

Dr. David Howard, Joshua - Ruth, Session 15, Joshua 10 – Southern Campaign Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 15, Southern Campaign, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This excerpt from a lecture by Dr. David Howard **analyzes Joshua chapter 10**, focusing on the Southern Campaign against Canaanite kings. He **examines the battle near Gibeon**, highlighting God's miraculous intervention with hailstones and the subsequent Israelite victory. Howard then **discusses the poetic interpretation of verses 12-14**, arguing against a literal reading of the sun standing still, instead suggesting it's figurative language expressing the magnitude of God's triumph. He supports this interpretation by **comparing similar poetic passages in Exodus and Judges**, emphasizing the difference between poetic and prose accounts in scripture. Finally, he **concludes with a summary of the chapter's key events and themes**.

2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 15 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → Joshua-Ruth).



**Howard_Josh_Ruth
_Session15.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 15, Joshua 10 – Southern Campaign

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Howard_Josh_Ruth_EN_Session15_Josh10 Gibeon.pdf":

Briefing Document: Joshua 10 - The Southern Campaign

Overview: This session focuses on Joshua chapter 10, which details the Southern Campaign of the Israelite conquest of Canaan. The chapter highlights a major battle, the miracle of the hailstorm, the controversial "long day" passage, and the subsequent conquest of several southern cities. Dr. Howard emphasizes interpreting the text considering its genre (prose and poetry), and the importance of understanding God's role in the victories of Israel.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Structure of the Conquest:

- The Israelite conquest of Canaan unfolded in three main phases: first in the central hill country (Jericho and Ai), then in the south (Chapter 10), and finally in the north (Chapter 11).
- Chapters 9-11 form a cohesive unit, depicting Canaanite kings forming coalitions against Israel.
- Chapter 10 focuses on a coalition of Southern kings.

1. The Battle at Gibeon:

- The battle in Chapter 10 is not initially an attack *on* Israel, but rather on Gibeon, a Canaanite city that had made a treaty with Israel (Chapter 9).
- Adonai-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, fears Gibeon's alliance with Israel and assembles a coalition to attack Gibeon.
- The Gibeonites appeal to Joshua for help, invoking the treaty.
- Joshua and the Israelites are compelled by the treaty to defend Gibeon.

1. God's Intervention and Miracles:

- God assures Joshua of victory: *"Don't be afraid. I've given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you."* (Echoing God's promise in Chapter 1).

- God throws the Canaanites into a panic, leading to their rout.
- A significant miracle occurs in the form of a massive hailstorm. *"As they fled before Israel, while they were going down by the ascent of Beth Horon, the Lord himself threw down large hailstones from heaven. As far as Azekah, they died. And there were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword."*
- Dr. Howard believes the hailstorm is the primary miracle in the chapter.

1. The "Long Day" Controversy (Joshua 10:12-13):

- Joshua commands the sun and moon to stand still *"Sun, stand still at Gibeon, moon in the valley of Aijalon."*
- Traditionally interpreted as a literal miracle where the earth's rotation stopped, this explanation is debated.
- Dr. Howard refutes both the 19th century Greenwich Observatory and the 20th century NASA stories about the "missing day" as modern myths or urban legends.
- Dr. Howard advocates a hermeneutical approach based on the text's genre, arguing that the passage is **poetic** and should be interpreted as figurative language, rather than literal historical prose.

1. Poetry vs. Prose and Interpretation:

- Dr. Howard emphasizes that poetry in the Bible should be understood differently from prose; it tends to be more imaginative, emotive, and figurative.
- He provides examples from Exodus 15 (song after the Red Sea crossing) and Judges 5 (Deborah's song) to show how biblical poetry treats historical events differently from narrative prose.
- In Exodus 14, a prose account of the Red Sea crossing shows it as a dry path in the middle of the sea, while in Exodus 15 a poetic account talks about the sea "sinking" the Egyptians, illustrating the figurative nature of poetry.
- Similarly, Judges 4, a prose account of Deborah's victory provides only the facts, whereas Judges 5, a poetic version, talks about the stars and natural forces fighting on behalf of Israel.
- Dr. Howard suggests that the language regarding the sun and moon in Joshua 10:12-13 is poetic and should be seen as an expression of the overwhelming

nature of God's victory rather than a literal astronomical event. He believes the subject of verse 12 saying "he said in the sight of Israel" should be God, not Joshua. He believes it is much more appropriate for God to make commands to the sun and moon rather than Joshua, and the passage should be interpreted with God as the primary actor in these verses.

- Dr. Howard also believes the Greek translation of verse 13 is a better reading, "until *God* took vengeance against his enemies," keeping God the primary actor.

1. **The Southern Conquest and Summary:**

- The chapter concludes with a summary of the Southern Campaign, including the capture of seven key cities (Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir) as representative of a broader campaign.
- The conquest is described as a complete victory, with "none remaining, devoted to destruction."
- However, Dr. Howard notes that later chapters reveal survivors and unconquered areas, implying the "complete destruction" should be understood as a figurative, summary statement emphasizing the scope of the victory rather than a literal annihilation of every individual.
- The repetition of "Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp of Gilgal," found at both verse 15 and verse 43, may be a copyist's error.

