



Joshua 10:25

וַיֹּאמֶר
 אֲלֵיהֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
 אַל-תִּירְאוּ וְאַל-תִּחַדּוּ
 חֲזָקוּ וְאַמְצוּ--כִּי
 קָכָה יַעֲשֶׂה
יְהוָה
 לְכָל-אֹיְבֵיכֶם,
 אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם
 נֹלְחָמִים אֹתָם.

Then Joshua
 said to them,
 "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed;
 be strong and of good courage, for thus
 the **LORD** will do to all
 your enemies against whom
 you fight."

27 Nov 2022 KALLERSON

Joshua 10:16-27 **(The Battle for Gibeon, Part II)**

After typing last week's sermon, it took several days of mulling over the meaning before I finally got my first hint of what is being pictured in this passage around 2:30 one night. I fell asleep after that and got up at 3:30 feeling relieved.

Without knowing the typology, you get a sermon with a lot of details, but nothing to explain why the words are there. A good life application sermon on verses like this is simple and quick.

Reading Matthew Henry's commentaries will fill you with all kinds of ideas about such things. They have less to do with the substance of the verses, and more to energize you to do your best to achieve whatever point he is making.

Without knowing the typology and pictures being revealed, you are really no further along the path of knowing what God is actually trying to convey to you. Verse 18 confirmed the typology, and it fit the conclusion of last week's sermon and expanded on it. Relief!

Text Verse: *"And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your eyes have seen all that the Lord your God has done to these two kings; so will the Lord do to all the kingdoms through which you pass. ²² You must not fear them, for the Lord your God Himself fights for you.'" Deuteronomy 3:21, 22*

In Deuteronomy, Moses encouraged Joshua concerning the battles ahead. He had seen the victories over Sihon and Og and was assured that things would go well for him in Canaan, too. The victory in today's passage is proof to him that what Moses had said remains true.

You might be wondering already what the passage is about. Well, what is the Bible about? Yes, you in the third row. You are correct. It is about Jesus. And what is it that Jesus offers us? Yes, you in the back, that is correct, grace – God's grace.

See you've already got it figured out. Let's finish with that and go home for a nap. Or not. Please sit back down. You have to first find out how the grace is to be given. What do five kings attacking Gibeon have to do with what has already been seen?

What does hanging five kings on five trees and then casting them into a cave have to do with Jesus? Stay tuned and we'll go over it together. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Hidden in the Cave at Makkedah (verses 16-21)

¹⁶ **But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah.**

With the poetic insert about the sun and moon standing over Israel until Joshua had avenged his enemies complete, the narrative continues with these words: *va'yanasu khamashet ham'lakhim ha'eleh va'yekhavedu bam'arah b'maqedah* – “And fled five the kings, the these, and are hidden in the cave in Makkedah.”

The word *mearah*, or cave, comes from *ur*, meaning to be exposed, bare, or made naked. They had gone into the cave to be hidden, but instead, they have been exposed. In this case, it is a specific cave as identified by the definite article – “the cave in Makkedah.”

Further, the words “in Makkedah” are disputed by some to mean “the area of Makkedah” and not the immediate city because it isn't until verse 28 that the city is said to have been taken. But that verse doesn't give the timing of the event. It only says, “in that day.”

Therefore, for all we know, it could have been during the battle itself that someone came to Joshua and said, “We have the five kings cornered in a cave in Makkedah.” The timeline of Chapter 10 has not been chronological. In the earlier verses, we can see that. There is no reason to assume it is here as well.

Hence, the words “in Makkedah” could be referring to the immediate area of the city. It may have been fortified, and that would explain the reason why the kings would go there to hide. With that understood, it next says...

¹⁷ And it was told Joshua, saying, “The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah.”

The matter is conveyed to Joshua, certainly to find out what he wanted done with them, and the words are similar to what was said in the previous verse: *nim'seu khameshet ham'lakhim nekh'beim bam'arah b'maqedah* – “Have been found five, the kings, hidden in the cave in Makkedah.”

It again says, “in the cave in Makkedah,” and the words form a sort of pun when the root meaning is understood. The place of hiding, the cave, is where they are exposed. As noted last week, the name Makkedah means Place of Shepherds. In response to this knowledge, Joshua issues his order...

