

CHAPTER 11 – 12

THE FINAL CONQUEST

Joshua 11:1 – 12:24

The God Who Fights for You



Joshua 10:28-12:24

11:1-4 A “league of Nations”

- Jabin, **King of Hazor**, held the same position of power in **the North** as King Adonizedek held in **the South**.
- Jabin gathered the northern Kings together to fight Joshua and Israel, whereas Adonizedek only wanted to punish **Gibeon** for **joining** Israel.
 - So, it seems that he learned nothing from observing Joshua’s Victory in the South.
 - If we learned the lessons of History, we wouldn’t repeat them!
 - • Read **Joshua 9:1-2**: this is the gathering of opposition to Israel.
- The Canaanite city-states watched the destruction of Jericho and Ai with astonishment and fear... now they rise up to oppose the invading force.
- A mobilisation of forces to go to war was not new:
Gen 14:1-2 speaks of a gathering of 5 Kings at the time of Abraham.
 - the idea of a “power bloc” is very old in history...
- Here in Joshua 11:1-4 we have something **new**: **all** the Kings of the North and every part of Canaan not yet touched by Joshua, join together **TO WIPE OUT ISRAEL**
Read Ps 2:1-4
 - They are really declaring war on God, who has decreed their judgement: cf Rev 16:14-16
 - This clash brings the forces of **unbelief** against the People of God – a reality repeated many times in history.
 - It is the insanity of hatred and revenge.

- The enemy always presents itself as **MORE POWERFUL** than the children of God. 11:6 reveals that this coalition of armies came with **HORSES** and **CHARIOTS** whereas Israel came **ON FOOT** with no great weapons: **Deut 20:1-4**
 - So they appear to be **POWERLESS**
Rom 8:31 **If God is FOR US who can be against us?**

Historical Note: Before the reign of **King Solomon**, circa 1,000 BC, Israel's army had no chariots.

- Joshua **here** is in the same position as David before Goliath: **1 Sam 17:32-54**
Both of them faced the enemy with **no material** force, but **God** was with them.

11:4

A horde as countless as the sands of the sea

- this is the way the O.T. speaks of a large number of people – not counted.
eg Deut 1:10 says that Israel will be multiplied **as the stars of heaven**.
1 Sam 13:5 described the Philistines gathering against Saul as **sand on the seashore in multitude**
cf Jer 15:8 and Nahum 3:6
- In modern language a very large and well-equipped force came against Joshua to challenge Israel's occupancy of the Promised Land – which was their inheritance from God.

Spiritual lesson: when Satan observes that we are **really** serious about dealing with our enemies, he gathers the forces of evil against us.

- we **seem** to be helpless against them, but we have **God** on our side.
- Jesus has given us all we need to gain the victory.

Lk10:19: **I have given you authority to tread underfoot serpents and scorpions and the WHOLE STRENGTH of the Enemy... Nothing will harm you.**

11:4

This countless horde coming against Israel now was the nightmare of Kadesh-Barnea staring them in the face! **Num** 13:25-33; 14:1-19; 20-38 cf Judges 4:3
A later Jabin fights Israel with 900 chariots - designed to mow man down like grass.

- The challenge to Faith and Trust in God is all too real! cf **Red Sea**
- One of the most endearing titles for God is: **THE FAITHFUL ONE**

Heb 10:23 **Let us keep firm in the hope we profess BECAUSE the One who made the promise is FAITHFUL**