1. **God as the Warrior:**

- The recurring theme is that God is the true warrior for Israel: "*The Lord God of Israel had fought for Israel.*" (10:42).
- He does not see Joshua as making the sun stand still, but rather that God is the one making a command for that to happen.
- The victory belongs to God, and the Israelites must rely on Him, not on their own strength or strategy.

1. **Theological Implications:**

- Chapter 10 is about the faithfulness of God to His promises and to the treaty made with Gibeon.
- The chapter shows God as the primary actor behind Israel's victories.

Conclusion:

Dr. Howard's analysis of Joshua 10 emphasizes a nuanced understanding of the text, taking into account its literary forms (prose and poetry), recognizing both literal and figurative language. He encourages a move away from a purely literal interpretation of the "long day" miracle, and to see it as a poetic way to celebrate a great victory. He argues that while the chapter emphasizes the totality of God's victory, there are reasons to believe there were still inhabitants left in the land after the conquest. The key takeaway is that God is ultimately the warrior, and the victories of Israel are a testament to His power.

This briefing provides a detailed review of the main themes and ideas presented in the source material. Let me know if you have any other requests.

4. Study Guide: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 15, Joshua 10 – Southern Campaign

Joshua 10 Study Guide: The Southern Campaign

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. Why does the Southern Coalition of kings attack Gibeon, and what role does Israel play in the conflict?
2. What is the primary miracle in Joshua 10 that the text emphasizes, and how does it demonstrate God's involvement?
3. What is the traditional interpretation of the sun and moon "standing still" in Joshua 10, and why does the lecturer find it problematic?
4. According to the lecturer, how does the poetic language of Joshua 10:12-13 compare to the narrative prose in other passages like Exodus 14 and 15?
5. In the context of the poetic verses of Joshua 10, who does the lecturer suggest is the subject of the phrase "he said" when the sun and moon were commanded to stand still?
6. How does the poem in Exodus 15 alter the depiction of the Red Sea crossing compared to the prose account in Exodus 14?
7. What is the significance of the phrase, "the Lord obeyed the voice of a man," and how does it differ from other places where God is said to respond to prayer?
8. What are some of the key cities that the Israelites capture in the southern campaign after the battle at Gibeon, and what is the narrative structure of those accounts?
9. How does the summary at the end of Joshua 10, which describes the complete destruction of the Canaanites, relate to the later chapters that mention surviving inhabitants?
10. How does the overall message of the chapter reflect on Israel's faith and the fulfillment of the covenant?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The Southern Coalition of kings attacks Gibeon because Gibeon made a peace treaty with Israel, which was seen as a threat to their power. Israel gets involved due to their treaty obligation to defend Gibeon.
2. The primary miracle is the hailstorm that kills more Canaanites than the Israelite swords; this event shows God's direct intervention in the battle, aligning with the larger theme of God fighting for Israel.
3. The traditional interpretation is that God miraculously stopped the earth from spinning to prolong the day, however, the lecturer views this as problematic, suggesting it may be more of a poetic account than a literal one.
4. The poetic verses in Joshua, like in Exodus 15 and Judges 5, uses figurative and emotive language to reflect on past events. They do not necessarily provide a literal retelling of the narrative prose accounts.
5. The lecturer suggests that God, not Joshua, is the subject of the phrase "he said" and was the one who commanded the sun and moon to stand still. The text emphasizes God's actions in conquering Canaan.
6. While Exodus 14 describes the dry land and walls of water of the Red Sea crossing, the poem in Exodus 15 uses figurative language of the waters covering and sinking the Egyptians to celebrate the victory.
7. The phrase "the Lord obeyed the voice of a man" highlights that God directly followed a human's prayer, which is a unique occurrence in Scripture up to that point, using specific language.
8. Key cities include Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir; the accounts follow a repetitive structure of conquest, emphasizing their thoroughness.
9. The summary statement is a figurative way to describe the immensity of God's victory, and not a literal account of complete annihilation; later chapters show that not everyone was destroyed.
10. The overall message reflects God's faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant through miraculous victories and showcases Israel's reliance on God rather than their own strength.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the theological significance of God's intervention in the Southern Campaign. How do the miraculous events (hailstorm, sun/moon) in Joshua 10 contribute to the overall narrative of God's power and Israel's dependence on Him?
2. Compare and contrast the roles of narrative and poetic language in the Bible, using examples from Joshua 10, Exodus 14-15, and Judges 4-5. How does each type of language contribute to understanding historical and theological meaning?
3. Evaluate the lecturer's argument against a literal interpretation of the sun standing still. What textual evidence does he use to support a figurative reading, and what are the implications of this approach for interpreting biblical miracles?
4. Examine the concept of *herem* (devotion to destruction) in Joshua 10. How does this concept shape the nature of the Israelite conquest, and what are some of the ethical considerations related to it?
5. Discuss the significance of the Gibeonite treaty in chapter 9 and how the events in Joshua 10 challenge and affirm that covenant. What does Israel's action of intervening reveal about their character, and how does God's intervention reflect on the value of the covenant?

