

SONGS: Jesus Saves (We have heard the joyful sound); And Can It Be; Victory Through Grace (Conquering now and still to conquer)

CLOSE: Onward Christian Soldiers

Possessing The Land

Joshua Series: 13 of 18

Text: Joshua 10 - 11 (Don't read)

Aim: To expound on the 2 essential elements necessary for spiritual victory.

INTRODUCTION

A. There were three basic campaigns fought by Israel in possessing the land of Canaan:

1. Central campaign presented in chapters 6-9 — This involved...
 - a. Crossing the Jordan
 - b. Cutting across the land east to west thereby dividing the enemy in two.
2. Southern campaign is offered in chapter 10
3. Northern campaign to be had in chapter 11

When we come to **chapter 12** we'll find there is a summary of all of the battles and of all the victories that Israel won in the land of its conquest.

RIGHT NOW, we want to consider chapters 10 & 11.

In the Northern and Southern campaigns of chapters 10 & 11, we see Israel's final conquest of the land of Canaan. For all practical purposes, after these campaigns, the land is taken, **though** there are still little pockets of resistance all over the countryside that are yet to be conquered, and unfortunately for Israel, some will NEVER be conquered. **BUT**, as far as major opposition is concerned, after Chapter 12, the land falls into the hands of the Israelites and is ready to be divided among the 12 Hebrew tribes.

B. In the final conquest of these two chapters, as well as in the first campaign, there are two principles, which are essential for victory:

1. God's Power 2. Human Obedience.

1. **GOD made clear** to Israel before they ever entered the land that HE—by HIS power was going to give the Promised Land to them, and they were going to be victorious, even though it was filled with kingdoms mightier than itself.
 - a. Israel, as an army, was an ill equipped and inadequately trained. They were in no way able to take on the people of Canaan by themselves
 - b. **Apart from the power of God**, Israel would never have gone any further than the banks of the Jordan River! **It took God, to give them the land.**
 - c. The Canaanites were armed with iron chariots, spears, swords and shields. Israel came out of Egypt unarmed.
 - d. Israel had no mighty instruments of war and lacked much basic military equipment. The ONLY WAY they could have gained victory over the Canaanites was through the power of the Almighty God.
2. The ONLY WAY you and I will win our battles in obtaining spiritual maturity and gaining victory in our lives will also be by the **SECOND principle, which was human obedience.**

Though God was to give the victory, man still had to go on the battlefield.
Israel still had to obey and launch an attack.

THESE TWO PRINCIPLES: total dependence on the power of the Almighty God and human obedience are still true today in your life and mine — we still face a lot of battles.

The foes that oppose us must be defeated, if we are to be mature and have the victory in our lives. Fortunately, the SAME power that was Israel's in OURS!

As they obtained victory by obedience so must we!

In this message we are going to examine these principles as viewed through the Southern Campaign.

Let's Examine...

I. THE CAUSE OF THE CONFLICT

- If you would remember in chapter 9, the clever Gibeonites, who feared they were next on Israel's list of doomed nations, deceived the entire nation of Israel because God's people failed to consult their Lord.
- Gibeon, by feigning that they were a people of a distant land, dressed in ragged clothes and had mouldy food to carry out their convincing deception.
- They knew that Israel – under God's orders – were to wipe out the people in the surrounding countryside, **BUT** they also knew that God made a provision for Israel to make peace with any distant nation that would submit to their authority. The Gibeonites, who lived locally, not far away, slyly took advantage of this provision and tricked Israel into making an alliance with them.

A. 10:1-5 – There was PANIC Among Southern Kingdoms

1. In this chapter attention suddenly shifts from Gibeon to Jerusalem—5 mi. away.
2. Panic had seized Adonizedec, Jerusalem's king and for good reason! The treacherous surrender of the Gibeonite cities completed an arc beginning at Gilgal and extending through Jericho and to Ai to a point just a few miles northwest of Jerusalem.
3. **THE HANDWRITING WAS ON THE WALL!** Jerusalem's security was being severely threatened. If the advances of Israel's armies continued without challenge, Jerusalem would soon be surrounded and have their goose cooked!
4. Vs. 2 – They "*greatly feared*" because of Gibeon's alliance with Israel.

