

# A Practical Study of JOSHUA

## “The Path of Obedience Leads to Victory”

### Study Number Eleven – Joshua 11:1-23

Usually when we have a hard time in our life the first thing that we think of is, “What have I done wrong to deserve this?” And we try to figure out what God is doing in our life and try to find out what it is that’s wrong so we can make it right.

And that is not always the case. And a lot of what we face can be explained in several passages of scripture, and certainly is in our passage from Joshua.

#### Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world-forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ...

#### 2 Timothy 2:3, 4

Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, ...

## 1 Corinthians 15:57, 58

thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

Harry Ironside has written prolifically and all of his sermons and addresses were put to writing. When he wrote on the book of Joshua this is what he had to say:

(Joshua, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther by H. A. Ironside)

Joshua's victories illustrate the Christian's triumph over the unseen hosts of evil who, acting under the leadership of Satan, the god and prince of this world, would seek to hinder believers from possessing practically that which God has given them in Christ Jesus.

Many of us are defeated, when we ought to be victors, because of unjudged sin in our lives, or because of sloth and lethargy which hinder our laying hold of that for which God has laid hold of us. Blessed it is, if, like the Apostle Paul, we recognize the importance of pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the calling of God on high in Christ Jesus ... When God has promised to lead us on from victory to victory if we but cleave to Him with purpose of heart, it is the greatest folly to hold back and to fear lest we may not be able to overcome in the day of adversity.

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Now let's think for just a minute more on a couple of other passages. In John 13 Jesus is saying farewell, basically. He's washed their feet and begins to speak. And like a person who would announce his resignation from a congregation—and it's a shock—so Jesus makes a shocking announcement.

“One of you is going to betray me,” He says as they're gathered together. Peter looks across the table at John and asks him to find out who it is.

And Jesus simply says: “The one to whom I dip the morsel will be the one.” And our text tells us, and after the morsel Satan then entered into him. Jesus then said to him, “Whatever you do, do quickly.”

In Luke 22 the same thing happens to Peter:

Luke 22:31, 32

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

And then the capper of all of it is Job chapter 1 and we see the economic crunch on Job permitted by the Lord, and Satan is the one who perpetrates it. Listen to these verses:

## Job 1:6-12

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." Then Satan answered the Lord, "Does Job fear God for nothing? "Hast Thou not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. "But put forth Thy hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face." Then the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.

To do what? To put his hand on all that he had. His material blessings, the things that he owned, but with restrictions and limitations.

Satan is very, very much at work. And we're seeing it on every front. And he's doing war that we're not even aware of. And in the doing of the war, we're looking within to see what God is trying to do to us. And God is certainly going to use it.

But we need to recognize the fact that the Christian life is

difficult. And sometimes we just do well to survive in being able to continue consistently to make progress in the Christian life and to honor Him.

Now in our study of the book of Joshua to this point, we considered the SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN. We call chapter 11 the NORTHERN CAMPAIGN.

As far as where we are, the forces of Israel have now retired to Gilgal—we left them there at the end of the southern campaign in our last study. If we were to look at our maps, everything below Gibeon is now in possession of the children of Israel as a result of the Southern campaign.

Now on the second page of maps, we have those four squares. And that bottom right one is the one for this study—the Northern campaign. So it's everything north of Gibeon that now comes under surveillance. Our central city is going to be Hazor—and that is 80 miles north of Gilgal where Joshua and the Israelites are located.

We titled chapter 9—THE GIBEONITES. It was a compromise with them that took place there.

Chapter 10—THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN.

And now chapter 11—THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN.

Let's get into the text. It's going to look like verse 1 is a lot like Joshua 10:1:

## Joshua 10:1

Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and ... that the ... Gibeon had made a treaty of peace ...

And that brought Adoni-Zedek to make this alliance with the other four Amorite kings and the five of them came up against Gibeon and that started the Southern campaign.

Now in this passage it's a little bit different and we're going to roll out all the artillery. This is the last great act of defiance. This is going to be the big battle.

**v. 1 When Jabin king of Hazor heard of this, he sent word to Jobab king of Madon, to the kings of Shimron and Acshaph,**

“When Jabin king of Hazor heard of this, he sent word to Jobab king of Madon, to the kings of Shimron and Acshaph,”

Now the king of Hazor, Jabin, is the king over probably the largest city in the land of Canaan. Hazor is just no small jumping off place. It is a huge metropolis and everything is centered here.

