



*Conquest of the South*  
*Joshua 10*

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## Joshua 10: Introduction

Realizing the promises of God is hard work. But if we will follow the Word of God and keep focused on His promises, He will move heaven and earth to meet our needs.

We see this clearly in Joshua 10, when God even extends the daylight to allow Israel to make more progress in His Word.

Joshua and all Israel are back on track with the Lord, and the Canaanite nations which have determined to resist Joshua and fight against his God are in for a rough time. God is faithful, and when His people faithfully obey Him, He delivers on everything He has promised.

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## 1 A Gathering of Mad Men

*Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it—as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king—and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, that they 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. Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, “Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.” Therefore 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 and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it. And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, “Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us.” Joshua 10.1-6*

*Reflect.*

1. Slavery to sin and false gods can make a person crazy. How can you see that in the actions of these kings?
2. How can you see that God used the covenant with Gibeon for the larger purposes of His covenant?

*Think about it.*

God uses the covenant with Gibeon to bless His people in an unusual way. The Canaanite kings, who were normally wary of, and frequently at war with, one another, ban together to give the Gibeonites their come-uppance for aligning with Israel. Their combined forces represent a sizeable chunk of the southern sector of the land of promise. Rather than Israel needing to march on each of these nations separately, they come together in one place, thinking to punish the people of Gibeon.

That would prove to be a tactical error of the first magnitude.

The people of Gibeon took their covenant relationship with Israel seriously. They send messengers to Joshua, calling on him to come and deliver the servants of Israel. Having aligned themselves with the people of God, they fully expect to know the protections God gives to those who rest in Him, even those who are the lowest of His servants.

We might ask: Why didn't these five kings follow the lead of Gibeon and pursue peace with Israel? They knew that Gibeon had made peace, and they also knew – and feared – that the Lord was with Joshua and Israel. Nevertheless, blinded by their self-wills, cherishing their autonomy and the false religions that propped them up, they believed they could punish the Gibeonites and then defeat Israel, if necessary. They *knew God*; but they *believed themselves greater* than God. And they determined to *resist* God with all the might they could muster.

It's the problem every unbeliever faces today, and nothing short of the grace of God can overcome the madness of sin.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Do you agree that sin makes a person crazy? In what ways?
2. Look at Revelation 19.19. Jesus is returning, and “the kings of the earth, and their armies” can *see* Him, and all the host of those who have made peace with Him! And yet they “gathered together to make war against Him.” How insane is *that*! How does it help us in working our Personal Mission Field to understand

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the blinding power of sin?

3. The law of sin still operates in every believer, too (Rom. 7.21-25), which means that we are at all times susceptible to the blinding power and madness of sin. How should we guard against succumbing to this?

*“There is no doubt that when a human soul associates itself with the Word of God, it is immediately going to have enemies, and that those it once considered friends will be changed into adversaries. The soul should not only expect to suffer this from humans, but it should also know that such will likewise be forthcoming from opposing powers and spiritual iniquities. Thus it happens that whoever longs for friendship with Jesus knows he must tolerate the hostilities of many...” Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)*

*Lord, keep me from the madness of sin! Help me to cling to my covenant relationship with You, to trust in You, rest in You, and...*

*Pray Psalm 53.*

Pray for the lost people in your Personal Mission Field. They don't understand the Gospel, and they aren't seeking the Lord. They can even be a little hostile toward you. But remember: You were once God's enemy, just like they are (Rom. 5.10). Ask the Lord to revive you, so that His salvation will flow from you to many.

**Psalm 53** (*Leoni: The God of Abraham Praise*)

The fool says in his heart, “There is no God at all!”

Corrupt are they in whole and part, unjust and small.

Not one of them does good; God sees their wicked ways.

None understands the Word of God or gives Him praise.

Have all these wicked men no knowledge of God's grace?

The Church they hate with passion and seek not God's face.

Lord, strike their hearts with fear, where fear was not before.

And scatter all who camp so near Your holy door.

The wicked flee in shame; their ways our God rejects.

Renew Your people in Your Name with great effects!

Let great rejoicing sound once we renewed have been,

And let salvation's Word resound from us again!

