

# Joshua 10

## Conquering False Kings

### Intro

Joshua 10:1-5

*Now it came to pass when **Adoni-Zedek** king of **Jerusalem** heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it—as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king—and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty. Therefore **Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem** sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, “Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.” **Therefore** the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, **gathered together** and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and **made war** against it.*

Joshua 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.”*

These verses set the stage for the events that transpire in this chapter.

Essentially we find Israel under attack by the enemy and we find Israel sending out a rescue effort to save Gibeon.

This passage will serve as a vivid illustration of:

- The believer under attack by the enemy

He attacks the weakest link

- The serpent set his sites on the desires of Eve

- The Amelekites attack Israel in the rear
- Jesus was tempted with bread after a 40 day fast
- The church venturing out on the great commission to rescue those under the enemies' bondage.

For the first time in Canaan the enemy kings are named

Adoni- lord

Zedek - righteousness

Jerusalem - the city of peace

Adoni Zedek, king of Jerusalem seeks to capitalize on Israel's allegiance with the Hivites. He and 4 other kings form an alliance to defeat Israel by attacking their weakest link.

Israel will be forced to step into battle against this highly organized military force.

- The section records how God will topple the false king of Jerusalem and his allies
- This passage is filled with application regarding ministry. We will see how to participate with God in order to further His kingdom.

Remember Joshua as a book illustrates the victories in the life of the individual Christian as well as how God works through a congregation

## There are 3 parts to the battle

### First, God speaks to Israel

Joshua 10:7-8

*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."*

It is not clear whether or not this was solicited by Joshua and the leaders or if the conversation was initiated by the Lord.

Ministry stems from both

There are times when we see a particular situation unfolding and we must seek God for His direction

There are other times when we are suddenly struck by something and realize the Lord is giving us a command to participate in ministry

It is not uncommon for that to happen during a time of worship or as we study the word together

We will see how Joshua and Israel acted upon hearing the voice of the Lord

## Second, God promises victory over their assailants

Joshua 10:8

*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."*

This is a repeat of

Joshua 1:9

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."*

Joshua 8:1

*And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear and do not be dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, **I have given** into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land."*

**Notice the phrase "I have delivered them..."**

This will be the backbone of the lesson from this chapter

God promises to provide a victory.

- There will be a **miraculous** component to the victory

It will be one of the most dramatic miracles ever accomplished

- But there will also be a **human** element to the victory.

Our main point tonight is that ministry happens when we partner with God in the work He wants to accomplish

- Ministry happens when heaven meets earth
- Ministry happens when the natural and the supernatural meet

## Lets examine the passage

Joshua 10:10-11

*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. And it happened, as they **fled before Israel** and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that **the Lord cast down large hailstones** from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.*

There are two parts to this miracle

- First, hailstones fell upon the enemy without striking the people of God

## Hail

Job 38:22-23

*“Have you entered the treasury of snow, Or have you seen the treasury of hail, Which I have reserved for the time of trouble, For the day of battle and war?”*

Hailstones usually measure between 1/4" and 6" in diameter.

The speed at which hail is falling when it strikes the ground, varies.

Hailstones generally fall at higher speeds as they grow in size

It is estimated that a hailstone of 1/2 inch falls at a rate of 20 mph

While stones the size of 3 inches fall at a rate of (110 mph).

The largest officially recognized hailstone in the U.S. fell in South Dakota in (2010)

It measured 8.0" in diameter, 18 ½" in circumference, and weighed in at almost 2 pounds.

#### Baseball

It is about 9 inches in circumference, and about 3 inches in diameter and weighs less than 1/2 a pound

#### Softball

Has is about 4 inches in diameter and also weighs less than 1/2 a pound

We do not know the size of the hailstones in Joshua 10, but they are described as great and lethal enough to kill at a greater rate than the sword, spear or bow of Israel's army.

Josephus writes

God assisted him, which he declared by thunder and thunderbolts, as also by the falling of hail larger than usual.

Imagine 2lbs softball size hail falling from the sky at over 100 mph

#### Accuracy mattered

For the first miracle to happen great aim was required

There is a complicated mathematical formula necessary for determining the amount of variation to expect in a bullet traveling over long distances. Since the speed of a bullet begins to reduce the moment it is propelled from a gun the reduction in speed will impact the line the bullet takes. Additionally wind direction and speed must be taken into account

Imagine the mathematics behind guiding large hailstones at 100 mph with perfect accuracy

- The second part of the miracle is that the sun stood still in the sky for roughly 12 hours

## The Sun

Joshua 10:13

So **the sun stood still**,

And the **moon stopped**,

Till the people had revenge

*Upon their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So **the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day.***

In the midst of the battle Joshua realized they were losing daylight. If they were going to have a complete victory over Adoni-Zedek and his allies they would need an intervention from the Lord.

God could have intervened in any number of ways

- Thrown more hail
- Speed up Israel's swords

But He chose to do something so dramatic as to forever grab our attention.

