

# Joshua 8:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the other issued 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.

## Analysis

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This verse describes the climactic moment in the battle of Ai, showing the execution of a divinely ordained military strategy. The phrase "**the other issued out**" refers to the ambush force that had been hidden behind the city (Joshua 8:12). The Hebrew "**issued out**" (yatsa) means to go forth or come out, indicating decisive action at the perfect moment.

The tactical situation is described precisely: "**in the midst of Israel**"—the men of Ai were caught in a classic pincer movement with Israelites on both sides. The phrase "**some on this side, and some on that side**" emphasizes the complete encirclement. The result was total: they "**smote them**" (nakah, meaning to strike or defeat) so thoroughly that "**none of them remain or escape**" (lo-hish'iru sarid uphaliyt)—a doublet emphasizing absolute victory with no survivors or refugees.

This military description demonstrates the fulfillment of God's strategic instructions to Joshua. The perfect execution shows obedience to divine command resulting in complete success.

## Historical Context

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This battle occurred around 1406 BC during Israel's conquest of Canaan under Joshua's leadership. Ai (meaning 'the ruin') was a strategic city guarding the approach to the central hill country. The battle came immediately after Israel's humiliating defeat at Ai due to Achan's sin, making this victory particularly significant as a restoration of divine favor.

The military tactic described—feigned retreat followed by ambush—was common in ancient Near Eastern warfare, but this instance succeeded because it followed God's explicit battle plan (Joshua 8:2). Archaeological excavations at et-Tell (identified by some as Ai) show destruction layers from this period. The total destruction of Ai's army without survivors was part of the herem (devoted destruction) practiced during the conquest, reflecting the seriousness of Canaanite sin and God's judgment. This victory opened the central highlands to Israelite settlement and demonstrated that obedience to God, even in military matters, brings success.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does this battle demonstrate the importance of following God's specific instructions?
2. What is the spiritual significance of the 'pincer movement' strategy in this context?
3. Why was total victory (no survivors or escapees) necessary in this case?
4. How does this victory contrast with the previous defeat at Ai, and what does that teach us?
5. What does this military account teach about God's sovereignty over the outcome of battles?

## Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֹהִים	לְקַרְאָתָם	בְּעִיר	מִן	צִאָה	וְאֵלֹהִים	לִישְׁרָאֵל
<b>And the other</b>	<b>issued out</b>	<b>of the city</b>		<b>against</b>		<b>of Israel</b>
H428	H3318	H4480		H7125		H3478
בְּמִצְרָיִם	וְאֵלֹהִים	מִן הַמִּזְרָח	בְּמִצְרָיִם	וְאֵלֹהִים	מִן הַמִּזְרָח	
<b>them so they were in the midst</b>	<b>And the other</b>		<b>And the other</b>		<b>And the other</b>	
H8432	H428		H2088		H428	H2088
וְאֵלֹהִים	לְכָלָת	מִן	הַמִּזְרָח	וְאֵלֹהִים	עַד	אֶזְרָחָת
some on this side and some on that side and they smote						<b>them so that</b>
H5221						H5704
בְּלִתְנִינָה	שְׁרֵיד	לְכָלָת	וְאֵלֹהִים	וְאֵלֹהִים	עַד	
<b>they let</b>	<b>none of them remain</b>					
H1115	H0					
H7604	H8300					
וְאֵלֹהִים	וְאֵלֹהִים	וְאֵלֹהִים	וְאֵלֹהִים	וְאֵלֹהִים	וְאֵלֹהִים	

## Additional Cross-References

**Deuteronomy 7:2** (Parallel theme): And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

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