

## Joshua 07-07-06b

Let's pick up our study in Joshua chapter 10. We're looking at the end and fixing to move into chapter 11, Lord willing. The idea here, now I gave you an example at the end of the first session about how this spiritual conflict is actually engaged.

And that's an easy one. You could think of that all by yourself. Oh well, there's forces of evil out in the world and we've got to engage the rampant insidious creep of badness that's in our society and so on.

That was sort of a gift. That was a gimme. You could have figured that out by yourself.

I still want to emphasize that what we're looking at in Joshua is not just dusty history from 3,400 years ago. It is written for us. We are supposed to be making something out of this.

Tonight and tomorrow and the next day. We don't grab a sword and go slay people. We don't go out and find criminals and put social justice in effect or whatever.

How do we engage the spiritual conflict? You can't get a better passage to teach the spiritual conflict than Joshua, the battle of Jericho, the battle of Ai, the treaty with the Gibeonites, the sun standing still, the valley of Eglon, this section right here. If there's any place where we ought to be able to learn about our wrestling match with the principalities and powers, it's here. Right? Wouldn't you think? Can you think of a better battle scenario than this one? Especially since the good guys are winning.

This is not the sons of Eli going out with the ark and coming back with golden rats and tumors. Right? This is the good guys doing what they're supposed to do. It's an example of faith.

This is right up there with David and Goliath and the great days of the mighty men that will come along some 400 years later. So what should we learn from this? What is the personal application? How do we do what Joshua and the people are doing here in our spiritual conflict? Because that's what we're supposed to learn. If we don't figure that out, we're largely wasting our time studying this, aren't we? Because there's no application.

It's just fun history. So how do we do it? Well, we've already laid a little bit of groundwork. We know that this warfare is spiritual and spiritual life is in the realm of thinking.

It's in the realm of ideas. You are what you think. Our actions, our speech flow out of our thoughts.

Everything begins with thoughts, right? If I asked you to give me three categories of sin,

most of you would be able to give the very same three categories that I'm about to mention. What are the three categories of sin? There is mental attitude sin. There is sin of the tongue.

And there is overt sin. I take a hatchet and I chop down your cherry tree. That's an overt sin.

I say something I shouldn't say. I am sharp-tongued. My tongue is set on fire by the flames of hell and I say things I shouldn't say.

I gossip. I'm malign. I judge.

I backbite. I am vindictive. I'm implacable.

But where do overt sins begin? Where do sins of the tongue begin? I wouldn't be saying what I'm saying sinfully. I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing sinfully if it had not started with thinking, right? The battle is in the mind. We are what we think.

You are what you think. It's not what other people think. It's not a popularity contest, the judgment seat of Christ.

Jesus is not going to say, okay, who's Sam's friends? All of y'all come up here. Should I let him in or not? What sort of rewards do you think he deserves? I might have fooled people. They might think I'm a really great guy and I'm just a rascal.

Man looks on the outward appearance. Where does God look? Where does God look? Say it. On the heart.

Where is the spiritual battle? In the heart. Where does the Word of God do its work? In the heart. The battle is in the heart.

Principle number one, point number one in the spiritual conflict. If you want to learn something from studying Joshua and the victories in the land of Canaan, this battle is in the heart. It's a spiritual battle.

It's a thinking battle. You've got to think through this battle. We have to think our way to victory.

Everything flows from that. What you say and what you do starts with what you think. It's true for all of us.

That's why we study the Word of God. That's why we're looking at Joshua because this ought to make a difference in the way we think, right? So, what difference should it make in the way we think? You're going to pray tomorrow, sun stand thou still, and moon in the valley of Eglon? Why would you pray that? How does this pertain? Well, we can see external influences of darkness and we can resist those in proper ways. And I close

the first lesson by pointing out that there are proper ways and improper ways to resist evil in the world.

We are not vigilantes. We are not the arm of God going forth to slay and to judge and to punish and to be the, you know, the court. Hi there, I'm your judge and jury.