## 2 Day of the Stand-Still Sun

*So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you." Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah. And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword. Then Joshua spoke 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 still over Gibeon;  
And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."*

*So the sun stood still,  
And the moon stopped,  
Till the people had revenge  
Upon their enemies.*

*Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal. Joshua 10.7-15*

*Reflect.*

1. How many different ways does the writer confirm that God was with Israel in this battle?
2. How can you see that Joshua was in communion with the Lord concerning this effort?

*Think about it.*

Joshua's response to the Gibeonite plea is immediate. Encouraged by the Lord (v. 8), Joshua led Israel on an overnight march from Gilgal to Gibeon and routed the five kings and their armies in a surprise attack. The writer makes it clear that God is the victor in this battle, employing even the forces of creation to accomplish His wrath against His enemies (cf. vv. 11, 12, 14).

There was more work to do than one day's light could accommodate, so Joshua asked for an extension. He was so certain of God's will and so determined to carry it out that he was emboldened to ask for something no one had ever seen before: the sun standing still, time augmented and increased "Till the people had revenge upon their enemies." Have you ever prayed so boldly?

As if to reinforce the fact of this event, the writer cites another account of it, perhaps in a now-lost pagan book, as documentation for his report. The Gibeonites relieved, Joshua "and all Israel with him" return to their camp at Gilgal. The battle was won, but there was more to do yet in finalizing Israel's victory.

This battle in some ways foreshadows events as they will unfold at the return of the Lord. Time will come to an end, the enemies of the Lord will be completely destroyed, and their leaders – the devil and his ilk – will be utterly destroyed forever.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Why do you suppose the writer went to such lengths to show that God was clearly in agreement with this battle plan?

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2. What does the stopping of the sun suggest about God's relationship to time? What is time? Where does it come from and what is it for (Eph. 5.15-17)?
3. If we commit our time to the Lord (Ps. 90.12, 16, 17), can we expect Him to help us make the best use of it (Eph. 5.15-17)? What does that involve?

*"Let no one tell me, therefore, that the motions of the heavenly bodies constitute time. For when the sun stood still at the prayer of a certain man in order that he might gain his victory in battle, the sun stood still but time went on. For in as long a span of time as was sufficient the battle was fought and ended. I see, then, that time is a certain kind of extension." Augustine (354-430 AD)*

*Teach me to number my days and to make the most of my time, O Lord, so that I...*

*Pray Psalm 90.12-17.*

Commit your time and all your work to the Lord. Pray specifically that He might "establish" your work and glorify Himself in it.

**Psalm 90.12-17** (*Landas: My Faith Has Found a Resting Place*)

Lord, teach us all our days to note that wisdom may be ours.  
Return, O Lord, have pity on those servants who are Yours.  
Each morning let Your love appear that we for joy may sing.  
And make us glad for every day You us affliction bring.

Now let Your work to us appear; our children show Your might.  
And let Your favor rest on us; show mercy in Your sight.  
The work that You have given us, confirm, and to us show,  
That we Your chosen path may walk and in Your precepts go.

### 3 The Five Kings Imprisoned

*But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. And it was told Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah." So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them. And do not stay there yourselves, but pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand." Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished, that those who escaped entered fortified cities. And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace. No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. Joshua 10.16-21*

*Reflect.*

1. What did Jesus mean when He said that He had "bound" Satan and was now about the business of plundering his house (Matt. 12.22-29)?
2. Since Satan is bound – like these kings were "bound" in that cave – how should the work of "Joshua and the children of Israel" instruct us?

*Think about it.*

Two reasons suggest themselves for bottling these kings up rather than killing them outright.

First, if the Israelites had killed them outright, they may have been regarded as martyrs, and this might have rejuvenated their fleeing armies. Second, it was important that these kings be left for last, so that they could see the utter destruction of their peoples before being destroyed themselves. Just as these kings had heard of Joshua's victories at Jericho and Ai, so the remaining Canaanite peoples would hear what had happened to this southern alliance of kings.

The confederated armies destroyed, and their remnants having fled to the fortified cities, Joshua called the people to return to the camp, now moved to Makkedah, and to be at peace. We note that "No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel." This refers, in the first instance, to the people of Israel. No one grumbled or complained or spoke ill of any of their brethren. All enjoyed their hard-won peace. But it also suggests that a terrible silence had fallen upon the Canaanite peoples, huddling in dread in their fortified cities. None spoke ill of Israel. Were they too terrified to speak the name of their enemy? Or did they hope by their silence to secure mercy?