When he gets word that the south has been wiped out, he gets concerned. And just like Adoni-Zedek, he's running around looking for friends in order to survive. And so he starts in. And

look at the massive, massive thing he puts together here.

First of all, “he sent word to Jobab, king of Madon.” Now that’s 18 miles southwest of Hazor. And then to “Shimron”—that’s 30 miles southwest. “Acshaph” is 22 miles southwest.

So he goes kind of south and west from his own town, sends an invitation to these three fellows and says, “Look, join me.” But that isn’t where he stops.

**v. 2 and to the northern kings who were in the mountains, in the Arabah south of Kinnereth, in the western foothills and in Naphoth Dor on the west;**

“and to the northern kings who were in the mountains, in the Arabah south of Kinnereth, in the western foothills and in Naphoth Dor on the west;”

Now if we took that terminology and looked at it for just a minute we probably wouldn’t understand much.

Just south of Hazor there’s a whole group of cities—Endor, Jahneel, Ophrah, Camon and several others. He sent these invitations to all these fellas to come and join him.

See the word “Kinnereth”? That’s an Old Testament term for the Sea of Galilee so we can kind of get the location on the map as to where these places are when we see a term like that.

“Naphoth Dor” is way over on the Mediterranean Sea coast and it’s 47 miles southwest of Hazor. So he’s chased all around the area up there, urgently looking for people to join him. But he doesn’t stop.

**v. 3 to the Canaanites in the east and west; to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites in the hill country; and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah.**

“to the Canaanites in the east and west; to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites in the hill country; and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah.”

This guy goes berserk! He’s after anybody.

He catches the “Canaanites” over on the Mediterranean Sea coast.

Then after he gets them, he gets the “Amorites” that are left that survived everything on the east.

The “Hittites”—of course a lot of them are wiped out down around the Dead Sea—but there’s a great, great bunch of them up in Asia Minor. So, he’s pulling all of them in.

The “Perizzites”—we can call them parasites. They’re village-dwellers. They’re scattered throughout the land. He gets all of those he can.



“Jebusites” are the ones that were centered in and around the city of Jerusalem, and of course held that until the time of David.

“and to the Hivites below Hermon”—why do they mention them that way? Remember the Gibeonites were Hivites and they had a treaty. He couldn't touch them, but that treaty did not cover all of these that are up here in the north. So there's a whole group of them that joined them.

“in the region of Mizpah”—and that of course means simply the plains of Mount Hermon. So that's way up there in the north.

What do we have? We're mobilizing for one final all-out offensive. And look how big it is.

**v. 4 They came out with all their troops and a large number of horses and chariots—a huge army, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.**

“They came out with all their troops and a large number of horses and chariots—a huge army, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.”

Wow! Just jillions of people, and on top of that we have a new warfare. We now have “horses and chariots.” When you're a foot soldier and you're used to using your sword and now you have to do battle with “horses and chariots.”

There's a principle here and we want to verify it by the study of Joshua. Let's illustrate this point:

The further we get along in the Christian life, the bigger and more difficult are the battles with the evil one.

Make a decision to get serious about the Lord, the evil one is going to rise up and resist. We can count on it. We can say, "Well I didn't even know he existed." If we can say that, we are probably going the same way so we haven't bumped into him lately.

He is very real. And the further we get along in the Christian life, the bigger and more difficult the battles.

Why do we say that? Satan mobilizes for an all-out offensive in a MID-LIFE CRISIS, in a DIVORCE, in REBELLIOUS CHILDREN, in JOB LOSS, in AGING. And even in SUCCESS—because once he can get us successful, we want to enjoy the good life instead of living the life of a disciple—giving of ourselves freely to the cause of Christ in the midst of all of that. He uses it all.

Now look at that illustrated in the book of Joshua. Where was their first battle? Jericho—there's a fortress. Just one king, one city, right? Just a little number compared to what we have now.

What was their next one? Even smaller! Ai was just a little deal to go up and take.

After that what happens? Treaty with the Gibeonites.

Then after that? The southern campaign—only five kings in that.

Now what do we have? We're rolling out the whole nine yards now. We have everybody that is left in the land—"the sand on the seashore." They are mobilized. And on top of that they have "horses and chariots."

