

**Joshua 10:16-43**  
**“Putting your foot down upon distractions”**

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**I. Intro**

The remainder of the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter is concerned with the mop up military campaign of the first 15 verses characterized by the verse 20 statement that “*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.*” But knowing, as we do, 2 Tim. 3:16 “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*”, we must assume that there is something in this section that is “*is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*”.

I suppose unless you like to read about the exploits of military warfare this section with the five time repeated phrase “*fought against*” would be a bit boring. Yet in the Holy Spirit’s wisdom Joshua records this for us for a specific practical reason. To remind us that the possession of the promises and presence of the Lord in our lives is going to be filled with BATTLES. And we learned something very encouraging last week **that when the enemy is afraid he attacks (10:2, 4)**. But here in the midst of these 28 verses of this section is recorded a series of events that point to another truth with regards to spiritual warfare and that is **when the enemy is about to be defeated he distracts!** So let me be straight: “***When he is afraid he attacks when he is about to be defeated he distracts.***”

**II. Vs. 16-27 Do not be afraid**

Vs. 16-27 Here we have for us the completion of the with those five kings and it is important to realize that as impressive as the hailstones and the sun standing still is Joshua and the army of the Lord still had to complete the task. *The strategy of the Lord was to split the region in two a divide and conquer technique which if completed would be effective.* Thus we see that the enemy would stop at nothing to see it NOT accomplished.

The battle is not over until the enemy is annihilated and until then there is very much work to do. I find it easy to fall into is a let down when I have initial victory. That’s why I love Joshua’s demonstration at the cave Makkedah where he has the five kings come out of the cave and the captains to place their feet on the necks of these kings and then exhorts them to be strong and courageous. The enemy is afraid so he is attacking that means he is on the run so it’s time to go after him and when you have him held up in a cave shut him down and finish him off. **There are five things that could have been a distraction for Israel.**

1. Vs. 16-19 **Giving to much attention to the big things that you neglect the little things:** The leaders of these five nations had names interpreted as: “Lord of justice” “Woe to them”, “Wild ass” “Splendid” and “Sanctuary” and they were all held up in a cave. It would have been very tempting to exact some “Justice” to send some “woe to them” you know a little “wild ass” whipping on those who thought they were “splendid” and the cave was their “sanctuary”. ***But that was not what the priority was at that time and Joshua stayed focused in completing God’s victory so he just imprisoned the five kings and set a stone over the cave and a guard at the jail.*** The enemies of our faith our very crafty and the first means of defense is distraction.
2. Vs. 20-21 **The best way to stop people’s mouths is to let your actions speak louder than your words:** Far too often we are tempted to get into a shouting match with the enemy rather than keep on task and finish the work God has given us to do. ***Satan won’t be defeated by our rhetoric and neither will our flesh but by our faithful obedience to complete what God has called us to do will.*** These folks of Canaan knew by the actions of the Israelis that God was at work and that any thing they said was futile. We are told in Romans 14:11 that “*Every knee shall bow to Me, and every*

*tongue shall confess to God.” This ought to be what the Church is like for those that come here it ought to be a place where people **hear the truth of the Word of God, experience the practice of the Love of God and the combination of these two things ought to cause the unsaved person to say, “Hey, if I keep coming here I’m going to conquered by God and I’ll have to submit my life to Him.” Too many churches portray a harmless God that requires no surrender and the body of Christ becomes a sanctuary that offers no hope, and no power of transformation instead it is a warm fun place to go on the way to hell.***

