

# Joshua 10 - Hailstones; Long Day of Joshua; Completion & Summary of the Southern Campaign

I. Israel's conquest of Canaan (Joshua 1:1—12:24)

(3) Israel conquers Canaan (Joshua 5:13—12:24)

(B) Southern campaign (10:1-43)

(a) Canaanite southern coalition gathers to destroy Gibeon (10:1-5)

(b) Israel defends Gibeon and defeats the southern coalition (10:6-15)

(c) Southern cities conquered (10:16-43)

## Joshua 10

(B) Southern campaign (10:1-43)

(a) Canaanite southern coalition gathers to destroy Gibeon (10:1-5)

**1** Now it came about when **Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem** heard that Joshua had captured Ai, and had utterly destroyed it (just as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king), and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were within their land,

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**1** King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem eventually heard how Joshua had conquered Ai, utterly destroying it, doing to Ai and its king the same thing that he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were now living among them.

**1** Now it came to pass, when Adoni-Zedek 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;

- The kings of southern Canaan were defiant in the face of Israel's military victories and their treaty with the Gibeonites

- "...Adoni-zedek" - "The Lord of Righteousness"

— Like Melchizedek (Gen 14:18), a title of the Jebusite kings

- "...king of Jerusalem" - imitating the "King of Righteousness" (Heb 7:2), but hating the people of God (2 Thess 2:4)
- "Jerusalem" - means "The Founding (or Possession) of Peace"; formerly the ancient city of Salem (Gen 14:18)
- The city is called Jerusalem here for the first time in Scripture
- All the inhabitants of Canaan were considered utterly corrupt (Cf. Lev 18:25)

2 that he 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.

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2 So they were terrified, since Gibeon was a large city, comparable to one of the royal cities, was larger than Ai, and all of its men had been warriors.

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.

3 Therefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent *word* to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying,

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3 So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent word to King Hoham of Hebron, King Piram of Jarmuth, King Japhia of Lachish, and King Debir of Eglon. He told them,

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,

- Jerusalem was closer to Gibeon than any of the other allied towns

4 "Come up to me and help me, and let's attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel."

4 "Come up to me and help me, and let us attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel."

4 "Come over and help me, and let's attack Gibeon, because it made a peace treaty with Joshua and the Israelis."

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.

- The kings of southern Canaan responded defiantly to the news of Israel's victories. They feared Israel, who had already destroyed two Canaanite fortresses, and made a vital ally out of the Gibeonites

— They could hardly let the capitulation of the Gibeonites rest; it would set a disastrous precedent

5 So 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 with all their armies, and camped by Gibeon and fought against it.

5 So 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 with all their armies, and camped by Gibeon and fought against it.

5 So 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 their armies together and advanced with all of their armies toward Gideon, camped there, and laid siege to it.

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.

- The Gibeonites were now at war with their former allies

(b) Israel defends Gibeon and defeats the southern coalition (10:6-15)

6 Then the men of Gibeon sent *word* to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, “Do not abandon your servants; come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the **Amorites** that live in the hill country have assembled against us.”

6 Then the men of Gibeon sent *word* to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal, saying, “Do not abandon your servants; come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites that live in the hill country have assembled against us.”

6 The Gibeonites sent word to Joshua at his camp in Gilgal: “Don’t abandon your servants. Come quickly, save us, and help us, because all of the kings of the Amorites who live in the hill country have attacked us.”

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.

- When the five kings conspired to attack Gibeon, the Gibeonites desperately pleaded to Joshua for help

— Joshua faced a dilemma: should he risk his men to rescue the Gibeonites after they deceived him into making a treaty with them?

— Joshua knew God expects His people to act with integrity in accord with His own character (Lev 19:11; Num 23:19; Rom 12:2; Phil 4:8; 1 Peter 3:16)

— If you make agreements with the enemy, expect to pay a price defending them

- "...Amorites" - used in a general sense for the Canaanites who were living in nearby hills, including the Jebusites

— That is why God's people are to remain separated from the world (2 Cor 6:14-18; 2 Tim 2:4)

- The Gibeonites trusted in Joshua ("YHWH is Savior") and his word

In Joshua, we see an essential quality of good leadership: remaining teachable. When confronted by the Gibeonites' clever deception, Joshua had not prayed for wisdom. He made an unwise decision. But he did the next right thing by accepting the consequences and receiving God's mercy. This time, rather than be led by feelings or circumstances, Joshua lived by what God said. When Joshua followed God's lead, he witnessed God's power.

