

SESSION 4

"Conquering the Land"—Part 2
"Southern and Northern Campaigns"

I. PRAYER

II. PANORAMA OF THE BIBLE BROAD CONTEXT

A. Movements #1-4

1. Prologue Four Key Events
2. Patriarchs Four Key Characters
3. Redemption/ Three Big Events (Exodus)
Wanderings One Major Rebellion
4. Conquest Three Movements (Joshua)

B. Chart: Book of Joshua

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA					
"Promise/Fulfillment of the Land"					
Enter		Conquer		Possess	
1	5	5	12	13	24
Jordan River		Canaan		East of Jordan West of Jordan	

C. **Outline: Book of Joshua**

See Session 1, p. 8, for detailed outline.

The Book of Joshua

- A. "Entering the Land"(1–5)
- B. "Conquering the Land"(5–12)
 - 1. Commander: Lord's Army (5)
 - 2. "Central Campaign"(6–8)**
 - 3. Gibeonites: Deception..... (9)
 - 4. "Southern Campaign"(10)**
 - 5. "Northern Campaign"(11)**
 - 6. Defeated Kings: Listed (12)
- C. "Possessing the Land" (13–24)

*Note the Campaign Strategies in bold print used to conquer the land of Canaan ("Promised Land").

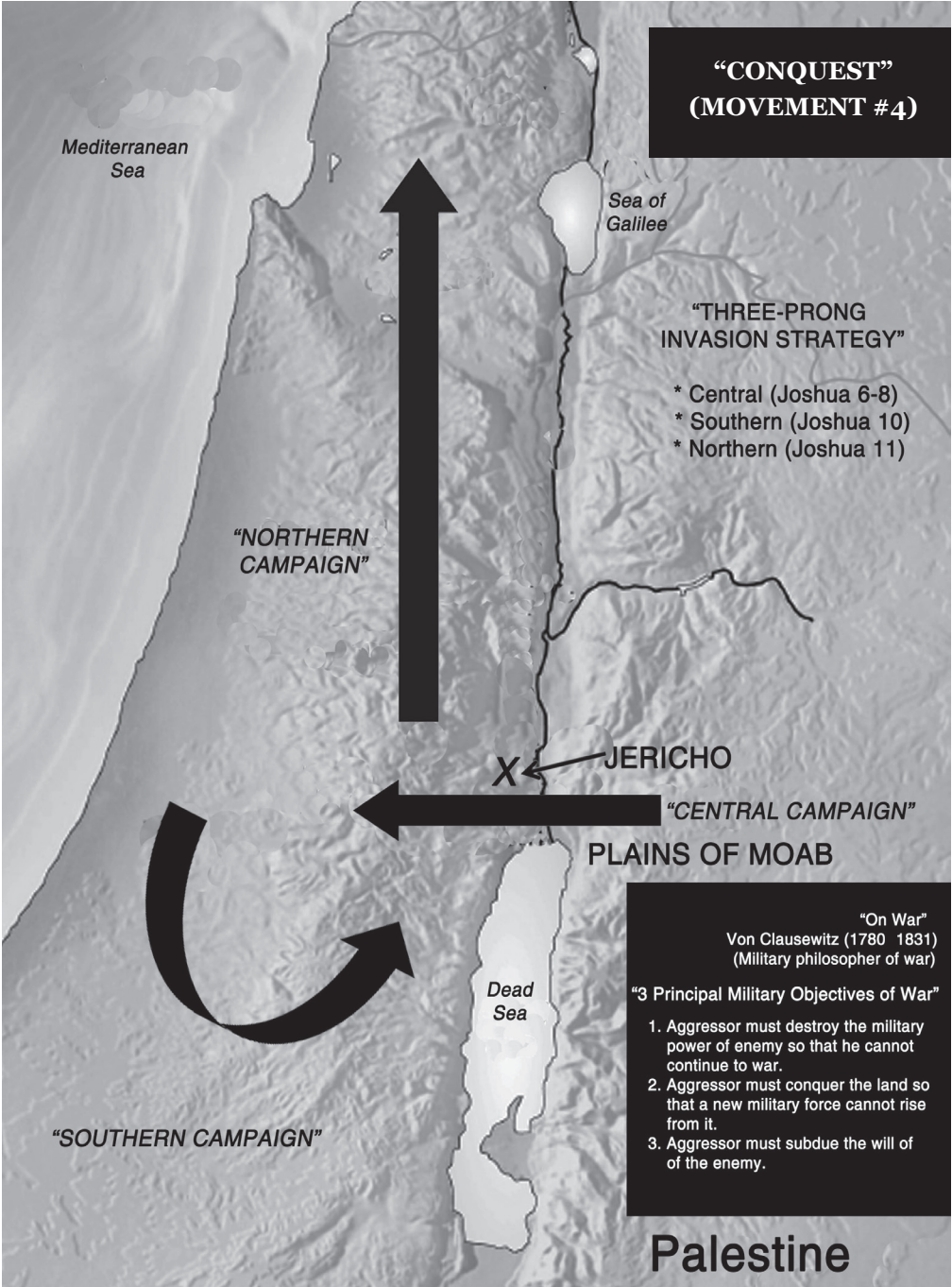
Insight:

Military success in the Book of Joshua will depend upon "trusting and obeying" (as does New Testament age spiritual success). The following bit of verse illustrates the principle.

*O Church arise and put your armor on;
Hear the call of Christ our Captain;
For now the weak can say that they are strong
In the strength that God has given.
With shield of faith and belt of truth
We'll stand against the devil's lies;
An army bold whose battle-cry is "Love!"
Reaching out to those in darkness.*

Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend, O, Church Arise

D. Campaign Strategies: Map



III. "CONQUERING THE LAND": BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT (Part II)

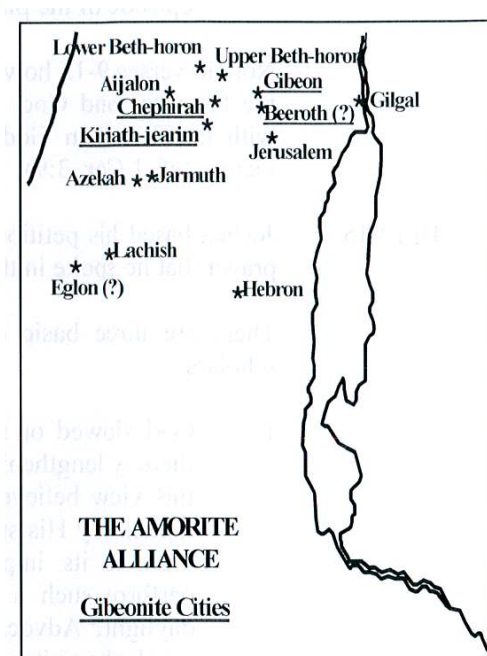
A. "Southern Campaign" (Chapter 10)

The previous map outlines the threefold campaign strategy to take the land of Canaan. In a sense, the conflict with the Amorite confederation could be seen as the last part of the "Central Campaign." However, certain ones of the five kings lived toward or to the south of Jericho-Ai, and thus this conflict will be considered a part of the "Southern Campaign."

1. Amorite Confederation: Battle (10:1–15)

Joshua 10:1–5

¹ Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and totally destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and that the people of Gibeon had made a treaty of peace with Israel and had become their allies. ² He and his people were very much alarmed at this, because Gibeon was an important city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were good fighters. ³ So Adoni-Zedek **king of Jerusalem** appealed to Hoham **king of Hebron**, Piram **king of Jarmuth**, Japhia **king of Lachish** and Debir **king of Eglon**. ⁴ "Come up and help me attack Gibeon," he said, "because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites."



*Taken from Constable,
Notes on Joshua, 51

a. Cause (1–5)

Joshua 10:1–2

¹Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and totally destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and that the people of Gibeon had made a treaty of peace with Israel and had become their allies. ²He and his people were very much alarmed at this, because Gibeon was an important city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were good fighters.