I have found you guilty of being a pervert and now I'm going to abuse you and malign you and cause you problems. I'm going to stand outside your home with a bullhorn and yell things through your windows and so on. There are Christians who do this and they are wrong with a capital R. They're as wrong as they can be.

That's not our job. How do we resist in the unseen conflict? There's a proper way and an improper way. There are channels through which we express the light that we represent.

We have a vote. If you're old enough, you have a vote. You can speak in the forum of ideas when you're in conversation in school or in a place of employment or in some other public setting and a conversation is taking place.

You can express viewpoint and you can say the essential nature of the thing as the old adage goes is you can love the sinner and hate the sin. We are not out to punish individuals but we do resist the sins that individuals commit and the evil lifestyles that individuals will adopt and there are certain things that we will not do. For example, going back to my rather easy illustration at the end of the first session with homo... Suppose you had a homosexual in your family or suppose you had a close friend or someone in your periphery who is in a deeply committed relationship with somebody else of the same sex.

How do you deal with that? What if you go to school with someone? Many of you are going to be heading off to college at some point and your classmates are going to be wonderful, loving, sweet-natured, sense of humor, snappy dressing homosexuals. How do you behave? Do you eschew all contact? Do you try to not be in the same room? Do you squirm away if they sit next to you at an assembly or in a classroom? What's your behavior? You treat them like any other person. Listen, all of us sin.

A lot of us have patterns of sin that we have not yet eliminated. Being a chronic gossip is just as bad as being a chronic homosexual in a lot of ways. Being a chronic worrier, being a chronic complainer, being a chronic wet blanket on those who are trying to develop their faith because of your intellectually superior knowledge of doctrine and so forth, you can put out the spirit's fire in another believer by dampening their enthusiasm, by over-correcting.

Especially if you have a nature like mine where you want every I to be dotted and every T to be crossed, it can just be like fingernails on a chalkboard when somebody starts saying incorrect things about scripture and you want to correct and you want to stop

them and you want to get everything right. And it's not always the right time to do that. So, we have to rein ourselves in in the outside.

But, I'm still asking this question. Where is the wrestling match? Where do you resist the principalities and powers? Point number one, it's in the soul, it's in the thinking. How are they going to engage us in our own soul? We've talked about the world.

There's evil in the world and there's a right way and a wrong way to engage evil in the world. You don't say, oh look, there's an evil person and just go punch him in the nose. There are Christians who have pulled weapons and shot abortion doctors because they think that they're doing an evil thing.

They will answer for that at the judgment seat. You do not answer evil with evil. You don't attack in ignorance.

There is a way, there is a means, there is a right way. But that's external. I want to talk about internal because this is where we spend most of our time.

How many times are you going to fight evil in the world? Most of the time, it's going to be an internal battle. How do the forces of darkness attack us in our thinking? Well, I want you to look at Joshua in verse 29 of chapter 10. Joshua passed from Makeda, the place of the cave.

The heads of this confederation have been slain. They've been made an example of. Joshua has made an application.

And they went next to Libna. They fought against Libna. The Lord delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel.

That's now six kings. He struck it and all the souls who were in it with the edge of the sword, he let none remain in it. But did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

Notice it doesn't say as he did to the kings of the confederation. As he had done to the kings at Makeda. He didn't do the hanging up and the waiting until later and then putting them in a cave.

This is the prototype. There is a precedent that has been set at Jericho. And the precedent is not Makeda.

The kings at Makeda were treated like the king of Jericho. The king at Libna is treated like the king of Jericho. Jericho is the watershed event.

That's the one where the walls fell flat. No other walls are going to fall flat in Canaan. That was the signal, symbolic presence of God knocking down the fortifications.

And that king is associated with that victory. All other kings are going to be treated like

the king of Jericho. Then Joshua passed from Libna, and all Israel with him, to Lachish, or lake-ish you sometimes hear.

And they encamped against it and fought against it. The Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel who took it on the second day and struck it and all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword. That means Libna was the previous day.

Lachish is the second day. This is a lightning raid. Horem king of Gezer came up to help Lachish and Joshua struck him and his people until he left none remaining.

