

## JOSHUA BIBLE STUDIES

**CONQUERING: JOURNEYING WITH JOSHUA**

## LESSON #11

**JOSHUA CHAPTERS 10 - 21*****“THE CONTINUATION OF THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN”***

The first nine chapters of Joshua are full of the stuff of legends, miraculous and heroic actions and events, that we have heard recounted in Bible stories from our youth. There is the call and commissioning of Joshua, the spying expedition into Canaan, the episode about Rahab the harlot, the crossing of the Jordan River, the fall of Jericho, the thievery by the man Achan, the defeat of Israel at Ai followed by the ambush and overthrow of Ai and, in our last study, the deceptive tactics of the Gibeonites which was both humorous and sad. These are great stories with many truths for us to learn as we have journeyed with Joshua.

Beginning with chapter 10 and on through chapter 21, the record of the conquest of Canaan accelerates. The progress is summarized in chapter 10:40-42 and 11:16-18 as follows: “So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded. And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.” (Joshua 10:40-42)

There remained some “moping-up” action as chapter 11:16-18 indicates: “Thus Joshua took all this land: the mountain country, all the South, all the land of Goshen, the lowland, and the Jordan plain--the mountains of Israel and its lowlands, from Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings, and struck them down and killed them. Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.” And, verse 23 adds, “So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.”

The conquest of Canaan under Joshua is nearing completion. According to 12:24, thirty-one kings in all had been defeated. There were yet pockets of resistance but the majority of the Promised Land has been occupied. There was yet much in the way of leadership required of Joshua. There was:

- The distribution of the land to the tribes, 13:1-19:51
- The allocation of cities of refuge, 20:1-9
- The provision for the Levites, 21:1-15
- The resolution of various problems. 22:1-34

We come now to examine chapter ten. A good title for the chapter is: ***“HEAVEN HELP US !! (And heaven does!)***

**Chapter 10** is perhaps the most unique chapter in this section, with the exception of chapter 14, which we will study in the next lesson. In chapter 10 there are several very unusual developments. Let us concentrate on them as follows:

**I. THE ALLIANCE OF THE AMORITES. 10:1-5**

In vs.1-5 we see 5 Amorite kings forming an alliance against the Gibeonites. The kings of these city states knew what had happened to Jericho and Ai. Evidently they believed that their combined, larger forces could withstand Israel and even God.

**II. THE APPEAL OF THE GIBEONITES. 10:6**

“And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us.”

The Gibeonites were now self proclaimed slaves to Israel and as such were under their protection. They immediately sent out to Joshua a call for help.

**III. THE ADVANCE OF THE ISRAELITES. 10:7-10**

“So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you." Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.”

Joshua and the leaders of Israel had made a covenant with the Gibeonites, they had Given their word and they could not go back on it. They were therefore, morally bound to Keep their word, and consequently had to defend those who they should have destroyed.

**IV. THE ATTACK FROM HEAVEN’S HEIGHTS.10:11-15**

**A. Hail, Hail, (not hail as in hailstones!)The Gangs All Dead! 10:11**

**B. Heavenly Sunshine! 10:12-15**

1. First instance of Daylight Savings Time!
2. Hezekiah prayed and the sun went backwards 10 degrees.
3. Elijah prayed and it did not rain for 42 months.
4. Israel stepped into the Red Sea and the Jordan and the waters parted.
5. Jesus spoke and the stormy Sea of Galilee became calm and flat.

**V. THE ADDENDUM TO THE FIGHTS.**

**A. The Kings Caved In! 10:16-18**

**B. The Caved Kings Killed! 10:22-26**

**C. [Cave] Case Closed! 10:27**

## JOSHUA'S LONG DAY VIEWPOINTS

### **1. The passage is figurative.**

This viewpoint interprets the passage figuratively rather than literally. The adherents of this view say that the passage is poetical and is no more literal than Psalm 29:6 where we read "The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars, Yes, the LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon. He makes them also skip like a calf."

And Isaiah 55:12 which reads "The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."

They cite Josh. 10:13 to bolster their view which reads, "Is this not written in the Book of Jasher?" An ancient collection of poetry, now lost, which described great events in the history of Israel. The book contained Joshua's poetic address to the sun and the moon at the battle of Gibeon (Josh 10:12-13) and the "Song of the Bow," which is David's lament over the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1:17-27). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers

### **2. The passage is literal.**

This view believes that Joshua did ask for, and receive, an actual lengthening of the day. The passage itself contains proof enough:

a. Verse 14 states that this was a most unique day: "And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man.."

b. Other biblical references: Habakkuk 3:11 "The sun and moon stood still....."

c. Extra biblical references. R.A.Torrey, Bible Teacher and author writes:

"Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells us that the priests of Egypt showed him a record of a long day. The Chinese writings state that there was such a day in the reign of Emperor Yeo, who is supposed to have been a contemporary of Joshua. The Mexicans have a record that the sun stood still for one entire day in the year which is supposed to correspond with the exact year in which Joshua was warring in Palestine."

d. Conservative biblical scholars.

