

Joshua: Walking by Faith, Growing in Grace

Miracles

Joshua 10:1-43

October 19, 2025

HDBC

Joshua is a book about warfare. It is the account of the invasion of Canaan by the Israelites. They were not invading because they were by nature imperialistic. They had no illusions of conquering the world. They invaded this little slice of the planet because God made it abundantly clear that it was it belonged to them. The one who made it all determined that it be theirs. So, at God's command and with God's blessing they invaded.

And the result of the invasion was warfare. God determined, for reasons known only to Himself to allow the people to be used in conquering the land. Rather than chasing them out Himself, the people would do that. Thus, they would be facing battle after battle. It would be imperative that they settle for nothing less than victory.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur was accurate & prophetic when he declared the following words in his farewell speech to congress in 1951. *In war there is no substitute for victory.* Joshua would have agreed with him.

1. The Opposition (1-6)

Joshua's alliance with Gibeon was a catalyst which quickly led to a major military action with the tribes occupying the hill country west of the Jordan River. As soon as the other cities learned of that covenant they responded with anger & retaliation.

It is not that they were all **best buds** but it was unthinkable that any of the city-states would actually join with the Israelites. In a swift military movement they swept down out of the hills and encamped near Gibeon whom they deemed to be a traitor.

All five of these cities were within a thirty-mile radius of Gibeon. The unexpected attack took the Gibeonites by surprise and all they could do

was call for help from their new friends, the Israelites. This was their only hope. I'm sure they wondered if the covenant that was founded on deception and trickery would stand up to the test.

2. The Victory (7-28)

Don't miss the focus on all that the Lord does to bring about this victory.

Verse 8 *Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands.*

Verse 10 *And the Lord confounded them . . .and He slew them*

Verse 11 *The Lord threw large hail stones from heaven on them.*

Verse 12 *The Lord delivered up the Amorites.*

Verse 14 *For the Lord fought for Israel.*

1) The Momentum Shifts (7-10)

From a purely military standpoint this turn of events would have looked great to Joshua. Anytime an army can get the enemy divided, it has a better chance of victory. Joshua could turn a deaf ear, and in a short time the Gibeonites would be dead. He could then fight and conquer the other five armies.

However, **Joshua knew the power of a covenant.** He knew how important it was that they stand by their word. **Character was more important than military expediency!** To his great credit, Joshua did not flinch. He immediately dispatched his army. In fact they endured an all-night march of 25 miles, mostly uphill.

Joshua's all-night march took the enemy completely by surprise. The sudden appearance of the Israeli army must have sent chills down the spines of the enemy soldiers. After a brief skirmish which left many of the enemy soldiers dead, they began to retreat. They headed through the mountain passes, trying to get away from what seemed like an invincible army.

What was it that made the momentum shift? The presence of the mighty army of Israel. They were too much for the armies of the

five kings. They thought, *if we can only get away from the Israelites, we will be safe.* **Wrong Assumption!**

2) The Miracles Happen (11-14)

God intervened in the battle with two miracles. God has always been able to do miracles. He still is. When it fits with His purposes He still does so. Not talking about “miracles on demand”. I am speaking of sovereign decisions on God’s part to change the natural order of creation for his glory and to aid His people.

a. The Hailstones (11)

As they were retreating, many of them were killed with hail stones. Do we really know that this was a miracle? Hail does happen. I’ve seen it. Two things make this a miracle: First, the timing. The hailstones fell when God ordered them to fall. Second, they only hit the enemy soldiers.

These were **smart bombs from heaven**. They only struck the enemy soldiers. God was not about to let these people escape. So, He got personally involved in the battle. In fact more were killed with the hail stones than by Israel’s army.

This encouraged Joshua. He knew how important it was to finish the task. But he would need more daylight for that, and the sun was setting fast. So, he cried out to God. And this led to the second miracle.

b. The Sun (12-14)

And the Lord caused the light to remain, in order that they might finish the job.

This is an amazing miracle. I have read some who say that this is impossible. Some could possibly buy into the miracle of the hail stones, but draw a line here, saying even God could not do this.

A Couple of Schools of Thought

One. God stopped or slowed the rotation of the earth on its axis to give more time to that particular day. If so, how did he keep the people from feeling the catastrophic consequences of that action?

This interpretation has been supported by a long line of Christian and Jewish interpreters, including Augustine, Jerome, Luther and Calvin.