We can hear rejoicing and laughing and *rest* in the camp of Israel. Meanwhile, all her enemies are hunkered down in dread silence.

And the bound kings are powerless to mount any resistance to God and His people.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. The incarceration of these five kings undoubtedly had an effect on the armies of Israel, sent to destroy their enemies. In what way? How would knowing their enemies generals and kings were in captivity have encouraged the Israelites in their efforts?
2. Satan is bound (Matt. 12.22-29), and while he still can wield considerable power, he is on a leash, held by the strong hand of King Jesus (1 Pet. 5.8, 9). How should that encourage us in our calling to the Kingdom and glory of God (1 Thess. 2.12)?

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3. In what ways can you see that Israel's work of conquering the land of Canaan is a type or symbol of the work we've been given to do in our Personal Mission Field?

*"Whoever fights under the leadership of Jesus [Joshua] against opposing authorities ought to merit that which is written about those former warriors: 'And the whole people,' it says, 'returned safely to Jesus [Joshua] and not one of the sons of Israel muttered with his tongue.' You see, therefore, that the person who serves as a soldier under Jesus must come back safely from battle and ought not even receive a wound 'from the fiery darts of the wicked one'; he ought to be neither polluted in heart nor defiled in thought, and [he] ought not allow any place for demonic wounds—not through wrath, lust, or any other occasion." Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)*

*Lord Jesus, I know that You have bound the strong man, and you have set me to the task of plundering his holdings, beginning in my own life, and then throughout my Personal Mission Field. Today I need to focus on...*

*Pray Psalm 149.*

Praise God for the victories He is achieving in and through you, and ask the Lord to show you specific areas of your life where you need to wield His "two-edged sword" more consistently and more effectively.

**Psalm 149** (*Toulon: I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*)

Sing to the Lord a glorious song and new!  
Praise Him you people, to Whom praise is due!  
Let us rejoice, let us be glad in Him  
Who has created us and cleansed our sin.

Praise Him with dance, with tambourine and lyre!  
To be so praised is God's one great desire.  
Lord, beautify Your holy ones with grace;  
Show us the mercy of Your saving face.

Sing to the Lord, exult with great delight!  
Sing on your beds with joy to God by night!  
Sing praise and take His Word into your hand;  
Publish His grace and wrath in every land!

## 4 The Kings Destroyed

*Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave." And they did so, and brought out those five kings 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. So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until evening. So it was at the time of the going down of the sun that Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day. Joshua 10.22-27*

*Reflect.*

1. Three symbolic acts are mentioned here: the feet on the necks, hanging on trees, and a pile of stones. For whom were these symbolic gestures intended? What does each symbolize?
2. Verse 25 suggests that Joshua is back on track with the Lord's will. How can you see that?

*Think about it.*

The brutality of this passage is difficult to receive. But we need to keep it in perspective.

First, these pagan kings were cruel and violent, and they had set themselves to destroy Israel and its allies. Canaanite kings were typically brutal in victories over their enemies. The violence to which these kings and their people were subjected was nothing more or other than what they typically visited on one another (cf. Jdgs. 1.3-7).

Second, Israel was acting as God's instrument in judgment against these peoples, whose sin had now filled to overflowing. These kings were not merely the losers of a great battle; they were cursed of God (cf. Gen. 15.16; Deut. 21.22, 23). Had Joshua not dispatched these kings in this manner, the message to the remaining kings and peoples of Canaan would have conveyed something less than God intended.

Third, any possibility Israel had of realizing the blessings of God in the land of promise depended, first, on remaining entirely separate from pagan peoples, and, second, on maintaining fear of God and respect for His Law. The treatment accorded these kings and their people would have spoken clearly to Israel about God's zeal for righteousness and His hatred of sin.

We should be horrified at such violence, so horrified that we wish no one ever to have to experience it. But the horrors these kings endured are not to be compared with the terrors of hell and eternal condemnation. If we feel pity for these kings, and recoil at the punishment visited upon them, surely we can muster greater concern for our neighbors, friends, and co-workers who are enemies of the Lord and bound for eternal torment.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Should wanting to rescue people from the terrors of hell be a motive for our bearing witness to them? What would Jude say (Jude 1.22, 23)?
2. Joshua and Israel now had a third major victory under their belt. The news of this would have reached to all the pagan peoples of Canaan. However, it did not soften their determination to fight against Joshua and

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the Lord. Why not? How do people become hardened to the Lord and the promise of eternal life?