- (1) The Central Campaign saw the defeat of the fortress city of Jericho and on a second attempt, the city of Ai. Joshua 9 chronicled the Gibeonite trickery and deception, which led to an ill-advised treaty of peace. As the subservient Gibeonites observed, “We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you” (9:25).
- (2) Perhaps because Jerusalem (first time mentioned in the OT—means “founding or possession of peace”) was near to Gibeon, the king of Jerusalem became alarmed. Adoni-Zedek (“lord of righteousness”) may have reasoned that:
 - We have lost a key ally to oppose the Israelites.
 - We have been weakened as a confederation.
 - We may have a new enemy in the Gibeonites.
- (3) Therefore, the king of Jerusalem called upon the confederation to decisive action against traitorous Gibeon.

Joshua 10:4–5

⁴“Come up and help me attack Gibeon,” he said, “because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites.” ⁵Then the five kings of the Amorites—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon—joined forces. They moved up with all their troops and took up positions against Gibeon and attacked it.

b. Conflict (6–15)

(1) The Gibeonites cry out to the Israelites for help.

Joshua 10:6–7

⁶ *The Gibeonites then sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: “Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because all the Amorite kings from the hill country have joined forces against us.”*⁷ *So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men.*

- The basis of the request is the recently enacted treaty.
- The Israelites march from Gilgal (base camp) with a formidable army (“all the best fighting men”—10:7).

(2) The Lord promises Joshua victory.

Joshua 10:8

⁸ *The LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you.”*

(3) Joshua and the Israelites defeat the Amorite confederation.

Joshua 10:9–10

⁹ *After an all-night march from Gilgal, Joshua took them by surprise.* ¹⁰ *The LORD threw them into confusion before Israel, so Joshua and the Israelites defeated them completely at Gibeon. Israel pursued them along the road going up to Beth Horon and cut them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah.*

This victory was aided by two significant miracles:

- (a) Miracle of hailstones (10:11)
- (b) Miracle of the “long day” (10:12–14)

Joshua 10:13b–14

¹³ *The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day.* ¹⁴ *There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a human being. Surely the LORD was fighting for Israel!*

Insight

How does one explain the “longest day” of Joshua 10? Scholars differ, but there are common explanations of what the Bible presents as a miracle.

- (1) The earth’s rotation slowed and prolonged the day. However, such an action would normally be (unless God intervened to prevent it) an inconceivable global catastrophe.
- (2) The light of the passing day was supernaturally refracted in some way (mirror effect) to extend light.
- (3) The Hebrew word for “stand still” could also be translated “cease” or “stop.” Thus the actual miracle could have been to keep the sun from intensely shining (extreme cloud cover *and* hailstones imply severe weather) and thereby giving the Israelites relief from intense heat of the sun. Therefore, the miracle provided a cooler day in which to war.

2. Amorite Kings: Execution (10:16–28)

- a. Trapped in the cave (Makkedah) (16–21)

The defeated kings flee in defeat and seek refuge in the cave. Joshua overtakes the kings and rolls “large rocks” before the entrance to imprison them until Joshua returned from the ongoing battle. “So Joshua and the Israelites destroyed them (the Confederation) completely” (20).

- b. Humiliated before the cave (22–24)

Joshua 10:22–24

²² Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me.” ²³ So they brought the five kings out of the cave—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon. ²⁴ When they had brought these kings to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the army commanders who had come with him, “Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings.” So they came forward and placed their feet on their necks.

Joshua summoned his commanders to appear before the defeated kings. Placing one's foot on the neck of the once-powerful kings demonstrated the Israelites' strength and absolute subjugation of the rival kings. It was an act of dominance over and humiliation of the defeated.

c. Executed before the cave (25–27)

Joshua 10:25–26

²⁵ Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous. This is what the LORD will do to all the enemies you are going to fight." ²⁶ Then Joshua put the kings to death and exposed their bodies on five poles, and they were left hanging on the poles until evening.