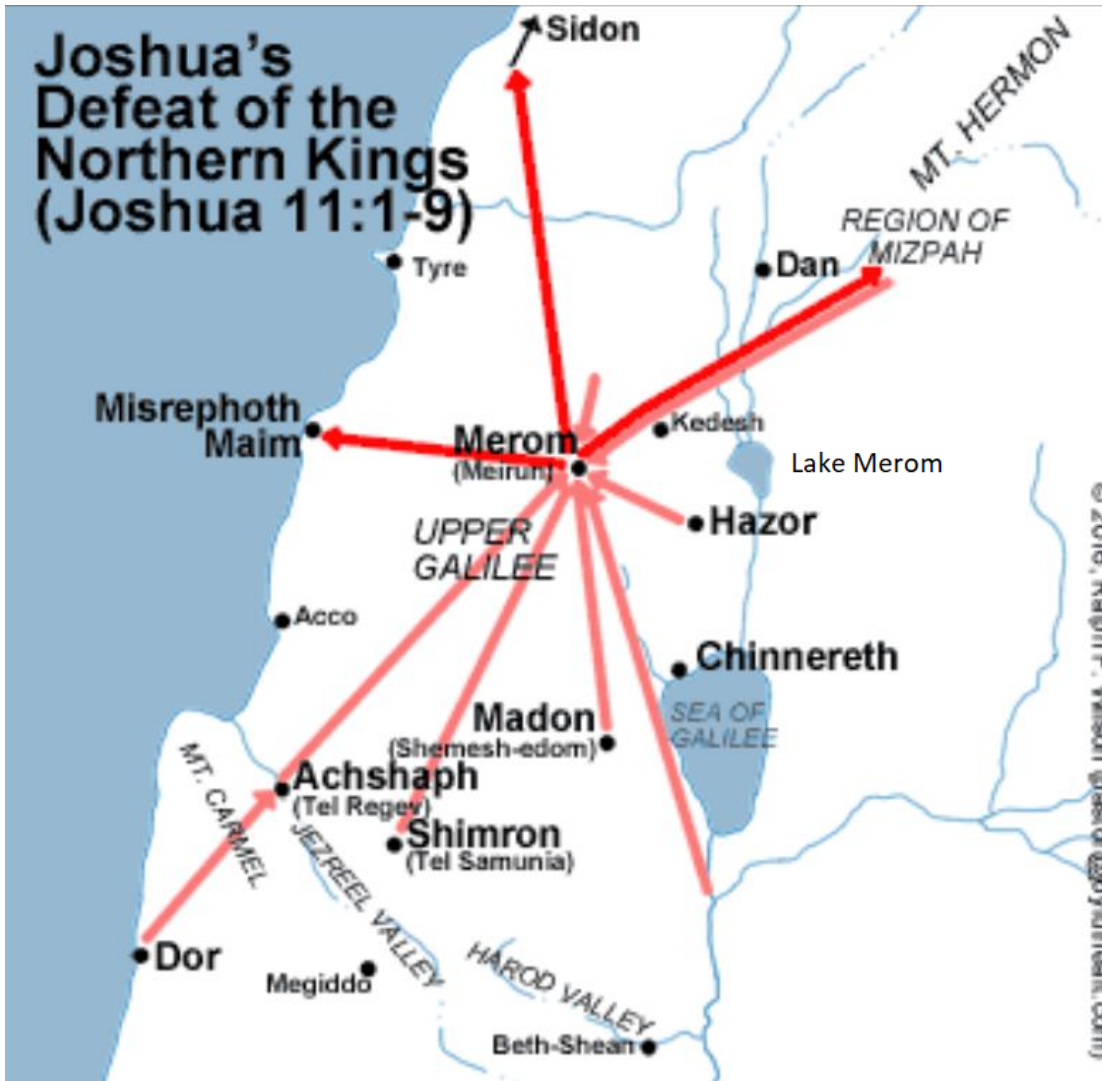
Song "Yahweh's love will last forever, His Faithfulness 'till the end of time;
Yahweh is our Faithful God; Yahweh, the Faithful One"

Deut 7:9 **Yahweh, our God IS God indeed, THE FAITHFUL GOD who is true to His Covenant and his graciousness for a thousand generations towards THOSE WHO LOVE HIM and keep his commandments...**

Therefore, we can trust Him beyond reason in every circumstance of our lives.

11:5

The Battle of Merom: The great army settled by the water of **Merom** (north of Galilee) as comfortable of victory as the Kings of the South were in Chapter 10.



11:6 God Himself spoke to Joshua **Have no fear of these men...**

- This challenge of the Canaanites was not so much against Israel – it was against Israel’s God, so **HE TAKES CHARGE...**
 - the enemy (Jabin) doesn’t realise that it is up against **The Captain** of the **Lord’s Army!**
- God had made His Triumphal Entry into the Promised Land at Jericho - **with great fanfare**
 - He was proclaimed the **GOD** of this land on Mount Gerizim/Ebal (Jos 8)
 - Besides God had given this land to Abraham’s descendants **FOREVER**: Gen 13:14-17
- All enemies – spiritual or temporal will find out the hard way...
Zec 2:8: **“He who touches you touches the apple of my eye”**

Lesson: Satan and his minions only attack us **BECAUSE** we belong to the Lord.

- so the attacks are really **on Him** in the eternal hatred Satan has for God.
- cf Acts 9:4 **Why do you persecute Me?** – here Satan was attacking God through His Church.

