

When Opposition Rises

Joshua 10 opens with a significant shift in the battle for the Promised Land. Up until this point, Joshua and the Israelites had faced isolated battles—Jericho, Ai, and smaller strategic engagements. But at this point something shifts. The victories of Israel have begun to ripple through the land, and the surrounding kings realize that this is no longer a local problem. Israel is advancing. Territory is being lost to them. And fear is spreading.

When the king of Jerusalem hears that Gibeon has made peace with Israel, he understands the threat immediately. Gibeon was not a small village—it was a powerful city with strong warriors, strategically positioned in the heart of the region. Its alignment with Israel changed everything and posed a threat to his city and the region. So instead of responding alone, five Amorite kings unite together in opposition.

What began as one battle suddenly became a coalition war.

Joshua was now facing his greatest military challenge yet. A regional alliance had formed. Opposition was multiplying. The pressure was escalating. And the enemy was no longer waiting behind fortified walls—they were mobilizing together.

But what appeared to be a moment of overwhelming threat would become one of the greatest demonstrations of the power of God in the entire book of Joshua. Because Joshua 10 is not merely about war—it is about what happens when opposition rises, when pressure intensifies, and when the people of God discover that heaven still fights for those who walk in obedience to Him.

1. The Importance of Covenantal Integrity

Joshua 10:1-6 (NLT)

1 Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured and completely destroyed Ai and killed its king, just as he had destroyed the town of Jericho and killed its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel and were now their allies. 2 He and his people became very afraid when they heard all

this because Gibeon was a large town—as large as the royal cities and larger than Ai. And the Gibeonite men were strong warriors.

3 So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent messengers to several other kings: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon. 4 “Come and help me destroy Gibeon,” he urged them, “for they have made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel.” 5 So these five Amorite kings combined their armies for a united attack. They moved all their troops into place and attacked Gibeon.

6 The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua at his camp in Gilgal. “Don’t abandon your servants now!” they pleaded. “Come at once! Save us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have joined forces to attack us.”

Five kings unite together in response to one thing: Gibeon has aligned itself with Israel.

The enemy’s aggression was not random. It was covenantal.

Sometimes the battle comes not because of what you attacked... but because of who or what you are connected to.

But Joshua understood something important: **covenant integrity matters.**

Israel may have entered the agreement foolishly, but Joshua chose to walk faithfully once the covenant had been established. He understood that honouring his word was part of walking correctly before God.

This becomes deeply important spiritually because **mature believers do not only value discernment before decisions—they also value integrity after decisions.**

There is something powerful here for the church. **Many believers want the benefits of covenant without the responsibilities of covenant. But throughout Scripture, covenant always carries responsibility.**

John 17:12 (NIV)

“While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me.”

Ephesians 6:10–12 (NIV)

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood...”

If the enemy can’t get to you directly, he will attack what is yours, or what is your responsibility, or what you are protecting.

2. The Opportunity in Opposition

Sometimes what looks like your greatest threat is actually God gathering your enemies into one place for defeat.

What looked like increased danger was actually a divine opportunity for decisive breakthrough.

Exodus 14:13–14 (NIV)

“Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today... The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

Psalms 2:1–2 (NIV)

“Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed...”

Joshua 10:8 (NLT)

“Do not be afraid of them,” the LORD said to Joshua, “for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you.”

The size of opposition does not determine the outcome of the battle.

Colossians 2:15 (NIV)

“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”

3. The Principle of Divine Partnership

Joshua 10:7-14 (NLT)

7 So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. 8 “Do not be afraid of them,” the LORD said to Joshua, “for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you.”

9 Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise. 10 The LORD threw them into a panic, and the Israelites slaughtered great numbers of them at Gibeon. Then the Israelites chased the enemy along the road to Beth-horon, killing them all along the way to Azekah and Makkedah. 11 As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the LORD destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm from heaven that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.

12 On the day the LORD gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the LORD in front of all the people of Israel. He said,

*“Let the sun stand still over Gibeon,
and the moon over the valley of Aijalon.”*

13 So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.

Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. 14 There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the LORD answered such a prayer. Surely the LORD fought for Israel that day!