¹⁸ So Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave,

The order from Joshua is: *golu avanim g'doloth el pi ham'arah* – “roll stones whopping into mouth the cave.” With enough men, really large stones could be manhandled to fill the mouth of the cave. For those inside, it would be a great chore to undo such a blockade, but just in case, he also says...

¹⁸ (con't) **and set men by it to guard them.**

v'haph'qidu aleha anashim l'shameram – “And appoint over her men to watch them.” A cave, like a city, is a feminine noun. Saying “it” is fine, but simply to identify it as feminine, I used the word her. Joshua has ordered men to be appointed to watch over it until these kings can be dealt with. In the meantime, a battle continues that must be attended to...

¹⁹ **And do not stay *there* yourselves,**

v'atem al ta'amodu – “And you, not do stand.” It was appointed for certain men to watch over the cave hiding the kings, but those appointed to continue the battle were not to simply stand there. Instead, they were to continue on...

¹⁹ (con't) **but pursue your enemies, and attack their rear *guard*.**

rid'phu akhare oyevekhem v'zinavtem – “Pursue your enemies and tail them.” Here is a word that is found for the second and last time in the Bible, *zinev*. It means to extend or to tail out, coming from *zanav*, a tail.

The only other use was in Deuteronomy 25:18 when Moses spoke of Amalek attacking the rear of Israel when they were tired and weary. Joshua instructs the main army to continue on and complete the task of destroying the enemy, and...

¹⁹ (con't) **Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the Lord your God has delivered them into your hand.”**

The words read: *al tit'num lavo el arehem* – “no give them to enter into their cities.” It would be like a present to the enemy if they failed to cut them off. And Joshua was not going to gift them such a thing. They are already defeated: *ki nathanam Yehovah elohekhem b'yedkhem* – “for has given them Yehovah your God in your (pl.) hand.

The Lord has gifted the enemy to Israel, and so Israel is not to give them an inch by allowing them to enter into their cities.

²⁰ **Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished,**

Vayhi k'khaloth Yehoshua u-bene Yisrael l'hakotam makah gedolah meod ad tumam – “And it came to pass according to Joshua and sons Israel to strike them – stroke whopping, very – until they finished.”

The meaning here is referring to the entire battle, not just the cutting off of the tail. In other words, these words initiate the summary of what began in verses 10:7-10 –

“So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. ⁸ And the Lord said to Joshua, ‘Do not fear them, for I have

delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you.’⁹ Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal.¹⁰ So the Lord routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.”

“Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter...” (v20)

The day of battle is complete before the day’s end, the people had avenged their enemies (v. 13), and there was only a few remaining to be dealt with. As it next notes...

²⁰ (con’t) **that those who escaped entered fortified cities.**

The word “that” gives a false sense of what is being said, as if it is an action based on what was just said. Rather, it is simply a statement of fact concerning the battle: *v’has’ridim sar’du mehem va’yavou el are ha’miv’tsar* – “and the survivors survived of them and entered into cities fortified.”

It is these who will be dealt with when the five cities are engaged and destroyed in verses 28-42. The battle of the kings and their armies is effectively ended at this time. Destroying the cities filled with noncombatants and those few soldiers who fled to their cities would not be a great chore but rather a mopping-up operation.

²¹ **And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace.**

With the battle sufficiently complete the people returned to Makkedah where Joshua was. The obvious but unsaid meaning is that during the battle the people were told that Makkedah would be the place where the troops settled after the battle.

The meaning of *b’shalom*, or “in peace,” is that there was no more war to be waged against the enemy at this time because the armies of the five kings had been defeated. Hence...

²¹ (con’t) **No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.**

lo kharats liv’ne Yis’rael l’ish eth l’shono – “no sharpened to sons Israel to man tongue.” It is a proverbial saying going back to Exodus 11 –

“But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” Exodus 11:7

Some translations make this an action of Israel – “none of the house of Israel harmed a man with his tongue.” But the context here is that not one of the enemies of Israel sharpened his

tongue against any man of Israel. The idea of the Gentiles being dogs would be understood from the proverb. As a dog wags its tongue, so would the Gentiles, if they could. But none dared or were able.

