Promise. They tell us that you can see much of the land of Israel from the peaks of those two mountains. **IT IS HELPFUL TO FIX the LOCATION and POSITION** of those two mountains in our mind.

S Those two mountains were **25 TO 30 MILES FROM AI**. **THE MAIN NORTH — SOUTH ROAD** through central Israel passed through the valley found between those two mountains. In that valley between those two mountains was found **THE ANCIENT CITY OF SHECHEM**. Its location would have made it **A HIGH TRAFFIC AREA**.

S **MOUNT EBAL** was on the **NORTH** side of the valley and its peak was **3077 ft.** above seal level. **MOUNT GERIZIM** was on the south side of the valley and its peak was **2849 ft** above sea level.

THE SUMMITS of the two mountains were separated by a distance of about **2 MILES**. **THE WIDTH OF THE VALLEY** between these two mountains at their closest point is about **500 YARDS** (approx. **1/3 MILE**).

IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THE PICTURE FIRMLY PLANTED IN YOUR MIND. On the north was mount **EBAL**. On the south was mount **GERIZIM**. At their closest points between two mountains is a valley the width of **500 yards** at its most narrow point. Those two mountains form **A NATURAL AMPHITHEATER**. They have stated that a person can stand on the peak of one mountain on a calm day, and shout across the valley to the summit of the other mountain, and be understood.

S THAT PARTICULAR VALLEY IS **RICH IN BIBLICAL HISTORY:**

- 1) **ABRAHAM** left the city of Ur and traveled with his family to a place called Haran. He stayed at Haran until Terah, his father, died. After Terah's death, God told Abraham to get up from that land and go to a place God would show him. Abraham **JOURNEYED SOUTHWARD** until he came to a place called **SHECHEM** (KJV "Sichem"). Listen to what God said to Abraham in the valley between those two mountains called Ebal and Gerizim.

(Gen 12:6-7 NIV), "Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. {7} **The LORD** appeared to Abram and **SAID, "TO YOUR OFFSPRING I WILL GIVE THIS LAND."** SO HE **BUILT AN ALTAR THERE** to the LORD, who had appeared to him."

It was at Shechem between those two mountains that **GOD FIRST PROMISED THE LAND TO ISRAEL. IT IS NO COINCIDENCE** that God sent Joshua and Israel back to the place where God had first promised the land to Israel. Perhaps some Israelites were wondering why they were in that land at all. God's answer to any doubters was they were there because God had promised the land to them. It was in that land where the Lord Jesus would someday come and die for the sins of the world. It was the people of Israel in that land that God would use to record the holy Bible.

IN RESPONSE to God's promise, Abram did what he often did, he **BUILT AN ALTAR TO GOD**. That is also what Israel was going to do in Joshua 8.

- 2) **JACOB** was at Shechem at a time **OF PERSONAL REVIVAL**. God appeared to him at Shechem and told him to return to **BETHEL**. Bethel was the place God first appeared to Jacob as he ran from his brother Esau. At Shechem Jacob told his family and servants to put away their strange gods and change their garments. Jacob took all their strange gods and their earrings and buried them under an **OAK TREE** which was by Shechem (Gen 35:4).

3) IN LATER O.T. DAYS, THE **SAMARITANS** built a temple that competed with the temple in Jerusalem. **That particular temple** was **DESTROYED** during the days of the **Maccabees**.

4) IN JOHN 4 JESUS TALKED TO **A WOMAN AT A WELL**

Some interesting facts accompany that conversation.

#1. SHE WAS A **SAMARITAN**

#2. THEIR CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE AT A SPECIFIC LOCATION — **JACOB'S WELL**.

(John 4:6), "Now Jacob's well was there. . . ."

THAT WELL **exists even to this very day** and is found in the valley between mount Gerizim and mount Ebal. They still call it **JACOB'S WELL**.

HER **EXACT WORDING** REFERS TO **A MOUNTAIN** **(John 4:20)**, "Our fathers worshipped **IN THIS MOUNTAIN**; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

"**THIS MOUNTAIN**" referred to **MT. GERIZIM**, where **SAMARITANS WORSHIPPED** IN THE DAYS OF JESUS.

4) THE MODERN CITY OF **NABLUS** is now found in that valley where ancient Shechem was once located. Nablus is often in the **NEWS** due to the present conflict in Israel.

ACCORDING TO VERSES 33 & 35 **JOSHUA TOOK THE ENTIRE COMPANY** OF ISRAEL TO THAT VALLEY:

- THE **ARMY**, THE **OFFICERS**,
- **ELDERS**, THE **JUDGES**, **PRIESTS**,
- **WOMEN**, **CHILDREN**
- and **STRANGERS**

THE **NUMBERS** WOULD HAVE BEEN **MASSIVE** as they gathered between those two mountains.

