

JOSHUA

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Joshua chapter 11 as we continue our study through the Word of God. So far the children of Israel have defeated their enemies in the central part of the land, Jericho and Ai. Then, once that wedge was driven between the north and the south, they defeated Adoni-Zedek and the surrounding armies that federated with him in the southern part of the land. Now, as we move into chapter 11 of Joshua, we will see the northern conquest of the land that God promised to the children of Israel.

Now, if this is a picture of the Spirit-filled life, which I believe it is, then why do we need all these strategies and all this organization? Can't we go with the flow and see what God is going to do? Folks, if our strategies and organization has become our master, then you are in trouble. But if you are seeking direction from God and following His strategy and organization, you will be victorious. Make sure who is lording over your life is the idea I would like you to take away from this.

And now, let's begin reading in Joshua chapter 11, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and the children of Israel begin their northern campaign against their enemies!

JOSHUA 11**VERSES 1-5**

1. Jabin, the king of Hazor, gets the news on what Joshua and the children of Israel accomplished in the Southern and Central parts of Canaan. So he forms an alliance with the surrounding nations to make a surprise attack on Joshua and the children of Israel. Hazor was located about 10 miles northwest of the Sea of Galilee, called the Sea of Chinnereth.

Now, this alliance of nations that were federated together rendezvoused a few miles northwest of the sea of Galilee, in a plain near the waters of Merom, which was just a small lake and is not even around today. And don't think that this army was small and insignificant, for it wasn't. Josephus, a Jewish historian of the first century A.D., speculated that this northern confederacy included some 300,000 infantry soldiers, 10,000 cavalry troops and 20,000 chariots. Understand that these chariots were like our modern day tanks, and to own one put you in power. These chariots had a platform for a driver; a javelin thrower, an archer, and the wheels on the chariot had blades on them so that when you got too close, your legs would be cut in two. Thus, their plan was to sweep down the Jordan valley and attack Joshua and the children of Israel at Gilgal.

VERSE 6

1. This attack against the children of Israel was on a much larger scale than they have faced before and thus, God is encouraging them that they may have a huge number of soldiers, they may have great weapons of war, but they don't have the Lord and thus, God will give the children of Israel this victory! I like that because I may not be strong, I may be few in number in the battles I face, I may not have great weapons for war from a physical standpoint, but I have the Lord and the armor of God and there is nothing else that I need!

2. Not only were the men to be destroyed, but then they were to hamstring their horses as well. That means the horses were crippled by cutting their leg tendons, their Achilles tendon, which would make them unfit for military use. Also God did not want them to put their trust in these military weapons but only in Him. As the Psalmist said **“No king is saved by the multitude of an army; a mighty man is not delivered by great strength. A horse is a vain hope for safety; neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.”** Psalm 33:16-17. And the Psalmist goes on to say where our hope should rest, **“Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, on those who hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, just as we hope in You.”** Psalm 33:18-22.

Again, it is easy to take our eyes off the Lord when we have other things we can put our trust in, but as these other nations will soon find out, that will not help them when they are fighting against the Lord! And think about this for a minute. God told Joshua and the children of Israel not to be afraid. He would not have said that unless there was a reason for this encouragement, unless He was going to give them the victory! Our God does no less for us, may we remember that!

VERSES 7-9

1. Joshua and the children of Israel surprised this army, attacked them and defeated them. And Joshua completed the work; **“they attacked them until they left none remaining.”** Too often Christians start a work and they don’t finish it, they don’t complete it. Yes, it may not be easy. Yes, they may be tired. Joshua and his men made this five-day journey from Gilgal to Merom; they were tired but they finished what they started. They were obedient to the Lord!

VERSES 10-15

1. Now why did they strike against Hazor, burning this city and leave these other cities alone, only wiping out the inhabitants but not burning it to the ground? Because Hazor was the capitol of Northern Canaan and this city occupied some 200 acres of land. It was also strategically located as several branches of the Ancient Highway branched from this city. This Highway lead from Egypt to Syria and on to Assyria and Babylon, which being located on these trade routes made it a wealthy city. Thus, it would cause these other nations to lose heart, give up in this battle because this mighty city was destroyed by Israel and thus, they would be no match for them.

