

~EBAL, MOUNT (271) **(E'bal)**

- A mountain now identified as **Jebel Eslamiyeh, Har `Eval**, situated in the district of Samaria. Mount **Ebal** is opposite Mount Gerizim, these mountains being separated by a beautiful, narrow valley, the Vale of Shechem or Nablus Valley, in which nestles the city of Nablus, not far from ancient Shechem.
- Only its lower slopes sustain such vegetation as vines and olive trees, the higher elevations being quite barren and rocky. Like other mountains in Samaria, **Ebal** consists of a limestone core with an outer shell of chalk. It stands to the Northeast of Mount Gerizim and rises to a peak of over 900 meters (3,000 feet) above the level of the Mediterranean. Mounts **Ebal** and Gerizim are situated to the West of the Jordan River.
- And it must occur that when Yehowah your God brings you into the land to which you are going to take possession of it, you must also give the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the malediction upon **Mount Ebal**. (**Deuteronomy 11:29**)
- Are they not on the side of the Jordan toward the direction of the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites dwelling in the Arabah, in front of Gilgal, beside the big trees of Moreh? (**Deuteronomy 11:30**)
- Looking North from the summit of **Ebal**, one can see the greater part of the land of Galilee and also Mount Hermon. The heights in the vicinity of Jerusalem can be seen to the South, and the Plain of Sharon and the Mediterranean to the West.
- To the East it is possible to see as far as the Hauran across the Jordan. Abram or Abraham once camped in the valley between these two mountains, near the big trees of Moreh.
- And Abram went on through the land as far as the site of Shechem, near the big trees of Moreh, and at that time the Canaanite was in the land. (**Genesis 12:6**)

- **Moses told the Israelites that when Yehowah brought them into the land that they were going to possess, they must also give the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the malediction upon **Mount Ebal**.**
- **And it must occur that when Yehowah your God brings you into the land to which you are going to take possession of it, you must also give the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the malediction upon **Mount Ebal**. (Deuteronomy 11:29)**
- **Are they not on the side of the Jordan toward the direction of the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites dwelling in the Arabah, in front of Gilgal, beside the big trees of Moreh? (Deuteronomy 11:30)**
- **He also instructed that great uncut stones be selected, whitewashed with lime, and set on **Mount Ebal**. An altar was to be erected there, upon which sacrifices were to be presented to Yehowah. Moses also said;**
- **And Moses together with the older men of Israel went on to command the people, saying; There should be an observing of every commandment that I am commanding you today. (Deuteronomy 27:1)**
- **And it must occur that in the day when you will cross the Jordan into the land that Yehowah your God is giving you, you must also set up for yourself great stones and whitewash them with lime. (Deuteronomy 27:2)**
- **And you must write upon them all the words of this Law when you have crossed, in order, that you may enter into the land that Yehowah your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, according to what Yehowah the God of your forefathers has spoken to you. (Deuteronomy 27:3)**
- **And it must occur that when you have crossed the Jordan, you should set up these stones, just as I am commanding you today, in **Mount Ebal**, and you must whitewash them with lime. (Deuteronomy 27:4)**
- **You must also build an altar there to Yehowah your God, an altar of stones. You must not wield an iron tool upon them. (Deuteronomy 27:5)**

- With whole stones you should build the altar of Yehowah your God, and you must offer burnt offerings to Yehowah your God on it. (**Deuteronomy 27:6**)
- And you must sacrifice communion sacrifices and eat them there, and you must rejoice before Yehowah your God. (**Deuteronomy 27:7**)
- And you must write on the stones all the words of this Law, making them quite clear. (**Deuteronomy 27:8**)
- After Israel crossed the Jordan, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali were to stand for the malediction on **Mount Ebal**, and the other tribes were to stand to bless the people on Mount Gerizim.
- At that time the blessings to be enjoyed by those obeying God's law, as well as the curses or maledictions to be experienced by those breaking his Law, would be recited.
- The following are the ones who will stand to bless the people on Mount Gerizim when you have crossed the Jordan, Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Joseph and Benjamin. (**Deuteronomy 27:12**)
- And the following are the ones who will stand for the malediction on **Mount Ebal**, Reuben, Gad and Asher and Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali. (**Deuteronomy 27:13**)
- And the Levites must answer and say with raised voice to every man of Israel. (**Deuteronomy 27:14**)
- When the curses for disobedience were pronounced, all the people were to say **Amen!** that is; So be it! To show they agreed that practicers of wickedness merited condemnation.
- Cursed is the man who makes a carved image or a molten statue, a thing detestable to Yehowah, the manufacture of the hands of a wood-and-metal worker, and who has put it in a hiding place. And all the people must answer and say; **Amen!** (**Deuteronomy 27:15**)
- Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt. And all the people must answer and say; **Amen!**