3. Vs. 23-27 **Make no compromise with those things that can destroy you:** The stone was removed the five kings brought ought and Joshua called for the army and then the captains to come forward and put their feet of the necks of the five kings. What a symbolic gesture this must have been as these captains took turns putting their feet on the neck of these kings. All of this reminds us of Paul’s words in Romans 16:20 where he writes that *“the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.”* **It was a demonstration to each of them not to allow the things that use to rule over your life to have life.** Sometimes you just got to, **“put your foot down”** upon the neck of that *what controls you and threatens to destroy your fellowship with the Lord.* Those kings of lust, pride, covetousness, anger, and self worship have got to be slain and not allowed to reign in our lives. Don’t you love the fact that in verse 8 that the Lord encourages Joshua and now in verse 25 Joshua is the one encouraging the rest of the people to be *“not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.”* **The Lord will do it but we have to be willing to put our foot down upon the necks of the things that use to rule over our lives, the things that keep us from inhabiting more of His promises.** After having put the foot down upon the necks of these five kings **Joshua tells us that he did three specific things to make sure that these things would never rule over them again:**

- A. **Vs. 26a He struck them with the sword and killed them:** Interesting as this speaks to my heart about killing the things that rule over our lives with the **Sword of the Spirit the Word of God.** That’s the only thing strong enough to end their reign! **We need to take these things that want to lord over us, keep us from the presence of the Lord to the obedience of His word.**
- B. **Vs. 26b-27a He hung them on a tree:** Ah again I see a picture of the new testament as we reckon the old man to be dead. **Notice that they were only to be on the tree until evening then they were to be taken down?** Saints we need to reckon the old man to be dead but **we also need to remember that the new man is alive to God in Christ.** That’s what Paul says in Romans 6:11 where we are told that we need to *“reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* So as far as the flesh is concerned it needs to hang on the tree but don’t keep it there because the new man is alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- C. **Vs. 27b He cast them into the cave and sealed the entrance:** What a great word this is in making sure that those enemies of our faith that have ruled over our lives won’t ever be able to do so again. **They were sealed up in the pit that they were hiding in.** You **can’t give access to those things that use to rule over your life even after they have been slain, seal them up and let them remain that way.** It has been my experience that if you don’t place them in a sealed tomb those bones have way of escaping and coming back into our lives to trip us up.

### III. Vs. 28-39 One at a time

Vs. 28 The proximity of these cities to one another gave advantage to Joshua and the army as long as they stayed of task: Jerusalem was only 6 miles from Gibeon, Hebron (*the place of the Jewish patriarchs*) was 19 miles south west from Jerusalem, Jarmuth was 16 miles west over looking the coast, Lachish, Eglon were all close by as the army headed south.

4 Vs 28-39 **Don’t get overwhelmed at all the battles take them one at a time (verse**

42): Here we are given six cites of the Canaanites that were taken by the Lord through Joshua and the Israelites (seven including Gezer who came up to help Lachish). **The distraction here is the sheer volume of warfare that Joshua and the army faced.** Have you ever felt defeated and discourage when it isn't just one battle you face but every where you turn there is another fight on your hands? Notice that Joshua didn't get overwhelmed because he just took them as they came. Jesus said in Matthew 6:34 "*do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*" On the same day those five kings hung from the trees Joshua and the army defeated Makkedah as apparently watching five dead kings hang from tress was a waste of time so he went after Makkedah defeated it and returned before nightfall to remove their bodies. Paul tells us in Ephes. 5:16 that we need to "*redeem the time, because the days are evil.*" No wasted day for Joshua as they accomplished two things in one day. Next we are told that they defeat five more cities three of which belonged to those kings. When things mount up, and your hard pressed on every side remember what Paul said in 2 Cor. 4:8 if you may be "*hard pressed on every side*" but you won't be "*crushed*" and you may get to the place where you "*are perplexed*" but you won't be in "*despair*". So from verse 28-39 Joshua lists those cities that he took one by one as he and the army of the Lord fought against each of the six cites and when one was defeated they moved on to the next one and just keep going until we are told in verse 40 that "*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.*" All the land the "*mountain country*" the "*South*" the "*lowland*" and the "*wilderness slopes*" all as the Lord had commanded.