From Lachish, Joshua passed to Eglon and all Israel with him and they encamped against it and fought against it. They took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword. All the people who were in it, he utterly destroyed that day according to all that he had done to Lachish.

Joshua went up from Eglon and all Israel with him to Hebron and they fought against it. They took it, struck it with the edge of the sword. It's kings, it's king, all its cities.

Hebron is a collection. It's a metroplex. Hebron is kind of like Dallas and Richardson and Plano and it's a collection.

It's a confederation of closely located little towns. It's king, it's cities and all the souls who were in it. He left none remaining according to all that he had done to Eglon.

Utterly destroyed it and all the souls who were in it. Then Joshua returned and all Israel with him to Debir and they fought against it. He took it and it's king and all its cities.

They struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed all the people who were in it. Left none remaining as he had done to Hebron. So he did to Debir and it's king.

As he had done also to Libna and it's king. Now, this seems kind of repetitive, doesn't it? Why couldn't he just say, Makeda, Libna, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, Debir, Joshua went in and killed the king, killed all the people. Summary.

Why is this given to us repetitively? Well, first of all, think about the original recipients of this book. A lot of us who lived here in Dallas for some time, do you know the story of how Dallas became a town and how this land became a part of the state of Texas and so on? Kids who go to public school here in Texas, you take Texas history just like I took Oklahoma history and California history and so on. Wherever you've lived, you get the history of that state and you find out how you came to be in that state as it is.

This is for Israel. Israelite generations after will know these place names in detail, just like we know where Richardson and Plano and Garland and Saxe and the colony and all these other places around Dallas. We know where those places are if we've been here

any length of time.

And so if somebody says, well, this is how Stephen F. Austin came into Texas. This is what took place hither and yon. This is what took place in San Antonio.

This is where Sam Houston did his thing and why Houston is named after him. This is why Stephen Austin has a town named after him. This is why Dallas is named Dallas.

You learn the history of Texas and how these places came to be. Well, first and foremost for Israel, when you mention Lydna and Lakeish and Eglon, they know these places. They know exactly where they are.

Oh, I've got a cousin that lives down there. I've been down that way. We went on a trip to sell some livestock down there.

They've walked this land. They've seen the terrain from up north. Now remember, Gibeon is not too far from Jerusalem, not too terribly far from Jericho.

Remember, Joshua makes it in an all-night forced march to Gibeon to launch this battle. These towns, Lydna, Lakeish, and Eglon are pretty much in a straight line north to south. And these cities guard the approaches to what will be soon called the hill country of Judah.

If you want to get up into the hill country, you know there's ridges and there's steep cliffs and inaccessible areas, and then there are certain approaches so that you can get up on the high ground. And once you're up on the high ground, anybody that wants to get you has to attack uphill. So you do not want your enemies getting up on the high ground in the hill country of Judah and being unapproachable.

It's as good as being in a fortified city. So Joshua goes down and takes Lydna and Lakeish and Eglon. These three cities are the major approaches.

You have to go through these. They sit on the roads. They sit on the access points to the high ground of the whole southern area.

If you control Lydna and Lakeish and Eglon, you can prevent anybody from getting into the hill country. You own the hill country at that point. It's yours.

You can move into the hill country should you be attacked. It's a strategic location, each of these. Then Joshua turns and drives right into the heartland of this southern portion of Canaan.

And this is Hebron and Debir. These are the two biggest cities in that whole region. Now, remember the original five kings of the confederation? Who was the guy that started up the confederation? Remember his name? Adonai Zedek, Lord of Righteousness.

Kind of like Melchizedek, King of Righteousness. Lives in the same town, later to be called Jerusalem. It's not called Jerusalem at this point.

It's called Jebus. That's where Adonai Zedek is. He's long, long centuries before Melchizedek had been the king of that town.

And the hereditary title, kind of like Pharaoh, or who's the guy I can never think of that Abraham and Isaac both talked to down there? Abimelech, thanks. Abimelech, my father was the king. It's a hereditary title.

It's a title, not a name. Adonai Zedek is the name of the guy who is the current reigning prince, if you will, in Jebus, or Jerusalem. I don't see Jerusalem in this list of conquered cities, do you? He was the leader of the confederation.

