

CONQUERING THE LAND OF CANAAN

Joshua 10-12

(Josh 9:1-2), "And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof; {2} That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord. "

(Josh 10), "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; {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} 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, {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. {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. {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. {7} So Joshua **ascended** from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. {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. {9} Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal **all night**. {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. {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. {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} 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. {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} And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal."



TODAY'S TEXT TAKES US BACK IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY to time when God first commanded them to conquer the land. At that particular time the land was called **THE LAND OF CANAAN**.

S JOSHUA CHAPTER 9 BEGAN BY RECORDING THE REACTION OF FIVE KINGS IN SOUTHERN CANAAN **TO THE VICTORIES** that God had given to Israel after entering the land of Canaan. Israel had conquered the cities of **Jericho** and **Ai**. **THOSE FIVE KINGS FORMED A COALITION** to fight against Joshua and Israel (9:1-2).

S In the southern region of the land of Canaan was located THE GREAT CITY OF **GIBEON** LOCATED **ONLY SIX MILES NW of Jerusalem**. **THE GIBEONITES HAD REFUSED TO JOIN** the Canaanite coalition because they understood the implications of what God had done to **JERICHO** and to **AI**. **THEY KNEW** that if Jericho and Ai had fallen before Israel, they would never have the strength to stand against her. **THEY** decided to **DO WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY** to establish **A TREATY** with Israel. That treaty is presented in **Joshua chapter 9**.

CHAPTER 10

S CHAPTER 10 PRESENTS **FURTHER REACTIONS TO GIBEON'S DEFECTION** TO ISRAEL. **THE CANAANITE KINGS** COULD NOT LET **THE GIBEONITE DEFECTION** go **UNANSWERED**. Their act might embolden other cities to follow their example.

S THE NAMES OF THE **FIVE KINGS** ARE PRESENTED BEGINNING IN VERSE 3:

_____ KING _____

_____ CITY _____

1. **ADONIZEDEK** king of **JERUSALEM**
2. **HOHAM** king of **HEBRON**
3. **PIRAM** king of **JARMUTH**
4. **JAPHIA** king of **LACHISH**
5. **DEBIR** king of **EGLON**

ADONIZEDEK was the leader of the coalition. HE **PERSUADED** the other four kings **TO JOIN** together and **ATTACK GIBEON**. **ONE DESIGN** for such a battle was to **INSTILL FEAR** in the heart of any other cities in the region that might consider defecting.

S GIBEON SENT WORD to Joshua **AT GILGAL** and **ASKED FOR HELP**. ISRAEL'S TREATY WITH GIBEON **OBLIGATED** them to come to Gibeon's defense. **ONE MAJOR PROBLEM** for Joshua was that Israel's army was at **Gilgal**. **Gibeon** was in the mountains 6 miles NW of Jerusalem. **Gilgal** was by the Jordan River near Jericho. The journey from **GILGAL** to **GIBEON** was **UPHILL** a distance of approximately **20 MILES**. The army of Israel would have to **MARCH ALL NIGHT** to get there. After arriving they would be exhausted before the battle ever began.

S A FORMER SOLDIER shared with me regarding long marches. The longest march his group had ever had to make was **18½ MILES** carrying more than fifty pounds on their backs. They began their march at 10:00 at night and finished the next morning at 6:00 a.m. I asked him if it would have been difficult to fight a battle after having marched all night like that. He said, "Yes!" Many of the soldiers had blisters on their feet. Some had trenchfoot from walking so long with wet feet. They were tired for two reasons: they had walked 18½ miles, and they had been up all night without sleep.

S JOSHUA NEEDED A WORD FROM THE LORD in order to command his army to make such **A DIFFICULT JOURNEY** just before entering into battle. **GOD RESPONDED TO JOSHUA'S NEED**:

(V. 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.'"

S IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S PROMISE, Israel marched **THROUGH THE NIGHT** up the mountains from Gilgal to Gibeon. **THE RESULT** was that the armies of the Canaanites were

CAUGHT OFF GUARD. They were totally UNAWARE and UNPREPARED for battle with the armies of Israel. THE CONFLICT **THREW** the Canaanite army into such **GREAT CONFUSION** that they began TO **RUN**. ISRAEL **CHASED THEM** in hot pursuit over great distances:

C FROM **GIBEON** they fled to **BETHHORON** a distance of **10 miles**.

C FROM **BETHHORON** they fled to **AZEKAH** a distance of **24 miles** from Gibeon. Between Bethhoron and Azekah **HAILSTONES** fell on the Canaanite soldiers so that more died of the hail than from the battle itself (V. 11).

C FROM **AZEKAH** they fled to **MAKKEDAH** a distance of **36 miles** from Gibeon.

S AS THE BATTLE WORE ON, JOSHUA REALIZED THAT MANY CANAANITES WOULD ESCAPE IF THE SUN WERE TO SET. **JOSHUA PRAYED** IN THE PRESENCE OF ISRAEL: **(V. 12)**, “. . . ‘Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.’”

GOD ANSWERED (V. 13-14), “. . . So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. {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.”

S **IT IS INTERESTING** TO NOTE THE DIFFERENT **EXPLANATIONS** people have offered in an attempt to explain this miracle. My favorite response was offered by **DR. F. B. HUEY**, professor of O.T. at Southwestern Baptist Seminary, back in my seminary days. He was speaking regarding the miracle of the sun standing still. He made mention of a list of views related to how God might have accomplished such a feat. Before reviewing the list, he stopped and asked the class, “How many of you believe that God could do what is described in Joshua 10 if He wanted to?” Everyone in the class quickly raised their hands. He said, “That is sufficient explanation for me. It is not necessary for me to present the different possibilities as to how God could have accomplished it.” He continued teaching through the text without presenting the different

explanations.

- C **COULD GOD** DO SUCH A MIRACLE? **YES**, He is the creator!
- C **DID GOD** DO SUCH A MIRACLE? **YES HE DID!**
- C **HOW DID GOD** DO SUCH A MIRACLE? **GOD KNOWS!**
If God had the power to create the universe, He has the power to cause the sunlight to be extended if He so chooses.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

- S AS ISRAEL BEGAN THEIR **20 MILE MARCH** TO GIBEON, THEY **MUST HAVE WONDERED HOW ANY POSSIBLE GOOD** could have come from such a long march that preceded such an intense and long battle. They must have thought that **EXHAUSTION** would be the order of the day.
- S **BUT REMEMBER ROMANS 8:28**, “All things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose.” Consider **FOUR BENEFITS**:
 - 1) THE OVERNIGHT MARCH **CAUGHT** the Canaanite armies **TOTALLY OFF GUARD**. The Canaanite kings never dreamed that Israel would have come to the rescue of the Gibeonites. Even if Israel responded to Gibeon’s request, surely they would have taken a day or two to get there. The Canaanite armies were caught off guard.
 - 2) THE CANAANITE ARMIES were also **CAUGHT OUT IN THE OPEN FIELDS**. Had they been locked up behind the walls of their cities, the battles would have been more formidable. Future battles against the fortified cities still existed, but they were much less formidable because many of the fighting men were defeated in the open fields.
 - 3) **THE RAIN CLOUDS** that God provided that day helped Israel in two ways. They brought hailstones that helped defeat the Canaanites. The rain also provided **DRINKING WATER** and **COOL SHADE** for a weary Israeli army.
 - 4) THE MIRACULOUS **EXTENSION OF SUNLIGHT** and the **HAILSTORM** gave the armies of Israel THE SENSE THAT

GOD WAS FIGHTING THE BATTLE.

IT WAS NOT THAT GOD WAS ON ISRAEL'S SIDE, IT WAS THAT **ISRAEL WAS ON GOD'S SIDE**. There is **A BIG DIFFERENCE** between the two.

PRECEDING THE BATTLE AT JERICHO, **JOSHUA WAS STANDING BY JERICHO**. While standing there, **A MAN APPEARED AND STOOD** in front of Joshua with a sword drawn in his hand. Joshua's **HEART** must have begun to race uncontrollably. Joshua did not know **who** the man was; **where** he had come from; **what** he wanted.