- (1) "Strong and courageous" hearkens back to Joshua's challenge to become the leader of the Israelites (1:6–7, 9, 18).
- (2) Joshua (or perhaps his commanders under Joshua's direction) executes the kings and hangs them (impales) on trees as a further step of humiliation.
- (3) At sunset the bodies are taken down so as to not defile the land.

Deuteronomy 21:22–23

²² If someone guilty of a capital offense is put to death and their body is exposed on a pole, ²³ you must not leave the body hanging on the pole overnight. Be sure to bury it that same day, because anyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

d. Summary: at Makkedah (28)

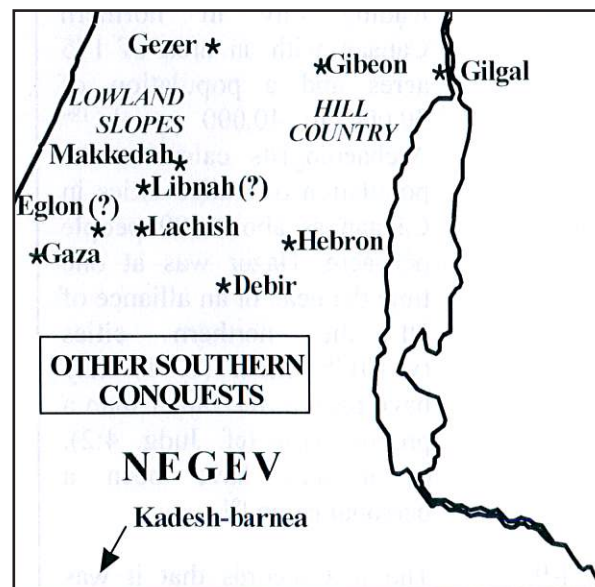
Joshua 10:28

²⁸ That day Joshua took Makkedah. He put the city and its king to the sword and totally destroyed everyone in it. He left no survivors. And he did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

3. Southern Cities: Conquered (10:29–43)

Having pursued and defeated the Amorite Confederation, the Israelites moved south to conquer the following cities:

- a. Libnah (29–30)
- b. Lachish and Gezer (31–33)
- c. Eglon (34–35)
- d. Hebron (36–37)
- e. Debir (38–39)



*Taken from Constable, *Notes on Joshua*, 55

The phrase “totally destroyed” occurs five times in the chapter (28, 35, 37, 39, 40). The accounts are brief, without detail.

- Note the summary

Joshua 10:40–43

⁴⁰ So Joshua subdued the whole region, including the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills and the mountain slopes, together with all their kings. He left no survivors. He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded.

⁴¹ Joshua subdued them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from the whole region of Goshen to Gibeon. ⁴² All these kings and their lands Joshua conquered in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. ⁴³ Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal.

B. “Northern Campaign” (Chapter 11)

The Central and Southern Campaigns have been successful. The news of the Israelites’ victories have traveled north.

1. Coalition (1–5)

Joshua 11:1–5

¹When Jabin king of Hazor heard of this, he sent word to Jobab king of Madon, to the kings of Shimron and Akshaph, ² and to the northern kings who were in the mountains, in the Arabah south of Kinnereth, in the western foothills and in Naphoth Dor on the west; ³ to the Canaanites in the east and west; to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites in the hill country; and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah. ⁴ They came out with all their troops and a large number of horses and chariots—a huge army, as numerous as the sand on the seashore. ⁵ All these kings joined forces and made camp together at the Waters of Merom to fight against Israel.



*Taken from Constable, *Notes on Joshua*, 56.

- a. Jabin, the king of Hazor, is the leader of this new alliance.
- b. The assembled army is formidable. The Jewish historian, Josephus, numbered it at **three hundred thousand** foot soldiers, **ten thousand cavalry** troops, and **twenty thousand** chariots (Josephus, 5:1:18). The numbers seem unnecessarily high, but the Biblical account describes it as “a huge army, as numerous as sand on the seashore” (11:4).
- c. The mustering place for the gathering army was “the Waters of Merom” (west of Hazor, northwest of the Sea of Chinnereth—later called Sea of Galilee; see previous map).

