

**Into the Promised Land - Joshua's Story**  
**Lesson #55 - "The Lord Fights For Israel"**  
**• HANDOUT •**

► This lesson covers Chapter 10 and gives us details on how the Lord is not just "with" Israel but is fighting "for" Israel. We begin with the southern kings being miraculously conquered by Israel. Once again we see that Israel's reputation as fierce and mighty warriors has preceded them and is causing the inhabitants of the Land to fear them. But, added to the mix, is now the fact that the Gibeonites have a peace treaty with Israel and are fighting with them. This is very concerning because Gibeon has its own reputation: It was an important city, larger than Ai with an excellent standing army. Adoni-Zedek, the king of the Jebusite city, Jerusalem, decided something needed to be done about the Gibeonite alliance. He made plans to attack Gibeon. He turned to the southern alliance and their respective five kings for help:

► **Joshua 10:4** • "Come up and help me attack Gibeon," he said, "because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites."

Q: Why does King Adoni-Zedek react so strongly to the alliance between Israel & Gibeon?

The Southern Kings of Canaan – the Amorites – assemble for an attack on Gibeon.

► The five kings assembled are: Hoham, king of Hebron; Piram, king of Jarmuth; Japhia, king of Lachish; Debir, king of Eglon; and Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem. Adoni-Zedek is serving as the leader of the Southern Amorite coalition.

The kings, with their respective armies, camped before the city of Gibeon to make war with it.

Q: The Five Kings ultimate quarrel was not with Gibeon but with Israel. Why didn't they take their massive number of fighting men and attack Israel directly?

► The men of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua at Israel's camp at Gilgal telling him about the Southern Coalition had gathered in Gibeon to make war with them and he asked for Israel's help. Joshua and his men were faithful to their vow to the Gibeonites and he mustered his fighting men to go to Gibeon's aid. The Lord confirmed Joshua's decision. *"Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you."*

Joshua left Gilgal marched his men all night. Between Gilgal and the mountains of Gibeon, the men would have to negotiate a climb of 3, 300 feet over about 20 miles. This translates to eight to ten hours of hard marching all thru the night.

Israel's arrival on the scene where the Amorite coalition was camped in preparation for war, was a total surprise. Their sudden arrival caused great disorder and though the Amorite coalition tried to fight, a great number of them were killed. Then they started to flee down the mountain heading south. Joshua chased them along the ancient road that went from Lachish to the Valley of Aijalon.

As they came to the pass at Beth Horon God intervened. The scripture says: "the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than those who were killed by Israel's sword at Gibeon.

Q: Is there a reason why the Lord chose to use hailstones to kill the Amorite Coalition who were trying to take out the Gibeonites?

**To maximize Israel's victory, Joshua requests God extend the day.  
This is the third and last great miracle in the book of Joshua.**

► **Joshua 10:12-14** • On the day the Lord gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the Lord in front of all the people of Israel.

He said, "Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.

Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the Lord answered such a prayer. Surely the Lord fought for Israel that day!

Q: Why would Joshua make this unusual request?

Q: This entire event has been scrutinized in depth, especially by geophysics. Are we to see this as a poem that uses hyperbole, or is it a factual event that simply defies our logic?

Q: What did this event accomplish beyond giving Israel a great victory?

Q: What is the "Book of Jashar?"

**Joshua uses his extended day to complete the battle ...**

► Meanwhile, during the battle, the five kings who had instigated the attack against the Gibeonites escaped and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah. They were discovered by some of Joshua's men and told Joshua what they had discovered. Joshua responded:

► **Joshua 10:18-20 [NIV & NLT]** • "Roll large rocks up to the mouth of the cave, and post some men there to guard it. But don't stop! Pursue your enemies, attack them from the rear and don't let them reach their cities, for the LORD your God has given them into your hand."

So Joshua and the Israelite army continued the slaughter and completely crushed the enemy. They totally wiped out the five armies except for a tiny remnant that managed to reach their fortified towns.

► Following the battle, Israel's whole army returned safely to the camp Joshua had set up at Makkedah, the place where the five kings had hid in a cave and whose entrance was now sealed with large rocks. Once everyone had settled down and was quiet, Joshua gave them a new order:

► **Joshua 10:22-24** · Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me." So they brought the five kings out of the cave--the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon. When they had brought these kings to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the army commanders who had come with him, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came forward and placed their feet on their necks.

Q: When it says Israel's whole army returned "safely" to the camp, what does that tell us?

Q: What's the significance of the army commanders putting their feet on the necks of the kings?

► **Joshua 10:25-27** · Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous. This is what the LORD will do to all the enemies you are going to fight."  
Then Joshua struck and killed the kings and hung them on five trees, and they were left hanging on the trees until evening. At sunset Joshua gave the order and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had been hiding. At the mouth of the cave they placed large rocks, which are there to this day.

Q: Was there a specific reason why the bodies of the five kings were taken down from the five trees at sunset and placed in the cave in which they had hid, making it their tomb?

### **The Five Kings and their Armies have been dwelt with. Now the remaining Southern Canaanite Cities were next ...**

► On the same day the five kings were entombed, Joshua began the conquest of the southern Canaanite Cities. He began in Makkedah, destroying the city and everything in it, including the King, just as they had done in Jericho. Next came Libnah followed by Lachish. When Horam, king of Gezer, came to Lachish' aid, Joshua stuck them down as well. This was followed by the destruction of the city of Eglon.

With these battles, Joshua was securing the foothills before he invaded the mountains. So, with the battle of Eglon accomplished, Joshua and all Israel with him, leaves the foothills and climbs to Hebron, which was an elevation of 3,050 feet above sea level. Now, Joshua heads south of Hebron for about seven and one-half miles to Debir, which they also destroyed.

Chapter 10 closes with a summary of the conquest of the southern Canaanite kingdoms.

► **Joshua 10:40-42** · 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.

Joshua subdued them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from the whole region of Goshen to Gibeon. All these kings and their lands Joshua conquered in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Q: What area was included when it says Joshua subdued the whole region?

**The Hill Country:**

**The Negev:**

**The western foothills:**

**The mountain slopes:**

**Kadesh Barnea to Gaza:**

**Goshen to Gibeon:**

Q: Does this mean that Joshua has now accomplished a complete conquest of the Land of Promise, enabling Israel to settle the Land?

Q: What is included in the statement that Joshua destroyed everything that had breath?

► **Joshua 10:43** • Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal.

Q: Since Joshua still had the Northern Canaanite regions to deal with, what is surprising about Joshua choosing to return to Gilgal, taking all of Israel with him? Israel would be leaving behind conquered cities which could have been occupied at this time. Wasn't this the ultimate goal for Israel?

**► The Northern Kings Hear about Israel's conquest of the South and decide they must act immediately against Israel, or they will face the same outcome in the North. They bring together a massive & powerful army to defeat Israel.**



Next Time • Lesson #56  
“Challenge from Northern Canaan”