JOSHUA ASKED:

(Josh 5:13 NIV), “. . . ‘ARE YOU **FOR US OR FOR OUR ENEMIES?**’”

THE HEAVENLY VISITOR SAID:

(V. 14 NIV), “**NEITHER**, . . . but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.’”

S THE ISSUE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE **WAS NOT** whether God was on **Israel's side** or **the Canaanite's side**.
THE ISSUE WAS — **WERE THEY ON GOD'S SIDE?**

S WARREN WIERSBE TELLS OF HUDSON TAYLOR, a missionary to China many years ago, who founded the **CHINA INLAND MISSION**. On one occasion, Taylor met with **A SMALL GROUP** of missionaries in China and reminded them of **THE THREE WAYS TO DO GOD'S WORK:**

- 1) "ONE is to **MAKE THE BEST PLANS** we can, and carry them out to the best of our ability . . . ”
- 2) "OR, having carefully laid our plans and determined to carry them through, we may **ASK GOD TO HELP US**, and **TO PROSPER US** in connection with them.”
- 3) "YET ANOTHER WAY of working is to **BEGIN WITH GOD**; to **ASK HIS PLANS**, and to offer ourselves to Him to **CARRY OUT HIS PURPOSES**.”

JOSHUA WAS NOT CARRYING OUT HIS OWN PLANS.

Joshua found God's plans and joined with God. (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Series on Joshua*)

S THE ISSUE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE IS, **AM I ON GOD'S SIDE?** When you are carrying out God's plans and purposes, God does what is necessary to bring His purposes to pass.

S YOUNG DAVID STOOD BEFORE **GOLIATH**, THE GIANT, AND SAID:

C (1 Sam 17:47), ". . . **THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S**, and he will give you into our hands."

AFTER EXPERIENCING DEFEAT, THE **FIVE CANAANITE KINGS** FLED AND **HID** in **A CAVE AT MAKKEDAH**. Word was sent to Joshua regarding their location. Joshua commanded his men to secure the kings in that cave by placing **GREAT ROCKS** over its mouth. Joshua dealt with them after the mopping up operation was complete.

(Josh 10:24-25), "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. {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."

ONCE THE **FIELD OPERATIONS** HAD BEEN COMPLETED, JOSHUA TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO **THE CITIES**. HE TOOK THEM ONE BY ONE:

- 1 **C MAKKEDAH** — (v. 28)
- 2 **C LIBNAH** — (v. 29)
- 3 **C LACHISH** — (v. 31)
- 4 **C GEZER** — (v. 33)
- 5 **C EGLON** — (v. 34)
- 6 **C HEBRON** — (v. 36)
- 7 **C DEBIR** — (v. 38)
- 8 **C ALL THE CITIES** — (v. 39)

SUMMARY

(Vv. 40-43 NIV), "So Joshua subdued **THE WHOLE REGION**, including **THE HILL COUNTRY**, the **NEGEV**, the **WESTERN FOOTHILLS** and **THE MOUNTAIN SLOPES**, together with all their kings. He left no survivors. He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the **LORD**, the God of Israel, had commanded. {41} Joshua subdued them **FROM KADESH BARNEA TO GAZA** and from **THE WHOLE REGION OF GOSHEN TO GIBEON**. {42} All these kings and their lands **JOSHUA CONQUERED IN ONE CAMPAIGN**, **BECAUSE THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, FOUGHT FOR ISRAEL**. {43} Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal."

TWO QUESTIONS RELATED TO CHAPTER 10:

#1. WHY WAS SUCH HARSHNESS REQUIRED?

S The answer must be presented in **THE O.T. CONTEXT. GOD'S EXPLANATION WAS:**

(Deu 9:4 NIV), "... It is on account of **THE WICKEDNESS** OF THESE NATIONS that the **LORD** is going to drive them out before you."