He got killed. Adonai Zedek is one of the guys whose corpse is rotting away inside that cave up at Makeda, right? Why didn't they go take Jerusalem? It's not in this list. What did they take? They took all of these towns that are now defenseless because their troops are all laying out there, dead from hailstones and Israelite swords.

And they went and took those cities, burned them with fire, slew all of the inhabitants. Now, I want to say this carefully, because I don't want to give the wrong impression about current events and current situations. But, and I think Dan made this point on the break as well.

Are the Israelites going to have any sort of Palestinian problem coming back to commit acts of terror or try to carve out a state for themselves in this southern area? They have been completely wiped out. There is no resistance in these towns, is there? Joshua doesn't have to. It's sort of like the law.

The law of Moses has no provision for imprisonment. They don't have a prison population. They don't have to tax the population to support thousands of prisoners who are languishing in jail, do they? There's no provision for imprisonment in the law.

You commit a crime, you're brought before the judge, you're sentenced, you either pay a fine or you get beaten with stripes or you make restitution or if it's a capital crime, you're executed and the thing is done. It's over with. If you murder someone and you flee to a city of refuge, that's a whole separate thing.

But it's just not an issue. Prisons and jails are not an issue because there's no such thing. It's not a part of the policy.

Same thing here. You don't have an indigenous population chafing and languishing under the Israelites who have just come in and occupied and they're trying to sit on top of a larger population than themselves and keep them in subjection. They've wiped them out.

There is no resistance left in Lydna or Lachish or Eglon. I mean, that's why it says there wasn't even a dog left to sharpen his tongue against the Israelites. There was no tongue left to even wag.

Now, harsh and cruel. How could God make them go in and do all of this? Let me ask you a question. Did the Canaanites know the Israelites were coming? What did Rahab say? We have heard.

We've known you were coming for four decades. We have known for 40 years, ever since y'all left Egypt, and we've heard what your God said and what your God has done. We've known you were coming.

We knew this was your destination. We've heard the stories of Abraham. We know about Isaac.

It's a part of our literature and our culture. We know about this history, that Abraham thinks his God promised him this land and now that same God has delivered Abraham's descendants out of Egypt and they're heading up here. We don't really know what's taking them so long.

Seems like we're getting a reprieve, and a reprieve, and a reprieve. What would a smart Canaanite, especially when he reads the Law of Moses splashed on the rocks up there at Mount Ebal, what would a smart Canaanite do? Pack! A smart Canaanite would pack. This God is unstoppable.

His people are coming in and taking this land. Let's go up there to Chaldea. Let's see what's up north.

Let's take a trip. Let's vanish ourselves from this region. I can read on the rocks the extent to which this people is going to come in and conquer.

Let's leave. These people do not believe that God can give the land back to the people or they are unwilling to leave, but they have had fair warning. They've had nearly half a century of warning, haven't they? If they are still there to be slaughtered, if those children are still there, that's their parents' fault for not waking up and believing that God would do what He said He would do.

What is the consequence for all unbelievers? If you think getting slaughtered is bad, look at the Lake of Fire. God gave them 40 years' fair warning, and they didn't leave, so now they die. I don't think that's cruel and unusual punishment.

They have chosen to remain. They have chosen to perpetuate this evil, depraved, perverted, violent, vicious, child-sacrificing, Baal-worshipping, Dagon-loving culture. They deserve everything they get.

Listen, they deserve everything they get, all of them. You have to believe that or God is really not just, and God is really not fair, and God is really not righteous. God sent the Israelites in to slay all of these people, and if they are still there to be slain, that's their fault.

That is the penalty. That is the consequence of unbelief. They did not turn.

They did not repent. They've had 40 years' advance warning, and God put a big billboard right in the middle of the land. Everybody knows what that thing says.

It's their fault. People try to go to the Old Testament and say the God of the Old Testament is cruel. Listen, the Canaanites of the Old Testament are stupid, if you ask me.

