

WORKING THROUGH A BIBLICAL STORY

Name: AARON DUNLOPPassage: Joshua 10:16-28Date: April 16, 2024

This worksheet helps us to dig into the narrative (story) passages of Scripture. The goal is to go deep into the text, but also to get a broad, “whole-Bible” view of the story.

This worksheet is not an examination, it is only one method among many. Don’t let it intimidate you or burden you. It is just a tool that will help you to interrogate the text. Some questions may not apply to your passage. Feel free if you need to skip a question or a section. You can leave a question/section and come back to it later. You may find parts of it are not helping you or distracting you, or you may want to spend more time on certain parts. That is okay. You may find also that you have a sermon idea in the first or second point. That is good, but you will find it helpful to work through the remaining steps—you will add breadth and depth to the idea you already have.

As you work through each step remember to take notes—*exegetical* and *preaching*, the two-columns method on back page). This page will become the most important when preparing a sermon. The other pages can be reduced to headings and reminders.

READING: Read the story through five times. Here you are getting to know the story. Do some background study and as you read, notice the context, the characters, and the keywords.

1. Context

- a. **The literary context**— what type of literature? Is the story set in poetry, law, or prophecy? Are there songs, poetry, prophecy, or teaching in the story?

Narrative, no poetry, or prophetic literature. There is teaching in the passage (vs. 25).

- b. **The Immediate context** — what goes before and after the story? This is important to understanding the setting of the story and the scene before you.

“these ...” refers back to something.

This is the beginning of the Southern conquest. The battle at Gibeon (vs. 1-15) and then the “clean-up” of the cities (vss. 29-43). This section (vss. 16-28) looks in detail at a part of that battle of Gibeon – the five kings.

This paragraph is a part of the broader story of the battle.

The story is told in such a way that the battle is ongoing, but the enemy is already left without escape ...

- c. **The historical context** — you need to do some background reading on the authorship of the book. What were the circumstances of the author’s audience? This is important to understanding why the story was written for the original audience.

This book records the fulfilment of God’s promise to conquer the land. God had given them the land but they must fight for it. These kings are reacting to the defeat of Jericho and Ai, and also the Gibeonites.

- d. **The cultural context** — what details are relevant to life as it was lived in this place at this time? This will include geographical and historical points that may relate to the story.

The Canaanites know that the Land has been given, and that the Lord is fighting for Israel. The putting the feet on the necks was a common symbol in those days to show absolute defeat (Deuteronomy 33:29; 1 Kings 5:3; Psalm 110:1). There is God’s sovereignty here, and Christ’s victory at Calvary in this image. Makkedah is 20-30 miles from Gibeon.

- e. **The biblical context** — are there biblical references or connections to previous parts of the Bible that have significance in the story? These may be implied (not stated, but assumed), or stated or quoted directly. It will help to go back and read these.

The promise of the land / God as warrior / the feet on the neck or head / Christ in **1 Corinthians 15:25**.

2. Characters

- a. Is the character an individual or a group (married couples, family, armies, etc.)?

Kings / Joshua / Israel's army / Canaanite army / elders of Israel / Yahweh

- b. In what order do the characters appear? What condition are the characters in? What actions do they take? What statements or requests do they make?

This section (like **vs. 11**) begins with the verb "fled." In verse 11 it was the army, here it is the kings. Begins and ends with the Kings (**vs. 15**). They receive the same treatment as the king of Jericho (**vs. 28**).

3. Key words

- a. What words are essential to the story? Make a list of key words. This will help you to get the essential story and embed it in your memory. Making a list of key words will force you to examine the story, and then to tell the story without looking at the text.

Kings / fled / cave / Joshua / necks / etc.

EXEGESIS: here we go deeper into the text, asking questions, sifting through the details.

1. Know the meaning of words.

With commentaries, concordances, dictionaries, using another Bible translation, and some Bible apps you will be able to get into the meaning of the words. Taking the time to go through the text word by word will take you deeper into the meaning of words. You will get helpful insights by taking the time to do this.

- a. What words have various meanings? Are there any idiom or figures of speech?

"Hidden" = withdraw (vs. 17). "destroyed" = finished / complete / wiped out (vs. 20). "Fortified" = stronghold

(vs. 20). An idiom (vs. 21) - sharpen the tongue" = "uttered a word against" (Exodus 11:7) - "To point the tongue at" i.e. to threaten. The author used this same phrase to show, that between the Exodus and the possession of the land there is continuity...the God who brought them out of Egypt is still working.

