

**Joshua 11:1-23**  
**“Leaving nothing undone”**

**I. Intro**

**II. Vs. 1-15 Strategic warfare**

**III. Vs. 16-23 Peace for pieces**

**I. Intro**

The Southern campaign was finished in the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter 7 years after the entrance into the land of promise but Joshua doesn't say, “*Ok fellows let's just stop here and catch our breath*”. No he immediately moves into the northern campaign into the areas of Mount Hermon, the Sea of Galilee and the Valley of Megiddo. The key to this aspect of the conquest was like what we have seen so far and that is the ***complete obedience to the Lord***. What we have here than is nothing more than a desperate attempt by the consolidated king's of the north to stop what God was doing but notice that this work didn't work. There are ten things that nothing can change:

- The Bible still has all the answers
- Prayer still works
- The Holy Spirit still moves in power
- God still inhabits the praises of His people
- God still speaks to people through His Word
- We will still sing praise to our God
- God is still pouring out His blessings upon us
- There is still room at the cross
- Jesus still loves us
- Jesus still desires to save the lost

So with that said nothing the enemy can through at us need to cause us to be discouraged.

**II. Vs. 1-15 Strategic warfare**

Vs. 1-5 It is interesting that we see a similarity in with the Southern nations as they again formed a confederacy which shared armies and weapons horses and chariots. The Jewish historian Josephus tells us that this coalition had at their disposal 300,000 infantrymen, 10,000 cavalrymen and 20,000 chariots which were like our tanks. By ancient standards the enemy had numbers and technology of their side, yet were still defeated.

Notice again based upon verse 1 what Israel's victory and walking into the promises painted a huge bull's eye upon them. In 1 Peter 4:12-17 Peter exhorts a persecuted church saying, “*Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?*”

In verse 4 Joshua describes two things that made this attack greater than anything they had faced before:

- “*All their armies with them, as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude*”: ***The size of the army was larger than anything they had faced prior.***
- “*With very many horses and chariots*”: ***Their technology was superior to anything they***

had faced since the Egyptians.

The nation is fresh off an attack and the northern kingdoms come after them in even a greater way than the southern kingdoms had. We can see that the battle they faced at Jericho prepared them for Ai and the victory at Ai prepared them for what they faced when the southern kingdoms united. That means that the Lord uses what we face each and every time to prepare us for what we are about to face. You may say, “Oh Lord I can’t go through this storm, it’s too big, I’ll never make it!” The storms that you have faced in the past are the lessons you will need now. Oh how great our Lord is to prepare us each and every time for what we are to face.

Vs. 6 The Lord says, “*Don’t be afraid*” which means that Joshua who had just been victorious in the southern campaign now saw the northern campaign and was afraid. This tells us that with a new more severe attack and challenge God knew that Joshua needed a fresh confirmation of His promise for his life. Last weeks victories may prepare us for this week’s trials but we need to realize that we will still need a fresh dose of the promises of His word to keep make us victorious.

Notice that the Lord says, “*I will deliver*” but he also says “*you shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire*”? The Lord is going to do the work but He allows you and me to participate in His work. Joshua defeated these nations by disabling their speed (horses) and destroying their power (chariots) and all of this was laid out for Joshua by the Lord in verse 6. Sometimes I hear that strategy and planning are the work of the flesh but clearly in this passage we see that God fulfilled His promise through Joshua by guiding him and the army of the Lord strategically.