British Pastor and author, Charles Haddon Spurgeon sums up the event as follows:

"To please skeptical minds, scores of explanations of this wonderful occurrence have been laboriously elaborated, but there is no need for them and no use in them. The Almighty God can as easily stop the sun and moon as a watchmaker can alter a watch; He did so, and how He did it is no question for us: we may rest assured he prolonged the daylight by the very wisest means. It is not ours to try and soften down miracles, but to glorify God in them." (Charles H. Spurgeon, p.168-Spurgeon's Devotional Bible. Baker.)

What happened in Joshua 10? Today we know that the sun does not revolved around the earth, but the earth revolves around the sun. Did the earth stand still? Did the solar system stand still?

Did God refract the light of the sun to create the long day in Joshua 10? Some say the storm that brought the hailstones created conditions that caused the light of the sun to be refracted from the clouds.

Then we must not forget the moon – it also was also stationary. How did God do it? I am not sure. What I am sure of is that a great miracle occurred. How God did it I am not certain.

What I am certain about in this text is that God will not let anything hinder Him from accomplishing His purposes. Not even the laws of science can stop my God from doing what He desires. If the God Who created the universe wants to stop the universe to accomplish His purposes, He can do it! It is His planet. It is His universe.

### **LESSONS TO LIVE BY**

#### **1. Those who identify with the Lord's people are sure to have enemies.**

Many times when persons side with God even their families and former friends become their enemies.

#### **2. Commitments are only good if we back them up with actions. 10:6-7**

If you give your word, stand by it!

#### **3. If we are to conquer like Joshua we must fight daily battles.**

Rom. 13:11-13 - "knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

These words tell us that the armor is our daily uniform! Note that Israel lived a life of daily battles! The same is true for the child of God. Enemies confront us daily: the enemies of the world, the flesh and the devil. We must arise each day with the willingness and readiness to overcome the enemies of our souls. Why else would we be instructed to put on our armor? Why an armor if no battle or enemy?

Eph 6:12-13 "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

"Many Christians misinterpret Jesus' promise of the "abundant life" to mean perfect health, a comfortable lifestyle, constant happiness, full realization of your dreams, and instant relief from problems through faith and prayer. In a word, they expect the Christian life to be easy. They expect heaven on earth....Why would God provide heaven on earth when he's planned the real thing for you in eternity?" (Rick Warren Purpose Driven Life p.173)

Max Lucado, in his "Inspirational Study Bible" writes, "The Book of Joshua is a book of battles. A book for soldiers. A book for people who would dare win God's way. What applied then, applies today. It is the faithful who conquer. Those who follow the strategy win, those who don't – don't."

We have not yet reached our homeland – and the Devil will do all he can to make our journey as miserable as possible! He cannot keep us from reaching Heaven, but he will do his worst to keep us from enjoying the journey!

**4. We do not need to be many to be much!**

Israel was outnumbered by enemy soldiers but “if God be for us who can be against us” - successfully? (Rom. 8:31) and remember Rom.8:37 - “we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

“Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God.” – so said pioneer missionary to China, Hudson Taylor.

**5. The story illustrates the power of believing prayer. 10:12**

The God of Joshua is our God alive and active on behalf of His people. We too can see great victories if we will cooperate with Him in quiet obedience and in calm confidence call upon Him just as Joshua did. He has not changed in all the years of human history.

The hymn “Yield Not To Temptation” instructs us in words that apply not only to battling temptation but also battling in general:

*To him that o’ercometh, God giveth a crown;  
Through faith we shall conquer, though often cast down;  
He Who is our Savior our strength will renew;  
Look ever to Jesus, He’ll carry you through.*

Refrain

*Ask the Savior to help you,  
Comfort, strengthen and keep you;  
He is willing to aid you,  
He will carry you through.”*

**6. Let us be aware that that heaven is watching! 10:12-15**

In this story we see God’s supernatural intervention. He sent hail from the heavens and caused the sun to stand still over Gibeon so the battle could be finished and won by the Israelites. (Joshua 10:12-15)

Psalm 34:15 and 1 Peter 3:12 tell us that “the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

Isn’t it satisfying to know that the God who rules in the affairs of nations rules in the affairs of individuals as well?....

**7. Always side with God and you won’t “hang” with the wrong crowd! 10:26**

Make sure you are on God’s side of every issue.

**ADDENDUM**

From The Message introduction to book of Joshua

“For most modern readers of Joshua, the toughest barrier to embracing this story as sacred is the military strategy of “holy war” .... Killing everyone in the conquered cities and totally destroying all the plunder, both animals and goods. Massacre and destruction. .... We look

back from our time in history and think, “how horrible.” But if we were able to put ourselves back in the thirteenth century B.C., we might see it differently, for that Canaanite culture was a snake pit of child sacrifice and sacred prostitution, practices ruthlessly devoted to using the most innocent and vulnerable members of the community (babies and virgins) to manipulate ..... gods for gain.”

**Don't Forget Joshua 11:20**

“For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, and that they might receive no mercy, but that He might destroy them,” (Also compare 9:24)

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