

Joshua 10:1-27
Five Kings and the Astronomical Miracle

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Read Joshua 10:1-27

Remembering the structure of the Book of Joshua CROSS TAKE DIVIDE SERVE

Opening Verses The coalition of the five kings against Israel

- Verses 10:1-5 echo the opening verses of chapter 9, as well as chapter 11:1-5
- So we have an ongoing motif of the coalition of the pagan kings and their nations against God of Israel and against the people of God (children of Israel)
- There is a clear context of war – the war between God and the rebellious pagan nations – the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Genesis 3:15)
- This deadly animosity is described in Psalm 2 (notice the futility of standing against God)

God is a Warrior The LORD God fights for His people:

1. Gibeonites ask Joshua for help – they act according to the covenant made with Israel; the vassal (the servant) asking the suzerain (the master) for protection
2. Joshua and Israel fulfill the covenantal obligation; all the men of war marched from Gilgal to Gibeon

3. The reassurance from the LORD God *Do not fear them for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you*
4. This assurance motif is familiar within the Book of Joshua (starting with chapter 1:5)
5. The repetition of assurance gives comfort and strength to Joshua and the people of Israel
6. The fallen nature of the children of Israel, their sinfulness, necessitate the repetition of God's assurance
7. The LORD God knows that His people need constant reassurance and He graciously provides it
8. The Divine Warrior in battle:
 - verse 10: *and the LORD threw them into panic...*
 - ... **he** struck them with a great blow at Gibeon, and (**he**) chased them ...
 - verse 11: ... *the LORD threw down large stones from heaven on them ...*
 - *There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword*
9. God promised the victory and God delivered the victory
10. *Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty. The LORD mighty in battle – Psalm 24:8*
11. *The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is His name – Exodus 15:3*
12. The vision of the Faithful and True sitting on the white horse, the One who judges and makes war in righteousness (Revelation 19:11-16)
13. God as a Warrior in New Testament – the ultimate battle against the enemy won at the cross; Jesus Christ the divine warrior, fought for us, He went where we could not go (John 8:21; 13:33). Jesus Christ, the ultimate Joshua, won the battle and procured for us the true rest (no more battles).

Joshua's prayer In the midst of the battle, Joshua prays to the LORD God:

1. However we interpret the meaning of *Sun stand still ...* the effect is of divine miraculous origin

2. The LORD God, the Creator of the Universe, commands the creation according to His will
3. Just as He commanded the hailstones to fall upon the Israel's enemy, He can arrest the planets and stars
4. The difficulty (the main point of disagreement) is whether Joshua prayed for the light or darkness:
 - Is Joshua prohibiting the Sun and the Moon from moving or from shining (the Hebrew verb means *to be dumb, silent or still*)
 - A "compromised" position is that there is a light above the Israelites (Gibeon – east) and darkness over the enemy (Aijalon – west)
 - This interpretation (proposed by John Currid) is similar to the events described in Exodus 14:19-20 where there was light and darkness, separating Israel from the Egyptians, the children of light from the children of darkness
 - It is important to note that the language employed in this passage is reflecting common human experience
 - Martin Luther's use of this passage: *So it goes now. Whoever wants to be clever must agree with nothing that others esteem. He must do something of his own. This is what that fellow does who wishes to turn the whole astronomy upside down. Even in these things that are thrown into disorder I believe the Holy Scriptures, for Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and not the earth.*
5. God answered the prayer of the man – this is the stated reason in the Scripture for the extraordinary character of the day
6. The day was unique not because of the astronomical miraculous event, but because the LORD listened to the voice of a man
7. The LORD God, the Creator of everything, listens to the voice of a man or a woman, the creature

The Sign of the Victory God's victory over the enemies is made public:

1. Joshua locks the five kings in a cave and after Joshua and the mighty men of Israel defeated the enemies, the five kings were brought before Joshua

2. Joshua summons the chiefs of the men of war and tell them to put their feet on the necks of the kings
3. It is the sign of victory and a comfort for the people of Israel – *For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight* – verse 25; see Psalm 110:1
4. Then Joshua treated the five kings the same way he treated the king of Ai
5. The stones at the cave – ... *which remain to this day* – are yet another stone memorial
6. Psalm 110:1 is frequently quoted in the New Testament (Matthew 22:44; Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 1:13) to underscore the truth that Jesus is *both the Lord and Christ*
7. The imagery of *putting all his enemies under his feet* is also present in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
8. We also read about the public announcement of God's victory in Colossians 2:15 – *He disarmed the rulers and authorities, and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.*
9. Finally, in John 20:19 the Lord Jesus, following His resurrection, appears to the disciples and greets them *Peace be with you.* Having won the battle, the Divine Warrior, the true Victor, announces peace.