

Joshua 10:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

Analysis

And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

The phrase "returned to the camp" (וַיָּשׁוּבוּ צֶלֶהָעָם אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה, vayashuvu chol-ha'am el-hamachaneh) indicates the army's reassembly after pursuing scattered enemies across the region. Despite operating across miles of hostile territory, Israel's forces regrouped intact—testimony to their discipline and divine protection. The location "at Makkedah" confirms the cave site became the temporary command center for the southern campaign.

The triumphant declaration "in peace" (בְּשָׁלוֹם, beshalom) indicates more than merely cessation of fighting. The Hebrew shalom encompasses completeness, wholeness, security, and covenant blessing. Israel returned not merely alive but victorious, intact, and blessed—the promised rest God gives His people (Deuteronomy 12:10; Joshua 21:44). This peace resulted from total victory eliminating immediate threats.

Most remarkable is the statement "none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel" (לֹא־חָרָץ לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאִישׁ אֶת־לִשְׁנוֹ, lo-charats livnei Yisra'el le'ish et-leishono). The verb חָרָץ (charats) means to sharpen or cut, used of dogs growling (Exodus 11:7). So complete was Israel's dominance that even verbal opposition ceased—enemies were too terrified to speak against them. This fulfilled the

promise that fear of Israel would fall on the nations (Exodus 23:27; Deuteronomy 11:25; Joshua 2:9-11).

Historical Context

The phrase "none moved his tongue" echoes Exodus 11:7, where God promised that during the final plague in Egypt, "against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue." This verbal parallel indicates the conquest fulfilled promises made during the Exodus—the same God who delivered Israel from Egypt now gave them Canaan. The connection reinforces continuity of divine faithfulness across generations.

Ancient warfare typically generated cycles of revenge, with defeated peoples conducting raids and guerrilla attacks even after major battles. The statement that none dared speak against Israel indicates psychological domination beyond mere military victory. Fear paralyzed opposition, creating conditions for rapid conquest. Similar psychological effects appear in accounts of Alexander the Great and Roman legions—reputation could win battles before they began.

The reassembly of Israel's forces "in peace" also suggests minimal casualties despite intense fighting. Ancient battles often inflicted 10-30% casualties even on victorious armies through combat, exhaustion, and disease. Israel's return intact demonstrated supernatural protection fulfilling promises like Deuteronomy 28:7: "The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face." Military success without proportionate losses testified to divine intervention.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does it mean for believers to experience the 'shalom' (wholeness, rest) that comes from complete obedience to God's commands?
2. How should the reality that 'none moved his tongue against Israel' shape our understanding of spiritual authority in Christ over the powers of darkness?
3. What areas of your life lack peace because of incomplete obedience or unfinished battles God has called you to fight?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּשׁוּבוּ	כָּל	הָעָם	אֶל	הַמַּחֲנֶה	אֶל	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
returned	H3605	And all the people	H413	to the camp	H413	to Joshua
H7725		H5971		H4264		H3091
מִמָּקֶדָה	בְּשָׁלֶם	לֹא	חָבַץ	לְבָנֵי		יִשְׂרָאֵל
at Makkedah	in peace	H3808	none moved	of the children		of Israel
H4719	H7965		H2782	H1121		H3478
לְאִישׁ	אֶת	לְשׁוֹנוֹ:				
against any	H853	his tongue				
H376		H3956				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 11:7 (References Israel): But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

Isaiah 54:17 (Parallel theme): No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 57:4 (Parallel theme): Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood,