3. Joshua spoke to the people of Israel in the same words God had used in speaking to Him in chapter 1. Why? What was Joshua doing here?

*"If we understand these things spiritually and manage wars of this type spiritually, and if we drive out all those spiritual iniquities from heaven, then we shall be able at last to receive from Jesus as a share of the inheritance even those places and kingdoms that are the kingdoms of heaven, bestowed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, 'to whom is the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen!'" Origen of Alexandria (185-254AD)*

*You hate sin, Lord, and I must learn to hate it, too. Rid me of everything that defiles me and offends You, and help me to...*

*Pray Psalm 97.*

How does this psalm lead you to fear the Lord? Let it guide you both in hating sin and seeking the light and gladness of the Lord.

**Psalm 97** (*Darvall: Rejoice, the Lord is King!*)

Rejoice, the Lord is King! O earth, lift up your voice.

Be glad, you islands, shout and sing: Rejoice! Rejoice!

*Refrain v. 9*

Beyond, above

All gods and nations be exalted, God of love!

His just and righteous throne 'mid clouds and darkness stands;

His fiery wrath consumes His foes in every land.

*Refrain*

Earth trembles at the sight of Jesus' holy face;

The mountains melt before His might and praise His grace.

*Refrain*

The heav'ns above declare His glorious righteousness;

And tribes and peoples everywhere; His Name confess.

*Refrain*

While Zion gladly sings, let all be brought to shame

Who to vain idols worship bring and scorn His Name.

*Refrain*

All you who love the Lord, despise sin's wicked ways!

Praise Him Who guides us by His Word through all our days.

*Refrain*

## 5 The Southern Campaign (1)

*On that day Joshua took Makkedah, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them—all the people who were in it. He let none remain. He also did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho. Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, to Libnah; and they fought against Libnah. And the Lord also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel; he struck it and all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword. He let none remain in it, but did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho. Then Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish; and they encamped against it and fought against it. And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, who took it on the second day, and struck it and all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah. Then Horem king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he left him none remaining. From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it and fought against it. They took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; all the people who were in it he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish. Joshua 10.28-35*

*Reflect.*

1. Israel is on a roll, and the target is the pagan nations of the south. Can you see the logic of this campaign, why it makes sense to target an entire region?
2. We note that, while the people of these nations are being destroyed, the cities are left intact, unlike Jericho and Ai. Why?

*Think about it.*

The rest of Joshua 10 depicts a very aggressive military campaign against the cities and peoples of the southern part of the land of Canaan. The impression we receive is that Israel is moving quickly from one city to the next, destroying the people but leaving their cities, then moving on to the next city. There is little time for celebrating.

We can imagine the impact of this campaign on the cities of this region. No one could resist Joshua and all Israel; therefore, everyone must have lived in terror and dread. We cannot help but weep for the destruction of so many people. At the same time, we need to remember that each of these nations has positioned itself as an enemy of Joshua and his God. Believing they could be victorious, despite all they had heard and seen, they condemned themselves to the destruction God visited upon them.

The same is true for all who resist the Gospel of Jesus today. Jesus wept for those who chose to stand in ignorance of and rebellion against the Lord. He gave up His life for them, and in the process, taught us how we must regard the lost people in our lives.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. God had promised His people abundant material blessings, as well as peace (Deut. 28.1-14). The Canaanites were in the way of Israel's realizing those promises. What obstacles stand between you and greater realization of the precious and very great promises of God (2 Pet. 1.4)? How are you attacking those obstacles?
2. Israel's campaign to gain the promises of God was deliberate, aggressive, and ongoing. Does this describe your approach to working your Personal Mission Field? Explain.
3. Keeping in mind the promises of God (Gen. 12.1-4; 2 Pet. 1.4), the people in your Personal Mission Field, and your calling to the Kingdom and glory of God (1 Thess. 2.12), write a prayer that you could use at the beginning of every day, as you take up your calling and work anew.