2. Interestingly enough, archaeologists seem to confirm the fact that this city, Hazor was burned with fire because they have found an ash layer in their excavations that corresponds to this period of time!

3. The secret to Joshua's success and ours is simple. God wants us to be obedient to Him, that is where the blessings are found. If we refuse, then there is the loss of those blessings and we put ourselves in danger. Remember what happened at Ai and how the children of Israel were defeated because of sin in the camp!

VERSES 16-20

1. Now we see a summary of the land the Joshua and the children of Israel conquered, and when you read in verse 20 that that Lord hardened their hearts so that He might wipe them out, to destroy them, that may lead you to the wrong conclusion. First of all God gave them over 400 years to repent and they did not. Secondly, God was only given them what they wanted, a life apart from Him, doing their own thing and the end result of that is judgment. God does the same today.

2. Remember what Paul said in Romans 1:24-28, **“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.”** And you can read on and see the perverse things that man apart from God will do. But here is the thing. If you want that lifestyle, don't blame God when His judgment comes upon your life. God is good, He is righteous and there is no darkness in Him at all! As with the Canaanites, God deals with our hearts the same way. His grace will either harden the heart or soften it, but the choice is ours in what it will do!

VERSES 21-22

1. These Anakim or giants are the same people that terrified the children of Israel some 40 years earlier and because of that they refused to enter the land at that time. Now, what was a stumbling block for them, God gives the children of Israel victory over them just as He had told them that He would! The only Anakim to survive were the ones who lived in the coastal cities that were occupied by the Philistines, the cities of Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. And we will see as we study through the Word of God, when we get to I Samuel chapter 17, the 9 foot 6 inch tall giant by the name of Goliath that David fought was from Gath!

VERSE 23

1. Yes, the Canaanite kings have been destroyed within the borders of Israel but there were still pockets of resistance that the various tribes would have to destroy as the land was allotted to them. There were those small towns and villages that needed to be dealt with. It is as Redpath tells us, "Much territory was yet to be possessed, but it was left to each tribe to possess what potentially it had received through the conquest of the whole people in which it had taken part. Each tribe was to apply individually the lessons it had learned in united war if it was to possess its inheritance. That the tribes failed to do so was not a reflection on the power of God, but on the failure to take for themselves what Joshua had given and allotted to each one of them."

2. How does that relate to us as Christians today? Jesus has already defeated the enemy and conquered the land, but we must then take those steps of faith and possess that land and do battle against the enemy. And folks, that battle will continue until we go and be with the Lord but one day, when His kingdom is established on this earth, these battles will be over! It is as Revelation 11:15 tells us, “. . . **‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’**” We long for that day when righteousness will fill this land!

JOSHUA 12

VERSES 1-6

1. Joshua is now re-capping the victories that Moses and the children of Israel had on the east side of the Jordan River. This is the land that Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh requested, outside the Promise Land.

VERSES 7-8

1. Here we see a broad description of the Canaanite nations that were conquered by the children of Israel under the leadership of Joshua.

VERSES 9-24

1. (OVERVIEW)

In these 16 verses Joshua gives to us the various kings and nations that were defeated by the children of Israel on the west side of the Jordan River in the Promise Land.

2. Just a quick review of these verses. First we see the 2 kings in the middle of Canaan spoken of in verse 9. Then Joshua tells us of the 14 kings in Southern Canaan that were defeated and that is found in verses 10-16. And finally, Joshua tells of the 15 kings of Northern Canaan that were defeated and that is found in 17-24. These 31 kings occupied an area of land approximately 150 miles north to south and 50 miles east to west. One writer put in perspective what these wars were all about when he said, "There has never been a greater war for a greater cause. The battle of Waterloo decided the fate of Europe, but these series of contests in far-off Canaan decided the fate of the world." How true that is for out of the nation of Israel came the Messiah.

3. Why is this important to us? Because I do believe there is a principle here. Redpath put it like this, "Sometimes in the course of human experience it is good to sit down and reflect on what has been conquered by the grace of God." How true that is. Looking back at all that God has done to give us strength for what we are involved in now and for the battles that are ahead. God gives the victories, these were real to the children of Israel and they are real to us.

