



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

KEEP CALM AND MARCH ON!

Marching through the Book of Joshua: Lesson 14

In our lesson this week, we will be studying the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Joshua. Chapter 11 records the conquest of the northern territory in the land of Canaan, while chapter 12 catalogues the defeated kings and their land. We had no break between Israel's campaign to the south and now this campaign to the north. The chapters that follow show us how the land was divided and distributed between the tribes of Israel.

The kings in the northern territory were becoming a little anxious as they continued to hear about Israel's victories. At the initiation of one of the kings, the Canaanite states united together to fight against Israel, along with the remnants of armies from the previous battles in the south. The uniting together of several kings for a common cause was no new thing. It was a common practice at that time. Let's read our chapter and find out what happens.

First Day

1. Read Joshua 11:1-23. Title each section.
 - a. Section 1: verses 1-9
 - b. Section 2: verses 10-15
 - c. Section 3: verses 16-23
2. Write a summary statement for each section that explains the main thought, along with a brief description of what is happening.

3. Write any new facts you find. List any words that are new to you.
4. Are there any repeated words or phrases?
5. Do you find any immediate application for yourself?
6. What verse in this chapter explains the goal, or the reason, behind all the bloodshed in chapters 6 through 11?
7. Locate a map of the "Conquest of Canaan." Most likely there is one in the back of your Bible. Locate all the cities mentioned in chapter 11 and trace Israel's steps as they move from Gilgal to Hazor. This will give you a visual picture of what is happening and will also enhance your study.
8. What are your first thoughts as you read this chapter? Write your thoughts, questions, and interesting observations.

This ends our lesson for today. Israel has moved in and conquered the rest of the Promised Land. We can learn many lessons about being a servant in this chapter, as well as many important truths about the Lord. Remember to read the chapter with the eyes of a detective, absorbing every detail you possibly can. God has so much to teach us if we are ready to learn.

Memory Verse of the Week: "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." **Joshua 11:15**

Second Day

Review your memory verse. What can you learn about being a servant from this verse?

1. Read Joshua 11:1-9 again. Answer the following questions:
 - a. Who is the king that initiated the uniting of the states?
 - b. Where was he from?
 - c. Why did he do it?
 - d. List all the Canaanite states that came together.

"Jabin" was not a proper name, but a hereditary title that was given to the king (Judges 4:2), such as "Pharaoh" in Egypt or "Agag" among the Amalekites.

Hazor, the capital of that region, was a key city in Palestine. It was a fortress that was centered on the trade route from Egypt to Assyria, north of the Sea of Galilee, three miles west of the Jordan. It was the largest and best fortified city in Canaan. The "upper city" was thought to be about 30 acres and the "lower city" was about 175 acres. Hazor had a population of about 40,000.

2. Read Joshua 11:4-5. How many people were there? What advantages did the Canaanites seem to have over Israel?

Although we don't know exactly how many people were in the Canaanite army, Josephus, a Jewish historian, claims that the northern armies had 300,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 20,000 chariots.

The term "as many as the sands on the seashore" is a common proverbial expression used to signify a great number. This phrase gives the reader a vivid picture of what is being described (i.e.; Deuteronomy 1:10; Judges 6:5, 7:12; 1 Samuel 13:5; Jeremiah 15:8; Numbers 3:16).

The exact number is not important. The main point is that there were many, many people uniting to fight against Israel.

3. Read Psalm 139:17-18 and Psalm 40:5. What else is "more than the sands of the sea"? How does this encourage you?

4. According to Joshua 11:5, where did the kings set up camp while preparing for battle?

Merom was in upper Galilee, about 4,000 feet above sea level. This location was not the best place to maneuver chariots. Why were chariots there? John Gray suggests that "in rough country, such as the mountains of Galilee, the chariot was dismantled and reassembled in suitable terrain." God may have guided Israel to attack while the chariots were down.

5. How do you think Joshua may have felt as he faced this huge army which included horses and chariots? (How would YOU have felt?)

6. What does God tell Joshua in verse 6?

God is so faithful to encourage us as we face various battles. He continues, over and over again, to remind us of His presence, His power, and His plans.

7. What did God tell Joshua to do to their horses and chariots?

To "hamstring a horse" was to cut the large tendon behind the knee of their hind legs. This would prevent them from being able to walk, making them unfit as war horses.

