

Joshua 10:1 ¶ Now it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;
Joshua 10:2 That they feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it *was* greater than Ai, and all the men thereof *were* mighty.

This chapter is basically a record of victories the Israelites won as they continued to follow the LORD's directive to take possession of the land.

Adonizedek, the king of Jerusalem, home of the Jebusites, heard how Joshua had conquered Ai and utterly destroyed the city and her king—just as they had done in Jericho. He had also heard that the people of Gibeon had made peace with the Israelites. This was especially bad news since Gibeon was a great big city, even bigger and stronger than Ai. It is also significant to note that Gibeon was only about six miles away from Jerusalem.

Joshua 10:3 Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,
Joshua 10:4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.
Joshua 10:5 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.
Joshua 10:6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.

So Adonizedek sent messengers to four other kings to join with him in an alliance to attack Gibeon for making peace with Israel—Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish and Debir king of Eglon. These five Amorite kings joined forces and set out to make war against Gibeon. The men of Gibeon immediately sent word to Joshua at Gilgal that they were in danger from this alliance.

Principle: The enemy (Satan) is always motivated to go on the offensive when people seek to align themselves with the family of the LORD.

Joshua 10:7 ¶ So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.
Joshua 10:8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

Joshua and all his troops responded immediately in accordance with the treaty

made in the name of the LORD. The LORD told Joshua not to be afraid because He had delivered the enemy to them and not one would be left standing.

Principle: We never have to fear the enemy because the LORD has promised us the victory—though it may not come according to our expectation.

Romans 8:31b–32 “If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

Joshua 10:9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, *and* went up from Gilgal all night.

Joshua 10:10 And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

Joshua 10:11 And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, *and* were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: *they were* more which died with hailstones than *they* whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

Joshua responded so quickly, traveling through the night, that the enemy armies were surprised. The NIV Commentary notes that this would have taken about 8-10 hours.

The LORD destroyed the enemy as they fled before the army of Israel—along the way to Bethhoron, to Azekah and on to Makkedah. Along the way the LORD dropped great hailstones from heaven on them, and more died from the hailstones than were killed by the sword.

It stands out to me that these hailstones fall with supernatural guidance since they didn't kill any Israelites.

Principle: God will use miracles as necessary to accomplish His purposes in and through us.

Joshua 10:12 Then spake Joshua 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 thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

Joshua 10:13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. *Is not this written in the book of Jasher?* So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

Joshua 10:14 And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.

Evidently, Joshua felt like more daylight was needed to finish the job as they chased the Amorite coalition. He must have been confident that the LORD would agree because he asked the LORD to make the sun and moon to stand still

over Gibeon and the valley of Ajalon respectively—and he did so in the hearing of the people. (This was evidently one of those days in which both the sun and moon can be seen in the daytime sky.)

The LORD did as Joshua asked, and the sun and moon stood still for almost a whole day. This truth is also recorded in the book of Jasher (which must have been written before Joshua). Joshua tells us that there was never such a day either before or after that the LORD honored the prayer of a man that involved manipulating the laws that sustain the universe. And why did He do this? Because He was fighting on behalf of Israel in light of His covenant with Abraham.

The New Bible Commentary gives the following possible reasoning for Joshua's request: "The Canaanites coming up the slopes from the west of Gibeon (to which Joshua had brought relief after his strenuous, all-night climb) were looking east into the blinding sun above Gibeon when the battle began. To keep the advantage, Joshua, praying to the Lord, commanded the sun and moon, as the Lord's subordinates, to stay put until Israel avenged itself (*i.e.* defensively vindicated its sovereignty) on its enemy."

Principle: *Luke 1:37 "For with God nothing shall be impossible."*

Joshua 10:15 ¶ And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

Joshua 10:16 But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

Joshua 10:17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah.

Joshua 10:18 And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them:

Joshua 10:19 And stay ye not, *but* pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand.

After the fighting was over on that miraculous day, Joshua and the troops of Israel returned to camp at Gilgal. The five enemy kings had run away and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. Joshua responded by having his men roll big stones to block the mouth of the cave, essentially turning it into a prison, and assigned men to guard it. He ordered the rest of the troops to pursue the enemy and attack from the rear to prevent them from returning to their cities. He assured them that the LORD promised them the victory.