B. 10:3-4 – PLEA of Jerusalem's pagan King to 4 other pagan kings for their cooperation in defeating their enemy.

1. Gibeon was more powerful than Ai, and more than likely so was Jerusalem, but evidently, Jerusalem was not mightier than Gibeon. Therefore this city had reason to fear.
2. The other 4 cities were greater than Ai and they probably were even more powerful than the five cities to the south of them, but individually they were no match for Gibeon and Israel.

C. 10:5 – The 5 Canaanite Cities Made a PACT

- The southern strategy was to attack Gibeon either crippling them or to get them to join their forces against Israel.

II. THE COURSE OF THE CONFLICT – 10:6-15

A. Vs. 6 – There was the INSISTENT APPEAL of Gibeon

1. This put Joshua on the spot
 - a. Gibeon reminded Israel of their Peace Treaty and need of defence.
 - b. Israel had made a league with Gibeon – a promise to defend them and they now had to live up to their promise.

This should be a warning to us, DON'T be making Promises you won't honour or Make alliances with people for whom you don't want to fight.

2. **We need to honour our word as much as Israel!**

Israel represented God – You and I represent God!

Do we bring Him honour or shame by the word of our mouths?

- a. Our names should be equated with honesty & honour, truthfulness & trust.
- b. **Ps. 15:4** says, the godly, upright, truthful, honest man *“sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not!”* We are to keep our word even if it hurts or costs.

B. Vs. 7-8 – There was the INSTANT ACTION on the part of Joshua.

1. Fighting these unified cities was not an option for Joshua.

- a. Not only was Israel to protect Gibeon, but also sooner or later Joshua would have to confront the five kings of the South.
- b. The combined Amorite armies were camped together in an open field outside Gibeon and a victory here would break the backs of the enemy forces in the entire region.

2. *“Fear not!”* The LORD promised, “You’ll kick the tar out of every one of ‘em!”

Rom. 8:31 – *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

C. Vs. 9-10 – Immediate Attack of Joshua

1. Gathering his forces, Joshua and his men marched 25 mi. from Gilgal to Gibeon, in one night, under cover of darkness!
2. It would have been a tiresome journey for it was 4,000 ft. uphill and over difficult terrain. There was no opportunity to rest. The army would have been pooped by the time they were in position and were face to face with a very powerful foe.

Clearly, God must intervene or all would be lost!

3. Motivated by God’s promise of victory, Joshua led a surprise attack on the Amorite armies of the south, possibly, while it was still dark.
4. Panic seized the enemy and after a short confrontation in which many were killed they made a run for it through a narrow pass to the west, which led down to the Valley of Aijalon in **vs. 12**.

D. Intervention Of The Almighty – Vs. 11-15

HERE we see the principle of GOD'S POWER in vivid action.

1. **There were Two Miracles Recorded**

1st Miracle – GREAT *HAILSTONES* – Vs. 11

- 1) Although tornadoes and other violent storms are natural phenomena in the world, God is in control of them for his purposes **SEE >> Nah. 1:2-8.**
- 2) Largest hailstone recorded in modern times weighed 1.67 lbs. was 7 1/2 inches in diameter and fell in Coffeyville, Kansas on Sept. 3, 1970.
- 3) 246 people killed in a hail storm in Moradabad, Uttar Pardish, India – April 30, 1888
- 4) During the 7 yr. Tribulation period we read in **Rev. 16:21** – *“And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”*
 - a) *“Weight of a talent”* in the Bible is est. between 75-100 lb. (34=45 kgs. or 5-7 stones) hailstones will fall on God’s enemies.

5) Think of God's accuracy! It is fantastic!