Is Joshua, in getting these reports, just a tad bit concerned about the magnitude of the task that he faces?

**v. 5 All these kings joined forces and made camp together at the Waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.**

"All these kings joined forces and they made camp together at the Waters of Merom, to fight against Israel."

Notice just southwest on the map, "the Waters of Merom." That's a great central staging area. They have water there and the provisions they need to set up camp till everybody gets to that location—and it's just southwest of Hazor. A great place to start.

What do we have? We have something that just overwhelms us from a human point of view. Just looks totally hopeless. Finally, Joshua and the sons of Israel are going to experience

defeat.

If we look at that from a natural point of view, that's exactly the way we feel.

Ruth Harms Calkin—she always does it in such a humorous way. She says:

(Lord, It Keeps Happening ...and Happening by Ruth Harms Calkin)

O God  
What shall I do?  
I am at the total end  
Of myself.

[And the Lord always answers.]

Wonderful, dear child!  
Now start your new beginning  
With Me.

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Lee Ezell in her book *The Missing Piece*, talking so much of tragedy in her life, says:

(The Missing Piece: Finding God's Peace for Your Past by Lee Ezell)

Learning to give thanks in my circumstances was another.

Then came the realization that nothing passed God's desk with His approval, and that even a seeming disaster could fit His plan. I had also learned to release my problems to the Lord and allow Him to work after I had done all I humanly could.

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Ron Lee Davis tells this story of a young man by the name of George Matheson in the 1800s:

(The Healing Choice by Ron Lee Davis)

Some of us face loss in the form of lost hopes and dreams. This was the hurt of loss suffered by George Matheson, a young man living in the mid-1800s. Afflicted by an incurable disorder that gradually robbed him of his sight, Matheson found himself increasingly avoided by family and friends. Finally, there was only one person who stood by him: his fiancée.

But as the day of their wedding grew closer, she began to be less affectionate, less spontaneous with Matheson. He knew something was troubling her, so he asked her what was wrong. At first she said nothing, then, with her own beautiful eyes averted from his gradually failing eyes, she blurted, "I'm sorry. I just can't face a future of caring for a blind man." With that, she left him—forever.

George Matheson had lost his sight, his friends, his family, and the love of the only woman he ever cared for. All his plans

and dreams for the future were dashed. And it was in the depths of this terrible loss that Matheson sat down at his desk and wrote the lines of that great hymn,

O Love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in Thee;  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.  
pp. 59-60

Joshua is there! It just seems from the human point of view that there is no possibility of a victory because now everybody's heard about it and they're all mobilized against this.

Is the Lord equal to this? Look at it—verse 6. Right on schedule, the Lord's there.

We say, "But in my stillness, the Lord never comes around." Have we ever been still enough to let Him talk to us? The text tells us to be still and know that He's God.

### Isaiah 30:21

Thine ear shall hear a word behind thee saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," when you turn to the right hand and to the left.

The problem is, do we really want to hear from the Lord when

the crisis is falling all around us? And when we're all ears and we have the word before us, God begins to speak.

**v. 6 The Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel, slain. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.”**

“The Lord said to Joshua,”—did He do that in the last study? Yes, He did it then too. Just as they headed toward Gibeon—“Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel, slain. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.”

If that old hymn had been written:

Just when I need Him Jesus is near,  
Just when I falter, just when I fear;  
Ready to help me, ready to cheer,  
Just when I need Him Jesus is true,  
Never forsaking all the way through;  
Giving for burdens Pleasures anew,

Just when I need Him Jesus is strong,  
Bearing my burdens all the day long;  
For all my sorrow giving a song,

Just when I need Him He is my all,  
Answering when upon Him I call;  
Tenderly watching lest I should fall,

Just when I need Him most.  
Just when I need Him most.  
Just when I need Him most.  
Jesus is near to comfort and cheer,  
Just when I need Him most.  
(source unknown)

Here He is. He's there, just as they headed toward Gibeon, we read:

### Joshua 10:8

...“Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hands. Not one of them will be able to withstand you.”

Why does the Lord do that each time we come to a situation like this? Because He promised Joshua back in that commissioning service in Joshua 1:

### Joshua 1:5

No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you or forsake you.

