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Joshua 11

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Joshua 11.

Topics.

- Armies as great as the sand on the seashore gather together against Israel.
- Joshua suddenly comes, against Israel's enemies by the waters of Merom.
- Joshua captures king Hazor; struck him with the sword; burned the city.
- Joshua made war a long time capturing kings and putting them to death.
- The kings' hearts were hardened so they would be devoted to destruction.
- Joshua cut off the Anakim and devoted them and their cities to destruction.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the first five books of Moses anticipated the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham concerning the Promised Land. Moses is now dead. Joshua crosses the River Jordan (about 1400 B.C.) and after a string of military victories apportioned the land according to the twelve tribes. These battles shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that God fights for His people when they are faithful and courageous and put their full trust in Him. (Josh. 1:6-9). At the close of the book Joshua says that he and all his house will serve the LORD and invites the people to choose whether they will serve the gods of their fathers or the gods in whose land they dwell or the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. The people choose to serve their God. (Josh. 24:15). Although anonymous the book appears to contain eyewitness testimony, some of which may have been written by Joshua himself.

JOSHUA 11:1-5

Armies as the Sand on the Seashore Gather Against Israel.

- **Joshua 11:1-5:** When Jabin, king of Hazor, heard of this, he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph,² and to the kings who were in the northern hill country, and in the Arabah south of Chinneroth, and in the lowland, and in Naphtoth-dor on the west,³ to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpah.⁴ And they came out with all their troops, a great horde, in number like the sand that is on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots.⁵ And all these kings joined their forces and came and encamped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

The expression, "Jabin king of Hazor, heard of this," refers to the following events of the previous chapter. Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem gathered five Amorite kings to fight against Gibeon (Hivites), because they had sided with Israel. Israel fought for the Hivites against the five Amorite kings and God not only threw down hailstones upon them, but

also caused the sun and moon to stand still. The five kings hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah; Joshua captured them alive; the chiefs men of war put their feet on the necks of the five kings after-which they were each hanged on a tree and the inhabitants of Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron and Debir were put to death. In rapid succession of triumphant victory Joshua and his armies with the LORD swept through the whole of southern Palestine capturing and cleansing the land and then returned to the camp at Gilgal.

Jabin, king of Hazor sent to:

- Jobab king of Madon
- The king of Shimron
- The king of Achshaph
- All the kings who were in the northern hill country the Arabah south of Chinneroth and in the lowland and in Naphoth-dor on the west.
- The Canaanites in the east and the west
- The Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country
- The Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

All of these kings and their massive armies with troops as great in number as the sand that is on the seashore, with multitudes of horses and chariots joined their forces and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

JOSHUA 11:6-9

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Joshua Comes, Against Israel's Enemies by the Waters of Merom.

- **Joshua 11:6-9:** And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will give over all of them, slain, to Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." ⁷So Joshua and all his warriors came suddenly against them by the waters of Merom and fell upon them. ⁸And the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel, who struck them and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward as far as the Valley of Mizpeh. And they struck them until he left none remaining. ⁹And Joshua did to them just as the LORD said to him: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

Imagine how the men and women of Israel would have felt as they look out and these fearful men of war gathered together as the grains of the sand on the seashore for one purpose; to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. Without God on their side they would be facing certain doom. But the LORD was on their side, He came to Joshua and said, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will give over all of them, slain, to Israel." Now here the great trust Israel had in Joshua (the captain of their armies) is manifested. God spoke to Joshua not to all the people of Israel they had to trust in Joshua. Israel's armies had to go war against impossible odds trusting Joshua's faith, his word and his unique relationship with God.

Hamstring their horses: when Israel has utterly destroyed their enemies, they are to hamstring all their horses. The reason the LORD tells Joshua to do this is so that all the horses can live, but they will never again be able to be used as war horses.

Burn their chariots with fire: the reason for this of course is obvious it would be absolute foolishness for any army who conquers an enemy not to destroy all their weapons of war.

Joshua attacks: Joshua and all his warriors took the kings and their armies by the waters of Merom by surprise and the LORD gave Joshua triumphant victory. The armies of their enemies fled in fear from the warriors of Israel and Joshua pursued them until all were put to death.

JOSHUA 11:10-13

Joshua struck King Hazor with the Sword and Burned the City.

- **Joshua 11:10-13:** And Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor and struck its king with the sword, for Hazor formerly was the head of all those kingdoms. ¹¹And they struck with the sword all who were in it, devoting them to destruction; there was none left that breathed. And he burned Hazor with fire. ¹²And all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua captured, and struck them with the edge of the sword, devoting them to destruction, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. ¹³But none of the cities that stood on mounds did Israel burn, except Hazor alone; that Joshua burned.

Jabin, king of Hazor was the king who gathered all the other kings together to go to war against Israel (v1), after Israel had defeated all the kings and their armies that Jabin had gathered together against Israel Joshua returns to Hazor and put king Jabin to death and burned the city.

JOSHUA 11:14-15

Israel takes the Cities Spoil and Leaves No Man Breathing.

- **Joshua 11:14-15:** And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock, the people of Israel took for their plunder. But every man they struck with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they did not leave any who breathed. ¹⁵Just as the LORD had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

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Israel was permitted to take the spoil and livestock of these cities for themselves, but they were not to leave any man breathing.

NOTE: God had promised Abraham to give the land of Canaan as an inheritance to his offspring forever. Joshua's mission as the captain of God's army was to occupy and cleanse the land from all that was an abomination before God and all that was corrupt wicked and evil and from all traces of idols and pagan gods and their temples and all traces of occultism and their places of worship this is why they could not leave any man breathing who had come against them to destroy them.