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*“And again, Lachish is interpreted ‘way.’ But in the Scriptures, a way is both a laudable and a culpable thing. That is not difficult to demonstrate, as it says in the psalms, ‘And the way of the impious will perish’; and in another place, on the contrary, ‘Make straight the way for your feet.’ Therefore it can also be understood here that the city of Lachish was at first the way of the impious, and afterwards, when it was destroyed and overthrown, it was won over to the right way with the Israelites reigning.”*

*Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)*

*Lord, set me on a campaign footing every day, and lead me into my Personal Mission Field to...*

*Pray Psalm 149.*

As you pray, meditate on the people you will see today, and seek the Lord for the grace you will need to bring His grace and mercy to them. Memorize a stanza from the psalm that follows, and sing it throughout the day.

**Psalm 149** (*Toulon: I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*)

Sing to the Lord a glorious song and new!  
Praise Him you people, to Whom praise is due!  
Let us rejoice, let us be glad in Him  
Who has created us and cleansed our sin.

Praise Him with dance, with tambourine and lyre!  
To be so praised is God’s one great desire.  
Lord, beautify Your holy ones with grace;  
Show us the mercy of Your saving face.

Sing to the Lord, exult with great delight!  
Sing on your beds with joy to God by night!  
Sing praise and take His Word into your hand;  
Publish His grace and wrath in every land!

## 6 The Southern Campaign (2)

*So Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to Hebron; and they fought against it. And they took it and struck it with the edge of the sword—its king, all its cities, and all the people who were in it; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon, but utterly destroyed it and all the people who were in it. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and they fought against it. And he took it and its king and all its cities; they struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed all the people who were in it. He left none remaining; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had done also to Libnah and its king. So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded. And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal. Joshua 10:36-43*

*Reflect.*

1. These reports all sound the same. Is there a reason for this?
2. What is your overall impression of this campaign? Was it effective? Did it achieve the purposes God held out to His people?

*Think about it.*

These reports of victories over cities and peoples all sound the same. They recount the victories without dwelling on details, highlighting any individual heroics, or mentioning any of the plunder acquired. The focus is on Israel's overall progress in subduing the land of promise. The objective, and what the writer wants to keep in focus, is to bring the whole land under the rule of God's people and Law, and so the action moves quickly from one victory to the next.

We note also the repeated mention of "all Israel with him" (vv. 36, 38, 43). Realizing the promises of God requires the combined and coordinated efforts of all the people, not just a few strong and charismatic leaders and their lieutenants or elite guard. This is a good reminder for church leaders. If we want our churches to realize their full potential as the Body of Christ, and to accomplish their assigned mission, we must enlist all the people in the work.

The writer reminds us that Joshua was careful to do all that "the LORD God of Israel had commanded" (v. 40). There have been some blips and bumps along the way, but in the main, Joshua and the rulers and people of Israel have kept on course with the Lord's agenda. We may trip or become distracted from our callings from time to time, but it is always important to return to God's commandments and promises, make any necessary course corrections, and get on with the business of bringing ourselves and our Personal Mission Field increasingly in line with the gracious rule of King Jesus (Ps. 119:59, 60). God will be with us and will fight for us, if we will do so.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Israel was a people on a mission in this chapter. They moved swiftly from one objective to the next, following their leaders and keeping close to the commandments of God. Is this the way your church operates? Explain.
2. Why was it so important that "all Israel" should be involved in these battles? What's the lesson for us as the Lord's people today? What is the lesson for your church?

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3. The mission of Joshua and all Israel was driven by the promises of God. Do the promises of God factor into your church's ministry activities? In what ways?

*"Likewise, it is especially the work of the Word of God to pull down the diabolical structures that the devil has built in the human soul. For, in everyone of us, that one raised up towers of pride and walls of self-exaltation. The Word of God overthrows and undermines these, so that justly, according to the apostle, we are made 'the cultivation of God and the building of God,' 'set upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself the chief cornerstone, from whom the uniting of the edifice grows into a temple of God in the spirit.'" Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)*

*You have made me a member of Your Body, Lord, and as one of Your "all Israel" I...*

*Pray Psalm 126.*

Ask God to give you a vision for revival – for yourself, your church, and your community – and then to show you how you can “sow” for that vision every day.