Joshua was not passive.

But neither was he self-reliant.

Joshua 10:8 (NLT)

“Do not be afraid of them,” the LORD said to Joshua, “for I have given you victory over them.”

Verse 10 says:

“The LORD threw them into a panic...”

Verse 11 says:

“The LORD destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm from heaven...”

Joshua 10:12–13 (NLT)

*“Let the sun stand still over Gibeon,
and the moon over the valley of Aijalon.”*

Joshua 10:14 says:

“There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the LORD answered such a prayer.”

James 5:16–18 (NIV)

“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly...

Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...”

Psalms 121:1–2 (NIV)

*“I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.”*

4. The Principle of Relentless Pursuit

Joshua 10:16-25 (NLT)

16 During the battle the five kings escaped and hid in a cave at Makkedah. 17 When Joshua heard that they had been found, 18 he issued this command: “Cover the opening of the cave with large rocks, and place guards at the entrance to keep the kings inside. 19 The rest of you continue chasing the enemy and cut them down from the rear. Don’t give them a chance to get back to their towns, for the LORD your God has given you victory over them.”

20 So Joshua and the Israelite army continued the slaughter and completely crushed the enemy. They totally wiped out the five armies except for a tiny remnant that managed to reach their fortified towns. 21 Then the Israelites returned safely to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah. After that, no one dared to speak even a word against Israel.

22 Then Joshua said, “Remove the rocks covering the opening of the cave, and bring the five kings 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 brought them out, Joshua told the commanders of his army, “Come and put your feet on the kings’ necks.” And they did as they were told.

25 “Don’t ever be afraid or discouraged,” Joshua told his men. “Be strong and courageous, for the LORD is going to do this to all of your enemies.”

Joshua understood something dangerous:
unfinished enemies regroup.

This is not merely military strategy.
It is spiritual wisdom.

Joshua 10:19 is extremely important:

“Continue chasing the enemy and cut them down from the rear. Don’t give them a chance to get back to their towns...”

There are battles people win emotionally for a moment...
while the deeper structures underneath remain untouched.

People manage symptoms while leaving roots alive.

But hidden enemies become future battles.

Joshua 10:24 (NLT)

“Come and put your feet on the kings’ necks.”

Joshua 10:25 (NLT)

“Don’t ever be afraid or discouraged. Be strong and courageous, for the LORD is going to do this to all of your enemies.”

Romans 16:20 (NIV)

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.”

Ephesians 1:20–22 (NIV)

“[God] raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand... far above all rule and authority, power and dominion...”

Luke 10:19 (NIV)

“I have given you authority... to overcome all the power of the enemy...”

Galatians 6:9 says:

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

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Conclusion

Joshua 10 reminds us that rising opposition is not always evidence that God is absent. Sometimes opposition rises because something significant is being established.

Gibeon was attacked because of covenant alignment. The enemy recognized the importance of what God was building before Israel fully understood it themselves. And Joshua teaches us that faithfulness still matters, even when obedience becomes costly.

Then the opposition multiplied. Five kings gathered together, and what looked like a terrifying escalation became an opportunity for decisive breakthrough. The enemy gathered for war, but God was positioning the battle for judgment.

And in the middle of that conflict, Joshua shows us the power of divine partnership. Israel marched. Israel fought. Israel pursued. But heaven entered the battle. God hurled hailstones. God answered prayer. God held the sun still. Joshua fought on earth while God fought from heaven.

Finally, Joshua refused partial victory. He pursued until the resistance was broken. He understood that unfinished enemies become future battles. He did not stop at survival—he pressed toward complete victory.

And perhaps that is the great lesson of Joshua 10.

When opposition rises:

- do not retreat from what God has entrusted to you,
- do not misinterpret escalating warfare,
- do not stop praying,
- and do not stop pursuing what God has called you to overcome.

Because sometimes the very moment that looks most threatening becomes the very moment God demonstrates His power most clearly.

What looked like Israel's greatest threat became one of Israel's greatest victories.

And the same God who fought for Joshua still fights for His people today.