

Joshua 10:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein.

Analysis

And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein—Hebron's conquest receives more elaborate description than previous cities, reflecting its exceptional importance. The phrase "all the cities thereof" (kol-areha, כָּל-עָרֶיהָ) indicates Hebron controlled satellite villages forming a city-state complex, not just a single fortress. This multi-settlement structure made Hebron a major regional power center requiring more extensive operations than isolated cities.

Hebron (חֶבְרוֹן) derives from chaver (חָבַר, "to join" or "unite"), possibly referring to its role as a confederate center. The city held profound patriarchal significance—Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah there as a burial site (Genesis 23), and Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah were also buried there (Genesis 49:29-32; 50:13). This sacred ground, now under judgment for Canaanite corruption, demonstrated that even places once sanctified by godly presence could become devoted to destruction through later wickedness.

He left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein—the emphatic double statement "left none remaining...destroyed it utterly" underscores complete

execution of herem. The comparison to Eglon maintains the pattern of consistent application, while the comprehensive language stresses thoroughness—no half-measures, no survivors, no compromise.

Historical Context

Hebron (modern el-Khalil) sits at 3,050 feet elevation in the Judean hill country, making it one of the highest cities in ancient Israel. Its strategic location controlled north-south routes through the central highlands and provided access to the Negev southward. Archaeological excavations at Tel Rumeida (ancient Hebron) reveal Bronze Age occupation, though connecting specific destruction layers to Joshua's conquest remains challenging due to continuous occupation and later building.

The city's patriarchal associations gave it unique significance. The cave of Machpelah functioned as the family tomb of Israel's founding fathers, making Hebron's conquest particularly poignant—Abraham's descendants reclaiming land their ancestor had purchased. Later, Hebron became a Levitical city and city of refuge (Joshua 21:13), and David ruled from there for seven years before capturing Jerusalem (2 Samuel 2:1-4; 5:5).

Numbers 13:22 mentions that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt, suggesting great antiquity. The Anakim giants inhabited Hebron (Joshua 11:21; 15:13-14), and Caleb later drove them out and claimed it as his inheritance (Joshua 14:12-15). This detail reveals that Joshua's initial conquest was incomplete—requiring later generations to fully secure the territory, illustrating the ongoing nature of spiritual warfare.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Hebron's transformation from Abraham's sacred burial site to a place of judgment demonstrate that past spiritual heritage cannot protect present wickedness?
2. What does the phrase 'all the cities thereof' teach about how major strongholds often control networks of smaller dependencies that also require attention?
3. How does the later reappearance of Anakim in Hebron (requiring Caleb's conquest) illustrate that initial victories in spiritual warfare require ongoing vigilance and effort?

Interlinear Text

וְלָקְדוּ וְהָ	וַיִּכּוּהָ	לְפִי	חֶרֶב רַב	וְאֶת־	מֶלֶךְ הָ
And they took	it and smote	it with the edge	of the sword	H853	and the king
H3920	H5221	H6310	H2719		H4428
וְאֶת־	כָּל־	עַרְיָהָ	כָּל־	וְהָנִפְשׁ	אֲשֶׁר־
H853	H3605	thereof and all the cities	H853	H3605	it utterly and all the souls
		H5892		H5315	H834
בָּהָ	לֹא־	הַשָּׂאִיר	שָׁרִיד	כָּל־	אֲשֶׁר־
H0	H3808	that were therein he left	none remaining	H3605	H834
		H7604	H8300		
עָשָׂה הָ	לְעֵגְלֹן	וַיְהָרֵם	וְאֶת־	אוֹתָהּ	כָּל־
according to all that he had done	to Eglon	but destroyed	H853	H853	H3605
H6213	H5700	H2763			
וְהָנִפְשׁ	אֲשֶׁר־	בָּהָ:			
it utterly and all the souls	H834	H0			
H5315					