7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the valiant warriors.

7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him and all the valiant warriors.

7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, along with his entire fighting force of mighty warriors with him.

7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.

8 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have handed them over to you; not one of them will stand against you."

8 The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands; not one of them shall stand before you."

8 The LORD told Joshua, "Don't fear them, because I have handed them over to you. Not one of them will withstand you."

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.

- God must have laughed (Cf. Ps 2:1-4)

— Instead of having to defeat these five city-states one by one, they would now conquer them all at one time!

— The victory was already the Lord's. No mistake is final for the dedicated Christian.

9 So Joshua came upon them suddenly by marching all night from Gilgal.

9 So Joshua came upon them suddenly by marching all night from Gilgal.

9 So after an all-night march from Gilgal, Joshua attacked them by surprise.

9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, [and] went up from Gilgal all night.

- An all-night march to stage an early morning surprise attack, which caught the Amorites off guard (Cf. Ex 23:27)

— Their night march covered about 20 miles up steep terrain, with gear, under stress, in the middle of the night, and with a battle still before them

10 And the LORD brought them into confusion before Israel, and He struck them down in a great defeat at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent to Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

10 And the LORD confounded them before Israel, and He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

10 The LORD threw the Amorites into a panic right in front of the army of Israel, which then slaughtered many of them at Gibeon. The Israeli army chased them along the road that goes up to Beth-horon, striking them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

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.

- Israel gained the advantage, and pursued the fleeing Amorites for several miles

— This is known as the Battle of Beth-horon

11 And as they fled from Israel, *while* they were at the descent of Beth-horon, the LORD hurled large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died; *there were* more who died from the hailstones than those whom the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

11 As they fled from before Israel, *while* they were at the descent of Beth-horon, the LORD threw large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died; *there were* more who died from the hailstones than those whom the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

11 While they were fleeing in front of Israel and descending the slope of Beth-horon, the LORD rained down huge hailstones on them as far as Azekah, and they died. More died because of the hailstones than were killed by the Israelis in battle.

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.

- The large number of deaths from the hailstones led both the Amorites and Israelites to realize that the victory came from God, not simply Israel's own power

— *Yahweh*, not Israel, had devoted the Amorites to destruction

— Hailstones will also be used by God to execute His judgment in the end times (Rev 16:21)

The crossing of the Jordan at high flood and the cyclonic hail storm at Aijalon are of special theological significance, for Baal was the great Canaanite storm god who was supposed to control the rain, the hail, the snow and the floods of Palestine. These episodes proved that Baal was as powerless before Yahweh in Palestine as he had been in the episode of the plagues in Egypt.

**12** Then Joshua spoke to the LORD on the day when the LORD turned the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon, And moon, at the Valley of Aijalon!"

**12** Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "O sun, stand still at Gibeon, And O moon in the valley of Aijalon."

**12** Later that day, Joshua spoke to the LORD while the LORD was delivering the Amorites to the Israelis. This is what he said in the presence of Israel: "Sun, be still over Gibeon! Moon, stand in place in the Aijalon Valley!"

**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.

13 So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, Until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies. Is it not written in the **Book of Jashar**? And the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and did not hurry to go *down* for about a whole day.

13 So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, Until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day.

13 So the sun remained still and the moon stood in place until the nation settled their score with their enemies. This is recorded, is it not, in the book of Jashar? The sun stood in place in the middle of the sky and seemed not to be in a hurry to set for nearly an entire day.

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 hastened not to go down about a whole day.

- No boundaries or limits restrain God's power; God alone determines what is possible and impossible

— The first and best work we can do is to pray; God's power has no boundaries or limits

— It is God, and God alone, who determines what is possible and impossible

— This is plain proof that one person can gain God's attention in prayer

- "...book of Jasher" - seems to have been a collection of stories of Israel's heroes

- Some of the stories, if not all of them, were in poetry and commemorated God's great acts for Israel (Cf. 2 Sam 1:18)
  - Nothing is too hard for Him (Jer 32:17,27)
  - He commandeth the sun and it riseth not (Job 9:7); the sun appeared to go backward in the days of Hezekiah (Is 38:8)
  - Day and night belong to God (Ps 74:16)
  - Other mysteries (Job 38:22-23)
  - To deny miracles is the acme of arrogance—and a pretense to omniscience
  - To deny miracles would be to deny the birth of a child, or the creation itself. All the resources of science cannot create even a single blade of grass. No wonder the Lord asks of puny man, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding" (Job 38:4)
- See [The Long Day of Joshua - Joshua 10:12-13](#).