JOSHUA 11:16-19

Joshua made War Capturing Kings and putting them to Death.

- **Joshua 11:16-19:** So Joshua took all that land, the hill country and all the Negeb and all the land of Goshen and the lowland and the Arabah and the hill country of Israel and its lowland ¹⁷from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. And he captured all their kings and struck them and put them to death. ¹⁸Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. ¹⁹There was not a city that made peace with the people of Israel except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. They took them all in battle.

The Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon had such great fear and terror of Israel that they cunningly deceived Israel into making a peace covenant with them. (See Joshua chapter nine). These verses not only show what

a great captain of the LORD'S army Joshua was and the might and courage of Israel's armies, but also shows that when God was for them no one could defeat them no matter how mighty, powerful or how greatly they were outnumbered.

JOSHUA 11:20

Kings Hearts Hardened so they would be Devoted to Destruction.

- **Joshua 11:20:** For it was the LORD'S doing to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in order that they should be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but be destroyed, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

Hardness: comes from the Hebrew word (*porosis*) from a type of stone, figuratively it means stupidity or past feeling. It carries the idea of rendering a person hard and stupid or spiritually blind and past feeling. Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote:

- What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory²⁴ even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? (Rom. 9:22-23).

Paul is not saying God has predestined some to be saved and others to be destroyed. It is the riches of God's glory and mercy that has been prepared beforehand. When a person accepts God's plan of salvation and shows mercy to others God makes His riches and glory known to them. Such men and woman are vessels fit for God's mercy contrasted to those with a stubborn and hard heart who deliberately deny God and His ways and show no mercy toward others being vessels fit for destruction.

Hardness of heart and pride: self-centered and egotistical pride results in stubbornness which hardens the heart against all forms of authority, advice and counsel, so in this sense each time a person refuses to obey an authority or God they are hardening their own heart, but in a wider sense God has predestined into the laws of human nature the destruction of pride in that pride leads to stubbornness and stubbornness hardens the heart toward good advice, good counsel and all forms of authority so in this sense it can be said that God hardens a person's heart.

Hardness of heart a potter and clay: when a potter is making a jar to be admired and the clay won't mold in the way it should, because it has a flaw in the clay or it is not the right clay for the type of jar the potter is molding the potter destroys the half made jar because of the fault in the clay and then begins from the beginning to make a new jar. God the Master Potter according to His Sovereign will and His eternal purposes acts at various times in the same way, as the potter does with his clay and starts from the beginning?" Even an earthly potter knows when the clay is utterly flawed it is better to get new clay and start over again from the beginning. God actually did this with Judah and Israel when they had become so grossly corrupt and turned to other god's He used the King of Assyria to destroy Israel (the ten tribes) and Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon to destroy Judah (the two tribes) and brought both Judah and Israel into captivity for seventy years. God the Master Potter then began to remold the two divided nations of Judah and Israel into what they should have been. During the seventy years He molded Judah and Israel and transformed the two rebellious and corrupt tribes into one united nation and a people of one faith worshipping only the LORD their God that greatly desired to return and rebuild God's Holy City Jerusalem. The only reason a potter will destroy his work is because the clay has a flaw in it and therefore will not perform or act in the way it should. In the book of Deuteronomy Moses told the people of Israel:

- Not because of your (Israel's) righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. (Deut. 9:5).

These verses shine a spotlight upon the following four things:

1. God did not give Israel the land of Canaan because of their righteousness, but because of the wickedness and hardness of the heart of the people who lived in the land of Canaan.
2. Those dwelling in the land of Canaan were corrupt, wicked. It is also certain they were violent and practised all forms of evil and worshipped idols, pagan gods and had established temples for occult worship. Many of these ancient religions sacrificed on altars their own children to the pagan gods they believed in.
3. Joshua's mission as the captain of God's army was to occupy and the land and cleanse it from all that was an abomination before God.
4. God did not want people with wicked and hardened hearts dwelling with His people in the Promised Land.

In the same way the chief priest, Pharisees and scribes in the New Testament were full of pride and plotted behind closed doors to kill Jesus so God blinded them (John 12:37-43). God does not want people with pride and evil hearts to enter His Kingdom so he hardens or blinds them to the Gospel, but if these same people repent of their pride and evil hearts their eyes will be opened to the Gospel and they will be saved if they accept the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE: when speaking of such topics and God's sovereignty, God's timeless mind, predestination and God's foreknowledge I am fully aware that it is with a fallen and finite mind that is limited to time (as we understand it) that I am attempting to understand God's eternal wisdom and God's eternal knowledge which is far higher than my limited fallen mortal mind can comprehend therefore I never claim perfect understanding and would certainly not be dogmatic concerning my explanations and understandings when speaking of God's eternal sovereignty, but always allow for a certain amount of mystery. For further information concerning God hardening the heart, see the title:

- The Potter and the Clay.
- In, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

JOSHUA 11:21-23

Joshua Cut off Anakim and Devoted their Cities to Destruction.

- **Joshua 11:21-23:** And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction with their cities. ²²There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain. ²³So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

Joshua cut off the Anakim from:

- The hill country.
- Hebron.
- Debir.

- Anab.
- All the hill country of Judah.
- All the hill country of Israel.

Joshua devoted all the Anakim and their cities in these regions to destruction so that there were no Anakim left in the land of Israel except in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses and gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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