*These five will never bother you again
They are finished up and have seen their last
They have been the downfall of many men
But they are dead, and their time is past*

*A new Leader has taken control
And a new direction is laid out ahead
On Him we can every care and worry roll
Because those five are strung up and dead*

*Now, the enemy can no longer afflict us
We have a new hope because they are dead
Thank God for our Lord, our precious Jesus
Thank God that He is there as our Head*

II. Large Stones Against the Cave's Mouth (verses 22-27)

²² Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave."

The leader of the people will now have the leaders of the enemy brought out for the purpose of a public humiliation and execution. It is not said when this occurred. If it was on the day of the battle, then the day would be on its way to ending. If it was the next day, it would mean a prolonged humiliation for these kings.

Either way, they are now brought forth. The cave that was supposed to hide them is the beginning of their exposure...

²³ And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon.

Reading the Hebrew, the naming of the kings is almost rhythmic – *melekh Yerushalaim eth melekh Khevron eth melekh Yarmuth eth melekh Lakhish eth melekh Eglon* – "king Jerusalem, king Hebron, king Jarmuth, king Lachish, king Eglon." They are named as if they are being brought out in order to be presented to the victorious leader...

²⁴ So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua,

Here, the kings are presented to Joshua as vanquished enemies. Their power is entirely removed, and soon their presence will be removed as well. It is at the time of bringing them out...

24 (con't) **that Joshua called for all the men of Israel,**

Rather, it is singular: *va'yiqra Yehoshua kal ish Yis'rael* – “and called Joshua unto every man Israel.” It is as if he is personally addressing each person before him. Each should take heed and understand the importance of the event to take place.

24 (con't) **and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him,**

va'yomer el qetsine anshe ha'milkhamah hehalekhu ito – “and said unto the rulers men the war the goers with him.” With all of the men heeding Joshua, he then speaks to their rulers.

Here is a new word, *qatsin*, or ruler. It comes from *qatsah* meaning to scrape off. Hence, it is one who determines or decides a matter, as if scraping off the superfluous in order to come to a conclusion or a resolution. It is not a common word in Scripture, being used just twelve times, but a good verse to get the sense of it is –

“By long forbearance a **ruler** is persuaded,
And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.” Proverbs 25:15

They will be making decisions in the future, and so they are to be given an object lesson concerning the state of the enemies they will face in the future based on the enemies they will now humiliate. As such...

24 (con't) **“Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.” And they drew near and put their feet on their necks.**

Though still alive, the kings are utterly powerless. In this state, they will be perfectly humiliated. The foot upon the neck demonstrates possession. They possess the authority over these kings, and thus over their domains.

The *tsavar*, or back of the neck, is the spot that signifies the settling of a matter, either by the individual or externally. The word comes from *tsur*, an adversary.

If one turns the back of his neck toward the Lord, he has made himself an adversary of the Lord. If one is pursued by an enemy, he will turn his neck to find out how close he is. One can have a yoke on his neck, being brought under external control. If one puts his neck to the work, it means he has set himself to do the job diligently.

These men are setting themselves upon the enemy while demonstrating total possession, and thus authority, over them. What is happening here is well reflected by the words of David –

“For You have armed me with strength for the battle;
You have subdued under me those who rose against me.
⁴¹ You have also given me the necks of my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who hated me.” 2 Samuel 22:40, 41

²⁵ **Then Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage,**

The words closely match words already spoken by Moses to Joshua, to the people, by the Lord to Joshua, and to Joshua from the people. Joshua speaks in like manner to these men...

²⁵ (con’t) **for thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.”**

The word “against” isn’t in the Hebrew. Also, the word “you” is emphatic. It says, “to all your enemies whom **you** fight.” Any enemies they face in battle will be totally vanquished just as these kings under their feet will be.

With this promise to the people made, and with the humiliation of the enemies brought upon them while they are alive, they will next become another type of humiliation before all the people...

²⁶ **And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them,**

More precisely, it reads, “And struck them, Joshua, thus, and put them to death.” The kings were brought into total subordination, they were humiliated, and then they were put to death – all by Joshua...

²⁶ (con’t) **and hanged them on five trees;**

Again, it is credited as the action of Joshua: *va’yitlem al khamishah etsim* – “and hanged (sg.) them upon five trees.” One tree for each of the kings. The word *etsim* means “wood.” It could be trees, stakes, poles, or so on made from the tree.