8. Why didn't God want Israel to keep the horses and chariots? Wouldn't they have made Israel's life a little easier? What would be their temptation? Read Deuteronomy 17:14-16, Isaiah 31:1, and Psalm 20:7-8 for help.

9. What did God want Israel to remember? Read Jeremiah 3:23 and Psalm 3:8.
10. Have you been trusting in any "chariots and horses"? Is God removing anything or anyone in your life that has been preventing you from trusting Him? Give some examples of things that can be "chariots and horses" in our life.
11. What word in Joshua 11:7 describes how Israel attacked the Canaanites?
12. Who was the victor?

As Israel attacked, the enemies ran! Some fled over the mountains to Sidon, while others went eastward to the plains of Mizpeh.

Did Israel destroy the horses and chariots when they first attacked, or after the Canaanites fled? Some believe that they were destroyed after they fled, becoming a consequence of the victory. Others read the text and conclude that it was the cause of the victory, surprising and provoking the panic-filled flight. Who knows? It doesn't matter either way. The point is that God said to do it and Joshua obeyed Him.

I wonder if Joshua was tempted to keep the horses and chariots. They certainly would improve Israel's army, as well as their fighting ability. How much more efficient they would be! How much more "effective" they could be for God!

The enemy uses "chariots and horses" (people and things) in our life to tempt us in the same way. We covet and desire things, rationalizing that these things will make us "more effective" for God. The enemy uses even "good" things to tempt us.

13. Give some examples of things we are tempted by that could make us "more effective" for God. Is there anything tempting you right now?

Let's end here for today. Joshua and the children of Israel are moving forward, gaining new ground. There were many battles before their victory, weren't there? The same is true in our life. Make sure you're fighting those battles "just as the Lord tells you," if you want to experience the sweet victory that is found in Christ.

Third Day

Review your memory verse.

1. Read Joshua 11:1-15. Read verses 10-15 again.
2. What did Joshua do to the king of Hazor?
3. What percent of the people did Israel kill?

"Jabin" was the ringleader of the uniting of the Canaanites. There's always a "Jabin" in the group, isn't there? Someone who rallies others against us or stirs up trouble and strife to attack us. The Lord struck this "Jabin" with a sword to bring Israel victory. He will bring down the "Jabins" in your life as you obey Him and submit to Him.

4. Have you ever had a "Jabin" in your life? What was the result? Was truth revealed? What could you have done differently?
5. What should we do when others rise up against us? Give Scriptures to support your answer.
6. What did Joshua do to the other kings?
7. Why do you think he didn't burn the cities that were located on the "mound"? Read Deuteronomy 6:10-12.

A "mound" can also be called a "tell," which is an Arabic word describing a truncated, artificial mound built up by successive layers of ancient civilization. This word is widely used in place names in the Middle East.

When a city was destroyed by a catastrophe, such as a war or fire, new settlers simply leveled the ruins and built upon them. Thus the ground level of the new city was raised several feet higher than the old one, and the remnants of the old lay on the new. This process kept repeating, as time went on, until the site rose higher and higher. When the site was finally abandoned at its highest level, the winds and rains of many years leveled off the top and eroded the site, except where the process was arrested by a city wall. This explains the flat tops on the mounds.

Digging in such a way as to keep the improved occupational levels distinct is the modern scientific means of excavation. The remains found in each layer may be carefully studied and clearly dated.

8. What action is stressed in verse 15?

Joshua gives us a great model of a servant in verse 15. He left "nothing undone" that God told Him to do.

9. Are there any "things" in your life that have been left undone? Are there things that God has shown you to do, but you haven't had time to start? Or things you've begun, but never finished? Are you procrastinating? Do you need to reconcile with someone? Do you need to repent for something?

10. Why is it so important not to leave things "undone"? What can be the result?

As we end today's lesson, let's spend some time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to show us anything in our life that is "undone." But let's not leave it there. As He shows us, let's commit to finish it, okay?

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse? Is it ministering to you?