Vs. 36-37 What this must have been like to take this city where Abraham, Isaac Jacob and Sarah's tomb's were. They had been there 40 years earlier as spies when they saw the giants. The man in who the Lord spoke in Genesis 12:1 "*Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.*" Here where Abraham and the patriarchs lay for hundreds of years the promise of God under the occupation waiting to be fulfilled as Joshua and the armies of the Lord walked through Hebron it was fulfilled. Did they walk by the cave that held their bones and one day would hold Josephs as well and say "*Father Abraham, today God's promise to you is fulfilled?*" In Hebrews 11:9-10 we are told of Abraham that "*By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*" Oh what a day this must have been to walk into the promises made to Abraham all those years ago.

#### IV. Vs. 40-43 Hebron, Jerusalem and Kadesh Barnea

Vs. 40-43 By the time 10<sup>th</sup> chapter closes approximately 7 years has gone by which is a good reminder for us that the battle we face in obtaining the promises of God won't happen over night. Here we are given the summary the victorious battles which includes the geographical boundaries. Each battle a test, each required a new set of challenges and difficulties some were in "mountain country" others were in the "South" then some were in the "lowland" while others were fought on the "wilderness slopes". None of them were easy and there were many distractions along the way I'm sure that are not recorded for us.

5. Vs. 40-43 **Trying to do the battles in your own strength:** Victory was won in each of these four different types of terrain and 6 different cites because Joshua stayed focused to the truth that "*the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel*". That is no doubt the biggest distraction and the reason for our defeat is simply that we face a terrain or city that we think we don't need God's power to conquer. Saint's, the terrain may change and the towns may differ but one things certain now matter where you find your battle at you won't be able to be victorious and passes the promise apart from "*the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel*" fighting for you! I find it interesting that we are told here that the geographical boundaries included in this was Kadesh Barnea. That was the place where the original spies were sent out 40 plus years earlier and they came back saying that they couldn't go up and posses the promises of God

because though the land was full of blessings it was full of GIANTS. The name Kadesh Barnea means “*holy wanderings*” and it seems as though those 40 years caused them to realize that it wasn’t the nation that was going to do the fighting it was the Lord. How does this truth apply to us? Well turn over to 2 Cor. 3:18 where Paul writes that “*we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*” Our victory is certain because our transformation is “*by the Spirit of the Lord*” my dear ones and warfare will be constant as our Christian life is not a sprint it is a marathon. Finally, notice that Joshua returned and all of Israel with him to the camp at Gilgal. Joshua made a habit of making there home at the place where they celebrated God’s faithfulness, recalled the necessity of cutting away the flesh and trusted in God’s power. Those that want to conquer must continually be conquered. Time to camp at Gilgal I believe!!!

You may note the absence of the mention of Jerusalem being conquered by Joshua as we will find out that the Jebusites who inhabited the city could not be defeated by the tribe of Judah was not taken until the time of David 400 years later in 2 Sam 5:6-7. Interesting to find that both Hebron and Jerusalem is where we find the most difficulties to possess the promises, as Hebron is where the Giant’s dwelt as this was the place where Abraham and the patriarchs lay and Jerusalem is where the temple would be built. What is interesting is that the place of promise and the capital was heavily fortified by the enemy. Saint’s, **the enemy will fight you on all the promises but resist you the most one HOLY ground.** But the Lord will take the Hebron’s and though it may take 400 years He will take the temple ground as well. What this speaks of is that **the enemy fights the hardest in areas where the Lord wants to set up His throne and it causes us to realize that nothing lacked in God’s provision during the time of Joshua that was later supplied during the reign of David.** The difference lay not in the Lord but in their trust of Him.

Kadesh Barnea was the place of defeat where 40 years earlier they lacked the faith to trust the Lord to keep His word now they are experiencing victory in areas where they hadn’t prior. And what was it like now for Joshua and Caleb to walk into Kadesh Barnea 40 years later and conquer that city which they so wanted to when they were younger? Saints, this speaks to us about God’s faithfulness in the midst of our faithlessness and how He always keeps His promises. Oh wasted years where we have been in “*holy wandering*” as the Lord prepared the “***Person***” for the place all the while He was preparing the “***Place***” for the person. My mind moves to Jesus’ words in John 14:2-3 where Jesus tells His disciples “*In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*” Hey dear ones, He is preparing you for the place and the place for you!!!