JOSHUA 13**VERSE 1**

1. I'm sure that Joshua knew he was old, he died at the age of 110 but now the Lord reminds Him. The thing that is interesting to me is that the Lord does not tell him he can rest, go into a retirement community because he is old. The Lord tells him, "**There remains very much land yet to be possessed.**" In other words, there is still work to be done! The initial battles lasted some 7 years but now they needed to take care of those pockets of resistance, the smaller towns and villages throughout the land as now the individual tribes would be allotted their portion of the land.

2. The lesson for us is that the battle never ends until we go to be with the Lord. We are not to rest in our past accomplishments but to press on! That is Paul's point in Philippians 3:12-14 as he wrote, "**Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**" Thus, may we press on, never giving up as the Lord tells us!

VERSES 2-7

1. Here Joshua tells them the land that remains to be occupied by the children of Israel.

And yes, God will drive out the enemy, that is His part. For the children of Israel, they needed to walk by faith and possess what God had given them. And now, it was not going to be the entire nation fighting together, but the individual tribes would fight the enemy that was in the land, those pockets of resistance.

2. In our lives, God wants us to drive out every area of the flesh. We are not to be comfortable with it. The flesh is a constant enemy towards our spiritual walk! As Paul said in Romans 12:2, “**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**” And in Galatians 5:16-18 Paul tells us, “**I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**” God has given you the victory, are you willing to walk by faith and surrender your life to His Spirit?

3. Also, there is a tremendous blessing we can enjoy as we personally serve the Lord. As we take those steps of faith, as we walk as He leads, trusting in Him. You know the blessing that you receive just as you serve Him faithfully. If you don't, then walk and see the blessings that God has for you as you serve Him!

VERSES 8-13

1. (OVERVIEW – READ VERSES 8 AND 13)

Joshua now describes the portion of land that was divided up between Ruben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh on the east side of the Jordan River. It was the land that was taken as they defeated Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan.

2. Now as you move down to verse 13 it says, “**Nevertheless**” and that is not good! Yes, they defeated these enemies but they left two remaining and that is not what the Lord told them to do.

3. The same is true in our own lives. God wants us to drive out those enemies of the flesh in our lives, these fleshly passions, and we do most of the work but leave pockets of resistance that will, not might, rise up and cause us trouble. Paul put it like this in Galatians 5:24, “**And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.**” May we crucify the flesh!

VERSE 14

1. Levi received no formal land but the Lord was their portion according to Joshua 13:33. But they did receive 48 cities spread throughout the land. These areas had pastures for their herds and they, as priests, would be close to every tribe. That was important to the nation, as they would teach the people the things of God. (Numbers 35:1-5, Joshua 14:4, 21:41).

VERSES 15-23

1. (OVERVIEW)

Here we see the portion of land that was given to the tribe of Reuben on the east side of the Jordan River. They occupied the land in the area east of the Dead Sea or Salt Sea in the southern part of the land.

2. Also we see mentioned that the children of Israel killed Balaam the soothsayer here. He is the one that was hired by Balak, the king of the Moabites in Numbers 22 through 25:2 to curse the children of Israel and Balaam couldn't, he blessed them but then he gave the king the information needed so that the children of Israel would bring the curse upon themselves as they were involved with pagan women and idolatry! And he did make a profit, but not for long as we see here!

VERSES 24-28

1. (OVERVIEW)

Next Joshua tells us the portion of land that was given to the tribe of Gad on the east side of the Jordan River. They occupied the land from the northern part of the Dead Sea to just below the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Chinnereth.

VERSES 29-32

1. (OVERVIEW)

And the last tribe or the half tribe I should say that received their portion of the land on the east side of the Jordan River was the half tribe of Manasseh. And they occupied the land from around the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Chinnereth northward.

2. Now as lush and fertile as this land was, it was not where God wanted them to be.

These 2½ tribes lived in an area that had no natural boundaries and they did not have the assistance of the rest of the nation in battle. They were exposed to their enemies. And we do see that they were the first taken into captivity by the Assyrian's according to what we are told in I Chronicles 5:26.

VERSE 33

1. Here we see again the tribe of Levi not getting an inheritance because the Lord was their inheritance as they served Him. And this is the fulfillment of what Jacob spoke of in Genesis 49:5-7, that they would not have an inheritance but be scattered throughout the land.

