

Lecture 11- Joshua: God's Conquest (IV)

All these kings and their lands Joshua conquered in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Joshua 10:42

Key Terms

Human mitigation, unfaithfulness, renewal, the trouble with Gibeon, divine consummation, allocation, consecration

Lecture Objectives

- Explore some historical manifestations of the tension between God's faithful sovereignty and human unfaithfulness.
- Identify the problem with the "Gibeonite compromise" and why this might cause difficulties later.
- Identify key applications for the people of God today from having observed God's leading of his people in this historical account.

Preliminary Questions

- The issue of God's sovereign control and human responsibility (or freedom) is often discussed in today's church. What are the key issues/questions that people discuss regarding this topic? Based upon your experience so far, how do you think the book of Joshua will present the topic? How might the book of Joshua address some of these issues/questions?

Joshua: God's Conquest (IV)**I. Conquest (Humanly) Mitigated (7:1-10:28)****A. Victories stall because Israel is unfaithful (chpt. 7)**

1. Achan tempted to take that which was under the ban.
 - a. The ban = consecration to God of certain item or even of entire cities. These items must be destroyed or brought into the temple.
 - b. Most of the cities were dispossessed but not destroyed.
 - c. Why the total destruction of Jericho?
 - 1) Possibly to show the Canaanites that Israel was not acting selfishly.
 - e. Dr. Long illustration- in Paris by himself
 - f. There are no sins God does not see.
 - g. There are no completely personal and private sins.
 - h. God has the right over life and death.
2. Yahweh is angry
3. Joshua sends 5 spies to Ai
 - a. Acting on human wisdom alone
 - b. We need to be ever conscious that God leads us in our decision making.
4. Defeat
5. Joshua's doubt: to God, "Why did you...?"
6. Yahweh's response: "Stand up! It's not me, it's you! You took what was to be destroyed."
7. Sortition and stoning of Achan

What principles would you draw from the story of Achan? How would you respond to someone struggling with God's justice and mercy from this passage?

B. Yahweh's renewed call (chpt. 8)

1. "Do not be discouraged" recalls 1:9
 - a. Often we think we are above sin.
 - b. We need to have a healthy disrespect for who we are.
 - c. John Gerstner quote
 - d. We should feel good about ourselves in Christ; we should feel horrible about ourselves in our sinful human nature.

Did Achan repent? (Comparing him to Saul's defense of his actions)

2. Renewal ref.
3. King of Ai hung and buried under a pile of rocks – stone memorial to Israel's second chance (8:29)
4. 8:30 ff. stone altar on Mt. Ebal
5. Law of Moses copied on stones and read to all the people
 - a. Covenant renewal

C. Joshua spares a Canaanite city (chpt. 9)

1. Gibeon's guile
2. Israel's gullibility
3. God's neglected guidance
4. Passive unfaithfulness (self-reliance) (9:14)

Does the narrator fault the *Gibeonites* for their action? What verdict does that leave the reader regarding their action?

D. Joshua fights for a Canaanite city (10:1-28)

1. Having inadvertently spared Canaanites (Gibeonites), Joshua now finds himself in the awkward position of having to fight for them!
2. N.B. (nota bene = note well) 10:21 "No one uttered a word against the Israelites."
 - a. Possible ironic allusion to Exodus 11:7? In Hebrew = no one sharpened a tongue
 - b. Israel is unequally yoked to these Canaanite people.
 - c. Jesus prayed, "Father I do not pray that you take them out of the world, but that you preserve them in the world."
 - d. We must make sure that we do not become a Christianized sub-culture version of the world.
 - e. We need to question practices of our culture.
3. Joshua encourages his commander in terms similar to 1:5-9, but without the important injunction to follow Torah! 10:25 - significant omission

Read Josh. 10:1-15 again. How should we understand this miraculous event? Read Howard pp. 86-89. Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not?

II. Conquest (Divinely) Consummated (10:29-12:24)

- A. Success in Southern campaign (10:29-43)
- B. Success in Northern kingdom (chpt. 11)
- C. Summary of campaign results (chpt. 12)

Joshua 10:27 "still stands to this very day." What day?

Speaking of the day in which that part of the book was written; Chronicles –similar phrase – the time of the written account. This is helpful in dating the source material, but not necessarily the final inscripturated version. 1 Chron. 29:29 - The Bible's use of documents.

III. The Conquest Allocated (Chs. 13-21)

- A. There is a difference in winning the initial campaign (the blitzkrieg = lightning war) and in possessing the land fully. There is not a contradiction between Joshua and Judges. (13:1-7)
- B. Notice Caleb and Joshua – two faithful spies – are mentioned specifically. (14-19)
- C. Juridical allocations (cities of refuge) (Chpt. 20)
 - 1. 6 cities
 - 2. Anyone running for his life could go to a city of refuge and wait on due process.
 - 3. Numbers 35: 6-34
 - a. Deut. 4
 - b. Deut. 19
 - c. Josh. 20
- D. Levitical allocations - 48 cities (Chpt. 21)
 - 1. Concluding summary (21:43-45)
 - 2. Is it overstated?
 - 3. Main point at least is that God has made good on all his promises!

IV. Conquest Consecrated (Chs. 22-24)

- A. Altar of testimony- The Lord is God; The Lord is with us! (Chpt. 22)
 - 1. Stone memorial
- B. Joshua's exhortation to the leaders (Chpt. 23)
 - 1. The Divine Warrior has gone before (v.3) and continues to do so (v. 10)
 - 2. The land is conquered, allocated, and now to be fully possessed (v.4)
 - a. Difficult to translate work remains to be done (v. 4)
 - b. As Christians we are to be what we are.
 - c. "Be very strong to keep the Law of Moses and not to turn aside." (v. 6, c.f. 1:7)
 - 3. Do not associate with the Canaanites, or they will become snares and thorns!
 - 4. God has proved absolutely true to his word. (vs. 14-26)
 - a. As this applies to the promised blessing, so it applies to the curses that will follow covenant violation and apostasy.
- C. Joshua's final charge to the people (Chpt. 24)
 - 1. Joshua recounts what God has done and exhorts people to obedience.
 - a. People respond confidently (perhaps too much so; over-confidence perhaps evident in contrast between v. 15 and v. 18, as well as later)
 - b. Joshua responds, "You're not able to serve the Lord."
 - c. Jesus: "With man these things are not possible; with God anything is possible."
 - 2. Joshua (et. al.) dead in the Promised Land! (24:28-33)

V. What is the Theme of the Book of Joshua?

- 1. God gives his people the land; not a single promise he makes goes unfulfilled.
- 2. God is completely true, and he calls his people to trust him.
- 3. God is faithful even when we are faithless.
- 4. God is true to his covenant people, and he calls his people to trust him.

Is Joshua 1:4 concerning the land fulfilled? God fulfilled the promises in land in the time of Solomon.

One of Dr. Long's assignments was to read Benjamin & Matthews *OT Parallels*. Why do you think he wanted you to read that material? Do the parallels strengthen or weaken the biblical record?