



SCRIPTURE

Joshua 8

OVERVIEW

After the horror of chapter 7 and Israel's sins and mistakes, we see at the start of chapter 8 the Lord's grace at work. He comes close to Joshua and the people and speaks words of mercy and comfort over them saying "Do not fear and not be dismayed." Where we may expect judgment we see undeserving favour, that is, grace.

We looked at how through this chapter we see that grace is the fuel for our lives and the foundation of our faith.

Fuel for our lives

Grace allows us to walk in obedience to our God, not for his favour but from it. Throughout the passage we see the Lord speak

Direction (V1 - Take all the fighting men)

Strategy (V2 - Lay an ambush behind the city)

Victory (V1 - See I have given Ai into your hands)
The grace of God positions us to hear the voice of God and empowers us to follow him.
For Joshua and Israel obeying the Lord and following his leading led to them seeing the victory that the Lord had promised.
The grace of God leads us into humility, obedience and victory as we trust in the Lord.

Foundation of our faith

Once Israel had seen victory, immediately we read Joshua builds an altar, reads the law of Moses and brought forth the ark of the Lord. All of these were to serve as a reminder that their faith is built on the covenant promises of our God. The Altar was a place of worship and sacrifice, reminding the people of the greatness and holiness of our God. The law reminded the people of their sin and inability to live up to God's standards, and the ark reminded them that despite this, the Lord chose to be with them and be their God.

All of these things pointed towards Jesus, the Son of God, great and holy, who humbled himself and came to Earth, lived the perfect life the law commanded and died on our behalf for our sins. And he promised that if we know him as Lord and Saviour then he will dwell with us and in us for all eternity. All because of the grace of God.

DISCUSSION

1. When you get things wrong, what do you expect God's response will be? How can we grow in knowing the grace of our God?
2. What is the Lord calling you into in this season and what does obedience look like for you?

3. What misunderstanding towards grace do we carry and how does it affect our relationship with the Lord?

Here is a link to the article about difficult passages in the Old Testament that Martin mentioned:



Judgment or Cruelty? Conquering the Promised Land

Conquest and Controversy in the Promised Land
by *The Bible Project*