

# JOSHUA CONQUERING CANAAN

Joshua 10 - 19

## STRUCTURE

**Key-person:** Joshua

**Key-location:** Land of Canaan

### **Key-repetitions:**

- Jerusalem's king: heard that Joshua totally destroyed Ai and Jericho (Jos 10:1); heard that the Gibeonites made a peace treaty with Israel (Jos 10:1); united with four other kings to attack Gibeon (Jos 10:3-5).
- The Lord fought for Israel (Jos 10:14, 42).
- God's miraculous actions in favor of Israel: promised Joshua victory before the battle (Jos 10:8); threw the enemy kings and their armies into confusion (Jos 10:10); sent hailstones (Jos 10:11); sun and moon stopped (Jos 10:12-13).
- Moses' commands: Joshua took the cities and killed the kings as Moses had commanded (Jos 11:12); Joshua didn't leave incomplete anything that the Lord commanded Moses (Jos 11:15); Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses (Jos 11:20); each tribe received its parcel of land, just as the Lord had commanded Moses (Jos 14:5).

### **Key-attitudes:**

- Canaanite kings' shock at Israel's success.
- Gibeonites' terror of the Canaanite kings that came to attack them.
- Joshua's confidence in the Lord.
- Joshua's submission to obey all the Lord commanded Moses.

### **Initial-situation:**

The Lord stopped the flow of the flooding Jordan River, and the Israelites walked across the river into Canaan. Joshua led the Israelites to conquer the cities of Jericho and Ai, and totally destroy them. The people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, and they decided to trick the Israelites into making a peace treaty.

### **Initial-problem:**

Jerusalem's king heard that Joshua had taken both Jericho and Ai and totally destroyed them. He also learned that the people of Gibeon made a peace treaty with Israel.

### **Final-situation:**

Each of the twelve Israelite tribes received its own parcel of land, just as the Lord had commanded Moses (Jos 14:5).

## BIBLE STORY

Jerusalem's king heard that Joshua captured Ai and totally destroyed it and its king, just as he had done to Jericho and its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites made a peace treaty with Israel. This shocked the king, because Gibeon was an important city and all its men were good fighters. Jerusalem's king united with four other Canaanite kings, combined their armies, and set out to attack the city of Gibeon (Jos 10:1-4).

The Gibeonites sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal, "Don't abandon your servants. Come quickly and rescue us! Help us! All the kings from the hill country joined forces against us."

Joshua marched up from Gilgal to Gibeon with his entire army. The Lord told Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to stand up to you."

Joshua marched all night from Gilgal and took the five kings and their armies by surprise. The Lord threw them into confusion, and Israel experienced a great victory at Gibeon. The enemy fled, Israel pursued, and the Lord threw large hailstones down on them. God killed more with the hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword.

On that day, Joshua shouted to the Lord, and all Israel heard, "Sun, stop! Stand still over Gibeon. Moon, halt! Stand still over Aijalon Valley." The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and waited to go down for a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since. A day when the Lord did what a man told him to do! Truly, the Lord fought for Israel!

So Joshua and the Israelites destroyed them completely. Joshua left no survivors (Jos 10:5-26).

The Lord God of Israel fought for Israel (Jos 10:42). Joshua conquered the kings and the land of Canaan in one campaign (Jos 10:1 - 11:23). Joshua took all the Canaanite cities and their kings and killed them with the sword. He totally destroyed them, as Moses had commanded. The Israelites kept for themselves all the plunder and livestock of these cities, but they killed all the people with the sword. Joshua did not leave incomplete anything that the Lord commanded Moses. Except for those living in Gibeon, not one city made a peace treaty with the Israelites. Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses. Joshua parceled the land out as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war (Jos 11:13-23; Jos 13:7 - 19:51). Each of the twelve tribes received its own parcel of land, just as the Lord had commanded Moses (Jos 14:5).

## GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

## SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What shocked the king of Jerusalem?
2. Why did the Gibeonites request Joshua's help?
3. What assurance did the Lord give Joshua before the battle at Gibeon?
4. What are some examples of the Lord fighting for the Israelites?
5. Why were the Israelites able to conquer the inhabitants of the Promised Land?
6. Explain the paradox: The Lord gave the Israelites the land of Canaan; however, the Israelites had to fight to take possession of the Promised Land.
7. What commands had God given Moses that Joshua obeyed?
8. Would anyone like to share about a battle you faced where you only had victory because God acted on your behalf?
9. What are some challenges we face in life where we can only have victory if God acts on our behalf?

## LIFE-LESSONS

1. **It may be necessary for a person to struggle in order to obtain blessings promised by God.** The Lord gave the Israelites the Promised Land of Canaan, and he gave them rest from war. However, it was necessary for Israel to fight battles in order to take possession of the land (Jos 21:43-44).
2. **God is sovereign; he has power to do whatever it takes to carry out his plans.** God threw the enemy kings and their armies into confusion (Jos 10:10). God threw hailstones against Israel's enemy. This shows that God is sovereign over nature, and that he used nature against Israel's enemies (Jos 10:11). God enabled the Israelites to complete the destruction of the enemy by prolonging the day (Jos 10:13). *The terminology used in Joshua that the sun and moon stood still should not cause us to doubt the miracle. In relation to the earth, the sun always stands still – the earth travels around the sun. People are not confused when someone says that the sun rose or set. The point is that God prolonged the day, not that God used a particular method to prolong it. God's intervention turned the tide of battle for the Israelites.*
3. **God's servants fight against a defeated enemy.** Before the battle against the five kings at Gibeon, God told Joshua that he had given the enemy's armies into Joshua's hand; they would run and not one of them would be able to stand up to Joshua (Jos 10:8). Christians also fight against a defeated enemy; Satan has been defeated by Christ (Rom 8:37-39; Heb 2:14-15; 1 Jn 3:8). Christians still fight battles every day and sin is prevalent, but Christians have the assurance that the war has already been won and they can overcome their sinful nature and the world through Christ's power.
4. **God's people can face challenges where their only hope for success is the Lord's help.** The Lord fought for Israel (Jos 10:14). Had God not fought, Israel

would not have won. Because God fought, Israel could not lose and they only needed to obey the Lord.

5. **God is responsible for every victory his people experience.** The Israelites had victory over the Canaanites because the Lord fought for Israel (Jos 10:42). In the book of Joshua, all of Israel's victories came from the Lord.
6. **Each individual is responsible for his choice to obey God. Obedience is one aspect of life that each individual believer can control.** Joshua carefully obeyed all the instructions given by God (Jos 11:15).

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

#### **Twitter Prayers** (short, concise prayers):

Invite listeners to pray about the story in "twitter" length prayers (*one or two sentences prayers*). Tell God:

- How they feel about the story.
- How they are similar to or different from Joshua and the Israelites.
- Occasions when they knew God was fighting for them.
- Decisions they need to make as a result of hearing the story.
- How the story helps them face personal life-issues.
- How the story helps them to know God better.