- b. What words have significant meaning (e.g., theological, spiritual meaning or practical application)?

Neck (Genesis 3:15, 1 Corinthians 15:25), "Stone" (vs. 27, the idea of monuments, Achan, etc.), Hailstones

(vs. 11). Tree, the condemned (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).

Hiding in caves, links this passage to Rev. 6:11, when the wicked call on the rocks and stones to fall on them.

2. Analyze the grammar.

- a. Notice the verbs, repeated verbs, or a series of verbs that form a particular event?

Vs. 16 "fled" (see also vs. 11). Vs. 19 "don't stand still" (engage) // "pursue" // "attack" // "do not let" (prevent).

- b. Are there significant **prepositions** (e.g., in, at, on, of, to, by or with), **transition words**, (e.g., conjunction adverbs like, now, although, therefore, however, then, hence) or **conjunctions** (e.g., and, but, or, so, yet, for). These may form natural divisions in the story, add an important emphasis or indicate a contrast.

Vs. 19 guard them...but...do not stay there. // vs. 27 hang them...but...take them down at sunset. This is Joshua

giving instructions, clarifying so that the Israelites are engaged but that they do not break the law in the excitement of war and victory.

- c. Notice the nouns and pronouns. Are they plural or singular? Are they proper nouns or abstract nouns (an idea, emotion, or state of being)?

The names of the five cities (vs. 5) are repeated in vs. 22. This is most likely by way of solemn contrast.

Before they were ruling aggressive kings, now they are defeated subdued kings.

Peace or safe (vs. 21). Afraid/dismayed/strong/courageous (vs. 25). Why did Joshua have to say this after such a signal victory?

3. Repeated words / phrases

- a. What words or phrases are repeated?

But (vs. 19, 27). Stones (11, 18). The kings are mentioned at the beginning and end, which helps identify the theme.

The five kings and their cities are repeated (vss. 5, 23) ... The Lord knows those who are his and he will surely judge those who fight against him...he will make no mistakes

4. Other features to look for in the story.

- a. Are there similarities or contrasts throughout the story?

Joshua did to the king of Makeddah the same as he did with the King of Jericho ().

Joshua did not hang the king of Jericho or Makeddah ... which highlights the fact that what he did with the five kings was an object lesson, incident was intended to teach the Israelites and us today.

- b. Are there significant sights, sounds, or smells in the story? (e.g. Gen. 3:8; 27:27).

none

- c. Are there any unexpected features or surprises in the story?

Makeddah, the city in the vicinity of the cave was also taken in the end (vs. 28). ... more than conquerors

- d. Are there any unanswered questions in the text, something that needs further research?

Why does the author include this gruesome story in the Bible? This is an interesting historiography.

Why was this story written and why was it written the way it was written?

5. Outline

The author has organized the story in a certain way to emphasize a point or to develop a theme. Forming an outline will help us get the flow and meaning of the story. Forming an outline will also help us discover the reason why the author told the story.

- a. Develop the outline of the story in sections using verse references (this is not a sermon outline). By doing this you will find a flow, and perhaps the emphasis of the passage.

1. Five kings in a cave (vss. 16-17)

2. Joshua secures the kings in the cave (vss. 18-19)

3. Joshua continues the battle (vss. 20-21)

4. Joshua Executes the five kings (vss. 22-25)

5. Joshua hangs the five kings (vss. 26-27)

6. Makeddah destroyed (vs. 28)

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY: here we want to find connections with other parts of Scripture.

The Bible is one story. It is the story of God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ, told through history and biography, through prophecy and poetry. In every part of the Bible therefore, we find theological themes that link it all together, like threads running through a piece of fabric. This area of study will draw out the theological significance of the story.

1. What does the story teach us about God?

Are there any manifestations of the attributes of God? Look for significant manifestations of God's providence, his power over creation, his love for his people, his warrior activity for his people, his all-knowing activity, or his everywhere present nature.

God gives victory and God's victories is definitive and absolute.

- a. What theological themes can you find in the story? Trace the theme through the rest of Scripture.

*The absolute victory of the Lord, the enemy will eat the dust. **Genesis 3:15** / **1 Corinthians 15:25***

- b. What does this story add to the theological theme or themes—is this story unique?

*Nothing unique. David stood on the body of Goliath. But this story is a great application of the victory of God over his enemies (**vs. 25**).*

2. What does the story teach us about Christ and the Gospel?

Jesus said that the Scripture testifies of him (John 5:39). So, we need to look for Jesus in every story.