- The Canaanites were hit by the hailstones, BUT astonishingly not the Jews!
- With this same accuracy, God can also aim His hailstones at OUR foes and we too can get the victory in the power of our Almighty God.
- This entire passage provides us with a striking illustration of the interplay between 1] the human responsibility to obey God and 2] His intervening in our affairs to achieve victory.
- Vs. 7-11 alternates between Joshua & Israel and Joshua and the Lord. They all played important parts in the conflict.

The soldiers had to fight, BUT God gave the victory:

2nd Miracle – SUN STANDING STILL “*in the midst of heaven*” – Vs. 12-14

The battle of Beth-horon wore on and on. It was long and tough. The Amorites knew it was “D” day—*do or die*. At the most, Joshua had 12 hrs. of day light ahead of him. Joshua knew he clearly needed more time, if he were to realize the fulfilment of God’s promised victory. In desperation he cried out to God for the sun and moon to stand still!

- 1) In today’s view of cosmology, the sun is stationary with reference to the earth and the moon is in motion. BUT here in Joshua both the sun and moon are said to be moving, and both are made to stand still.

It should be noted that there no requirement in Scripture for the earth to cease its rotational movement—it is to be noted that NOTHING in this account in Joshua is said of the earth at all. Every statement concerns the movement of the sun and moon. For the earth to suddenly or even gradually stop its rotation, a further miracle would be required to prevent it being overwhelmed by catastrophe.

- 2) Many believe that for *convenience*, since men did not then know that the earth rotated, the Holy Spirit is presenting this miracle in the language of *appearance* rather than *actuality*.

It is argued that though the Bible says *the sun stood still*, actually “it was the earth that *stood still*”. If this were true it would set a serious precedent: i.e. that the Bible from time to time presents things only as they appear to be, not as they really are.

It is true in verse 12 that Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still from his vantage point on earth. However, verse 13 was written from the divine narrative vantage point of the Creator Who is outside of His creation and Who wrote absolutely about His creation.

The event here is to be taken in the same literal manner as Christ walking on the water, the plagues of Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea and countless other miracles. As Matthew Henry comments: “at the word of Joshua, the sun stopped immediately”.

- 3) In **Job 9:6-8** states God “*shaketh the earth out of her place,*” and commands “*the sun, and it riseth not...*”

The earth has a “*place,*” not a “*path.*” It does not move in “*courses*” as the stars mentioned in Judges 5:20. Nor does it travel in a “*circuit,*” that the heavens move in Psalm 19:6. Nor does it go *going forth*, as the sun in **Judges 5:31**. The earth is moved from her *place* only in times of judgement. The command in **Job 9:7** is specifically directed to the sun, nothing is said of God commanding the earth in its rotational movement.

4) An IMPORTANT FACT should not be overlooked!

- a) God’s miraculous intervention at the battle of Beth-horon was both important in the plan of God for Israel and for the whole world as well. It was a testimony to the sun-worshipping, moon-worshipping, nature-worshipping Canaanites – as well as the Israelites themselves – that the

God of Israel—the Creator—controlled the sun, moon and forces of nature.

- b) The sun & moon were principle deities among the Canaanites. At the prayer of Israel's leader—in earshot of the Amorites—the Canaan's gods were compelled to obey.
- c) This power over their gods must have been terribly upsetting and frightening to the Canaanites.
- d) The secret of Israel's triumph over the coalition of the Canaanites was not found in its military might or some secret weapon, **BUT IN THE FACT THAT in Vs. 14 – “the LORD fought for Israel!”**

Application

In Habakkuk's prayer (3:11) extolling God's majesty in delivering His people he recalls Joshua's long day. The day *“the sun and moon stood still in their habitation.”*

The earth was not the place where the passage says motion was suspended. It was in the sphere of the heavens where *“the sun and moon stood still in their habitation.”*

The same miracle working power available then is available to us today >> **TURN 2 Peter 1:2,3.**

- POWER for *“All things that pertain to Life”* **ALL THINGS** for everyday life and for eternal life — i.e. our salvation.