Anybody with a brain would get out of Dodge. So, Joshua comes down and seizes these strategically important access points to the hill country, so that he cannot be flanked. He cannot be attacked from the rear.

He's not going to be constantly plagued with Canaanites coming down from the hills and raiding. Then he goes to the two biggest power centers in the southern region, and he attacks those, and destroys those cities, and kills everybody in them. Anybody that's left is now packing.

Everybody else is saying, I am not sticking around for the last chapter of this book. I am leaving. And these large, strategic, symbolic... And it is symbolic that Joshua takes the king out every time that people say, it's like the ringing of the bell that tolls for thee.

It is the raven on the doorpost quoting Nevermore. Every time they hear, well, did you hear what happened up at Makeda? Oh, hey, did you hear what happened at Libna? Did you hear what happened at Lakish? Well, wasn't it the same thing that happened at Libna? Wasn't it the same thing that happened at... Hey, I'm grabbing my three goats and my wife, and we're leaving. And they have the opportunity to leave.

If they stay, it's at their own peril. This repetition is important. Now, again, it doesn't mean anything unless we interpret and apply.

We're back to this thinking battle, this wrestling against principalities and powers. Joshua seizes the access points where trouble can start. What are the access points for our mind where trouble can start? What plants bad ideas? What plants the idea that I'm a victim and society should adjust to me and help me and buoy me up and carry me on a stretcher to wherever I want to go? The world basically revolves around me.

I'm in a pre-Copernican universe. Everything is in its orbit. I am the center of gravity.

I am on the throne. Where do these ideas come from? Where are they cultivated and

nurtured and put forward and fanned and inflated and so forth? Where does that take place? What are the access points for those attacks? Literature. How about your required reading in high school? Holy smokes! Required reading.

Some of the worst, nefarious, evil I have ever seen is on the required reading list for high school students. And when you get to college, it's going to be squared and cubed, exponentially greater. Because the higher you get, the more atheists and agnostics you get, the more anxious they are to show you how smart they are and how dumb you are.

So we have to try to seize these access points. Now, if someone is going to rewrite American history and paint it as a record of failure, try to whitewash out all of the Christians who laid the foundations of our Constitution. I'm starting to yell, aren't I? Yep.

If the educational system, if literature, if media, is pushing false information, wrong viewpoint, this is something we have to seize. How do you engage in this wrestling against principalities and powers in the area of history, in the area of ideas, and in the area of attitudes about the individual's position in American society, in American culture, in American life? You have to know the truth. We should know our founding fathers.

Have you ever read a good biography of George Washington? If you have not, I strongly recommend that you get one. Washington Irving wrote a great short biography of George Washington. William Bennett, who was secretary of something under President Reagan.

William Bennett, who wrote the Book of Virtues, has a two-volume set on American history. If you want to get the balanced view with due credit given to believers and men of integrity and men of faith and men of virtue who were the founders and the developers of this country and everything that made it great, you need to get that set. It's in paperback.

It's not all that expensive. Two volumes. And read it.

It will thrill your heart. It will restore your faith in America and all of the things that made it great. It is an excellent, excellent series.

And it is a good antidote to the weird, twisted, distorted, black-hearted misrepresentations of history that are in current high school textbooks. And I have read them both. And you can take the same section, read about the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt in a modern textbook.

Well, Roosevelt, all he wanted to do was roll the Cubans up like jackrabbits and watch them die with a bullet in their belly. Read Bennett's history. And there are several other good ones.

I've got two or three on my shelf. And if you're interested, I'll give you the titles. But we

have to inform ourselves.

The battle is in the mind. If you want to wrestle against principalities and powers, we need not only biblical truth, but we need biblical viewpoint. We need to understand what is the application of biblical truth in society, in history.

Were we justified in fighting the wars that we fought? Were we justified in taking the territory that we took? Were our presidents great men? Was George Washington a great man? Was Theodore Roosevelt a great man? Was Ronald Reagan a great man? And if so, why? It's not enough to say, well, my daddy thinks he's great, so he must be great. We need to know this. We need to engage our culture.

