

Joshua 10:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

Analysis

And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

God's encouragement to Joshua echoes His earlier reassurances (1:9; 8:1), demonstrating the ongoing need for divine strengthening even as victories multiply. The command "Fear them not" (al-tira mehem, אַל-תִּירָא מֵהֶם) addresses the natural human response to overwhelming odds—five united armies attacking simultaneously. The prophetic perfect tense "I have delivered" (netatym, נְתַתִּים) again presents future victory as accomplished fact from God's eternal perspective, providing faith's basis for present confidence.

The promise "there shall not a man of them stand before thee" (lo-ya'amod ish mip'aneyka, לֹא-יָעַמֵּד אִישׁ מִפְנֵיכָךְ) guarantees complete victory, using terminology identical to the promise in 1:5. The verb amad ("stand") implies not merely physical presence but maintained position or resistance—no enemy would successfully resist Joshua's divinely empowered assault. This promise finds ultimate fulfillment in Christ, before whom every knee shall bow (Philippians 2:10) and against whom no weapon formed shall prosper (Isaiah 54:17).

The theological significance extends beyond military history: God's promises provide the foundation for faith-filled action. Joshua was commanded to make a forced march through the night (verse 9), attacking superior numbers with

exhausted troops—humanly foolish, yet divinely wise. Reformed theology emphasizes that true faith acts on God's word despite contrary circumstances, trusting divine promises over empirical probabilities. God's "fear not" transforms human calculation into faith-filled obedience.

Historical Context

The military situation was dire: five kings with combined armies attacked Gibeon, while Joshua's forces were based at Gilgal in the Jordan valley. The distance from Gilgal to Gibeon is approximately 20 miles with 3,300 feet elevation gain, requiring an all-night forced march through difficult terrain. Ancient armies typically avoided night marches due to coordination difficulties and vulnerability to ambush, making Joshua's night approach strategically brilliant—it achieved complete tactical surprise.

The coalition's focus on punishing Gibeon before engaging Israel proper reveals ancient Near Eastern warfare priorities. Cities that betrayed alliances or submitted to enemies faced exemplary punishment to deter similar defections. By attacking Gibeon, the coalition sent a message to other Canaanite cities: resistance to Israel, not accommodation, was the required response. However, this decision forced the coalition into premature engagement with Israel on ground of Joshua's choosing.

The battle would demonstrate the fulfillment of Rahab's confession that God "hath given you the land" and that "all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you" (2:9). The coalition's fear-driven aggression against Gibeon, rather than calculated defensive strategy, indicates psychological dislocation—leaders making tactical errors due to panic rather than maintaining strategic discipline. Fear of the Lord, which is wisdom's beginning (Proverbs 9:10), was absent; natural fear, which clouds judgment, dominated Canaanite decision-making.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's repeated reassurance to Joshua ("fear not") encourage us when facing multiple challenges simultaneously?
2. What does Joshua's night march based on divine promise teach about acting in faith despite humanly unfavorable circumstances?
3. In what areas of life do you need to trust God's prophetic perfect tense promises ("I have delivered") rather than present circumstances?

Interlinear Text

כִּי מִנְחָה מִתְּפִيقָה אֶל יְהוָשָׁעַ אֶל יְהוָה הָיָה אָמֵר

said And the **LORD** H413 **unto** **Joshua** H3091 **Fear** H3372

H559 H3068 H408 H1992 H3588

בְּיָדֶךָ לֹא יִשְׁעַם דָּבָר נִתְּחַת יְמֵינוֹ

them into thine hand **them not for I have delivered** **of them stand**

H3027 H5414 H3808 H5975

אֵשׁ אַתָּה בְּפָנֶיךָ מִנְחָה

there shall not a man **before**

H376 H1992 H6440

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:31 (Parallel theme): What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Deuteronomy 3:2 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

Joshua 11:6 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.

Joshua 8:1 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land:

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