S **GOD HAD GIVEN THE CANAANITES AMPLE OPPORTUNITY** to turn from their sin. They could have come to God the way the Canaanite named **RAHAB** had come in chapter 6. God knew that they would never turn to Him. They had lived so long in sin, and their hearts had grown so hardened toward God, that they would never respond to God in humility and repentance. God knew that, and as a result, judgment was forthcoming.

S **GOD HAD TOLD ABRAHAM WHY HIS DESCENDANTS WOULD REMAIN IN EGYPT FOUR HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE CONQUERING THE LAND OF CANAAN:**

C **(Gen 15:16)**, "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for **THE INIQUITY** of the Amorites is **NOT YET FULL**."

C **THAT MEANT** that a nation could reach a point in the sight of God in which their iniquity **WAS FULL**. When iniquity **WAS FULL**, it invited the judgment of God upon that nation. **ISRAEL**

WAS GOD'S INSTRUMENT for that Judgment on the land of Canaan at that time.

#2. ARE BELIEVERS TODAY SUPPOSE TO TAKE UP THE SWORD AGAINST NONBELIEVERS?

- S** In my understanding, God has granted to **THE STATE** (i.e., the government) the *obligation* and *responsibility* to maintain justice and order in a society by punishing evil (Romans 13:4). The corporate responsibility of a nation differs in many respects from an individual's responsibilities. If the government calls for its citizens to take up arms in order to punish evil, that is a responsibility for which the nation is charged. Under God, if the state makes the call, its citizens must respond, Christians included.
- S** In some respects our individual responsibilities differ from our corporate responsibility. Our battle is waged in the spiritual realm. As individuals Christians Paul referred to our conflict as "fight the good fight" (2 Tim 6:12). Paul was talking about our spiritual conflict. With the spiritual battle in mind, **OUR ORDERS ARE** to fight in the manner of **THE SECOND JOSHUA, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**. Do you remember **HOW JESUS FOUGHT WHEN HE WAS AMONG US** nearly two thousand years ago? (**John 18:36**), "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."
- S** JESUS FOUGHT BY **LAYING DOWN HIS LIFE** so that others might live. God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world. God sent Him that the world might be saved (John 3:17). **JESUS CONQUERED BY THE WAY OF THE CROSS**.
- S** **WE, TOO**, are to conquer by the way of the cross. We are to **PICK UP OUR CROSS** and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). We are to go out in Jesus' name sharing the good news of the Gospel. Our sword is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. **RATHER THAN KILLING OTHERS, WE OURSELVES MIGHT WELL BE KILLED**. We are to be **LIVING SACRIFICES** (Rom 12:1) willing to lay down our lives that others might be saved. We make the sacrifice so that others might hear the **GOOD NEWS** and live. That has been that case for a host of faithful Christian missionaries

throughout Christian history. We are charged with the responsibility of pointing others to Jesus Christ until the day God makes His enemies His footstool. (Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25).

- S** ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE, **A DAY IS COMING** in which the second Joshua, Jesus Christ, is going to come **IN PHYSICAL BATTLE** as the first Joshua did. That conflict is described in great detail in the Book of Revelation. That sword fight is reserved for Jesus when He returns on his white stallion (Rev 19). Until then we are to go out sharing the Good News that Jesus saves all who will come to Him.

THAT CONCLUDES CHAPTER 10 — ISRAEL'S SOUTHERN MILITARY CAMPAIGN

CHAPTER 11 PRESENTS ISRAEL'S NORTHERN CAMPAIGN.

A SNAPSHOT VIEW OF CHAPTER 11:

- S (V. 1)**, “. . . **JABIN KING OF HAZOR** heard **THOSE THINGS**, and he sent to the kings . . . ” (kings in northern Canaan)
- C** “**HAZOR**” was located **NORTH** of the Sea of Galilee.
 - C** “**THOSE THINGS**” represents all the miracles and victories that God had demonstrated through Joshua and Israel in the conquering the land of Canaan up to that point.
 - C** **JABIN WAS AS WORRIED** about Joshua’s victories as the southern kings had been.
- S (V. 4)**, “**AND THEY** {the northern armies} went out, they and all their hosts with them, **MUCH PEOPLE, EVEN AS THE SAND THAT IS UPON THE SEA SHORE** in multitude, with **HORSES** and **CHARIOTS** very many.”