We need personal conversation and personal knowledge. How do you fend off this false idea? How do you fend off the idea that our country is something to be ashamed of? How do you fend off the idea that our history is something to be ashamed of? Our godly Christian foundation doesn't even exist. You've got to know it.

It's a part of being a Christian in America, to know the history of this country, to do justice to the Christian men who helped to set it up, who helped to grow it, who look to God for their inspiration, just as our current president does. And I've never seen any man more vilified than our current president. And yet, and I don't agree with necessarily everything, but in terms of someone who is trying to do what's right for the right reasons, you will never find a president more vocal about his faith and about why he does what he does, and he's someone to pray for.

And if we disagree, we can disagree. People in families disagree, but it is a matter of recognizing that it is only our godly heritage that keeps us straight as a nation. So, Joshua taking the land.

If you want to take that spiritual inheritance and claim it for God and dwell in it and reflect God's glory, we have to know who we are. We have to know where we came from. Israel knows how these cities came into the land of Judah, how they became a part of Israel.

Joshua took them. Now, I want to tell you some things you can observe here, or suggest to you some things you can observe. I guess I could just tell you, but hopefully we can observe them for ourselves.

This is quite an amazing feat by Joshua. What is the nature of all of these battles? How many times was Joshua sitting there in camp trying to roast a piece of meat, and all of a sudden here came the Canaanites over the ridge, and they had to circle the wagons, and quick, everybody duck and turn the stuff over, and let's defend ourselves. Every single one of these battles is what kind of battle? Offensive.

Each of these battles that we have just detailed is a raid. Look at the next section.

## Chapter 11.

It came to pass when Jabin, I'll just give you an English, this is Yabin, but we'll just say Jabin. King of Hazor heard these things. He sent Jobab, king of Madan, to the king of Shimon, to the king of Akshaph, and to the kings who are from the north, in the mountain of plain south of Kinneroth, in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor to the west, to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorite, Hittite, Perizzite, Jebusite, and the mountain Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

You know where this is? North. Joshua has obliterated all resistance in the south. If you take a line from the north edge of the Dead Sea, Jericho, Ai, Jerusalem, shoot it across to the Mediterranean Sea.

Everything south of that is done. It's subjugated. Nothing worth worrying about down there.

Well, everybody in the northern half says, oh no, Jabin does the same thing Adonizedek did. He said, we have got to band together and see if we can do something about this. What's particularly interesting, look at verse 2. The kings who are from the north in the mountains and in the plain south of Kinneroth.

You know what Kinneroth is? This is Kinnereth, which in the New Testament in Greek is given as Gennesaret. What's Gennesaret? It's the Sea of Galilee. This is, Kinneroth is the ancient name of the Sea of Galilee.

You know your map of Palestine, right? You've got the Dead Sea, you've got the Jordan River flowing north to south into the Dead Sea. And what's up north? Sea of Galilee, Kinnereth. So, there are kings up there.

They're in the mountains, they're in the plain, they're in the lowland and in the heights. Canaanites in the east and west, everybody goes out in verse 4. They and all their armies with them, as many people as the sand that is on the seashore. Now, notice, in multitude with what? Very many horses and chariots.

Here's a new twist. How many horses and chariots were mentioned down south? Didn't hit any horses and chariots. Who is the stronger force? What's going to be harder to defeat? Guys in the south with no mechanized cavalry or the guys in the north? You know, your chariots, that's your mechanized cavalry.

That's your tanks. That's your rapid movement. Guy on foot with a shield and a sword and here comes a horse and a chariot and a guy up there, this is tough.

They're going against armor up there now and there's a lot of them. They are more numerous than the people in the south. Joshua is building up here.

He turned south first and not north and God essentially turned him that way because of Gibeon. Gibeon caused the south to rise first and they dealt with the south. Now the north says, those people down in the south, a bunch of hicks.

We've got the hell horses. We've got the chariots. We've got more kings and more armies.

We'll go down there and deliver the land from these guys. Well, spiritually speaking, God graduates our experience. We get what we need to begin with and then our tests and our challenges become gradually more complex.