IT DID **NOT MAKE GOOD MILITARY SENSE**, to make so many

people travel so far in harms way. The only thing that made the journey reasonable was that **GOD HAD TOLD THEM TO DO IT.**

WE MIGHT WONDER WHY the inhabitants of the city of Shechem did not attack Israel. Because the Scripture does not tell us why, a great deal of **SPECULATION** has surrounded that question.

- 1) Some have suggested that Israel had **ALREADY DEFEATED** Shechem in an earlier campaign. That explanation does not seem likely since Joshua's northern military campaign would not take place until they had conquered the south.
- 2) Others have proposed that Shechem was on **FRIENDLY TERMS WITH ISRAEL.** That is not likely considering God's command regarding the inhabitants of the land of Canaan.
- 3) **THE MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION** is that Shechem was **SHUT UP** because of fear the way **JERICHO** was before it was conquered. The citizens of **Shechem may have observed** Israel as they stood in the valley between mount Ebal and mount Gerizim.

YEARS EARLIER WHEN JACOB LEFT SHECHEM to go to Bethel, he had to travel through **hostile territory.** Scripture tells why the inhabitants of the land did not attack him. (**Gen 35:5**), ". . . They journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

THE QUESTION AGAIN — What would you have **GUESSED ISRAEL'S NEXT MOVE** would have been **AFTER DEFEATING AI?**
THE ANSWER IS — **THEY TRAVELED 25 to 30 miles** through **hostile territory TO WORSHIP GOD.**

(V. 30), "THEN JOSHUA BUILT AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal,"

- S **IT IS INTERESTING** that **ARCHAEOLOGISTS** have uncovered a large **Israelite altar** on Mt. Ebal. Might it be the altar built by Joshua?
- S **ISRAEL'S WILLINGNESS** to **travel so far** through unfriendly territory, and **to build an altar** to God on mount Ebal, **SAID**

MUCH ABOUT THEM:

- 1) It speaks of their **SPIRITUAL COURAGE**. They would **NOT ALLOW ANY OBSTACLES ERECTED** by the enemy to keep them from the place of worship.
- 2) It also says something about their **SPIRITUAL PRIORITIES**. They could have listed **ONE HUNDRED REASONS** why they should not have made that journey at that time. Their commitment to God was such that they would not allow their **DAILY ACTIVITIES** to keep them from the priority of meeting with God. **ISRAEL PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST.**

S ISRAEL'S JOURNEY TO MOUNT EBAL AND GERIZIM SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT **OUR SPIRITUAL PRIORITIES, TOO! SO MANY THINGS** can consume our time and energy on a daily basis. We have **COMMITMENTS** to fulfill. We have **WORK** to be done. We have **FAMILIES** to raise. **BILLS** have to be paid. There are **BATTLES TO BE FOUGHT**. In light of all the things that might consume our time, Jesus said:

(**Mat 6:33**), "But **SEEK YE FIRST** the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

OUR TEXT TELLS US WHY ISRAEL MADE THAT JOURNEY. Of course they did it to worship God, but **BEYOND THAT** the **TEXT REVEALS SOME DETAILS.**

(**V. 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, . . . "**

- S They journeyed **OUT OF OBEDIENCE** to **GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS** through **MOSES** given in **Deuteronomy 11** and **27**. Deuteronomy was **THE FAREWELL SPEECH OF MOSES** to the people of Israel just before his death.
- S **IN MOSES' FAREWELL SPEECH, HE TELLS ISRAEL:**
 - (**Deu 11:29**), "And it shall come to pass, when the **LORD** thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt **PUT THE BLESSING UPON MOUNT GERIZIM, AND THE CURSE UPON MOUNT EBAL.**"

- **(Deu 27:2-8)**, “And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster: {3} And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law . . . {4} . . . Ye shall set up **THESE STONES**, which I command you this day, **IN MOUNT EBAL**, and thou shalt **PLASTER THEM** with plaster. {5} And there shalt thou **BUILD AN ALTAR** unto the LORD thy God, **AN ALTAR OF STONES**: thou shalt **NOT LIFT UP ANY IRON TOOL** upon them. {6} Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt **OFFER BURNT OFFERINGS** thereon unto the LORD thy God: {7} And thou shalt **OFFER PEACE OFFERINGS**, and shalt **EAT** there, and **REJOICE** before the LORD thy God. {8} And thou shalt **WRITE UPON THE STONES ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LAW** very plainly.”

WHEN WE COMBINE ALL THREE PASSAGES HERE IS WHAT WE LEARN:

- 1) **THE ALTAR** was to be built upon mount **Ebal** — **BUT ONLY UPON MOUNT EBAL** (V. 30)
- 2) **THE ALTAR** was to be built out of **UNCUT STONES** on which **NO IRON TOOL** had been used (V. 31).