As for the act itself, Matthew Poole rightly says, “to their shame and disgrace, and the terror of others.” It is well stated. It is a note of shame upon the enemy, and it is a note of warning and terror upon those who understood its significance. Next, in accord with the law of Moses, it says...

²⁶ (con’t) **and they were hanging on the trees until evening.**

The Hebrew is more precise – “until the evening.” It is on the same day that they were hung. On that very same day at evening, which is directed in the law...

²⁷ **So it was at the time of the going down of the sun *that* Joshua commanded,**

vayhi l'eth bo ha'shemesh tsivah Yehoshua – “And it came to pass to time go the sun, commanded Joshua.” It is the end of the day and just before the beginning of the new day that Joshua instructs the men to accomplish the word of the law...

27 (con't) **and they took them down from the trees,**

va'yoridum me'al ha'etsim – “and they took them from upon the trees.” This is in accord with Moses' words –

“If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.” Deuteronomy 21:22, 23

It is the same symbolism as when the king of Ai was hanged. These men died in sin, a moral issue. It isn't the physical body that is being referred to, even though defilement does come to one who touches a dead body. And it is not a ceremonial defilement that is being referred to. A moral issue is being addressed.

And more, it does not mean that a person who is hanged is accursed in the sense of not being saved. That would mean that any saved person who was hanged on a tree could not be saved. That is not the issue. The meaning is that the person becomes a curse when hanged on a tree. Why?

Because sin is in all people. Anyone who is publicly displayed on a tree is dead. Death is the final penalty for sin. It is not the physical body, but the sin that is being focused on. *Sin* hangs on the tree and that sin is accursed of God.

Therefore, the hanging is a sign of being accursed. In leaving the bodies up overnight, the corpses would defile the land. Hence, Joshua instructs compliance with the precept of the law. They...

27 (con't) **cast them into the cave where they had been hidden,**

The bodies were returned to the cave. Remember that the word cave comes from *ur*, to be exposed. If you dig a cave, it exposes what was once not seen. It is like a mental pun where they hid in this place that was exposed. Now, they are being returned to that place...

27 (con't) **and laid large stones against the cave's mouth,**

va'yasimu avanim gedoloth al pi ham'arah – “And placed stones whopping upon mouth the cave.” In verse 18, they rolled stones into the cave's mouth. In verse 22, they opened the cave's mouth. Now they place stones upon the cave's mouth. It is shut and covered over. With that, it next says a most unusual phrase...

27 (fin) **which remain until this very day.**

ad etsem ha'yom ha'zeh – “Until bone, the day, the this.” The meaning is the exact same day, as in “bone of my bones.” The writer is penning the narrative, and he says, “until this very same day.” The same as what?

This same term, “the very same day,” is used in Genesis 7:13, Genesis 17:23, Exodus 12:17, and Joshua 5:11. Each time, it is referring to something that happened on the same day that something else has happened.

But when the word “until” is used along with “this day,” it refers to the day the author writes the passage. And so there is a conundrum. Keil attempts to reconcile the words by saying –

“If, therefore, it has any meaning at all in the present instance, we must connect the whole clause with the one preceding, and even construe it as a relative clause: ‘where they (the kings) had hidden themselves, and they (the Israelites) had placed large stones at the mouth of the cave until that very day’ (on which the kings were fetched out and executed).” Keil

But what would be the point of saying this? Rather, it appears that the author is either saying, “Until this very same day,” meaning the day he is writing, which would be forced and not have any real meaning, or personally, I think he is extending the thought beyond his day of writing to the day when his words are read, whenever that may be.

The meaning would then be that the kings are buried in that cave forever. As unusual as that may be, it is what I propose.

*Their bodies have been cast away
And the mouth of the cave is covered over forever
Before us stands a brand-new day
We shall never return to the past, no, not ever!*

*What marvelous things has our God done
When He sent us Jesus Christ our Lord
In Him is the victory, God's own Son
He has slain the enemy with His glorious sword*

*We shall go forth in the strength of Jesus
And we shall do it for eternal days
Great and wonderful things God has done for us
And so, forever and ever we shall sing His praise*

III. Pictures of Christ

In Chapter 9, the Gibeonites were brought into a covenant relationship with Israel. Now, they are being attacked by five kings, led by the king of Jerusalem and who are said in verse 5 to be of the Amorites, even though they are not actually all Amorites. Amorite means Renown.