They started with Og King of Bashan and a couple of skirmishes over on the other side of the Jordan to sort of baptize them into warfare. It's been 40 years since they've really fought a big battle and so now they come across and they do Jericho where they didn't have to do much because the walls fell down. Then they had to go fight at Ai and they got a little wake-up call there and they went back and fought that battle again.

Now they have fought at Gibeon and they've chased all these people down but now this is going to be much more of a pitched battle, much more of a standard warfare. But think about it. Joshua is really a brilliant military commander.

They use a ruse, a trap at Ai, don't they? They acted like they were running away and then they drew out of the cities and then they used the pincher and slaughtered them and they were drawn out of the city by the Gibeonite thing and then they were slaughtered down there. And Joshua used the element of surprise with that all-night march to Gibeon and then he did these lightning raids in the south and these towns were not prepared and their armies were already gone and he's been on the offense, on the offense, on the offense. He catches them flat-footed.

He catches them with their guard down. He catches them when they're unprepared. Now there's this big confederation forming up north and Joshua's back at Gilgal and the entire northern, all around, if you look at the map, that's a lot of territory and a lot of people, numerous as the sand of the sea, with huge strength.

And people could say, well, you know, you kind of got away with it, but the element of surprise is gone now and now you're going to have to fight for real and you're going to get it. So all these armies went out and the kings met together and they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel. The Lord said to Joshua, don't be afraid because of them.

Tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire. And you can imagine Joshua saying, oh, yeah, right.

Okay, this time tomorrow, you know how far it is from here to Merom up there by

Kinnereth, up there in the region of Galilee? Well, you have to really pay close attention. Look at verse 7. So Joshua and all the people who were with him came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom. Did Joshua sit at Gilgal and say, Lord, I sure hope you preserve us when these guys attack.

This is another high mobility. This is what they learned in the wilderness. They're drawing on their experience that God has given them.

Wandering in the wilderness was a curse for their parents. But it's a blessing for these people because they know how to move fast when they have to. And once again, he catches this entire conglomerated army flat-footed.

When it says they came on them suddenly, it doesn't do this justice. Out of nowhere, the last intelligence report was, well, they're down in Gilgal. We're going to get together and kind of pat each other on the back and dance around the campfire and have a big rah-rah rally.

And then we'll go down and stomp those people. Well, they wake up the next morning and Joshua and his men are attacking them. And they haven't even gotten their armor on.

They came upon them suddenly. Inferior force, small army, comes up and attacks this whole gaggle. And it just sends them into complete confusion.

They just didn't expect it. Because God is on their side. The Lord delivers them into the hand of Israel.

Offense, offense, offense. Don't wait to be attacked. Listen, if you're a person of faith, don't wait for society to attack your understanding of what's right and what's wrong, what's true and what's false, what is historical and what is a perverse distortion of history.

Learn it now. Be prepared. Go on the offense.

The next time there's a discussion about what's good or what's wrong with the country, we should know. The next time someone tries to convince us internally, well, I'm a victim or I'm not worthy or I'm ignorant because I'm a Christian or whatever, we should have already equipped and prepared ourselves. We ought to be ready to go on the offense and say, no way.

It's you who have it wrong. It's you who have the false view. It's you whom God is after.

You are the one on your heels. God is on the march. God is on the offense.

I'm going to seasonally hold him an eternal inheritance. I don't know about you. And here's why.

Be enthusiastic. Be proactive. Go on the offense.

We are on the winning side. The Lord Jesus Christ won the victory at the cross and we are just mopping up. Don't let anybody put you on the defensive as a Christian.

Don't let anybody make you feel inferior or ignorant because you're a Christian. You're on the winning side. Believe the promise of God.

I will deliver the enemy into your hand. Demons are going to be delivered into our hands before this thing is over. Well, we're out of time for tonight.

We'll take a break for a week until next Friday. Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for this great example that is given to us to encourage us, to remind us that we are overcomers by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

May God the Holy Spirit impress these truths on our hearts in such a way that we will be motivated, that we will be strengthened, and we will be able to achieve a similar victory in our daily spiritual conflicts in a way that will reflect your glory and the glory of our Savior. We ask it in his name. Amen.