- a. How does the passage connect us to Christ? (Is Christ typified in people, offices, things.

***1 Cor. 15:25** typified in his office as our king.*

- b. What part of the gospel is the author dealing with? (Redemption *accomplished* or redemption *applied*?)

Sanctification / spiritual warfare

APPLICATION: look for lessons & applying the story to us in our situation.
1. The main point

By this time, you should be able to state the main point of the story in one short sentence.

- a. State the main point of the story? State why you think this is the main point. Reasoning this through will help you form arguments and points for your sermon.

This story teaches us that God will have the victory. That victory will be absolute, and the Lord instructs us (vs. 25) to learn from this, take courage for the fight—for this is what the Lord will do to all his and our enemies.

2. Lessons taught in the text.

- a. What lessons are taught in the story? You may be able to identify many lessons, primary, secondary, etc. You will want to identify them in order of emphasis, importance, and how well you can show (develop) the lesson from the text. From these you can develop a sermon or a series of sermons.

Spiritual warfare is laid out in the different layers.

1. the Scriptures promise a sure and absolute victory (vs. 14, 21, 28, 24-26). 2. the Scriptures holds out an anticipated victory (Revelation 6:11; 1 Corinthians 15:25). There was a victory but some of the enemy found refuge in the fortified cities...the fight goes on Ch. 11. 3. the Lord gives grace and encouragement in the midst of the Battle (vs. 25).

Joshua's gifts of leadership and instruction (balanced with the "buts", so that the people would stay engaged but not break the law, vs. 19, 27).

- b. What lessons can be addressed to believers?

We are in a battle, and the victory is ours, through the Lord.

This is the Lord's battle (vs. 11), but ours also (vs. 21)

The Lord gives grace and encouragement in the midst of the battle.

We need to be strategic in our spiritual warfare (vs. 18-19).

- c. What lessons can be addressed to unbelievers?

Don't resist the Lord.

Although delayed, judgement is a sure thing (vs. 19).

That which we seek out for security may become our prison, and eventually our tomb. – lesson for Addicts

We may hide from the Lord and call on the rocks to hide us, but we will be brought out into the open (Rev. 6:16).

You are now ready to begin preparing a sermon ... how will you present this passage to your people?

Exegetical Notes	Preaching Notes
<p>Locations: (vs. 10), Gibeon / Beth-horan / Makkedah</p> <p>vs. 16 "Makkedah" - about 20-30 miles from Gibeon.</p> <p>vs. 16, 17 "hidden" to withdraw and hide</p> <p>vs. 19 "stand still" (vss. 8, 13x2)</p> <p>vs. 19 "rear" - from the Hebrew noun "tail" - to attack the rear guard.</p> <p>vs. 21 moved his tongue Exodus 11:7 as in Egypt. Lit. to "point the tongue" or "sharpen the tongue" in growing anger or "to threaten."</p> <p>vs. 27 "stones" see the hail stones (vs. 11) Achan's history.</p> <p>vss. 19, 17 - "But"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> although the Lord has given the victory over these kings, the people must stay engaged in the battle (vs. 19). Do not let victory cause you to become complacent in your obligation to the law of God and proper order. Joshua had also practiced this balance about the Gibeonites). See Deuteronomy 21:23. <p>vs. 26 "hung" - this is what happened to the king of Ai (8:29; see also Deuteronomy 21:22-23).</p> <p>vs. 27 a monument is set up (7:26; 8:29).</p>	<p>Joshua is strategic in his battle - (vs. 18, 19)</p> <p>vss. 16-18 That place of safety becomes a prison and then their tomb (McConville & Williams, 54).</p> <p>In Christ, we pursue the enemy with the assurance that the enemy is already running. We "cut them off at the tail" or "smite the tail" (vs. 19, Deuteronomy 25:18). This expression is a Hebrew idiom.</p> <p>The feet of the saints, worn and dusty from the battle will one day stand on the neck of the enemy (Romans 16:20)</p> <p>Four aspects of spiritual warfare (vs. 19)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage (do not stay there...) Pursue - ("pursue") Attack ("attack") Prevent ("do not let...") <p>God fights for Israel, but God fights with Israel, i.e. Israel is an instrument of war for God.</p> <p>The Kings: Revelation 6:15-16; Isaiah 2:10-12; Amos 9:2.</p> <p>The Caves: Caves were used as burial locations (Genesis 49:29-30), hideouts (1 Samuel 22:1), and dwellings (Genesis 19:30).</p>