Vs. 7-9 In verse 7 we read that Joshua came upon them suddenly that is to say it was a surprise attack then in verse 10 we see that he instructed the army to turn back to take Hazor. We see that Joshua worked quickly, surprisingly unpredictably. The other thing that fascinates me is that Joshua went after the strengths of the enemy not their weakness’ which again would not have been what they were expecting:

- Vs. 7 “*So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom, and they attacked them.*” One way to defeat an enemy that has greater size and power than you do is to utilize the elements of surprise and speed. Of further interest is the notation of the location by the “water of Merom” which means high place; the geography played an important part of this strategy as this is a lake surrounded by mountains on one side and a marsh on the other which would have nullified the advantages of the northern confederacy while maximizing the advantages of Joshua and the army of the Lord. When you are facing an enemy that has superior size and strength you have to take away their advantages by using surprise and speed.
- Vs. 8-9 Next we notice that they were obedient and followed through with the game plan. It appears that they chased them some 50 miles making sure that none of them remained. With regards to the things that can destroy us it is important that you do what ever it takes to make sure that you follow through with what Paul describes in Romans 13:14 by, “*putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*” Notice here that what the Lord told Joshua to do in verse 6 with regards to hamstringing the horses and burning the chariots they did in verse 9. But the question remains if none of them remained in verse 8 why do this in verse 9? I suggest that the disabling of the speed and power of the horses and chariots wasn’t for an enemy that no longer remained but rather so that what the enemy had relied upon wouldn’t be what God’s people would trust in! The Lord knew that the flesh would see those superior technology and gadgets and rely upon them to fight their battles instead of trust in God

and turn to obeying His Word. “*Oh Lord we don’t need you any more we have politicians who will stand up for us now!*” “*We have radio talk show hosts who espouse our beliefs for us!*” Do you realize that as Paul said in 2 Cor. 10:4 that “*the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds*”? Could it be friends that the Church is weak because it hasn’t burned the world’s chariots and hamstrung the world’s horses? Oh the times of refinement when the Lord in His wisdom strips us away from the things we have trusted in even good and valuable things so that we will learn that all we ever needed was the Lord!

Vs. 10-15 Old Hazor got the “razor” and he who was once the head lost his head. Hazor thought so much of himself that he named his castle after himself. The Lord will always come against man’s pride and I find a picture that is quite vivid that is a man’s arrogance becomes his castle but the Lord has a way striking our castles down and taking our breath away and burning it to the ground.

- Vs. 10-14 Notice yet another strategy that the Lord gave in defeating the enemy was the **sudden change of direction and the attacking of pride**. If you want to live a victorious Christian life you are going to have to go after those areas of your life where you are arrogant. You will find them where you have built a castle around them to protect them and make them look attractive. There is another interesting bit of information here that verse 13 tells us and that though they were to burn down the castles of pride they leave alone the cities stood on mounds and only take the spoil from them. The word for mound here in the Hebrew is the word “Tel” which a heap of ruins in which a new city has been built upon. You see building areas in ancient Israel were usually built in strategic areas where water was accessible and ground was fertile and the terrain provide natural protection. So those that survived the ruin of their fortress would often rebuild upon the same old spot utilizing the usable resources of the former life. Hey do you see something in this? The Lord takes down our pride and arrogance but such destruction is a great place to rebuild upon as we can gather the stones of faith and rebuild the walls of hope around the streams of fellowship and the water of the word. The Prophet Joel tells us in 2:25 that the Lord, “*will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten*”. Oh how great our Lord is that He can and does use those things that took us down and uses them in His mercy to rebuild us and gave us what we lost do to our pride and trust in other things beside Him.
- Vs. 15 “*He lift nothing undone of all the Lord had commanded Moses*”: Personally I have found that following through with things is the hardest thing I do, don’t you? Being **consistent in our Christian life is the quickest and surest way of living a victorious life in the promises of God**. Many times when our life is a battle ground and everything is in disarray we run around in circles trying to get it together and in our pursuit to hold things together all that happens is that we just continue to unravel. Dear ones **don’t leave anything undone of all the Lord has commanded you to do!** Here’s a word the Lord gave me years ago, “*Not knowing what God has for you in the future doesn’t negate what He has for you now, so be consistent.*” Are you coming apart at the seams, unraveling? Well how’s your devotional life? Are you in God’s Word? Are you consistent in fellowship? Are you on your knees daily? Are you giving of your time talent and treasure? **No, to busy holding together the pieces of you quickly unraveling life that you have no peace?** Here’s a word for you then from Jesus in Rev. 2:4-5 “*you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works*”. Go back and start doing what you know to do, let go of the pieces and grab a

hold of the hem of His garment and He will give you His PEACE!