(Deuteronomy 27:16)

- **Cursed is the one who moves back the boundary mark of his fellowman. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:17)**
- **Cursed is the one who causes the blind to go astray in the way. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:18)**
- **Cursed is the one who perverts the judgment of an alien resident, a fatherless boy and a widow. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:19)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with his father's wife, because he has uncovered the skirt of his father. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:20)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with any beast. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:21)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:22)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with his mother-in-law. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:23)**
- **Cursed is the one who fatally strikes his fellowman from a hiding place. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:24)**
- **Cursed is the one who accepts a bribe to strike a soul fatally, when it is innocent blood. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:25)**
- **Cursed is the one who will not put the words of this Law in force by doing them. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (Deuteronomy 27:26)**
- **After Israel's victory at Ai, Joshua complied with Moses instructions, building an altar to Yehowah in Mount Ebal. Upon stones, perhaps, but not necessarily, those of the altar itself, he wrote a copy of the Law of Moses that he had written before the sons of Israel.**

- Then, in front of the congregation of Israel, including the alien residents, assembled as Moses had directed, Joshua read aloud all the words of the Law, the blessing and the malediction, according to all that is written in the book of the Law.
- Half the congregation stood in front of **Mount Ebal** and the other half in front of Mount Gerizim, the ark of the covenant and the Levites being between the two groups.
- It was then that Joshua proceeded to build an altar to Yehowah the God of Israel, in **Mount Ebal**. (**Joshua 8:30**)
- Just as Moses the servant of Yehowah had commanded the sons of Israel, as it is written in the book of the Law of Moses; An altar of whole stones, upon which no iron tool has been wielded, and they went offering up burnt offerings upon it to Yehowah and sacrificing communion sacrifices. (**Joshua 8:31**)
- Then he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the Law of Moses that he had written before the sons of Israel. (**Joshua 8:32**)
- And all Israel and their older men and the officers and their judges were standing on this side and on that side of the Ark in front of the priests, the Levites, carrying the ark of the covenant of Yehowah, the alien resident as well as the native, one half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and the other half of them in front of **Mount Ebal**, just as Moses the servant of Yehowah had commanded, to bless the people of Israel first of all. (**Joshua 8:33**)
- And after this he read aloud all the words of the Law, the blessing and the malediction, according to all that is written in the book of the Law. (**Joshua 8:34**)
- There proved to be not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read aloud in front of all the congregation of Israel, together with the women and the little ones and the alien residents who walked in their midst. (**Joshua 8:35**)
- The slopes of **Mount Ebal** in relation to the slopes of Mount Gerizim provided excellent acoustics for this occasion. Notably, too, these things occurred approximately in the heart of the land of promise

and in the vicinity where Yehowah promised the land to Israel's forefather Abram, Abraham.

- And Abram went on through the land as far as the site of Shechem, near the big trees of Moreh, and at that time the Canaanite was in the land. ([Genesis 12:6](#))
- Yehowah now appeared to Abram and said; To your seed I am going to give this land. After that he built an altar there to Yehowah, who had appeared to him. ([Genesis 12:7](#))
- Jewish tradition holds that the Levites, standing between **Mounts Ebal** and Gerizim, faced Mount Gerizim when pronouncing a blessing, to which the people assembled there answered; Amen! Then it is said that they turned to face **Mount Ebal** and pronounced one of the curses, to which those assembled on that side said Amen! The Scriptures, however, do not outline the exact procedure followed on that notable occasion.
- And it must occur that when you have crossed the Jordan, you should set up these stones, just as I am commanding you today, in **Mount Ebal**, and you must whitewash them with lime. ([Deuteronomy 27:4](#))
- It is said that the stones were to be set up in Mount Gerizim according to the **Samaritan Pentateuch**. However, the reading is **Ebal** according to the **Masoretic text**, the **Latin Vulgate**, the **Syriac Peshitta**, and the **Greek Septuagint**.
- It was then that Joshua proceeded to build an altar to Yehowah the God of Israel, in **Mount Ebal**. ([Joshua 8:30](#))
- Just as Moses the servant of Yehowah had commanded the sons of Israel, as it is written in the book of the Law of Moses; An altar of whole stones, upon which no iron tool has been wielded, and they went offering up burnt offerings upon it to Yehowah and sacrificing communion sacrifices. ([Joshua 8:31](#))
- Then he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the Law of Moses that he had written before the sons of Israel. ([Joshua 8:32](#))

Indicates that it was on **Mount Ebal** that Joshua set up the stones on which a copy of the Law of Moses was written.

See Also GERIZIM, MOUNT