

Joshua 10:16-43 “Guaranteed win”

5 Kings join forces to take on the Gibeonites who made a truce with Israel. Joshua... (No God) comes to their rescue... **God intervenes with a little heavenly artillery. He plucks off most of the enemy with huge hall stones!**

Whenever we face situations of danger, difficulty, or complexity, God’s back is never turned. Nothing can slip into your life without his knowledge. Nothing can happen to you with his eyes closed. As the Psalmist reminds us in Psalm 121 verse 4 “Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep”
We can sleep because he never does.

¹² Then Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: “Sun, stand still over Gibeon; And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.” ¹³ So the sun stood still, And the moon stopped, Till the people had revenge Upon their enemies.

¹⁴ And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, “Oh what a day!” that the Lord heeded the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel.

God uses His people to purge the land of wickedness and evil. The extent He goes to is awesome! **May we apply this passion to our own lives and the evil within us, so that we are ruthless with our own sin and rebellion. PRAY**

Picking up in verse 16 of Chapter 10 But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. **Now called “the cave” because of its fame due to what is about to happen there. What they hoped would be their refuge in reality will become their tomb.** ¹⁷ And it was told Joshua, saying, “The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah.” ¹⁸ So Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them. **A holding action while they mop up.** ¹⁹ And do not stay *there* yourselves, *but* pursue your enemies, and attack their rear *guard*.

Joshua will not allow anything - even the personal capture of the kings - to keep him from completing Israel's victory. The kings can be imprisoned and dealt with later.

Again a striking similarity with the Book of Revelation. Not only does a false “Lord of Righteousness” (Adoni-Zedek) lead a group of nations against Joshua, who has come to possess the land; but also, in the midst of their defeat, the kings hide in caves in fear of the conquering Joshua ([Revelation 6:15-16](#)).

Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the Lord your God has delivered them into your hand.” **This is the human agency in the story, at full stretch fulfilling the divine imperatives through Joshua – pursue, attack, prevent. Again Joshua rallies his troops with the assurance that the victory they are about to pursue is the Lord’s gift (v. 19b).**

²⁰ Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished, that those who escaped entered fortified cities. ²¹ And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace. No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. Guzik said, "**Just like Israel, the church should be feared in the sense that it should be a place where people know God will conquer them. They should have the idea 'Well, if I keep coming here, God is going to conquer me. I'll have to submit my life to Him.' Too many churches present a 'harmless' God who demands no surrender from His people.**" ²² Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave." ²³ And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon. ²⁴ So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. **(Foot on neck is a sign of victory.) Romans 16:20. And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.**

Yes, this is the most powerful demonstration of their total victory and their enemies' utter subjection. To make your enemies your footstool is a sign of complete conquest, attributed to the Lord's anointed in Psalm 110:1, and so to the Lord Jesus Christ in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

**Psalm 110:1 – The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."**

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 – Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death. ²⁷ For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under *Him*," *it is* evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. ²⁸ Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

²⁵ Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." **When we take the whole of scripture and also understand that Joshua is a type of Christ... these words belong to us today as well!** ²⁶ And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until evening. ²⁷ So it was at the time of the going down of the sun *that* Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day. **they were taken down at sunset**, as Deuteronomy 21:22, 23 prescribed. Even in the flush of victory, Joshua is careful to obey all that God had commanded through Moses (see Joshua 1:7), and the kings are buried in the cave at Makkedah.

There now follows a list of the cities that were conquered in what has become known as the southern campaign.

²⁸ On that day Joshua took Makkedah, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them—all the people who *were* in it. He let none remain. He also did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho. ²⁹ Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with

him, to Libnah; and they fought against Libnah. ³⁰ And the Lord also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel; he struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword. He let none remain in it, but did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho. ³¹ Then Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish; and they encamped against it and fought against it. ³² And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, who took it on the second day, and struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah. ³³ Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he left him none remaining.

Notice the hyperbolic language... “until he left him none remaining.” Much that follows comes from Hughes commentary on Joshua, **To our minds it may sound overly inflated and exaggerated, but Joshua is neither making mistakes nor deliberately misleading.** “He was speaking the language that everyone in his day would have understood. Rather than trying to deceive, Joshua was just saying he had fairly well trounced the enemy.” He put a whoopin on them!

“If the Canaanites were to be completely obliterated, why this discussion about intermarriage or treaties?” His answer is that the devotion to destruction was not primarily directed to the Canaanite people but to the **Canaanites’ religion** (e.g. Deuteronomy 12:2-3). The land had to be purged of its false gods.

Deuteronomy 12:2-3 – *You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place.*

Romans 1:18 reminds us that the wrath of God is “revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”. If we are to ask for **justice** for the Canaanites, living in Yahweh’s world and created by him in his image, then destruction is the only proper outcome. “It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed” (Lamentations 3:22). **What our sinful humanity cries out for is mercy, not justice.** Yet there can be no true mercy if justice remains unsatisfied, which leads us to the cross, where “steadfast love and faithfulness meet” and where “righteousness and peace kiss each other” so the psalmist says in chapter 85 verse 10. There, as the Lord Jesus was “devoted” to the destruction we deserve, as he carried the weight of human sin and guilt in his own body on the tree, there and there alone can the curse be lifted and mercy triumph over wrath.

Hughes goes on to say, “It is not surprising, then, that a rebellious world will seize upon these issues as a *cause célèbre* in its ongoing war against the Creator. Atheistic critic Richard Dawkins may label the conquest as genocide or ethnic cleansing and distort the Biblical account in his claims of “bloodthirsty massacres” carried out with “xenophobic relish.” **But at least part of the animus behind that view is an unwillingness to allow any authority to sit in judgment on the sovereign self.** It is a denial that there is a Creator and we are his created beings, a resistance to the basic Biblical reality that the life we have is not ours to exercise in proud independence but is the gift of God, to whom we shall give account. The judgments on Canaan are precursors and foreshadowings, terrible though they were, of the ultimate judgment that awaits the whole creation at the last day.

Revelation 20:11-15 – **Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small**

and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

It is that reality, here in embryonic form, **that the atheist must at all costs deny or denigrate.** That is why the Lord Jesus himself warned us to fear the greater judgment and to live now in the light of eternity. "I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell." Yes, I tell you, fear him!" (Luke 12:5).

³⁴ From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it and fought against it. ³⁵ They took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; all the people who *were* in it he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

³⁶ So Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to Hebron; and they fought against it. ³⁷ And they took it and struck it with the edge of the sword—its king, all its cities, and all the people who *were* in it; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon, but utterly destroyed it and all the people who *were* in it.

³⁸ Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and they fought against it. ³⁹ And he took it and its king and all its cities; they struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed all the people who *were* in it. He left none remaining; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had done also to Libnah and its king. **Joshua's strategy was to cut across the land to divide it, then conquer the southern cities, and then the northern.** Summary of the conquest of the Southern Canaanite Kingdoms.

⁴⁰ So Joshua conquered all the land: **In a period of weeks (perhaps months) these six cities are defeated, without a single loss for Israel. Each battle was a test. None of them were easy, but under the leadership of Joshua, they all were victorious.** 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. ⁴¹ And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. **Here we are at the site of the failure of faith 40 years earlier...** ⁴² All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. ⁴³ Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal. **A return to base. Our base is Calvary.**

The outcome was never in doubt, because of God's commitment to his word of promise, but there was much blood, toil, sweat, and tears along the way. When we read the conclusion, it is easy to underestimate or even forget the process.

Our outcome is never to be doubted... God will finish what He started! Many battles will be fought, some will be lost and many will be won... but in the end God will have the victory... May you and I never forget it

