

Joshua Commands the Sun to Stand Still

Joshua 10:13 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.

To be noted here are Joshua's intrepid faith in God in the midst of an impossible situation and Jehovah's complete and utter providence over His creation.

"Here, as in many other passages, we are taught that the Lord God has a superintendence over all the creatures of His hand. He sends forth His imperious commands not only unto angels and men (Dan 4:34), but to the birds of the air (1 Kgs 17:4) and to the wild beasts (Dan 6:22), yes, to inanimate things ... The host of heaven, as well as the inhabitants of the earth, are entirely at His disposal. The whole source of nature moves or stands still at the mere will of its Maker" (Pink, p. 282). What are your thoughts?

The book of Jasher is believed by many to be "the book of the wars of the Lord" mentioned in Numbers 21:14. It is also referred to in 2 Samuel 1:18 and apparently was a national epic recording the warlike exploits and notable battles of the Israelites. Joshua's reference to its historicity, coupled with the fact that it recorded the event of the sun standing still during Joshua's lifetime, enhance the validity of this great miracle.

Joshua 10:14 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. :15 Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal. Do you believe that God would answer a prayer like this for us?

Joshua Kills the Five Enemy Kings

Joshua 10:16 But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. :17 And it was told Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah." :18 So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them. :19 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." :20 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.

Joshua now completes the "mopping up" operation of southern Palestine. In the terror of battle, Adonizedek, Hoham, Piram, Japhia, and Debir (the five who fought against the Gibeonites) banded together and hid in a cave. There were numerous caves in Palestine (see Gen 19:30; Jud 20:47; 1 Sam 22:1; 24:3; etc.), but the cave which these kings entered provided no protection. Joshua entombed them therein by rolling a **great stone** over the mouth of the cave while the Israelites pursued and defeated their armies. *As Christians, how do we reconcile this kind of judgment?*

Joshua 10:21 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 10:22 Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave." :23 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. :24 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.

Upon returning to the cave, Joshua commanded that the pagan kings be brought forth and told his men, **put your feet upon the necks of these kings**. This was a well-known Oriental symbol of victory and superiority, as Assyrian and Egyptian monuments attest.

Joshua 10:25 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." :26 And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until evening. :27 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.

But Joshua's command was more of encouragement than conceit (see vs. 25). This was also true of the act of hanging kings on trees after slaying them. Israel must know that Jehovah was with them, and they would continue to be victorious as they continued to rely on Him. The complete annihilation of Makkedah provided immediate substantiation.

Joshua Continues the Fighting

Joshua 10:28-39; No indication of time is given for the rest of the chapter, but the implication is that the rest of southern Canaan fell in weeks, perhaps days, from this point. Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir all fell to the Israelites. The geographical and topographical accuracy of the text is attested by the statement And Joshua went up from Eglon ... unto Hebron, since Hebron is situated on the hills of Judah while Eglon is down in the plain of the Philistines

Joshua 10:40 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.

Joshua 10:41 And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. :42 All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. :43 Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal. *What can we learn from these verses?*

Joshua Captures Towns in the North

Joshua 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard these things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph,

When word of Joshua's victories filtered northward into Galilee, the kings of that area immediately formed a protective alliance.

Joshua 11:2 and to the kings who were from the north, in the mountains, in the plain south of Chinneroth, in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west, :3 to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, and the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah. :4 So they went out, they and all their armies with them, as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots. :5 And when all these kings had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

The coalition army included the kings north of the mountains to the south of Galilee (**Chinneroth**) and westward to the coast at **Dor**. The league was made up of the **Canaanite, Amorite, Hittite, Perizzite, Jebusite**, and **Hivite**. The multitudinous hosts were as numerous as the sands of the sea (a poetic phrase common in Hebrew,) and fiercely strong, **with horses and chariots very many**.

The Israelites held cavalry and chariots in particular esteem. The northern alliance war machine gathered by the now drained Lake Huleh, which was at that time called **Merom**.

Joshua 11:6 But the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire."

As God had already frequently done (see 1:6-7, 9; 8:1; etc.), He again encouraged Joshua.

And as He had also frequently done (see 1:1-3; 3:7; 6:2; etc.), God again gave Joshua a promise.

Also, as He had frequently done before (see 3:8, 12-13; 6:3-4; 8:2; etc.), God again gave a plan of attack to Joshua.

God's encouragement was **Be not afraid**.

His promise was **for tomorrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel**.

His plan was to **hamstring their horses, and burn their chariots**. A horse is hamstrung when the sinews behind the hoof or hock are severed, thus rendering the horse useless. Given the larger picture of war, this was not a cruel act, but was probably done to prevent the Israelites from amassing a large chariot force from the spoils of war (see Deut 17:16; Ps 20:7; Isa 31:1).

God would be their only trust.