Has He said the same to us?

### Hebrews 13:5



Let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have for He has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

The Lord is mentioned NINE TIMES in this chapter again. We need to keep our focus on Him.

The first thing He says is, “Don’t be afraid of them.”

That little phrase occurs NINETY-NINE TIMES in the scripture. “Don’t be afraid.” It seems like every time the Lord talks to us in a crisis His opening remark is, “Don’t be afraid.”

### Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with you: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Now why does He say, “hamstring the horses and burn the chariots”? Of course we’re thinking cruelty to animals immediately. We don’t like that. Why does He say that?

Well, what are the two primary concerns on Joshua’s heart right now? Whipping him with a sword is one deal, but when we deal in the chariots and the horses that’s another ballgame. So his number one, primary concern is horses and chariots. And the Lord says, “hamstring the horses...burn the chariots.”

So he has a little indication of what's going to happen. But why do that? Why not capture these things and use them in future military campaigns as secret weapons?

That's the big problem right there. When we start depending upon military might instead of the Lord, we're going to get into trouble. The Lord can't trust them with horses and chariots.

We put "In God We Trust" on our coins but we're working like crazy to get Star Wars going because man we have to have the greatest defense in the world against everything that's coming against us. We just mouth it—words—but we really don't mean it.

The Canaanites used their horses in pagan worship. Listen to Psalm 20:

### Psalm 20:7

Some boast in chariots, and some in horses; but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God.

So He can't trust them with it.

Now to "hamstring" a horse only means he no longer can pull a chariot but he certainly can pull a plow. He can be used for domestic purposes. So we really aren't doing all that much damage to the horse, but we are letting the chariots go up in

smoke—and they certainly should.

Now the Lord’s got a message. The Lord says, “I’m going to hand them over to you tomorrow—slain. When you get them, hamstring the horses and burn the chariots.”

Winston Churchill, toward the end of his career, was invited to go back and speak to his preparatory school. And the headmaster said, “Now you’re going to have one of the greatest statesmen of our history speaking to you young men today. He is one of the greatest orators that is alive. I want you to take notes and watch his technique as he gives his speech.”

And after a long arduous introduction Churchill stood up and he said, “Young men”—with his gravelly voice—“never give up. Never give up. Never, never, never, never!” And he sat down.

That’s Joshua. Just never, never give up. Overwhelming odds against us—hang in there.

(No Time for Neutrality by Donald K. Campbell)

Marshall Foch, in the second battle of the Marne during World War I, was asked about his situation. He sent back [the following] dispatch: “My left arm falters. My center is weak. My right crumbles. [Final words] I am attacking.”

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**v. 7 So Joshua and his whole army came against them suddenly at the Waters of Merom and attacked them,**

“So Joshua and his whole army came against them suddenly at the Waters of Merom and attacked them,”

Is that similar to our last study? They traveled all night, caught them by surprise in the morning. Once again it's by surprise “at the Waters of Merom.”

And now we come to verse 8.

**v. 8 and the Lord gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.**

“and the Lord gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.”

There's something wrong with that verse. What's wrong with it? There's no detail.

What great action in our last study. Here's the Lord throwing them into confusion the first thing. Secondly,—they're on the run so He throws hailstones at them. Exciting isn't it?

And then the next thing, Joshua's running out of time. He says, "Hey God, hold the sun for a while." So for 24 hours the sun's held up there while they fight. That's exciting!

We don't have anything like that in this passage. All we have is "the Lord gave them into the hand of Israel." How about that?

That's the same way we are today. We get going on a high horse when we hear about the miracles. We hear about God's sovereign intervention and big deals. That really impresses us and gets us excited.

But just to give us a group of statistics and the fact of what the Lord did, that doesn't sound so dramatic and that doesn't minister to our nature does it? Because we get caught up in all the dramatic and the emotional parts of the deal. And we want the confusion and the hailstones and the sun standing still.

We can learn a principle there. There's no big deal at all. God did it—that's all. He got it done.

God is willing to do whatever is necessary to gain the victory for His obedient children. He did it again, just like He did before. It's just that we don't have all of these other statistics.

Now we'll notice several cities there:

“Greater Sidon” is 35 miles northwest of Hazor. That’s way up there on the coast, just south of Beirut, Lebanon.