*The mind which asks for a non-miraculous Christianity is a mind in process of relapsing from Christianity into mere 'religion.'* [C.S. Lewis]

14 There was no day like that before it or after it, when the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

14 There was no day like that before it or after it, when the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

14 There has never been a day like it before or since, when the LORD listened to the voice of a man, because the LORD was fighting on behalf of Israel.

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.

**15** Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal.

**15** Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp to Gilgal.

**15** After this, Joshua returned to the camp at Gilgal with the entire fighting force of Israel.

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

(c) Southern cities conquered (10:16-43)

**16** Now these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in the cave at Makkedah.

**16** Now these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in the cave at Makkedah.

**16** Meanwhile, the five kings had fled and hidden themselves inside a cave at Makkedah.

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

- Caves will also be hiding places for kings during the Tribulation (Rev 6:15-17)

17 And it was told to Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah."

17 It was told Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah."

17 Joshua was informed, "The five kings have been discovered hiding in the cave at Makkedah."

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

18 So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and post men by it to guard them,

18 Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and assign men by it to guard them,

18 So Joshua gave an order, "Roll large stones up against the mouth of the cave and assign men to stand guard there,

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

- A holding action while they mop up (2 Peter 2:9)

19 but do not stay *there* yourselves; pursue your enemies and attack them from behind. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD your God has handed them over to you."

19 but do not stay *there* yourselves; pursue your enemies and attack them in the rear. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand."

19 but don't stay there yourselves. Instead, pursue your enemies and attack them from behind. Don't allow them to enter their cities, because the LORD your God has delivered them into your control."

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.

20 It came about when Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished striking them down in a very great defeat, until they were destroyed, and the survivors of them *who* escaped had entered the fortified cities,

20 It came about when Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished slaying them with a very great slaughter, until they were destroyed, and the survivors *who* remained of them had entered the fortified cities,

20 Now it came about that after Joshua and the Israelis had finished the battle, destroying and scattering their survivors, who retreated into their fortified cities,

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.

21 that all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah in peace. **No one uttered a word** against any of the sons of Israel.

21 that all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace. No one uttered a word against any of the sons of Israel.

21 the entire army returned safely to Joshua's encampment at Makkedah. No one could speak so much as a single word against any of the Israelis.

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.

- "...No one uttered a word" - means no one lifted a finger in resistance against the Israelites (Cf. Ex 11:7)

**22** Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring these five kings out to me from the cave."

**22** Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring these five kings out to me from the cave."

**22** Then Joshua gave this order: "Unseal the mouth of the cave and bring out these five kings to me from the cave."

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

23 They did so, and brought these five kings out 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.

23 They did so, and brought these five kings out 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.

23 So they did. They brought out these five kings to him from within the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

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.

24 When they brought these kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the leaders of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come forward, put your **feet on the necks** of these kings." So they came forward and put their feet on their necks.

24 When they brought these kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came near and put their feet on their necks.

24 When they had brought these kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel and spoke to the leaders of the men who had gone out to war along with him, "Come close and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came near and put their feet on their necks.

**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.

- "...feet on the necks" - a symbolic act that represented complete subjugation of, and total defeat over, the enemy (1 Kings 5:3; Ps 8:6; 110:1); it is a sign of victory (Rom 16:20)

— This act gave the Israelites greater confidence and increased their faith

25 Joshua then said to them, "Do not fear or be dismayed! Be strong and courageous, for the LORD will do this to all your enemies with whom you fight."

25 Joshua then said to them, "Do not fear or be dismayed! Be strong and courageous, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies with whom you fight."

25 Joshua told the army, "Don't fear or be dismayed! Be strong and courageous, because this is how the LORD will treat all of your enemies whom you fight."

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.

- Since Joshua is a type of Christ, we can claim these words to ourselves

— The Lord's enemies are His footstool (Ps 110:1; 1 Cor 15:25)

— Through Him, we can claim victory and put our feet on the necks of our enemies (Rom 16:20)

26 So afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees; and they were hung on the trees until evening.

26 So afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees; and they hung on the trees until evening.

26 After this, Joshua struck those kings down, executing them, and hanged them on five gallows until sunset.

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.