The Scripture **MAKES A BIG ISSUE** out of building altars to God using **uncut stones**.

(Exo 20:25), “If you make an altar of stones for me, do not build it with dressed stones, for you will defile it if you use a tool on it.”

We will speak of **THE SIGNIFICANCE** of the uncut stones at the conclusion of this message.

- 3) **TWO KINDS OF OFFERINGS WERE TO BE MADE**. Those two offerings were the same two offerings made at **MT. SINAI** (Ex 24).

(V. 31), “. . . They offered thereon **BURNT OFFERINGS** unto the LORD, and sacrificed **PEACE OFFERINGS**.”

#1. THE BURNT OFFERING

S The burnt offering spoke God's provision for the **COVERING OF OUR SIN**. From a N.T. PERSPECTIVE, the burnt offering **PICTURED CHRIST'S SHED BLOOD**.

(**Heb 9:22**), "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and **WITHOUT SHEDDING OF BLOOD IS NO REMISSION**."

S IT IS OF **GREAT SIGNIFICANCE** that the altar was found only upon the **MOUNT EBAL**, the mountain where the curses were to be pronounced.

#2. THE PEACE OFFERING (FELLOWSHIP OFFERING)

S The *PEACE OFFERING* followed the offering of burnt sacrifice. It spoke of the **RESTORATION OF FELLOWSHIP** that is possible after sin has been committed. According to Deut 27:7 the fellowship offering was to be eaten with **REJOICING** in the presence of the LORD. As **Amy Carmichael** wrote, "Chords that were broken, can vibrate once more."

S **A PERSON WHO HAS FAILED** on mount Ebal can be restored to fellowship with God. The sacrifice of burnt offering paved the way for the sinner to **REJOICE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AGAIN**. GOD OFFERS PEACE to all who come by **THE WAY OF THE CROSS**.

(**Rom 5:1**), "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"

(**V. 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."

S IT IS ALSO **INTERESTING** how often God chose to use stones to bear witness to significant events. **ALREADY SIX SETS OF STONES** have been described in the Book of Joshua alone. **THOSE STONES STOOD AS A MEMORIAL**.

#1. **STONES IN THE JORDAN RIVER** commemorated the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River (Jos 4:9).

#2. **STONES AT GILGAL** memorialized Israel's first night in the land and the miraculous crossing of the Jordan river. The

name *Gilgal* meant *CIRCLE OF STONES*. Joshua stated the purpose of those stones:

(Josh 4:21), “. . . When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What mean these stones?’ {22} Then ye shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.’”

#3. **A HEAP OF STONES IN THE VALLEY OF ACHOR** memorialized **THE SIN OF ACHAN** (Jos 7:26).

#4. **A HEAP OF STONES AT THE ENTRY TO AI** reminded Israel of God’s Judgment (Jos 8:29).

#5 & 6. **THE STONES AT MT. EBAL SERVED AS STANDING**

STONES. They **STOOD AS A MEMORIAL REMINDING ISRAEL OF:**

- 1) **GOD’S PAST BLESSING**
- 2) **GOD’S PRESENT ENCOURAGEMENT**
- 3) **GOD’S FUTURE DIRECTION**

S **SOME DEBATE** exists about whether there were one or two sets of stones. **SOME BELIEVE** the uncut stones were set up and the sacrifice was offered on top of them. Once the sacrifice was complete, they coated the stones in plaster and the Words of the Law were inscribed upon that plastered stone.

OTHERS BELIEVE there were two separate sets of stones. The first set served as an altar for sacrifice. The second set was covered in plaster and served as the area upon which the *law* was inscribed. I am of the impression there were two separate sets of stones.

S **IT IS INTERESTING** that **LARGE STONES** have been uncovered by **ARCHAEOLOGISTS** that have had **MORE WORDS** written on them than are included in the Book of Deuteronomy. According to the ***BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY*** **ARCHEOLOGISTS** have discovered similar inscribed pillars or **STELAE SIX TO EIGHT FEET LONG** in the Middle East. **THE BEHISTUN INSCRIPTION IN IRAN** has **THREE TIMES** the amount of words as does the Book of Deuteronomy.

BACK TO THE VALLEY BETWEEN MOUNT EBAL AND MOUNT GERIZIM (V. 33 NIV), “All Israel, aliens and citizens alike, with

their elders, officials and judges, were standing **on both sides** of **THE ARK** of the covenant of the LORD, **FACING THOSE WHO CARRIED IT**— the priests, who were Levites. **HALF** of the people stood **IN FRONT OF MOUNT GERIZIM** and **HALF OF THEM IN FRONT OF MOUNT EBAL**, as Moses the servant of the LORD had formerly commanded when he gave instructions to bless the people of Israel."