Glossary

Amorites: A term often used in the Old Testament to refer to the inhabitants of Canaan before the Israelite conquest.

Beth Horon: A key pass in the hill country where the Israelites pursued the fleeing Amorite kings.

Book of Jashar: An extra-biblical book mentioned in Joshua 10:13, possibly a collection of heroic poems and stories.

Canaanites: The people who lived in the land of Canaan before the Israelites conquered it.

Figurative Language: Language that uses symbols, metaphors, and other non-literal devices to convey a deeper meaning or emotion.

Gilgal: The Israelite camp that served as the base of operations for the early part of the conquest.

Gibeon: A Canaanite city that made a treaty with Israel, which led to the events of Joshua 10.

Herem: The concept of dedicating something to destruction, often referring to the complete annihilation of cities and their inhabitants.

Hermeneutics: The theory and practice of interpreting texts, especially biblical texts.

Hymnic Reflection: A way of looking back at past events through a poetic or musical lens, using figurative language and emotional expression.

Southern Campaign: The military campaign by the Israelites against the coalition of kings in the southern part of Canaan in Joshua 10.

5. FAQs on Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 15, Southern Campaign, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Joshua 10 - The Southern Campaign

1. **What is the overall structure and focus of Joshua chapters 9-11?**
2. Chapters 9-11 of Joshua present a narrative of various Canaanite coalitions forming against Israel. Chapter 9 introduces the Gibeonites' treaty with Israel; chapter 10 describes the southern coalition's attack and Israel's counter-campaign; and chapter 11 portrays a northern coalition and its defeat. Together they provide a comprehensive overview of Israel's initial military engagements in Canaan with chapter 10 particularly focusing on the events and repercussions of the southern campaign, emphasizing God's role in the victories.
3. **Why does Israel become involved in the battle described in Joshua 10?**
4. Israel's involvement is a consequence of the treaty they made with the Gibeonites in Joshua 9. When a southern coalition of Canaanite kings, led by Adoni-Zedek of Jerusalem, attacks Gibeon, the Gibeonites appeal to Israel for help, invoking their treaty. This treaty obligates Israel to defend them, thus drawing Israel into the conflict. The text specifically highlights the panic felt by the Gibeonites and their desperate plea for immediate aid.
5. **What are the key events and miracles that take place during this battle?**
6. The primary miracle in this battle is the hailstorm that God sends upon the fleeing Canaanites, which inflicts more casualties than the Israelites' swords. The chapter also features a series of rapid-fire verbs to describe both the panic that God instills in the Canaanites and the swiftness of the Israelite response. The miraculous intervention of the hailstorm is what the professor believes the main miracle of this chapter is, while the "long day" is a poetic reflection of this great victory.

7. **What are the different interpretations of the "sun standing still" in verses 12-13?**
8. The traditional view interprets this passage as a literal, scientific miracle where the earth's rotation stopped, causing the sun and moon to appear stationary, thus giving Joshua more time to complete the battle. A modern idea involves the urban legend where NASA scientists found a "missing day" which is a misinterpretation of the biblical text. However, based on textual and literary analysis, the professor proposes an alternative interpretation: the passage is a short poem or hymnic reflection, using figurative and emotive language to emphasize the overwhelming nature of God's victory, similar to how poetry is used in Exodus 15 and Judges 5.
9. **What is the significance of the poetic language in verses 12-13 compared to the prose in the rest of the chapter?** The poetic language in verses 12-13 should be understood figuratively, capturing the emotional impact of God's overwhelming victory, whereas the preceding verses are more literal, focusing on the actions and the physical battle. This poetic section functions as a brief, hymnic reflection, drawing parallels to the way similar events are recounted in both prose and poetry in Exodus 14-15 and Judges 4-5. Poetry is more imaginative and emotive than the factual prose.
10. **How does the text emphasize God's role as the primary actor in the victory?**
11. The text repeatedly emphasizes God's actions: God throws the Canaanites into a panic, God strikes them down, and God sends the hailstorm. Even the "command" for the sun and moon to stand still is better understood as God's, not Joshua's, action. This highlights the idea that the victory is not due to Israel's might but God's intervention, mirroring the theme of God as a divine warrior fighting on behalf of his people throughout the book of Joshua.
12. **What is the significance of the list of the seven cities conquered after the initial battle?**
13. The list of the seven cities (Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir) symbolizes the completeness and totality of the victory in the southern campaign. Though seven cities are specifically mentioned, these cities represent a broader scope of conquest and destruction. It functions as a blanket statement to convey the overwhelming nature of God's triumph without suggesting that literally every individual in the region was killed.

14. How does the text portray the destruction of the Canaanites, and how does it reconcile with later descriptions of surviving Canaanites?

15. The text describes a seemingly complete destruction of the Canaanites, using the term "devoted to destruction" and emphasizing that "none remained." However, later chapters reveal that not all Canaanites were eliminated, and pockets of Canaanites remained. The professor argues that the description of complete destruction serves as a figurative and summarizing statement that encapsulates the immensity of God's triumph and the complete subjugation of the Canaanite forces, but not as a description of the literal annihilation of every person in the south.