### III. Vs. 16-23 Peace for pieces

Vs. 16-20 Here we have a recap of the Lord's work through Joshua and the army of the Lord as we see the expansion of the land of promise as victory piles upon victory. Notice that we are told in verse 18 that Joshua "made war along time with all those kings"; friends don't get discouraged when you are fighting the flesh for along time as our flesh will never make peace. Such my friends is the life of Christ for you and me as we walk in obedience and in His power we move into all that He has for us. Goshen "*drawing near*" was on the boarder of the Red Sea and Halak means "*bald or bare*" and Seir means "*hairy*" Baal Gad "*Lord of fortune*" Mount Hermon "*devoted to destruction*". Wow what a large amount of area the Lord had worked in regaining, places that had been "*bare*" times that had been a bit "*hairy*" high places that had been "*devoted to destruction*" and valleys that had been given over to seeking our own "*fortune*" all were one and given to God's people for His glory.

Now notice that it says in verse 20 that the "*Lord hardened their hearts*" man that just doesn't seem right to judge them for what the Lord did does it? Well let me give you the interpretation of this phrase as it simple means that these folks didn't want God even though life was "*barren*" times were "*hairy*" and they were "*devoted to destruction*" all the while seeking their own "*fortune*" so the Lord let them have what they wanted. They received no mercy because they didn't want mercy and as such they were destroyed because they got what they wanted. Oh dear ones be careful about insisting on getting what you want instead of seek the Lord for what He wants to give you because if you continue to harden your heart He may just let you have what you have insisted upon. How sad that none sought the peace of God except the Hivites of Gibeon and instead all "*took to battle*". I fought the Lord for 22 years of my life and I'm so thankful I lost the battle because it is when you and I lose that we truly win. Jesus said in Luke 9:24 "*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.*" I'm afraid that there have been to many times in my life that I didn't heed the words of Paul in Romans 2:4 where he asks, "*do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?*"

Vs. 21-23 Now finally we are told that Joshua "*cut off the Anakim*" and you are probably thinking wasn't that Luke Skywalker's dad who later became Darth Vader? No, that was Anakin with an "N". The Anakim with an "M" are the were the tribe of people that Goliath came from and apparently they were cut off from the mountains and some escaped to the area of the Philistines where they became mercenaries against Israel. It was these fellows that caused the spies to give a bad report of the land of promise and her we are told that cut them off from the mountains and destroyed their cites and they escaped to Gaza and more specifically Gath and Ashdod. So the foes of 40 years earlier are defeated and driven from their strong hold but yet they will have to fight them again 400 years later. Do you have some giant's held up in high places in your life? Well it's time to drive them out and burn their cites. Notice that they only faced the giant's after they had taken care of the small things and like wise spiritually we need some victories over smaller enemies of our faith before we are ready to conquer the giants. Isn't it great to realize that as Paul said in 1 Cor. 10:13 "*the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.*" NLT Ah but dear ones remember that kicking them out now doesn't mean that you won't have to face them again in the lowlands.

All the major cites were defeated and what remained were the little cites and skirmishes that caused them never to posses but a 1/3 of what God had for them. Oh hear me out saints

victory isn't just in taking the big things for the Lord it is in the day to day battles we face with the worst enemy we deal with our flesh. The battles were not up to each of the tribes in their allotted land to root out those inhabitants how were squatting on land that didn't belong to them. We too will need to go through our own lives as we look into the mirror of the Word and see the imperfections of the flesh and allow the Lord to take control that we may enjoy the land given us in Christ.