Some Bible students have claimed to verify this by referring to alleged calculations showing that precisely one day is missing from astronomical history and this missing day is accounted for by the extra day in Joshua.

Another recent story makes a similar claim; that twenty-three hours and twenty minutes are missing which are ascribed to Joshua's long day and the other 40 minutes to a similar thing that happened in Hezekiah's day. In this account, supposedly NASA scientist discovered the missing day through computer calculations.

The reality is that neither claim can be verified. As exciting as these stories are, and as much as we might like to believe them, we must be careful not to lose our credibility by putting faith in unsubstantiated claims.

Two. The rotation of the earth continued as normal, but God did something else to give more hours of daylight without adding time to the 24-hour period. The sun is always shining. And certainly God could take the rays of the sun and bend them around the earth and direct them to that part of the world, for prolonged sunshine.

For me, the simplest answer is **Faith**. I believe God can do anything He chooses. He is the creator of it all. He made the natural laws, and therefore has the right and the power to change them as He desires.

Jeremiah 32:27 says *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too hard for me?*

Some would criticize Joshua and the Bible, saying this is a clear example of a conflict between Scripture and nature. Everyone knows the sun does not revolve around the earth. Why then did Joshua order it to “stand still” when the earth is actually the one moving? That’s a silly argument. We use that kind of language all the time. We speak of the rising and setting sun even though we know that it is not literally rising. We are simply using the language of observation. He was doing the same.

Scientific journals still do that today and no one challenges them. They write of the times of “sunset” and “sunrise.”

3) The Kings are Destroyed (15-28)

The five kings had fled to a cave where they thought they were undetected. This was a cowardly and almost treasonous act. They only wanted to save themselves.

However, their hiding place became a trap. After the battle Joshua brought them out and had his generals symbolize their victory, by one-by-one placing his sandal on the neck of each king. This was a sign of total conquest. The kings were then killed. For the victory to be total, the enemy had to be completely put to death.

The New Testament application is this. If we are to be completely victorious in our struggle with the enemy of our souls, we must also crucify the flesh. We must put it to death. Not talking about the physical body. But the sinful nature that resides in us.

If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me.

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. . .

Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. . .

3. The Expansion (29-43)

But Joshua was not satisfied with this victory. He led his army south, where city after city fell before them . These verses summarize a whole series of battles. Seven different cities are conquered. Each battle gets only a verse or two.

The last verse is reflective. They returned to Gilgal. It is the place where Israel started the attack and the place to return to. It was like their base camp.

It was the place where Joshua set up the stones as a memorial to the crossing of the Jordan.

It was the place of circumcision. Renewal of the covenant with God.

It was the place where they began to celebrate the Passover again.

It was the place where the manna ceased and they began to eat from the land.

It was a place of spiritual and physical refreshment.

Now after weeks of fighting in the south, the weary soldiers follow their leader back to Gilgal for some much-needed rest. Gilgal represents the place of **restoration, renewal and refreshment**. In our era, that is best found in the fellowship of believers, the church.

Takeaways:

1. Victory often comes through warfare.

That is true in the natural world, but it is equally true in the spiritual world. If we are to have victory over our sinful nature, we have to battle. We can't compromise; we can't simply live and let live. We can't simply have a cease fire. The other side, our sin nature will never be satisfied to live and let live. Because we are called to live holy lives, the same is true of us. We cannot simply let our sin exist in us. We must kill it. We must accept nothing less than total victory over our sin.

2. Miracles are part of God's arsenal when it suits His purpose.

This is not the only time in the Bible when we find God violating the normal rules of nature to accomplish His will. He does not always choose to use miracles, but neither is He prevented from doing so. One other thing to remember: All miracles do not follow the same pattern. Consider these two:

The hail was a divine action by God that required no response from His people. God simply stepped in and defeated the enemy. The sun standing still, on the other hand, was a divine act of God that allowed His people to continue their work. It did require a response and continued action.

3. The weapons of our warfare are spiritual in nature.

Much like God used supernatural means to conquer the enemies of Israel, He uses supernatural means to enable us to conquer the sin in our lives. The supernatural power of the Word of God. The supernatural power of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. The supernatural power of the name of Jesus. The supernatural power that comes to us when we gather together in worship and experience the power and presence of God. The spiritual armor of God.