JOSHUA 14**VERSES 1-2**

1. Now we will see the distribution of the land on the western side of the Jordan River, in the Promise Land. And we see Joshua, Eleazar the high priest and representatives from each of the 9½ tribes on the west side of the Jordan River supervising the casting of these lots for their land. Back in Numbers 34:16-29 we see Moses give these instructions on how it was to be done and these officers or representatives who would oversee this.

2. Now keep in mind that God was directing the division of the land and how was this done? Jewish tradition tells us that the name of each of the 9½ tribes of Israel were drawn from an urn and simultaneously the boundary lines were drawn – but however it was done, God was in control. Remember what we are told in Proverbs 16:33 says, **“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.”** That is always the case, the key is, are we listening?

VERSES 3-5

1. Here we see Joshua explain that the tribe of Joseph was divided into two, according to the two sons of Joseph; Manasseh and Ephraim. You still have 12 tribes dividing up the land, not 13 because Levi was not given a portion of the land. God spread them out in the 48 Levitical cities throughout Israel!

VERSES 6-15

1. As we move into chapter 15 Judah will be the first to get their land and thus, Caleb, being from the tribe of Judah reminds Joshua of the promises that Moses made to him and now he wants to claim that land! Caleb is 85 years old and is still strong and he asks for the land where the giants dwelt! I don't know about you but at 85 I think I would ask for the land where the little people dwelt or beach front property, wherever the weakest enemy was at. I would be ready to retire but not Caleb, he knew God's promise to him and he was assured of the victory! This is the same area that terrified 10 of the 12 spies some 40 years earlier, but not Caleb and Joshua!

2. Here is how we can tell how long these wars lasted until the land was divided up. Caleb was 40 years old when he went to spy out the land. The wilderness wanderings lasted another 38 years, which would make him 78 years old. And now he is 85 years old and thus, the conquest of the land of Promise lasted 7 years and then the land was divided.

3. Folks, as you look at Caleb you see that his spiritual life did not weaken as he grew older but it was even stronger. That is what God desires for us, to continue to grow and mature in Him, to trust in Him more, to fight those battles even against the giants! Yes, we are growing older but may we never grow weaker in Jesus!

JOSHUA 15**VERSES 1-12**

1. (OVERVIEW)

Here we see the borders for the tribe of Judah and they occupied the land in the south from the Dead Sea as its border on the east all the way to the Mediterranean Sea or the Great Sea to the west. Judah was one of the larger tribes.

VERSES 13-19

1. Now we see the area that was given to Caleb and his family, who were from the tribe of Judah. And once again he defeats these enemies and he encourages others to go forward. And Othniel takes that challenge and he defeated the enemy at Kirjath Sepher and this must have been another incentive because he got the daughter of Caleb for his wife! And by the time we get to the book of Judges, we see Othniel as one of the Judges in Israel, (Judges 3:7-11).

VERSES 20-62

1. (OVERVIEW)

Now we see 29 towns and villages in the south that were given to the tribe of Judah and these are given in verses 21-32. Then we see that 42 towns and villages were given to them and these were located in the western foothills and we read of them in verses 33-47. Then there are another 38 towns and villages that are located in the central hill country and we can read of them in verses 48-60. And then there are 6 towns and villages in the sparsely populated wilderness of Judah which slopes down toward the Dead Sea and that is found in verses 61-62.

2. Now there seems to be some discrepancy with the number of towns in the south. The number of towns in the south is said to be 29 here in verse 32 and yet, 36 are mentioned. Is this an error? Not at all, you just need to read on in Joshua and you will find the solution to this problem. The solution to that problem is that seven of these are later given to the tribe of Simeon and you can read of it in Joshua 19:1-7. The tribe of Simeon was located within Judah!

VERSE 63

1. Here we see one of the problems for the children of Israel, specifically Judah here. They did not completely drive out the enemy and that is always a problem. And we will see this repeated over and over. Yes they were obedient, but not completely and it will be their downfall down the road! The same is true for each of us. God wants those enemies of our lives driven out or it will affect us, maybe not today but down the road, when you least expect it!

JOSHUA 16VERSES 1-9

1. (OVERVIEW)

Now we see the area of land that was given to one of the sons of Joseph, Ephraim. They occupied the area of land that was in the center or in the heart of the nation you might say, just south of Shechem. In chapter 17 we will see the area of land given to Joseph's other son, Manasseh.