DEUT 27 GOES INTO GREATER DETAIL

- 1) **THE LEVITES (PRIESTS) WERE TO READ THE *BLESSINGS*** and **THE *CURSES*** from the O.T. law while standing in the valley facing the Ark of the Covenant.
- 2) **THE SIX TRIBES OF Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin** were to stand **ON THE SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN OF BLESSING, MOUNT GERIZIM**. After each *blessing* was read, they were to say **AMEN** (Deut 27:12).
- 3) **THE SIX TRIBES OF Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali** were to stand **ON THE NORTHERN MOUNTAIN OF CURSING, MOUNT EBAL**. After each *curse* was read, they were to say **AMEN** (Deut 27:13).

What happened that day was **VERY VISUAL** and memorable. God was **PAINTING A VIVID PICTURE** that would **BE HARD TO FORGET**.

TIME DOES NOT PERMIT US TO READ ALL THE CURSING AND BLESSINGS. I have selected **SEVEN BLESSINGS** and **SEVEN CURSES** that would have been spoken by the Levites in that valley that day. These are **THE EXACTS WORDS** used that day except for being read in English, rather than read in Hebrew.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR MEMORY, I want to break our congregation into two groups and pretend we are on those two mountains. When we read the corresponding blessing, or cursing, I want you to boldly state — **AMEN**.

BLESSINGS FROM DEUT 28:

- 1) {4} The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock--the calves of your herds and the

lambs of your flocks. — **AMEN.**

- 2) {7} The LORD will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven. — **AMEN.**
- 3) {8} The LORD will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to. The LORD your God will bless you in the land he is giving you. — **AMEN.**
- 4) {9} The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. {10} Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you. — **AMEN.**
- 5) {11} The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity--in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground--in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you. — **AMEN.**
- 6) {12} The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. — **AMEN.**
- 7) {13} The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom. — **AMEN.**

CURSES FROM DEUT 27:

- 1) {15} "Cursed is the man who **CARVES AN IMAGE OR CASTS AN IDOL**--a thing detestable to the LORD, the work of the craftsman's hands--and sets it up in secret." — **AMEN.**
- 2) {16} "Cursed is the man who **DISHONORS HIS FATHER OR HIS MOTHER.**" — **AMEN.**
- 3) {17} "Cursed is the man who moves his neighbor's **BOUNDARY STONE.**" — **AMEN.**
- 4) {18} "Cursed is the man who **LEADS THE BLIND ASTRAY** on the road." — **AMEN.**

- 5) {19} "Cursed is the man who **WITHHOLDS JUSTICE FROM THE ALIEN**, the **FATHERLESS** or the **WIDOW**." — **AMEN**.
- 6) {24} "Cursed is the man who **KILLS** his neighbor secretly." — **AMEN**.
- 7) {26} ""Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out." — **AMEN**.

(Many blessings and cursing were left out because of time and space. Reading them all on your own would be helpful. Many of the curses reflected sins that were prevalent in the land of Canaan.)

(Josh 8:34-35), "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**, and the **strangers** that were conversant among them."

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

- 1) **WE HAVE ALL CHOSEN** the mountain upon which we want to stand and build our lives. Which mountain have **YOU** chosen? **WHERE** have you pitched **YOUR TENT**? Which mountain are you leading your **family** to build upon? If the path you have chosen is maintained for the next ten years, will there be blessing or cursing?
- 2) **IF** you have found yourself upon mount Ebal, **THERE IS A WAY** to get to mount Gerizim. The **ALTAR** on mount Ebal speaks of God's **PROVISION FOR RETURN**. **OPPORTUNITY FOR ABUNDANT FELLOWSHIP** exists for those who will come by the way of the cross. **(Rom 5:1)**, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"
- 3) Don't forget **THAT ALTAR CONSISTED OF UNCUT STONES**. We do not approach God in our own devised manner. We come in the manner prescribed by God. *Cain* approached God in his own self-determined

manner and was rejected. We must come in the way that God has prescribed.

- 4) **WORSHIP OF GOD OUGHT TO BE A MATTER OF GREAT PRIORITY.** Israel journeyed **30 miles** through **hostile territory** to worship God. **THEY REJECTED ALL EXCUSES** and obeyed God. **THEY REFUSED TO ALLOW ANY OBSTACLE** to keep them from the place of worship. **EVERY BARRIER ERECTED BY THE ENEMY** was overcome.

THAT SAYS SOMETHING TO US all about our **PRIORITY** and **COURAGE** in worship of God. May we be willing to pay whatever price is necessary to bring glory to God.

- 5) **A FINAL QUESTION — WHICH MOUNTAIN IS OUR NATION STANDING ON TODAY?**

S **GOD'S BLESSINGS WERE CONDITIONAL.**

S **(Deu 30:19)**, "This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live"