Note: **HATE** is Satan’s weapon of destruction, whereas
LOVE is God’s weapon of healing
So, we are **safe** in Jesus’ Hands : Jn 6:39; 10:28

11:7 Joshua used the strategy of surprise attack – as he did in the South.
He caught them unawares by the waters of Mermom.

11:8-9 Israel defeated them... **Joshua treated them as the Lord had ordered.**

- We see here that Joshua and his men conquered all the forces aligned against them.
 - In the same way **Christ and His Church** will conquer all the forces of evil trying to destroy the Kingdom of God on Earth: cf Rev 19/20

(NB)

- In our spiritual battles also we need to be aware that the victory lies with Jesus – the Captain of our Salvation
 - so we home-in to **His Power, His Victory on the Cross, His Grace**, etc.
 - Therefore the message of vs 6 applies **to us** on a daily basis: **Be not afraid because of them.**

cf Is 12:2 **Behold Yahweh is the God of my Salvation**
I have trust now and no fear.

Ps 91:3-6 **He will deliver you** (from all your enemies)

VIP The Lord did not allow this challenge until Israel had made considerable progress in dealing with the Canaanites they were **told** to cast out:

- until **obedience** to God and His Word had grown
- until **trust** in God’s goodness to them had grown
- until God had **SHOWN** them **WHO HE REALLY IS** through many signs.

Conclusion: Just as with Joshua and his army we, too, **in spite of** our weaknesses, in spite of **all the odds** stacked against us...

WE WILL OVERCOME! We will have victory: cf Rev 2/3

- In this campaign to conquer the Human Heart and set up the **KOG** inside of us
God wants to **work with us**
God wants to **work through us** to conquer other souls
God wants to **work FOR us**, since we are His representatives on Earth:

2 Cor 5:20; Eph 6:20; Lk 14:23

In 11:7 we observed that Joshua acted quickly, decisively and boldly in obedience to the Lord

- he didn't think of himself, but only of **GOD'S WILL**
- he was utterly selfless
- **THAT** was **NOT** expected by the "league of nations" which had declared war on him.

In 11:8 we have total victory for God and destruction of His enemies (**Rev 19/20**)

- (a) **JABIN'S** failure came from **the fact** that he was fighting God: cf **Job 5:13**
- (b) **PHAROAH'S** failure at the Red Sea was the same: **cf Ex 13:17-14:31**
- (c) Later in history **AHAB'S** attempt to corrupt **the Truth** also failed: **1 Kg 22:30-35**
- (d) **ATHALIAH'S** attempt to destroy the House of David (from which the Messiah was promised) failed also: **2 Kg 11:1**
- (e) Later still **HAMAN'S** attempt to wipe out all Jews failed too: **Esther ch 3**
- (f) Later still **HEROD'S** attempt to kill the Infant Saviour failed: **Matt ch 2**
- (g) and so on through History: 20th century: Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Polpot, etc. etc.
 - they all came to nothing in the end **Because** they opposed God's Will for God's children: cf **Dan 4:34**

Ps 33:10 **The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord STAND FIRM FOREVER, the purposes of his heart through all generations.**

11:9 Joshua's exact obedience is worthy of note –

- He **could** have decided that horses and chariots would be very useful to Israelites in the future – but NO!
- He put **Pride** and **self-will** aside in favour of **God's Will**
 - thus insuring future blessing because they would **always** have to rely on "the Arm of God" alone - but **that** Arm is Almighty!

Lesson: Pride never obeys. Humility bows the head and puts **God's Word into action.**

→ The conquest of Canaan shows that **God** is mighty in battle: Ex 15:3; Ps 24:8; 1 Th 5:24

11:10–14 The Fall of Hazor

- The city state of Hazor was the "capital" of the North – just as Jerusalem was for the South.
- Both kings were executed by Joshua!
- The inhabitants were **put to the sword**. The staggering completeness of the destruction shows the completeness of God's judgement of these people...
- It also demonstrates Israel's total obedience **in an unpleasant task**. cf Deut 7:1-2; 12:32; 20: 16-~~17~~¹⁸ **Notice the way in vs 18!**

Deut 7:18: **so that they may not teach you all the detestable practices they have to honour their gods and to cause you to sin against the Lord, your God.**



King Jabin of Hazor

Cuneiform from Hazor confirms Jabin was a dynastic name used for 500 years. Archeology now has 3 references to Jabin.



Jabin

Bronze Jabin
Hazor Exhibit
Israel Museum

11:13 Apart from Hazor itself, none of the other cities were burned – and Israel took the spoils of war.