**Psalm 126** (*Truro: Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns*)

When God restored our fortunes all,  
We were like those who sweetly dream.  
Our mouths with joy and laughter filled,  
Made Him our constant song and theme.

Then the astonished nations said,  
“The Lord has done great things for them!”  
Indeed, great things our God has done,  
Whose Name we praise, Amen, Amen!

Restore our fortunes, Lord our King!  
Let grace like flowing streams prevail.  
All they with tears of joy shall sing  
Who sow while yet they weep and wail.

They who in tears of sorrow sow  
And cast their seed on every hand,  
With joy shall reach their heav'nly home,  
And bring the harvest of their land.

## 7 Conquest of the South

*Read Joshua 10.*

*Reflect.*

1. Which aspects of Israel's southern campaign most speak to you of God's faithfulness?
2. What can you learn from this chapter about being faithful to God's calling on your life?

*Think about it.*

Realizing the promises of God is hard work. The land of promise – the land of Canaan – stands symbolically for all the promises of God's covenant (Gen. 12.1-3). God does not simply drop those promises in our lap. He will be faithful in giving us His promises, but we must be faithful in following His directions concerning *how* to lay hold on them.

Israel's relationship with Gibeon mirrors God's relationship with Israel. As Gibeon deceived Israel into a covenant relationship, so Jacob deceived his brother and father to gain the covenant with God. Israel had to fulfill their covenant obligations to Gibeon, just as God is faithful in fulfilling His covenant promises with us – His sinful and needy people.

At a spiritual level, Joshua's victories over enemies who refuse to submit to God is a symbol of Jesus' victories over all our spiritual foes. Aren't we glad that Jesus has bound them and will one day destroy them utterly?

God's sovereignty over peoples, places, and even time is clearly seen in Israel's campaign throughout the southern region of Canaan. We see Him mightily at work on behalf of His people, and them mightily at work in obedience to Him, so that they might claim the land He has prepared for them.

The conquest of Canaan is a type of the life of faith. Keeping our focus on God's promises – and on Jesus, in Whom all those promises are fulfilled (2 Cor. 1.20) – we obey the Lord's direction each step of the way, looking to Him for the courage and strength we need to lay hold on the promises He earnestly desires for us to have.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. What do you learn from Joshua 10 about laying hold on the promises of God? How do the promises of God factor into your daily work?
2. God is faithful to His Word, and He expects us to be faithful to it as well. What does this suggest about the place God's Word should have in our lives?
3. God is sovereign, His Word is true, and His promises are sure. How should knowing this guide our lives each day?

*"Not without cause, then, in the end of the chapter, is the goodness of God expressly celebrated, as it had been made manifest that he was fighting for Israel, when Joshua at once took and vanquished so many kings, with their territories. Indeed, he could never, even in a course of inspection, have passed so quickly from city to city, had not a passage been divinely opened by the removal of obstacles." John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*I know You are sovereign and faithful, O Lord. Help me to be faithful and obedient so that...*

*Conquest of the South*  
*Joshua 10*

*Pray Psalm 149.*

We return to this psalm because it reminds us of the importance of being skillful in wielding the Word of God. Praise the Lord for this week's victories, and commit yourself anew to the work that lies ahead in the week to come.

**Psalm 149** (*Toulon: I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*)

Sing to the Lord a glorious song and new!  
Praise Him you people, to Whom praise is due!  
Let us rejoice, let us be glad in Him  
Who has created us and cleansed our sin.

Praise Him with dance, with tambourine and lyre!  
To be so praised is God's one great desire.  
Lord, beautify Your holy ones with grace;  
Show us the mercy of Your saving face.

Sing to the Lord, exult with great delight!  
Sing on your beds with joy to God by night!  
Sing praise and take His Word into your hand;  
Publish His grace and wrath in every land!

*Conquest of the South*  
*Joshua 10*

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. Why was it necessary that Joshua and Israel should come to the rescue of the Gibeonites? What do we learn about God and His covenant from this story?
2. By determining to resist Israel and Israel's God, the Canaanites put themselves in a bad position. Explain.
3. How is that conquest of Canaan a type of our sanctification as believers?
4. How do God's faithfulness and our faithfulness work together for realizing His promises?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Joshua 10? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

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Thank you.