God may not bring hail stones on your enemies or cause the sun to stand still — in order that you may serve Him longer — BUT He does have ample power available to deal with any of your problems and most of all, to give you victory in your everyday spiritual life.

- There is POWER enabling all of us to live godly lives — power to change alcoholics, prostitutes, drug addicts, liars, murders, whoremongers and even you *“to glory and virtue”* of God.

How much power is there in a hurricane, or an Atomic bomb? How much power do you think is necessary to make the spots on a savage flesh eating leopard to be changed into a docile grass eating pussy cat? The Bible tells us this miracle of changing nature will happen in the coming Millennium Kingdom of Christ's earthly reign.

It takes no less of God's miraculous power to change a man's nature right now.

POWER to convert him from being a child of the devil, into being one of God's very own children.

Right now, whether you are saved or not, why not purpose to avail yourself of the Creator's power today? *“For with God nothing shall be impossible”* (Lk. 1:37).

NOTHING is impossible with God UNLESS it is outside His Word or will!

We looked at the CAUSE and the COURSE of action of the conflict, now let's look at...

III. THE CULMINATION OF THE CONFLICT – 10:16-43

A. Vs. 16-21 – The Fleeing of the 5 Kings

1. Why did they flee? BECAUSE Joshua obeyed God that is why!
 - a. For the **PRINCIPLE OF GOD'S POWER** to work in our lives there **MUST** be human obedience.
 - b. The reality of our Christianity is that though all of God's Power is available to us, **WITHOUT Human Obedience There Can Be No Experienced Victory!**
 - 1) For the hail stones to fall on the enemies Joshua and Israel had to be in battle.

- 2) If they weren't obedient, the sun wouldn't have stood still, neither would the land be possessed!
 - 3) Unless you and I enter the battle we will not have victory in spite of the fact that we have God's power in our lives.
 - 4) **Turn >> Joshua 11:15** states that Joshua *"left NOTHING undone of ALL that the Lord commanded"* to be done.
2. **READ >> Josh. 10:8-9** – Joshua took God at His word going into the battle
- a. NOTE Joshua didn't pray about what to do!
 - 1) Joshua got in trouble before for not seeking God's council, **BUT** this time he had commands from God!
 - 2) This was not a time to pray – delaying action in prayer would, at that time, have been sin. WHY? Because it would have been a lack of faith!
 - b. **Vs. 9** – states *"Joshua.... came up to them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal."* You also so should **"come up to them suddenly"** concerning the enemies that would prevent you from having victory in your life.
 - c. **A lot of Christians are:**
 - 1) Waiting on God for victory, BUT they won't go into battle!
 - 2) Praying for God to give them the victory. This would be like Joshua asking God to defeat the five kings when God has already *"delivered them into"* into Joshua's hands giving him the victory. You and I have got to put on the sword and go out there and fight for our victory, IF you are ever going to get what God has given us!

If we are ever to have victory, WE MUST FIGHT!

B. Vs. 22-27 – The Fate of the Kings

1. Joshua trapped the five kings in a cave – **10:16-18**
2. Joshua Made Short Work Of His Enemies!
 - a. He was NOT going to make a peace treaty with them; he was going to execute them! He was going to ANNIHILATE them! They were going to be wiped out, obliterated, eradicated, and exterminated out of existence!!!
 - b. These kings were idol-worshipping heathen; they were guilty of the grossest, most heinous sins.
 - c. Israel was to be God's instrument of judgement.
 - d. There was no way that Israel could ever hope to be holy and co-exist with them – they had to die!
3. We have heathen, pagan kings in our lives that also need to be destroyed.

>> TURN Col. 3:5-10; Gal. 5:19-21, cp. 24; 2:20

Crucifixion with Christ means death or separation from the reigning power of the old sinful life and freedom to experience the power of the resurrection life of Christ by faith.

What is to be crucified?