Verse 1 of Chapter 10 notes the name Adoni-zedek and says he is the king of Jerusalem. He had heard of the destruction of Ai. That was typologically the ending of the law for Israel. It also noted the destruction of Jericho. That was typologically given as coming out of the state of anathema, being restored to access to God.

Still in verse 1, it noted the king had heard that Gibeon had made peace with Israel. They were brought into the covenant protections. Gibeon is etymologically tied to the name Gabbatha, the knoll where Christ was judged.

Jesus submitted Himself to the Roman authority in order to establish the New Covenant in His blood. The Gibeonites submitted themselves to Joshua in order to enter into the covenant relationship that had been established with Israel.

Now, this covenant relationship is in jeopardy because of five kings who I suggest are representative of Israel's depiction in the books of Moses.

They are of Jerusalem/Foundation of Peace – Genesis (the Lord establishes Israel). Hebron/Alliance – Exodus (an alliance between Israel and the Lord). Jarmuth/Elevation – Leviticus (the priestly class who interacts with the Lord). Lachish/Obstinate – Numbers (Israel's rejection of the Lord). Eglon/Heifer-like – Deuteronomy (Moses reminds Israel of their apostasy with the calf in Deuteronomy 9).

Jerusalem being the head of this alliance would then represent the law itself, it being the city from which the law is administered as Paul notes in Galatians 4:25.

Because of this, the contents of this passage are not unlike those of Genesis 34. These kings, representing the law, have come to destroy Gibeon just as Judaizers of the past and the Hebrew Roots movement today attempt to destroy the faith of the Gentiles who have come to Christ.

As Matthew Henry says of this passage, not tying it in with the law, but seeing it as revenge against Gibeon, "As Satan, so wicked men, cannot abide to lose any of their communitie." This is exactly what Judaizers and Hebrew Roots folks do.

Verse 4 noted the call to attack Gibeon "for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel." This is just what the Gentiles did with Christ and what the Judaizers in Acts and Galatians did against those same Gentiles. They are not of Israel because they are not of Christ (Romans 9:6). Instead, they are of the law which was fulfilled and ended by Christ.

Verse 5 noted that they are the five kings of the Amorites, or Renown, even though they are not actually Amorites. It is they who are self-exalted because of their adherence to the law. "We are the Renown!" There it notes who they are kings of, but not their names, just where they ruled. Their rule is the law, the five books of Moses, and they have camped before Gibeon (think of Gabbatha) to wage war against it.

Verse 6. The men of Gibeon sent to Joshua (Jesus) at Gilgal (Liberty) pleading for help. This is exactly the substance of the council at Jerusalem in Acts 15. The Judaizers wanted to bring the Gentiles under the bondage of the law. An appeal was made to clarify that matter. It was clarified beautifully in the letter penned by the council.

As for the attack by the Judaizers, it is an attempt to destroy the grace of God in these people. But Gibeon calls out with a pun on the name of Joshua, "come up to us quickly, save us and help us." The word translated as "save" is the word, *yasha*, from which Joshua's (and Jesus') name is derived. The call is well reflected by the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2. The people have asked for Joshua's salvation. They need grace, not the law –

"We then, *as workers together with Him* also plead with *you* not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says:

'In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you.'

Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation."

Verse 6 also said that all the kings of the Amorite (sg.) who dwell in the mountain (sg.) had gathered against Gibeon. It is the mountain (the government) of the law. With that, verse 7 noted that Joshua ascended from Gilgal (Liberty) to help the Gibeonites. One cannot help but see the words of Paul in this –

"Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴ And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), ⁵ to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." Galatians 2:3-5

The Lord said to Joshua that He had delivered the enemy into his hand. The Judaizers and Hebrew Roots people will not prevail. They will all be swept away. The credit of the march from Gilgal was in the singular – Jesus ascended from Liberty to aid Gibeon.

It then noted in verse 10 that the Lord (Yehovah) routed the enemy before Israel and "killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon" (think of Gabbatha). From there, they were chased to Beth Horon, the House of Freedom.

It is reflective of the words of Jesus, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). It is through Christ’s fulfillment of the law, not ours, that one is set free. He has defeated the law. Verse 10 also noted Azekah and Makkedah. The enemy is defeated before a field properly Tilled for the seed and in a Place of Shepherds that watch over the flock.