1. Read Joshua 11:16-23.

Joshua gives us a summary, or a broad recap, of what just happened. This is typical of the Hebrew style of writing. These next verses seem to be able to stand alone because of their content. Notice how this section starts in verse 16: **So Joshua took all this land ...** And ends with a simple statement: **Then the land rested from war.**

2. Why do you think we are given so much detail about the kings and their land that was conquered?

3. What new facts do you find in verses 16-23?

4. How long was this war, according to verse 18?

Most scholars believe that the conquering of the Promised Land took about seven years. Caleb was 78 years old when the conquest began (Deuteronomy 2:14, Joshua 14:7) and was 85 when they took Hazor (Joshua 14:10). Thus we can calculate the conquest from Joshua 6:1 to 11:15 to be about 7 years. Although we are given a brief account in our text, it was not a brief war.

5. Do you think Israel expected it to take this long? Why or why not? Read Exodus 23:29-30 and Deuteronomy 7:22.

6. Why do you think God allowed it to take that long? Why not blow everyone away in one shot? What do you think Israel learned from this time of waiting?

7. Is there a trial in your life that is taking what seems to be "a long time"?
What are you supposed to do? What are you supposed to be learning?
Are you?

8. What was the name of the only city that made peace with Israel?
(This is not a commendation, but only an observation.)

In verse 20, we read about a concept that may seem hard to understand and hard to accept. The text says that the Lord "hardened their hearts" so the Canaanites could come against Israel in battle.

9. Where have you heard this before? Read Exodus 14:8.

10. How do Romans 1:24, 26, and 28 relate to this?

The word used in verse 20 is "hazaq," which means "you have strengthened." This same word is also used in Job 4:3-4 and Isaiah 35:3-4. God actually "strengthened" them in their own resolve to oppose Israel. God's love gave them chance after chance to repent, but they refused. And now their iniquity had finally given them up (Genesis 15:16). They just didn't want to turn away from their sin.

11. Who were the Anakims mentioned in verse 22? What do we know about them? Read Deuteronomy 1:28, 2:10, 11, 21 and Numbers 13:28-33.

We know that these people were considered "giants." They were Israel's "special dread." They were destroyed except for a small remnant that dwelt in the Philistine city (11:22).

These giants scared Israel, yet God delivered them into their hands. God again proves that He is victorious!

12. Do you have any "giants" in your life that are causing you "special dread"? Do they need to be slain? Do you believe that God can destroy them? What do you need to do?

Israel could now rest in the Promised Land. They still had to divide and distribute the land between the tribes of Israel, but at least there would be no more wars. They could rest from fighting battles, from fear of giants, and from the Canaanites themselves. They could actually breathe a sigh of relief!

God promises us rest as we come to Him (Matthew 11:28-30). We can rest here on this earth as we trust Christ, but we will experience complete and ultimate rest when we meet our Savior face to face. I can't wait, can you?

13. Look up some Scriptures on rest. Which one ministers to you the most? Why? Meditate on that verse throughout the day.

This ends our lesson today. Are you resting in Christ? I pray that God will open His floodgates of peace as you make the decision to rest in Him. How about lying down beside some green pastures? (Psalm 23:2)

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory. Are you doing everything that you're commanded?

Today we will read through chapter 12 of Joshua. This chapter seems to be a summary of Israel's conquests on both sides of the Jordan.

Remember that every chapter and every verse are inspired by God and written by the Holy Spirit. Be asking yourself, "Why does God want me to know **this?**"

1. Read Joshua 12:1-24. List any questions you have.
2. What two conquered kings are listed in verses 1-6?
3. Read about that conquest in Numbers 21:21-35 and Deuteronomy 2:26-34. Why was this so noteworthy? Who was the leader of Israel when they were defeated?

In verses 7-24 we have a less-detailed description of Israel's conquests west of the Jordan. About 33 kings are mentioned. Dale Davis said, "Joshua 12:7-24 emphasizes that God's old promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:18-21 has been fulfilled. God was able to do what He promised (Romans 4:21). These verses do not drip with tedium, they tingle with excitement. Great is His faithfulness! Each conquered king is specified; each is a sign of God's power and a cause for Israel's praise."

4. Each victory in your life is cause for praise. Spend some time today reflecting on all the victories that you have experienced through the Holy Spirit. Make a short list of the victories that you've seen just this week! Spend time in prayer, thanking and praising Him for all He's done!

Notice that Israel conquered the mountain country, the Jordan plains, the slopes, the wilderness, and the lowlands (12:8). There is no mountain too tall for God or any lowland too low. God will meet us anywhere, anytime. God can conquer anything! **How does that give you hope?**