He made the sun stand still

This is possible because of who God is

Psalm 74:16

*Yours is the day, yours also the night; you have established the heavenly lights and the sun.*

Colossians 1:15

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

This is one of the most amazing miracles in the Bible

- The earth is in an orbit around the sun. One revolution makes up a single year
- The earth travels 584 million miles a year at a speed of 67,000 mph.
- The earth is also spinning on its axis at a rate of 1,000 mph

Henry Morris

Since the account says that the moon also stood still (Joshua 10:13), it may be that the entire solar system stopped in its tracks for a day, with all relative positions and motions simply suspended”

**What would happen if earth stopped spinning?**

- Earth spins eastward at 1,000 mph if it stopped spinning, we would keep moving at that rate and be propelled forward like a person not wearing a seatbelt in an automobile accident
- Sudden stopping would form enormous tidal waves heading east and devastating coastal regions

- Because of the atmosphere that surrounds the planet when the earth stopped spinning the wind would continue to move blowing more than 1,000 miles per hour

**The miracle was not just stopping the earth from spinning, it was holding back the impact that would have occurred**

Many have sought to explain away this miracle

- It is poetry
- It only appeared to stop and Israel was able to accomplish more in a day than they ever thought possible
- Joshua was really only asking God to give his troops relief from the hot sun. A cloud appeared to cover the sun

Not only do these explanations fail to do justice to the text they all stem from having too small an understanding of God

If we have a small view of God then we will always be slaves to our circumstances. Infirmity, limitations and consequences will always govern our lives

If we have a proper view of God, the one who can stop the earth in its tracks and keep us from flying off, then we will never see our circumstances as governing us.

We can rise above like

- Joseph
- Daniel
- Jeremiah
- Paul
- John

I wonder how many things we are afraid to ask God to do because of what we fear may happen

Imagine scientific Joshua telling himself that if God stops the spinning of the earth chaos will break out.

It is really not that hard to imagine. We often rationalize ourselves right out of prayer or service.

### **One man said:**

We must not allow uncertainty about what took place on this day to obscure truths that are most certain indeed.

- God is a mighty warrior who fights for his people

Dale Ralph Davis says of this passage: ‘... the writer wants us to see that it is Yahweh who is the fighter; he is the warrior, he is the victor who crushes the enemy.’

He proceeds to say, ‘It is too bad much of the church has lost this vision of God or Christ as the warrior who fights for his people.... No mild God or soft Jesus can give his people hope. It is only as we know the warrior of Israel who fights for us (and sometimes without us) that we have hope of triumphing in the difficulties of life.’

**Clearly God played a large role in Israel's victory.**

However, Joshua and his team also participated

First, they worked hard

Joshua 10:9

*Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal.*

This is a 20 mile hike and they did in a single night

- It was a tiresome journey with an ascent of 4,000 feet up steep and difficult terrain.
- It probably took nearly 8 hours
- So while the enemy slept and rested, Israel marched and fatigued themselves

The word combination in verse 9, —“came against” denotes a hostile military encounter;

- Verse 11 states they fought in hand to hand combat their their swords



- And verse 13 makes it clear that the day was lengthened so the worn out soldiers could fight longer

The pursuit took them a great distance of more than twenty miles.

- They pursued with haste fearing that if the enemies made it to the cities they would not be able to defeat them

**Yet the American Bible Commentary states;**

"it was Yahweh—and Yahweh alone—who took the decisive actions against the enemies (v. 10). Every verb in this verse is singular, indicating that he alone confused, struck, pursued, and struck them"

## We find an important Biblical principle

Ministry happens when we participate with the Lord

BKC

Verses 7–11 alternate between Joshua (and Israel) and the Lord. They all played important parts in the conflict. The soldiers had to fight but God gave the victory.

1 Corinthians 15:58

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

Galatians 6:9

*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

This same truth is illustrated in the first miracle of Jesus

John 2 records how Jesus turned ordinary well water into extraordinary wine.

This is clearly a miracle

Nothing known to man can change the molecular structure of water into the molecular structure of wine

But the disciples played a key role in the miracle

John 2:7

*Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.*

- Gallon of water weighs 8 1/4 lbs
  - 20 gallons - 160 lbs
  - 30 gallons - 250 lbs

John 2:11

*This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.*

The glorious way ministry often works is revealed in this passage

They worked hard doing their part, God provided the miracle

Water went in - wine came out

## Second, they prayed in faith

Joshua 10:12-14

*Then Joshua spoke to the Lord...*

*"Sun, stand still over Gibeon;*

*And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."*

*So the sun stood still,*

*And the moon stopped...*

*And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the Lord heeded the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel.*

Their hard work would never be enough. They needed the assistance of heaven and that is accessible only through prayer

- It is interesting that the writer of the book of Jasher was not surprised that God stopped the sun in the sky as much as he was that God heard and responded to the voice of a man

He states that there had never been a day like that where God listened to man

But there have been many days since

1 Kings 17:22

*And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived.*

And we are encouraged to participate with God in prayer

- Prayer is where we express our dependence upon the Lord.

Joshua knew that they would not be victorious apart from the Lord by that they could conquer any foe with the help of the Lord

- They were part of an earthly battle against Canaanite kings so they prayed for the sun to stop in the sky.
- We are part of a heavenly battle seeking to see others come to Christ and ourselves grow out of the areas we struggle with

What should we be praying for

Hard hearts to soften

Like Saul's did

Closed doors to open

Like Caesar's household did

Gospel to run swiftly

Like it did in Ephesus

Servants to be raised up

Like they were in the first church

- What about in our personal life?

Joshua asked big things of God

Are we doing the same?

Or have we come to accept things as they are?

I will always struggle with this area

This part of my life will always be difficult

This relationship will never improve

My children will never come to faith

## Finally, the enemy is defeated

Joshua and his troops pursued the enemy, captured the kings and sealed them in a cave

After the battle was over Joshua released the kings only to have his generals put their feet on the defeated kings necks

This symbolized the victory that had been won

Jesus has done the same

Colossians 2:15

*Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

Psalms 110:1

*The Lord said to my Lord,*

*“Sit at My right hand,*

*Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”*

1 Corinthians 15:25-26

*For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.*

Just as Joshua and His men conquered the false kings so Jesus has conquered the enemies in our life.

We can live in victory