It is in this area that it said the Lord destroyed the enemy. He will never forsake His people and He will destroy the enemy before them.

Verses 12-14 were the poetic insert concerning the work of the Lord on behalf of Israel. It is the Lord who defeated the enemy. The sun standing over Gibeon would be reflective of Gabbatha. The moon over *emeq Ayalon* or the Depth of Aijalon would then be where Christ derived His strength on the same day before He went to the cross – “Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him” (Luke 22:43).

The point is that in a single day according to Hebrew reckoning (evening to evening) the enemies of Israel had been defeated. The poetic nature of the words highlights the fact. The avenging of the people Israel over their enemies (verse 13) means that they have done this through Christ, not on their own.

The note concerning the Book of Jasher tells us that Jesus, the Upright One (the Lord) fights for Israel. As the Gibeonites have become a part of the commonwealth of Israel, it is inclusive of them as well. The account also noted that the entire battle was won on a single, finished (perfect) day.

Verses 13 and 14 summed this up noting that the Lord heeded the voice of a man. It is reflective of the words of Psalm 66, a messianic psalm –

“If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear.
¹⁹ *But* certainly God has heard *me*;
He has attended to the voice of my prayer.” Psalm 66:18, 19

Verse 15 curiously ended with Joshua and all Israel returning to the camp at Gilgal. That actually doesn’t happen until the end of the chapter, but it is placed there to indicate the Liberty that is found in Christ’s finished work, not the law.

With that, this week’s passage opened with the five kings hiding in the cave in Makkedah. They tried to hide in a place that has been exposed at the Place of Shepherds. It tells us that in the church, the law is exposed to reveal Christ, not itself.

Joshua then said to roll large stones into its mouth. The law is shut up by Christ –

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

-Romans 3:19

It is the law by which we stand guilty before God. It is Christ who takes that guilt away. With that, it said to “appoint over her men to watch them.” The cave is the Torah (both feminine nouns) where the law, meaning the five books of Moses, is. That is appointed to be watched over until Joshua (Jesus) directs.

While they are hidden there, Israel continued to pursue the enemies, tailing them. Every remnant of law observance must be dealt with and eliminated. Grace cannot be earned. Jesus is the true Israel who fulfills every aspect of the law, thus defeating each for His people.

With the entire law vanquished (verse 20), leaving only those who escaped into fortified cities (who will be dealt with later) the power of the law is effectively ended. Israel returned to Makkedah in peace. Not a word could be spoken against Israel. Those who have trusted in Christ have prevailed. The symbolism of His victory is then given when the mouth of the cave was opened.

The Law is opened, exposing what is hidden there. The five kings, the five books of Moses, are brought out and are named again: king Jerusalem, king Hebron, king Jarmuth, king Lachish, and king Eglon. They had come against the people and now they will be ended.

Every man of Israel is called forward and the rulers, the *qatsin*, those who scrape off or determine a matter, are told to place their feet on the necks of the kings. They now possess them in their entirety, signified by the foot. Making it on the neck signifies the settling of the matter. The law was an adversary, and now it is defeated.

With this, Joshua encouraged them to not be afraid or dismayed, but to be strong and of good courage. Further, it said, “for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.” As it says in Hebrews 13 –

“The Lord *is* my helper;

I will not fear.

What can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:6

Holding on to Christ’s victory means that there is complete victory. The teachings of the Judaizers cannot harm when one holds to Christ’s fulfillment of the law. That is then seen in verse 26 where Joshua (Jesus) struck the five kings, putting them to death.

It is in Christ’s death that the law died. This is the typology being seen. The victory over the law is complete, but the picture of it is not yet finished. That is seen in the five kings being hung on

five trees. Their place of reign was mentioned three times in this passage, but their names were only one mentioned once. Each looks to Christ and His work –

- Adoni Zedek – Lord of Righteousness
- Hoham – Whom Yehovah impels
- Piram – Indomitable
- Japhia – Illuminous
- Debir – Place of the Word

What is being seen here is the same typology as with Ai. Charles Ellicott was close to seeing this. He said, “Upon the cross of the true Joshua, the enemies of the Israel of God are exhibited. ‘He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (Colossians 2:15).’”