27 Then it came about at sunset that Joshua gave the command, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and put large stones over the mouth of the cave, to this very day.

27 It came about at sunset that Joshua gave a command, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and put large stones over the mouth of the cave, to this very day.

27 When evening had come, Joshua gave a command to remove the bodies from the gallows and bury them in the cave where they had hidden. The army sealed the mouth of the cave with large stones that remain there to this very day.

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.

### **The Southern Campaign**

To this point, Israel' s victories had taken place in central Canaan. God's strategy was to first give His people a base of operations, a central headquarters in the middle part of the land. From there, they could then advance to the South, and then to the North.

**28** Now Joshua captured Makkedah on that day, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword; he utterly destroyed it and every person who was in it. He left no survivor. So he did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

**28** Now Joshua captured Makkedah on that day, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword; he utterly destroyed it and every person who was in it. He left no survivor. Thus he did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

**28** Joshua captured Makkedah that very day, and attacked both it and its king with swords, utterly destroying it along with every person in it, leaving no survivors. He dealt with the king of Makkedah the same way he had dealt with the king of Jericho.

**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.

- Ruthlessly thorough; no half measures here

- We should be both warned and encouraged. We must be alert and prayerful lest we be deceived and walk by sight rather than by faith. We need to be cautious about alliances; and yet, God can even take our blunders and turn them into blessings.

1 John 5:4b: and this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith.

**29** Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Makkedah to Libnah, and fought against Libnah.

**29** Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Makkedah to Libnah, and fought against Libnah.

**29** Afterward, Joshua and all of Israel passed on from Makkedah to Libnah, where they fought against Libnah.

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

30 And the LORD also handed it over to Israel, with its king, and he struck it and every person who *was* in it with the edge of the sword. He left no survivor in it. So he did to its king just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

30 The LORD gave it also with its king into the hands of Israel, and he struck it and every person who *was* in it with the edge of the sword. He left no survivor in it. Thus he did to its king just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

30 The LORD gave both it and its king into the control of Israel, and Joshua executed both its king and every person in it with swords, leaving no survivors. He dealt with the king the same way he had dealt with the king of Jericho.

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.

**31** And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish, and they camped by it and fought against it.

**31** And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish, and they camped by it and fought against it.

**31** Then Joshua and all of Israel passed from Libnah to Lachish, camped near it, and attacked it.

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

32 And the LORD handed Lachish over to Israel; and he captured it on the second day, and struck it and every person who *was* in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

32 The LORD gave Lachish into the hands of Israel; and he captured it on the second day, and struck it and every person who *was* in it with the edge of the sword, according to all

that he had done to Libnah.

32 The LORD gave Lachish into the control of Israel, and Joshua captured it the next day. He declared war on the city and executed everyone in it, the same way he had treated Libnah.

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.

- Note: Each victory measured against the one previous. Each victory should be a standard for the next.

- Joshua's conquest of Lachish took two days. When Sennacherib, king of Assyria "came up against all the fenced cities of Judah" (2 Kings 18:13) and he personally laid siege against Lachish (2 Chr 32:9), he had to abandon his attempt to reduce it (2 Kings 19:7-8) — Later, when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah in the reign of its last king, Lachish was one of the last to be conquered (Jer 34:7)

**33** Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish, and Joshua defeated him and his people until he had left him no survivor.

**33** Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish, and Joshua defeated him and his people until he had left him no survivor.

33 Then Horam king of Gezer appeared to help Lachish. So Joshua attacked him and his army, until he left no one remaining.

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.

**34** And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon, and they camped by it and fought against it.

**34** And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon, and they camped by it and fought against it.

**34** After this, Joshua, accompanied by all of Israel, proceeded from Lachish to Eglon, laid siege to it, and attacked it.

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

35 They captured it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; and he utterly destroyed on that day every person who was in it, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

35 They captured it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; and he utterly destroyed that day every person who was in it, according to all that he had done to

Lachish.

35 They captured it on that day, attacking it in battle. Then Joshua completely destroyed it that day, the same way he had dealt with Lachish.

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.

**36** Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron, and they fought against it.

**36** Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron, and they fought against it.

**36** Then Joshua, accompanied by all of Israel, left Eglon for Hebron, where they attacked it,

**36** And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it:

37 And they captured it and struck it and its king and all its cities and all the persons who *were* in it with the edge of the sword. He left no survivor, according to all that he had done to Eglon. And he utterly destroyed it and every person who *was* in it.

37 They captured it and struck it and its king and all its cities and all the persons who *were* in it with the edge of the sword. He left no survivor, according to all that he had done to Eglon. And he utterly destroyed it and every person who *was* in it.

37 captured it, and executed its inhabitants—its king, all of its cities, and every person in it, leaving no one remaining, the same way he had dealt with Eglon. He completely destroyed it, along with everyone in it.

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.

**38** Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to Debir, and they fought against it.

**38** Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to Debir, and they fought against it.

**38** Then Joshua returned, accompanied by the entire fighting force of Israel, to Debir, where they attacked it,

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

39 He captured it and its king and all its cities, and they struck them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed every person *who was* in it. He left no survivor. Just as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had also done to Libnah and its king.

39 He captured it and its king and all its cities, and they struck them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed every person *who was* in it. He left no survivor. Just as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had also done to Libnah and its king.

39 captured it, its king, and all of its villages. They executed them, totally destroying it and everyone in it, leaving no one remaining. He dealt with Debir and its king just as he had dealt with Hebron, treating them the same way he had dealt with Libnah and its king.

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.

### **Seven Victories Following Gibeon**

(1) Makkedah (v28)

(2) Libnah (v29-30)

(3) Lachish (v31-32)

(4) Horam, king of Gezar (v33)

(5) Eglon (v34-35)

(6) Hebron (v36-37)

(7) Debir (v38-39)

In the record of these encounters, two important facts are highlighted: (1) Israel was obedient to God's command to exterminate the Canaanites in these cities, and (2) it was the Lord, Yahweh, who gave Israel's enemies into her hands (v30,32).

The purpose of these quick raids was to destroy the military capability of these city-states, and to instill fear and confusion among the remaining Canaanites. Archaeology has confirmed that many of these cities did not suffer violent destruction at this time. But beyond inflicting immediate loss, this campaign achieved little else by itself—it was a sweep, not an occupation: "*Joshua returned and all Israel with him, to the camp, to Gilgal*" (Joshua 10:15,43). *Occupation* of the land, to live in it, keep livestock and cultivate crops in it, etc., was a far slower process, visible in part later in Joshua and in Judges.

### **Complete vs Incomplete Conquest**

At first glance, there is an apparent contradiction between some passages in Joshua (10:40-43; 11:16-23; 21:43-45) that seem to state (on the surface) that Joshua and the Israelites completed their conquest of the entire Promised Land (given by promise to Abraham in Deut 1:6-8 and Gen 15:18-21). However, in the immediate context of those passages, there are seemingly contradictory statements about an incomplete conquest (11:19,22; 13:1-7, etc.). After a close reading of the narrative, it becomes clear that the

writer of Joshua does not assert that the Israelites killed all the people of the land or claim that they captured and occupied every city or parcel of land in Canaan.

### **Summary of the Southern Campaign**

Joshua 10:40-43 contains four descriptions of the extent of Israel's victories. Verse 40a says that Joshua struck the whole land, with a list of the territories implied. Then we read that no one remained alive at the end of the campaign. Verse 41 describes the geographical extent of Israel's victory, and v42 tells us that Joshua captured all the kings. Finally, Joshua and all the Israelites returned to Gilgal (v43).

A closer look at the list of territories shows a "qualified" victory. The list of the geographic areas taken stand in apposition to the phrase, "the whole land." The list includes: the hill country, the Negev, the lowland, and the slopes. Israel can be described in terms of four parallel longitudinal zones. From west to east, these are: the coastal plain, the central mountain spine, the Jordan Rift Valley, and the Transjordanian plateau. According to Moses, the Promised Land included: the hill country, and...the lowland, and...the Negev, and...the seacoast (Deut 1:7, ESV). By comparing these lists, it is clear that the coastal plain does not appear in Joshua 10:40. In other words, the list of conquered territories does not include all the geographic regions of the southern part of Canaan.

In v40b, again it seems that the writer wants the reader to believe in a complete destruction of every individual in the conquered territory. However, "all their kings" (referring to the kings of the territory mentioned earlier in the verse) involves only a subset of the southern part of Canaan...the Philistine kings are not included. In addition, there is no mention of the capture of Jerusalem even if Joshua did kill Adoni-Zedek the king of Jerusalem. Furthermore, Gezer, the land of Horam, was apparently not attacked during this campaign even though King Horam was reportedly killed (Cf. Joshua 10:33).

The line from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza marks the southwestern border of the land (v41). Since, v40 clearly excludes the coastal plain region, there is little reason to believe that "even unto" includes Gaza and Gibeon in the territory taken by Israel. The exclusion of Gaza from the conquered territory described in Joshua 11:22 further supports this conclusion. Thus, v40 does not contradict the reality portrayed in other passages of Joshua...Israel did not capture or subjugate Gaza, and Joshua did not strike down the Gibeonites.

**40** So Joshua struck **all** the land, the hill country and the Negev and the lowland and the slopes, and **all** their kings. He left no survivor, but he utterly destroyed **all** who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded.

**40** Thus Joshua struck all the land, the hill country and the Negev and the lowland and the slopes and all their kings. He left no survivor, but he utterly destroyed all who breathed,

just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded.

**40** So Joshua conquered the entire land, the hill country, the Negev, the Shephelah, and the wilderness highlands, along with all of their kings. He left none of them remaining, but completely destroyed every living person, just as the LORD God of Israel had commanded.

**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.

- "...all" [3x] - limited meaning; here, it means all "parts" or geographical regions of the land, all the "kings" of the cities that Joshua destroyed, and "all who lived" in those destroyed cities (Cf. 13:1)

— In contrast to Saul, years later, sparing Agag and the best of the sheep, et al (1 Sam 15)

41 Joshua struck them from Kadesh-barnea even as far as Gaza, and all the country of **Goshen** even as far as **Gibeon**.

41 Joshua struck them from Kadesh-barnea even as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen even as far as Gibeon.

41 Joshua conquered them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, including the entire territory of Goshen as far as Gibeon.

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

- Here we are at the site of the failure of faith 40 years earlier...

- "...Goshen" - located at the southern end of Judah's hill country (not referring to the section of Egypt)

- "...Gibeon" - located in the southernmost part of Benjamin

— The implication is that Joshua defeated the indigenous people all along the mountain ridge of Judah up to Gibeon

— While the Gibeonite sites came under Israelite control during the southern campaign, they were not struck by Joshua

42 Joshua **captured** all these kings and their lands **at one time**, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

42 Joshua captured all these kings and their lands at one time, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

42 Joshua conquered all of these kings and their territories in one campaign, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

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

- "...captured" - often denotes taking possession of something or someone; in some cases the idea is inhabited rather than possessed
- However, it's evident that Joshua clearly did capture these lands and their kings
- Israel had to capture some of these towns again in Judges 1:9-29; in Judges 1:29, it's apparent that Gezer remained occupied by Canaanites even though Joshua defeated its king and no one was left alive (Joshua 10:33)
- "...at one time" - this stands in contrast to the statement in Joshua 11:18 that Joshua was involved in a protracted military campaign for the land
- The implication is that Joshua captured the southern portion of Canaan once, rather than "suddenly"
- Caleb was still seeking his inheritance in Hebron seven years after beginning the conquest (Joshua 14:6-15)

43 So Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal.

43 So Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal.

43 Then Joshua returned to the camp at Gilgal, along with the entire fighting force of Israel.

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

- A return to base. Our base is Calvary. This was a pattern for Joshua and the Israelites throughout the conquest.

— After the first defeat at Ai, Joshua sent the whole army out from Jericho to fight in the second battle of Ai (Cf. 8:1,3). Then at each step in the conquest for the southern territory, all Israel is involved (Cf. 10:29-39) which starts with Israel moving out from Gilgal (Cf. 10:9) and returning to Gilgal (Cf. 10:43).

— As Israel moved from city to city in the battle for the land, no one remained to occupy the conquered cities

— A similar distinction occurs in Joshua 12, where the narrator describes the conquest of the eastern territories (v1-6) and the western territories (v7-8). On the eastern side of the Jordan, Israel struck down Sihon and Og, and Israel took possession of the land (v1). In the description of the battle for the western territories, Joshua gives us a list of kings struck down, however there is no mention of Israel taking possession of the land of these kings. So although land has been conquered, there is no sense in which it is occupied. If Israel captured cities but did not occupy them, then it is highly likely that the people who fled before this invading army would have returned to their homes after Israel returned to Gilgal (Cf. Joshua 10:20). On this basis there is little reason to see a contradiction with passages that say there is much work that remains to be done (Cf. Joshua 13:2-5; 10:40-43).

## Lessons

(1) Walk by faith not by sight

(2) Be cautious about alliances

(3) God can take our blunders and turn them into victories (1 John 5:4)