2. Conflict (6–11)

- a. The instructions (6)

Joshua 11:6

⁶*The LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them, slain, over to Israel. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.”*

- b. The victory (7–9)

Joshua did not wait for the large, imposing army to meet him at Gilgal (cf. 10:43). Rather he raced to meet and surprise the confederation at the Waters of Merom. “*The Lord gave them (the Northern Confederation) into the hands of Israel*” (8).

- c. The fate of Hazor (10–11)

Joshua 11:10–11

¹⁰*At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and put its king to the sword. (Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms.)* ¹¹*Everyone in it they put to the sword. They totally destroyed them, not sparing anyone that breathed, and he burned Hazor itself.*

3. Capture (12–15)

Joshua 11:12, 14–15

¹²*Joshua took all these royal cities and their kings and put them to the sword. He totally destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded.*

¹⁴ The Israelites carried off for themselves all the plunder and livestock of these cities, but all the people they put to the sword until they completely destroyed them, not sparing anyone that breathed. ¹⁵ As the LORD commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

4. Summary (16–23)

Joshua 11:16–18

¹⁶ So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills, ¹⁷ from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and put them to death. ¹⁸ Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time.

Joshua 11:23

²³ So Joshua took the entire land, just as the LORD had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

C. Defeated Kings: Listed (chapter 12)

With the completion of the Northern Campaign, the “land” had been conquered. The back of organized Canaanite resistance had been broken. Joshua 12 summarized victorious Israel under their two great leaders: Moses and Joshua.

1. Moses’ conquests (1–6)

- a. The “kings of the land” on the east side of the Jordan River (1)
- b. The king (Sihon) of the Amorites (2–3; cf. Num 21:23–26)
- c. The king (Og) of Bashan (4–5; cf. Num 21:33–35)

Joshua 12:6

⁶ Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the Israelites conquered them. And Moses the servant of the LORD gave their land to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh to be their possession.

2. Joshua's conquests (7–24)

Joshua 12:7–8

⁷ Here is a list of the kings of the land that Joshua and the Israelites conquered on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir. Joshua gave their lands as an inheritance to the tribes of Israel according to their tribal divisions. ⁸ The lands included the hill country, the western foothills, the Arabah, the mountain slopes, the wilderness and the Negev. These were the lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. These were the kings:

The chapter concludes with a listing of “thirty-one kings in all” (24) that Joshua defeated.

The initial conquest has been successful. The tribes now will need to possess the land promised and delivered.

IV. LESSONS TO LEARN

A. Miracles: Both the miracle of hailstones (Josh 10:11) and the “long day” (10:12–14) connect to God’s faithfulness to provide victory for the Israelites. The Bible is a miraculous book; the God of the Bible is a miraculous God.

N. Geisler simply defines a miracle as “a divine intervention into the natural world” (Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 1:44). Further, he gives three basic reasons for miracles (1:48):

1. to glorify the nature of God (Jn 2:11; 11:40)
2. to accredit certain persons as spokespersons for God (Acts 2:22; Heb 2:3–4)
3. to provide evidence for belief in God (Jn 6:2, 14; 20:30–31)

How the miracles of Joshua 10 can be explained is not as important as the faith reasons for such signs, wonders, and power.

- B. **Prayer:** It must not be overlooked that Joshua prayed for the “long day” miracle (Josh 10:12–14). His prayer perfectly expressed the divine will. It reminds us of the NT teaching.

1 John 5:14–15

¹⁴ *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything **according to his will**, he hears us.* ¹⁵ *And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

- C. **Victory:** The successful Central, Southern, and Northern Campaign strategies reinforce a key theme in Joshua: trust, obedience, blessing. Though it is rooted in the story of Joshua, it applies to us today as well.

- D. **List of Defeated Kings:** Joshua 12 lists thirty-one defeated kings and punctuates with the word **one** after each king and city-state. Jackman observes (134):

But as each one is delineated, with the repeated “one” tolling like a bell, they represent the removal of those impossibly strong opposition forces at the hand of the living God and his limitless, sovereign power. *“Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness”* (Psalm 115:1).