This is just what is being seen. Christ is the King of the law. He and no other. And He was *talah*, hung on a tree, becoming a curse for us. Paul explains that in Galatians –

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).” Galatians 1:13

The five books of Moses, known as the law, are defeated, but the curse of the law stands without this part of Christ’s work. Jesus became a curse so that His people could be freed from the law’s demands.

Sin is a moral, not a physical or ceremonial, issue. It infects all people. Christ became a curse under the law. He paid the final penalty for sin. Our sin, in His fulfillment and ending of the law, hung on the tree, becoming that curse of the law.

This picture goes beyond that of the hanging of the king of Ai. It lets us know that it isn’t just a part of the law, such as Deuteronomy, that Christ fulfilled, but He is the embodiment of the entire law. The hanging of these five kings reveals this.

Once taken down from the trees, in accordance with the law, it then says that the kings’ bodies were cast into the cave. The place of being exposed will now hide the law. But more, it says that whopping stones were placed “upon” the mouth of the cave. Not only is the law hidden away, it is completely covered up, being entirely removed from sight through the work of Christ.

With that, the verses ended with the highly unusual phrase that this remained so “until this very same day.” The only explanation I can find for these words is what I already gave. The words extend to any time that they are read, forever. The power of the law, found in the five books of Moses, is removed forever in Christ.

Matthew Poole was cited earlier concerning these five kings, saying, “to their shame and disgrace, and the terror of others.” The law is ashamed before Christ. It has no power against Him because He has prevailed over it.

But this fact is also a note of warning and what should rightfully be terror upon those who hear and fail to understand the significance of what occurred. To throw oneself back under the law is a self-condemning act.

The Bible ends with the words, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.” The law is diametrically opposed to grace. If one chooses the law, he has nowhere else to go but to fulfill the law. Paul says as much using circumcision as a benchmark of the law, “And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law” (Galatians 5:3).

The Lord has shown us this same theme so many times since Genesis 1:1 that we simply cannot overlook or ignore it. The question for all people is, “Where do you want to hang your hat?” You can trust in the law and be judged by the law, meaning every single precept found in the law, or you can trust in Christ’s fulfillment of it and be freed from its power.

This was one purpose of the law. It was to show us what God expects in order to be right with Him. In seeing the enormity of the burden, the law carries, it was to then lead us to Jesus.

Hence, to say that we will live according to the law’s standard is to claim a self-righteousness equal to God. It is self-deceiving and it can only lead to condemnation. To trust in Jesus is to trust in God’s provision, thus giving all glory to God, not to self. Be wise, be discerning, and yield yourself to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. And please, do so today.

Closing Verse: *“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” Colossians 2:13-15*

Next Week: Joshua 10:28-43 *His victory is complete and it is grand...* (So Joshua Conquered All the Land) (22nd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Battle for Gibeon, Part II

But these five kings had fled
And hidden themselves at Makkedah in a cave
And it was told Joshua, saying
“The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah
-----all trembly and not so brave”

So Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave
And set men by it to guard them like a prison yard
And do not stay there yourselves
But pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard

“Do not allow them to enter their cities, please understand
For the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand”

Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel
Made an end of slaying them, not showing any pities
With a very great slaughter, till they had finished
That those who escaped entered fortified cities

And all the people returned to the camp
To Joshua at Makkedah, in peace – all was well
No one moved his tongue
Against any of the children of Israel

Then Joshua said, “Open the cave’s mouth, so let it be
And bring out those five kings from the cave to me”

And they did so
And brought out those five kings to him from the cave:
The king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth
The king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon
-----for them, things were looking grave

So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua
That Joshua called for all the men of Israel
And said to the captains of the men of war
Those who went with him, to them he did tell...

“Come near, put on the necks of these kings your feet”
And they drew near and put their feet on their necks
-----a sign of their defeat

Then Joshua said to them
“Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, that wouldn't be right
Be strong and of good courage
For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies
-----against whom you fight”

And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them
And hanged them on five trees
And they were hanging on the trees until evening
Attracting lots of flies and fleas

So it was at the time of the going down of the sun
That Joshua commanded
And they took them down from the trees
Cast them into the cave where they had been hidden
-----as the situation demanded

And laid large stones against the cave's mouth
-----big stones on display
Which remain until this very day

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...