

Joshua 10:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

Analysis

The coalition mobilizes: 'Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.' The repetition of all five kings emphasizes comprehensive allied participation. The phrase 'they and all their hosts' indicates full military mobilization—not token forces but complete armies. The verb 'encamped' (chanah, חָנַח) suggests establishing siege positions. The phrase 'made war against it' uses Hebrew lacham (לָחַם)—to fight, wage war. This full-scale assault on Gibeon creates crisis triggering Israel's intervention. The passage demonstrates how God orchestrates circumstances: Gibeon's deception led to treaty; treaty obligated Israel's defense; defense concentrated enemies for defeat. Human plans, including deceptive ones, ultimately serve divine purposes (Proverbs 19:21).

Historical Context

The five cities' combined military force represented formidable power. Jerusalem, Hebron, and Lachish especially were major fortified cities with professional armies. Their full mobilization ('all their hosts') meant thousands of warriors

besieging Gibeon. Ancient siege warfare involved surrounding the city, cutting supply lines, and either starving defenders or assaulting walls. Gibeon, though 'mighty' (verse 2), couldn't withstand five allied armies indefinitely. The siege's rapidity (Gibeonites send urgent message to Joshua, verse 6) suggests the attack threatened quick success. Archaeological evidence confirms these cities were major powers—excavations at Lachish reveal massive fortifications, confirming biblical descriptions. The coalition's commitment—leaving their own cities to campaign against Gibeon—shows how seriously they took the defection threat. This concentration of forces, intended to overwhelm Gibeon, created opportunity for Israel to defeat multiple enemies simultaneously. God's providence turns enemies' strength (coordinated attack) into weakness (concentrated targets for defeat).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God use enemies' coordinated efforts against them (concentrated forces easier to defeat)?
2. What does the rapid mobilization teach about urgency in addressing perceived threats?
3. When has God turned apparently overwhelming opposition into opportunity for decisive victory?

Interlinear Text

gathered themselves together	and went up	Therefore the five	kings	of the Amorites
H622	H5927	H2568	H4428	H567
kings	of Jerusalem	kings	of Hebron	of Lachish
H4428	H3389	H4428	H2275	H3923
kings	of Eglon	they and all their hosts	and encamped	
H4428	H5700	H1992	H3605	H5921
before Gibeon	and made war	before Gibeon	and made war	
H1391	H3898	H5921	H2568	H4428

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