Joshua 10:20 And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest *which* remained of them entered into fenced cities.

Joshua 10:21 And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

The troops did as Joshua commanded, but still a few enemy soldiers managed to make it back into their cities. All—every man of—the army of Israel returned to Joshua at Makkedah. The people of the land no longer bad-mouthed the armies of Israel.

Joshua 10:22 Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

Joshua 10:23 And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon.

Joshua 10:24 And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

Joshua 10:25 And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

Joshua 10:26 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening.

Joshua 10:27 And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, *that* Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

Once all his soldiers had returned, Joshua told his men to open the cave where the kings were kept prisoner and bring them out to him; and they did so. Joshua then ordered his captains to put their feet on the necks of the five kings; and they did so.

This time it was Joshua declaring the message to “Fear not...be strong and of good courage” because this action testified to how the LORD would act against all enemies they engaged in battle. Then Joshua killed the five kings and hung them each on a tree until the evening (cf note at 8:29), at which time they took the bodies down and threw them in the cave that had been their prison. They then sealed the mouth of the tomb with big stones, and it was still obvious at the time this book was written.

Joshua 10:28 ¶ And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that *were* therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho.

After disposing of the kings, Joshua and the troops of Israel finished off the people of Makkedah. Not one person was allowed to remain alive—just as had been done in Jericho (excepting Rahab and her family).

Joshua 10:29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah:

Joshua 10:30 And the LORD delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein; he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho.

These and the following verses detail the victories of the Israelites as they continued to take possession of the land. Each time they conquered a city they destroyed every person; not one person was left alive.

They went from Makkedah to Libnah.

Joshua 10:31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it:

Joshua 10:32 And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

Joshua 10:33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

They went from Libnah to Lachish. Horam, king of Gezer, made the mistake of coming to help Lachish, and he and every one of his troops were destroyed as well.

The NIV Commentary notes, ““Gezer” is near the entrance to the Valley of Aijalon, about a day’s march north of Lachish.”

Joshua 10:34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it:

Joshua 10:35 And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

They went from Lachish to Eglon.

Easton’s Dictionary tells about an interesting archaeological find in Lachish.

“Lachish has been identified with Tell-el-Hesy, where a cuneiform tablet has been found, containing a letter supposed to be from Amenophis at Amarna in reply to one of the Amarna tablets sent by Zimrida from Lachish. This letter is from the chief of Atim (=Etam, 1 Chr. 4:32) to the chief of Lachish, in which the writer expresses great alarm at the approach of marauders from the Hebron hills. ‘They have entered the land,’ he says, ‘to lay waste...strong is he who has come down. He lays waste.’ This letter shows that ‘the communication by tablets in cuneiform script was not only usual in writing to Egypt, but in the internal correspondence of the country. The letter, though not so important in some ways as the Moabite stone and the Siloam text, is one of the most valuable discoveries ever made in Palestine’ (Conder’s Tell Amarna Tablets, p. 134).”

Joshua 10:36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto

Hebron; and they fought against it:

Joshua 10:37 And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that *were* therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that *were* therein.

They went from Eglon to Hebron, the city where the cave of Machpelah—tomb of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah—was located.

Genesis 49:31 & 50:13-14 "There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.... For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father."

Joshua 10:38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought against it:

Joshua 10:39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that *were* therein; he left none remaining; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

They headed from Hebron to Debir.

Joshua 10:40 So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded.

Joshua 10:41 And Joshua smote them from Kadeshbarnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon.

Joshua 10:42 And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

Joshua 10:43 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

This evidently completed their conquest of the hill country and the southern area known as the Negeb in the southern part of what would become known as Judah. It stretched from Kadeshbarnea to Gaza, including all the land from Goshen to Gibeon. It seems that base camp remained at Gilgal.

Joshua notes that God gave them possession of the land by empowering them to conquer each king and his lands one kingdom at a time. This reason for this was explained in the book of Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 7:22–23 "And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed."