

Joshua Chapter 10 Continued

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."

Opened the mouth "of" the cave, by rolling away the stones.

"And brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave": Who are next mentioned by name, one by one, according to their dignity, and in the order they were brought unto him.

"The king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon": Who are particularly named for the greater glory of the conquest, and the triumph over them.

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."

"Feet upon the necks": This gesture (1) symbolized victory and (2) promised assurance of future conquest (verse 25).

Verse 23 is repeated to show who the kings were and where they had been. It also brings us up to date about them being brought before Joshua. The kings had to be lying on the floor in front of these captains. To put their feet upon the necks of these Amorite kings, shows them that God has put their enemies under their control. This was to inspire the captains to go ahead and win all of this land.

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."

In Joshua's encouragement to Israel is the Lord's encouragement for all His people: sometimes the battle gets fierce and it seems like the enemy is advancing, but a day is coming when the Lord will put His foot on the neck of all of His enemies, especially his arch-enemy, Satan (Psalm 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25-27; Rev. 20:10). Those who are allied with God will be victorious (Rev. 21:6-7).

This was to encourage them to have faith in God's ability to put their enemy into their control. Christians should share their victories over the devil with other Christians to encourage them to have more faith.

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."

With the sword; either by his own hands, or by others whom he ordered to slay them.

"And hanged them on five trees": To their shame and disgrace, and the terror of others.

"And they were hanging upon the trees until the evening": By way of contempt of them, and as a spectacle of terror to others, especially to the inhabitants of Makkedah, and their king they were now besieging.

This does not say they died from hanging. We do not really know the method they were killed by. Joshua hung them out for all Israel to view. The entire army would be encouraged that God would kill their enemies before them.

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."

Which was the time fixed by the law of God for taking down bodies that were hanged (Deut. 21:23).

"That Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees": Not from any respect to them, but that they might not defile the land, as dead bodies in a ceremonial sense did (Deut. 21:23). And this Joshua was the more careful of, as they were just entered into it, and were taking possession of it.

"And they cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid": So that what had been their hiding place now became their grave.

"And laid great stones in the cave's mouth": Not as a monumental pile, as in the instances of Achan and the king of Ai (Joshua 7:26). But to prevent their carcasses being dragged out, and eaten by wild beasts, as some think. Or that they might not be taken out, and buried in a more honorable manner.

"Which remain until this very day": When Joshua was grown old, the writer of this book.

At the end of the day they had served their purpose, and Joshua had them cut down and buried in the cave they had hidden in. Joshua was strictly keeping the law in Deuteronomy as well.

(Deut. 21:23) "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged [is] accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance."

Verses 28-42: Joshua "utterly destroyed" all the nations he conquered, in obedience to God's decree (in Deuteronomy 7:2).

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 the final defeat of the five Amorite kings at "Makkedah, Joshua" pushed still further south and west in a great expedition that took him into lower Canaan. He took strategic cities far to the south and west of Jerusalem (verses 29-42), before returning to the field headquarters in Gilgal (verse 43).

Makkedah is not mentioned as one of the cities of the evil confederacy, but was friendly toward them because the kings hid there. All the people were killed male and female.

Joshua 6:21 "And they utterly destroyed all that [was] in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword."

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

After he had taken it, and destroyed its inhabitants, and its king.

"And all Israel with him": That is, all the men of war he took with him from the camp at Gilgal, from whence he went to the relief of Gibeon.

"Unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah": A city that fell to the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:42). Jerom says, in his time it was a village, in the region of Eleuthero-polis, and was called Libnah. According to Bunting, it was but two miles from Makkedah.

All Israel, is speaking of all the able bodied soldiers. Libnah became one of the Levitical cities in the tribe of Judah.

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."

At once, no opposition being made that we read of.

"And he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein, he let none remain in it": That is, Israel smote it, or Joshua, and indeed both. And this was according to the orders given them to be observed with respect to all the cities and nations of Canaan. And that because of their abominable sins and wickedness, and to make way and room for the people of Israel (Deut. 7:1).

"But did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho": Slew him with the inhabitants.

The troops of Israel totally destroyed Libnah. They killed everyone, as we read about Makkedah above.

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

Which, according to Bunting, was eight miles from Libnah, and twenty miles from Jerusalem to the southwest of this city (see Joshua 10:5).

"And encamped against it, and fought against it": For it seems this city stood out, and would not surrender at once. Which obliged Joshua to encamp about it, and besiege it.

The army of Israel moved from Libnah to Lachish. They seemed to be going from one city to the next destroying them.

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."

In the various battle accounts, "the Lord" is given credit for the victory. He is the one who should receive glory for every battle won, both then and now (10:10, 19).

This is unusual to take a city in just two days, but we must remember that Israel had a very large army compared to these towns. In each case God had told Israel to leave no one alive. All the souls, means men and women were killed.

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."

10:28-43 Joshua made speed in taking these cities. See what a great deal of work may be done in a little time, if we will be diligent, and improve our opportunities. God here showed his hatred of the idolatries and other abominations of which the Canaanites had been guilty, and shows us how great the provocation was, by the greatness of the destruction brought upon them. Here also was typified the destruction of all the enemies of the Lord Jesus, who, having slighted the riches of his grace, must for ever feel the weight of his wrath. The Lord fought for Israel. They could not have gotten the victory, if God had not undertaken the battle. We conquer when God fights for us; if he be for us, who can be against us?

"And Joshua smote him, and his people, until he had left him none remaining": Destroyed him and all his army, so that there were none left to return and relate their unhappy case.

Gezer was reported to have 14-foot-wide walls surrounding it. The destruction of Gezer's army here is at Lachish. They came to help Lachish and were killed. This does not mean there were no inhabitants of Gezer who survived. It means the army that came to help Lachish died.

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

Which, according to Bunting, was eight miles from Lachish, and twelve from Jerusalem southward, of which see (Joshua 10:5).

"And all Israel with him, and they encamped against it, and fought against it": It not surrendering at once, but attempted to hold out a siege.

Joshua did not go to the city of Gezer from Lachish. He passed on to Eglon which had been part of the evil confederacy. Lachish and Eglon had been part of that confederacy.

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."

The same day they encamped about it and besieged it; the besieged finding they were not able to keep it.

"And smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day": Made an utter devastation of all its inhabitants.

"According to all that he had done to Lachish": The last city he took. They having no king as Lachish had not, its king being one of the five that had been hanged (Joshua 10:26).

God was with Joshua, and it took only one day to destroy Eglon. Again there was no one spared. They killed them all.

Joshua 10:36 "And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it:"

Which lay in the hill country, and therefore they are said to go up to it from Eglon, which lay lower. And, according to Bunting, it was sixteen miles from it.

"And they fought against it": It making some resistance at first, and did not surrender at once, as demanded.

Hebron was another of the confederacy. Joshua had killed their men in their army at Makkedah. He now kills the rest of Hebron.

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."

For though the king of Hebron was one of the kings that were taken in the cave of Makkedah, and hanged. Yet before Joshua came up to it, they had set up another king over them.

"And all the cities thereof": For Hebron was a metropolitan city, and had other cities dependent on it, and subject to it.

"And all the souls that were therein": Both in Hebron, and in the cities subject to it.

"He left none remaining": In any of them.

"According to all that he had done to Eglon": The last place he came from.

"But destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein": But it seems that afterwards some that made their escape before the taking of the city, and other Canaanites driven out of their habitations, re-peopled it. So that after Joshua's death it was recovered again by the tribe of Judah (Judges 1:10). Unless there is given in that place a more particular account of the taking of this city, with others at this time. But the former seems most likely.

This too, was totally destroyed. Joshua takes Hebron here. We will find in a later lesson that Caleb will retake it.

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

A city, according to Kimchi, which he passed by when he went to Hebron, and did not fight against it. But, when he had taken Hebron, returned and took it; and which Bunting says was but a mile from it, and twenty-two miles from Jerusalem, towards the south. It is the same with Kirjath-sepher and Kirjath-sannah (Joshua 15:15; 49). The city of a book or books; and the Rabbins say, that with the Persians Debir signifies the same, and had its name from a library which was here kept.

"And fought against it": It refusing to submit to him upon his summons.

This had been a frontier fortress of one of the five kings of the Amorites.

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."

For this also was a royal city, and had others dependent on it; and therefore, must lie further from Hebron than before suggested. And indeed, Burchard says it was five or six miles from it.

"And they smote them with the edge of the sword": The inhabitants of Debir, and the other cities adjacent to it:

“And utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein, he left none remaining”: And yet it seems this city recovered again, and was re-inhabited. And after the death of Joshua was taken by Othniel (Judges 1:11). Unless, as before observed, with respect to Hebron, there is a more particular account of the taking of it at this time. As he had done to Hebron, so did he to Debir, and to the king thereof.

“As he had done also to Libnah and her king”: That is, slew them.

God had commanded that they totally destroy the people of these cities, and make examples of their evil kings so no others would rise up in their place. Debir was destroyed as the other cities had been.

Verses 40-43: A summary of Joshua’s southern campaign (compare 9:1 – 10:43).

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."

That part of the land of Canaan which lay southward, and consisted of hills and vales. Which abounded with springs, and was a well-watered country, and agrees with the description Moses gives of it, though he never saw it (Deut. 8:7).

"He left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed": That is, all human creatures. As for the cattle, they were spared as a prey.

"As the Lord God of Israel commanded": This law is still in existence (Deut. 20:16); and which is here observed to clear the Israelites from the charge of cruelty and inhumanity. Since what they did was not of themselves, nor from a private spirit of revenge, nor a greedy desire after the substance of the inhabitants. But in obedience to the command of God, and who ordered this as a righteous punishment of those people for their gross abominations of idolatry, incest, etc. (see Lev. 18:1).

This seems cruel, but we must remember that all of these people had their opportunity to turn to God and they did not. They also could leave no women living besides the men, because they would intermarry with those who worshipped other gods. We can see the purpose in this is, that God wanted them to be a holy separated people to Him. The lands they took, and the cities they destroyed had been given to them as part of the Promised Land. God had given it to them as long as they remain obedient to His commands.

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

“Gaza was one of the five principal cities of the Philistines. It was about three miles from the Mediterranean coast, marking the southern border of Canaan. Situated on the great caravan route

between Mesopotamia and Egypt, at the junction of the trade route from Arabia, to the tribe of Judah (15:47). But it was not immediately occupied (Judges 1:18), because the Anakim were still present in the city (11:22; 13:3). Soon afterward the Philistines recovered Gaza (Judges 13:1). Samson was humiliated in this city (Judges 16:21), but in his last heroic act he destroyed many Philistines (Judges 16:23-31). Hezekiah dealt the decisive blow to the Philistines (2 Kings 18:8). Amos's prophecy concerning Gaza (Amos 1:6-7), was fulfilled by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. In (Acts 8:26), the Ethiopian eunuch was converted and baptized on the road from Jerusalem to the ruins of old Gaza.

This is an explanation of how far the land reached that they had taken in this war. We also must remember they were acting under orders from God to do this. God fought for them and they were able to take the land God had promised them.

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."

Tribute belongs to the Lord for all the victories, as "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5:18).

Not in one day, but in a very short time. In a few days, as the history clearly shows.

"Because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel": Which is the true reason of such quick dispatch being made. Otherwise in all probability much longer time must have been consumed in subduing them. The Targum is, "because the Lord God of Israel fought by his Word for Israel."

"At one time" means during this one campaign. It probably happened over a period of a few weeks. We remember one city was taken in two days and another in just one day. It seemed they went from city to city while they were fighting. God was with them and they won without much difficulty.

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

After all these kings and their cities had been taken by him, and not before, though the same is said, (Joshua 10:15). Before the history of those facts (see note on Joshua 10:15).

"And all Israel with him to the camp in Gilgal": Where the body of the people were left, and where was the tabernacle of the Lord. And no doubt he and Israel with him gave public praise and thanksgiving there for the victories they had obtained over the Canaanites.

It seems from this, that Gilgal was home base. This was a holy war, commanded by God Himself.

Joshua Chapter 10 Continued Questions

1. What did Joshua tell the captains to do to the five kings?

2. What does this show?
3. Why did Joshua tell the captains to fear not?
4. Why should Christians share their victories over the devil with other Christians?
5. What did Joshua do to the five kings?
6. Where did he bury the kings?
7. Where did Joshua attack that day?
8. Whose life was spared?
9. Who is all Israel in verse 29 speaking of?
10. What was the second city that was destroyed?
11. Lachish was taken in _____ days.
12. What does "all the souls" mean?
13. Who came to help Lachish?
14. How wide were the walls at Gezer?
15. What did Lachish and Eglon have in common?
16. Joshua takes Hebron here. Who takes Hebron at a later time?
17. Where does verse 40 say they took?
18. Why was it important to leave none of the women living?
19. What does verse 42 mean by "at one time"?
20. How long did the campaign last, probably?
21. One city was taken in _____ days and another in _____ day.
22. Where did Joshua return after the fighting was finished?