

THE DIVINE STRATEGY

Joshua 10-12



Chapters 1-9 record many crucial events and lessons for the nation of Israel, yet the essential task of subduing the land was still ahead. In these three chapters Joshua implements his strategy for warfare, and actually carries out the directive of God to take the land. Those who dwelt in it were not the real owners, even though they had lived there for centuries. A greater Owner was arriving, who would give it to His chosen people.

- *The Central Campaign (10:1-28)*
- *The Southern Campaign (10:29-43)*
- *The Northern Campaign (11:1-23)*
- *The War Chronicle (12:1-24)*

What does it say?

Joshua 10:1-15



Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and totally destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and that the people of Gibeon had made a treaty of peace with Israel and were living near them.¹ He and his people were very much alarmed at this, because Gibeon was an important city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were good fighters.² So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem appealed to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish and Debir king of Eglon.³ "Come up and help me attack Gibeon," he said, "because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites."⁴

Then the five kings of the Amorites -- the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon -- joined forces. They moved up with all their troops and took up positions against Gibeon and attacked it.⁵

The Gibeonites then sent word to

What does it mean?

In 10:1-5, what is the king of Jerusalem's strategy? What does he think will happen?

Does it work? (see verse 6)

10:7-15 In this encounter, list the things that Joshua does, and the things that God does.

Joshua

God

10:12,13 This is not your ordinary, everyday miracle! It is also mentioned in Habakkuk as one of God's mighty acts (3:11). Note two other similar miracles:

- Exodus 10:21-23
- 2 Kings 20:8-11

What does it say?

Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: "Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because all the Amorite kings from the hill country have joined forces against us."

So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men.⁸ The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you."

After an all-night march from Gilgal, Joshua took them by surprise.¹⁰ The LORD threw them into confusion before Israel, who defeated them in a great victory at Gibeon. Israel pursued them along the road going up to Beth Horon and cut them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah.¹¹ As they fled before Israel on the road down from Beth Horon to Azekah, the LORD hurled large hailstones down on them from the sky, and more of them died from the hailstones than were killed by the swords of the Israelites.

¹² On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: "O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."¹³ So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.

The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day.¹⁴ There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a man. Surely the LORD was fighting for Israel!

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

What does it mean?

"The words seem to point to a retardation of the sun's movement. Research has brought to light reports from Egyptian, Chinese and Hindu sources of that day. Some astronomers have concluded that one full day is missing in our astronomical calculation... Pickering of Harvard Observatory traced this to Joshua's time..."



Gleason Archer

Read the following section (10:16-28) and note the severe consequences of trying to fight God Himself. What happens to the five Amorite kings?

Summarize in one sentence the contents of this section.

In reading verse 20, the question arises, "How can God punish people for sin when it almost seems that He is causing them to sin?" How would you answer that? (see also Exodus 8:32, 9:12, Romans 9:18, Hebrews 4:7)

*Read Joshua 10:16-43
and Joshua 11*

What does it say?***What does it mean?***

Read Joshua 12

What is chapter 12? (check one)

It is a ...

- * summary
- * dialogue
- * battle scene
- * psalm

12:1-6 recounts the victories of _____
on the _____ side of the Jordan.

12:7-24 recounts the victories of _____
on the _____ side of the Jordan.

The relationship of the two halves of chapter 12, along
with the point made in 11:15, seems to emphasize some-
thing. What is it?

"For though we live in the world,
we do not wage war as the world
does. The weapons we fight with
are not the weapons of the
world. On the contrary, they
have divine power to demolish
strongholds."

2 Corinthians 10:3-4



APPLICATION — So What Does This Mean in My Life?

1. Joshua fought the flesh-and-blood Canaanites. Who do we fight? (see Ephesians 6:12) When do you usually realize the presence of spiritual warfare in your life (or do you tend to look only at the material world)?
2. Can you think of a time in your life when you sensed God was “fighting” on your behalf? (If you feel God is reluctant to support you, it may help to read these statements of “who you are” in His eyes: Ephesians 2:1-10, Galatians 4:1-7.)
3. The Canaanites lived in sin for hundreds of years without reaping what they sowed. Yet when God finally decided their time was up, there was no more lenience. Are you perhaps like one of the Canaanites, always thinking that there will be enough time to turn to God, or do you know someone like that? If so, the apostle Paul had this to say:

“...we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain — for He says, ‘At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you’, now is the ‘day of salvation’.”

2 Corinthians 6:1,2

4. What was necessary on Israel’s part for God to fight for them?

5. Make three observations about the character of God in these chapters:

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“I love you, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