THE LORD KNEW JOSHUA AGAIN NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT.

GOD SAID TO JOSHUA:

- S (V. 6)**, “. . . **'BE NOT AFRAID** because of them: for **TOMORROW** about this time will **I DELIVER THEM UP ALL** slain before Israel: . . . ”

S **(V. 8)**, “And **THE LORD DELIVERED THEM** into the hand of Israel, . . . ”

S **(V. 16)**, “So **JOSHUA TOOK ALL THAT LAND**, . . . ”

C “**ALL**” represents the land both north and south. If you read the verses in detail, they speak of the land **down to Egypt** in the south, all the way up **to Hazor** in the far north.

C According to **Judges 1-3**, after Joshua and his commanders had died, there were still some strongholds in the land that had not been taken.

A FINAL NOTE FROM CHAPTER 11

S **(V. 18)**, “Joshua **MADE WAR A LONG TIME** with all those kings.”

C “**LONG TIME**” represents at least **SEVEN YEARS**. That time reference is based on **CALEB’S AGE** while a spy at Kadesh Barnea, compared to his age in Joshua 14 (Deut. 2:14; Josh. 14:7, 10).

CHAPTER 12 IS A CHAPTER TO FAST-FORWARD THROUGH.
THE CHAPTER PRESENTS THE LIST OF DEFEATED KINGS.

S THE TOTAL NUMBER OF **CONQUERED KINGS** IS **THIRTY-THREE**.

S **SIHON AND OG** were the first two kings defeated before Israel ever crossed the Jordan. (vv. 1-8; Num. 21:21-35).

S **SIXTEEN KINGS** were defeated in **THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN** (vv. 9-16)

S **FIFTEEN KINGS** were defeated in **THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN** (vv. 17-24)

S **V. 24** concludes by stating, “. . . All the kings **THIRTY AND ONE**.” (That number does not include the two kings defeated east of the Jordan)

THE FOCAL VERSE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THIS MESSAGE
(JOSH 11:23), "SO JOSHUA TOOK THE WHOLE LAND,
ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THE LORD SAID unto Moses; and
Joshua gave it FOR AN INHERITANCE UNTO ISRAEL according
to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war."

- S THE LAND OF THE BIBLE HAS BEEN GIVEN MANY NAMES OVER THE YEARS. IT HAS BEEN CALLED**
- 1) **THE LAND OF CANAAN**
 - 2) **THE HOLY LAND**
 - 3) **PALESTINE**
 - 4) **ISRAEL**
 - 5) **THE PROMISED LAND.** It is called the *Promised Land* because God gave it to the Nation of Israel by virtue of His promise.

- S THE NEXT MESSAGE WILL FOCUS ON *ISRAEL, THE LAND OF PROMISE.***

WE WILL CONCENTRATE ON THREE FACETS OF GOD'S PROMISE

- I. **GOD'S PROMISE OF THE LAND**
- II. **OPPOSITION TO GOD'S PROMISE**
- III. **GOD'S VICTORY IN SPITE OF THE OPPOSITION**

GOD'S PROMISE RELATED TO THE LAND WAS THREEFOLD:

- #1. **GOD PROMISED THE LAND**
- #2. **GOD PROMISED REMOVAL FROM THE LAND**
- #3. **GOD PROMISED RETURN TO THE LAND**

PERHAPS SOMEONE IN RESPONSE TO THIS TEXT FROM JOSHUA, SHOULD MOVE FROM THE REALM OF CANAANITE RESISTANCE TO GOD, INTO THE REALM OF GIBEONITE SURRENDER. If you are without Christ today, you find yourself under the wrath of God.

(John 3:36), "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he

that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Under the wrath of God is a very dangerous place to be. Come to Jesus and find forgiveness of sin. In Christ we can move into the realm of God's grace and forgiveness.