- a. Improper sexual relations and affections
- b. Dirty language, Gossip, & Suggestive speech/jokes
- c. Unclean heart – envy, jealousy, and lust
- d. Strife, fighting, rivalries, and murders
- e. The use of drugs, drunkenness and revellings and such like – *"they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"* (Gal. 5:21).
- f. Unclean habits & practices – T.V. many programmes are suggestive, filthy, profane, and blasphemous, many children shows blaspheme God —Need I mention the movies, videos, Internet, & etc.?

Application

Many people have and “ADDICTION” not only to booze, and other hard drugs, and tobacco, but also to T.V. the cinema, and video games. – It is called ‘amusement.’ The word A - MUSE - MENT = NO THINK! The dictionary states that amusement is “distraction of attention; to occupy the attention of; to beguile.” While we and especially our children, sit bemused in front of the telly, the Devil is programming erroneous, worldly philosophy and filth into our minds.

Illustration

While preparing the vegetables for the evening meal, young Susan begged her mother go to the cinema. Her mother disapproved of the cinema and gave her the following reasons for not giving her permission to go:

1. When things are inappropriate, bad language, and sex scenes, *there is neither any on or off button nor* any remote control to change the channel.
2. Most movies promote sex; violence, crime, worldly thinking, and many use foul language, even taking the Lord’s name in vain while mocking Christians and Godly values.
3. The majority of the actors are not Christians and who live ungodly and immoral life styles that will influence and corrupt you.
4. Even when supposed good films are show that are harmless, previews of other upcoming attractions are advertised, which are bad.
5. Even when we give our money given for good films, it helps the same filmmaker to make immoral ones.

Mother continued to argue, “Honey, you can’t keep all that garbage from getting into you.” The daughter was not convinced and still argued she was old enough to know what was right. At mealtime, when the mother put out the dinner, she set a plate of the peelings and other food wastes at her place on the table. “What’s this?” the puzzled girl asked. Mom replied, “well, if you insist on putting garbage into your mind, then I didn’t think you’d mind putting some into your stomach!”

We need to be also careful of the **MUSIC** we allow it come into our homes. If you listen to the words – many are filthy, portraying two-timing relationships, drunkenness, adultery, and drugs. There was a musical out a number of years ago called Jesus Christ Superstar. The words in it blasphemed our Lord over and over!! Pastor David Moore, who was a former Punk Rocker, said he was scared of God’s judgement for the words that were in some of the music the band he belonged was to play. This is one of the major reasons he repented of his sins and got saved. We also need Christians to repent and get right for the music they listen to!

BUT I LOVE IT! I LOVE IT! God says, KILL THEM! **READ >> Joshua 10:22-25**

Can’t ya here the kings now? “Please let us live”! – Joshua said to his men, “*Put your foot on their necks.*” This symbolised their complete overpowering, defeat, overthrow, and conquest.

The kings in your life say, “Don’t listen to the preacher, plea-a-s-s-e-e-e have mercy, don’t get rid of us” – God says, “Chop off their heads”!! Put them to death!!

You need also to cut off wrong companions in your life – you don’t have a right to go with or hang around with and make those who aren’t God’s children your best buddies.

C. (Don’t read) Vs. 28-43 – We have the Fight for the South.

1. After the battle for the south, Joshua launched an attack against the Northern kings. **READ >> 11:1-6.**
2. In **11:23** - Victory is secured (**read**). NOTE: There was *no* rest, *no* peace, and surely *no* victory would have been possible if those kings were allowed to stay alive.

CLOSE**REMEMBER Joshua 10:25 << READ**

There are **TWO Essential Elements/Principles** necessary for spiritual victory.

1st God's Power

God is for us, He is on our side, and He has the power to give you the victory and has commanded us to overthrow the enemy. **Apart from the power of God**, we could NEVER have victory in our lives – BUT we must obey and fight if we are ever to get the victory.

2nd There MUST be Obedience on our part.

Though God gives us the victory, the believer still had to go on the battlefield.

How goes the battle in your spiritual walk?

Are there kings, which have lordship in your life?

Will you say, "I want to put them to death, God has given me the power to so do and by His grace I will do it!"?

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