VERSE 10

1. Once again they did not finish the job and down the road, because of this compromise, idolatry will enter the land. Why didn't they drive out the enemy completely? Maybe because they wanted peace at any cost, they were tired of fighting. Maybe they were more interested in wealth and possession instead of these battles. Folks, we need to be careful and not forsake the Lord for ease or money and fall short of what He has for us!

JOSHUA 17**VERSES 1-11**

1. (OVERVIEW)

Now we see the area of land that was given to the half tribe of Manasseh, the other son of Joseph. Keep in mind that half of this tribe stayed on the east side of the Jordan River. The land they encompassed was in the area of Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, in the heart of the land, north of Ephraim with the Jordan River as its boundary to the east.

2. We also see here that the daughters of Zelophehad get their allotment of land. The land usually went to the men but because Zelophehad had no sons, his daughters brought their request to Moses and he said that they would get an allotment so that the name would continue on and the ancestral inheritance could be passed on.

VERSES 12-13

1. Again, they could not drive out the Canaanites but put them into forced labor. Folks, as I have said, and God keeps repeating, we should not set up a peaceful co-existence with our enemies, the flesh! The flesh must be crucified!

VERSES 14-18

1. When you look at these two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, they were very large. Thus, they complained to Joshua that they needed more land to live in. So Joshua tells them if they are a great people, go and take the country where the giants are. He is trying to encourage them to walk by faith. And they complained about how strong the enemy was, which was true but they took God out of the picture. And you know, there are some people who will complain no matter what you do. But, instead of giving them the easy way out, Joshua told them to go and possess the land that God has given to them!

JOSHUA 18VERSE 1

1. Shiloh was located in the area of Ephraim and it became the center of worship for the nation of Israel until the time of David, when he moved the Ark to Jerusalem. Shiloh was located about 20 miles from Gilgal, which was their base camp. Now Shiloh was the center for their worship of God.

VERSES 2-10

1. Can you imagine that seven of these tribes had not gone out to take the land, to take possession of what God had given them. They were willing to remain nomads as they were in the wilderness. So Joshua rebukes them and he sends out 21 men, 3 men each from the remaining tribes, to go and survey the land, and then that land would be divided into 7 parts.

2. Now think about this in our own lives. What has God given to us that we have not taken possession of? Areas of the flesh that we refuse to deal with, and-so-on. It is easy to point the finger at the failure of these 7 tribes, but it pinches a bit when we apply those lessons to our own walk.

VERSES 11-28

1. (OVERVIEW)

Now we see the area of land that was given to the tribe of Benjamin. They were a small tribe and occupied an area of land between Judah and Ephraim, south to north, and from the Jordan River westward, about ½ of the way to the Mediterranean Sea. Yes, they were small in number but they were fierce warriors!

JOSHUA 19

VERSES 1-9

1. (OVERVIEW)

The tribe of Simeon occupied a portion of land within Judah, in the southern portion.

VERSES 10-16

1. (OVERVIEW)

Now we see the tribe of Zebulun occupy an area of land in the north, west of the Sea of Galilee. It included Nazareth and Cana.

VERSES 17-23

1. (OVERVIEW)

Issachar occupied the land south of the Sea of Galilee and to the north of the half tribe of Manasseh.

VERSES 24-31

1. (OVERVIEW)

Asher was allotted the land to the north along the Mediterranean Sea. It is the area of Lebanon today. And, by the time we get to King David, Asher has fallen into insignificance, but their tribal identity remained.

VERSES 32-39

1. (OVERVIEW)

Naphtali also was in the north by Hazor and had the area by the Sea of Galilee.

VERSES 40-48

1. (OVERVIEW)

The tribe of Dan actually had two areas of land that they occupied. The first was down by the Mediterranean Sea and the other was in the far north, west of Mount Hermon.

VERSES 49-51

1. Here we see the inheritance for Joshua, from the tribe of Ephraim. After all the land was distributed, now Joshua gets his portion. What humility we see in this man, who was the leader in Israel.

2. As I close this evening do you see how Joshua did not use his position to take advantage, although from a purely secular viewpoint, he could have. The world encourages its leaders to lord over its servants; God calls us to be servants of *ALL*, no matter our position. Notice the example that Jesus gives to us in John 13:12-17, **“So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’”** May we follow His example as we walk by faith!

