

## Joshua 10:16-43

### Introduction

Many times in the Bible, God is portrayed as a mighty warrior (**Exod 15; 2 Sam. 5; 2 Chron. 20:29**). John saw Christ mounted on a white horse (**Rev. 19:11; 15**).

The same theme is prevalent in Joshua 10; 'the LORD fought for Israel' (**10:14; 42**). In spite of Israel's failures and setbacks, the Lord exercised his power in covenant faithfulness to see that his people were victorious over their foes.

### Summary

**Joshua 10** tells the story of Israel's southern campaign in Canaan, the dominant theme of which is "the LORD fought for Israel"; vv. 1-15 give a summary of the day's events with a focus on the miracle of the sun and moon standing still, whilst vv. 16-43 give an expanded version of the story that fills in more of the details.

#### 1. Destroyed Amorites vv. 16-27

The kings and their armies fled from Israel, but the leaders stayed together and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah (**Josh 10:16**). The Israelites soon found them, however, and Joshua gave orders to imprison them in the cave (**Josh 10:17-18**).

Israel then continued to pursue the rearguard of the fleeing armies so as not allow them to enter their cities (**Josh 10:19**). There was really no danger of that, however, because the Lord had given Israel's enemies into their hands (**vs. 19c**).

God's loving intervention reminded Israel, and should remind us as well, that all we have is due to the unmerited grace and mercy of God. After virtually wiping out all the Amorites, (**vs. 20**), all the Israelites returned safely to Joshua at Makkedah (**vs. 21**)!

Joshua then commanded that the cave at Makkedah be opened and the kings be brought to him (**Josh 10:22-23**). He then had his chief military officers come forward and place their feet on the prisoner's necks as a symbolic act to demonstrate the complete subjugation of the Amorites to Israel.

These actions foreshadowed what Jesus would one day do (**Psalms 110:1; cf. Acts 2:33-36**). Paul cites **Psalms 8:6 in 1 Cor 15:24-27**. When Christ returns, he will strike down the nations and subdue them and rule them with a rod of iron (**Rev. 19:11-16**).

Joshua also used this event as a teaching opportunity for his generals. Just as God had called him to be strong and brave, he gave the same message to his leaders.

Along with the encouragement came the promise: 'For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you Fight' (**Josh:25**). The fulfilled promise was meant to bolster their faith for the future battles they were about to face. The simple message is that the faithful God would continue to be faithful (**Rom 8:31-35**).

After the military chiefs placed their feet on the enemies' necks, Joshua executed the kings, hung their bodies on five trees, and left them on display until evening (**vs. 26**). Everyone who was hanged on a tree was under the curse of God (**Deut. 21:22-23**). If we do not find our safety and security in God alone, the idols we trust will destroy us. The place we sought sanctuary will become your grave. Believers should never be afraid to stand to do what is right because God is on the side of his people.

## 2. Successive Victories vv. 28-39

Joshua then captured Makkedah and devoted it to destruction (**vs. 28**).

This is the basic, recurring pattern in the remainder of the chapter (**vv. 29-39**).

Why does the Lord give this highly structured account of six battles?

First, God reminds us that grace explains triumph.

Secondly, God recounts the consistency of his triumphs.

Thirdly, God puts on record what he is willing and able to do for his people.

Believers today do not have to face Canaanites, but in reality we face more formidable foes (**Eph 6:12**). The triumphs recorded here remind us of the God who will help us in the fight. God so loves his people that he will give us victory over every adversary and safely bring us home to heaven.

## 3. Complete Conquest vv. 40-43

The text summarizes Joshua's victory by listing four geographical areas that he struck.

This is a description of all of the southern country. In carrying out this campaign, Joshua fully obeyed the Lord by enacting the ban (**Josh 10:40**).

Verse 41 gives us four additional location descriptions.' This encompasses a large area of land extending from the border of Judah in the south at Kadesh-barnea to Gibeon as the northernmost point of conflict in this campaign, approximately 100 miles.

This was total victory 'because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel' (**10:42**).

Joshua and the troops then returned to the camp at Gilgal (**10:43**).

Here we see the complete conquest of southern Canaan yet in other places we read of ongoing resistance (**cf. Josh 11:22; 14:12**).

From one perspective Israel continued to struggle with Canaanites in the land, BUT from God's perspective, the land belonged to God's people.

The on-going conditions in Canaan mirror reflects the Christian life.

Christ has conquered sin in our lives but pockets of resistance, remaining sin, continue to rise up in rebellion.

Paul reminds us that it is our duty to put sin to death (**Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5**).

We have the responsibility to deal the death blows to temptation, but we fight in a power not our own.

We struggle, resist, and gain victory in the power of Christ as we consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God through the Savior's finished work (**Rom. 6:11**).