“Misrephoth Maim”—that’s 27 miles northwest of Hazor, right over on the coast.

And Sidon and Misrephoth Maim are about 38 miles apart. Misrephoth Maim is about 38 miles south of Sidon over on the coast. So they’re both way over there where they have been chased.

**v. 9 Joshua did to them as the Lord had directed: He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.**

“Joshua did to them as the Lord had directed: He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.”

What’s great about that? Not the act, but the fact that he lived so comfortably under divine authority. Are we like that? Are we excited to serve the Lord? When He seeks to call us and wants us to do something, do we feel good about it? And we don’t have any problem? We don’t buck and fight and have to have the bit and the bridle. We just walk with the Lord.

And Joshua does that. It’s just over and over again. He just lives comfortably under it. “Lord if You said, I’ll do it!” Because that’s the best thing to do.

What’s he doing? He is playing out the commissioning service in Joshua chapter 1 when the Lord said:

## Joshua 1:8

...this Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth; you meditate on it day and night, you're careful to observe all that's written therein. Then you will make your way prosperous and you'll have good success.

It's the obedient heart that God blesses.

**v. 10 At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and put its king to the sword. (Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms.)**

“At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and put its king to the sword. (Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms.)”

**v. 11 Everyone in it they put to the sword. They totally destroyed them, not sparing anything that breathed, and he burned up Hazor itself.**

“Everyone in it they put to the sword. They totally destroyed them, not sparing anything that breathed, and he burned up Hazor itself.”

Of all these cities, there's only one that he burned and that was Hazor.

There is a very exciting book called *Hazor: The Rediscovery of*

*a Great Citadel of the Bible* by Yigael Yadin. Yigael Yadin was a Professor of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and director of its Institute of Archaeology. It is he who directed the excavations at Hazor in 1955-1958.

In 1955 Yigael Yadin, leader of the excavations at Hazor, began the five-year search that has proved to be the key to understanding much of Biblical chronology. Before the dig was over, the archaeologists had uncovered no less than 22 cities of antiquity, including the original city of Hazor, which dates back to 2500 B.C., confirmed that an area thought to be a “chariot parking lot” was actually the largest city in Canaan; resolved a Biblical contradiction concerning the destruction of Hazor by the Israelites; and demonstrated that the historical books of the Bible (Joshua through Chronicles) are an amazingly accurate record.

Now here’s the quote:

(Hazor: The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible by Yigael Yadin)

Last, but not least in importance, is the evidence that this huge city, with a population of thousands came to an abrupt end by fire in the second half of the thirteenth century, never to be rebuilt. The discovery of the Mycenaean fragments in the topmost stratum shows that the city existed while such pottery was still extant, namely until 1230 B.C. Most probably the city was destroyed sometime in the second third of the thirteenth century. The striking similarity between the size of



Hazor as revealed by the excavations and its description in the Bible as ‘the head of all those kingdoms’, plus the insistence of the biblical narrator that Hazor—and only Hazor—had been destroyed by Joshua and burned, leave little doubt, it seems, that we actually found the Canaanite city of Jabin that was destroyed by Joshua. In that case, the excavations at Hazor provided, for the first time, decisive archaeological data for fixing both Joshua’s dates and, indirectly, the dates of the Exodus from Egypt.  
(source unknown)

Now we don’t need all that to prove our faith if we’d just believe in the Word of God in the first place, but it is kind of fun once in a while to see that we’re on the right track.

And the neat thing about it is they found these huge marble stones and guess what’s engraved on them? Horses and chariots.

**v. 12 Joshua took all these royal cities and their kings and put them to the sword. He totally destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded.**

“Joshua took all these royal cities and their kings and put them to the sword. He totally destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded.”

**v. 13 Yet Israel did not burn any of the cities built on their mounds—except Hazor, which Joshua burned.**

“Yet Israel did not burn any of the cities built on their mounds—except Hazor, which Joshua burned.”

**v. 14 The Israelites carried off for themselves all the plunder and livestock of these cities, but all the people they put to the sword until they completely destroyed them, not sparing anyone that breathed.**

“The Israelites carried off for themselves all the plunder and livestock of these cities, but all the people they put to the sword until they completely destroyed them, not sparing anyone that breathed.”

Just exactly the way the Lord said that it would be done. Now notice the chain of command in verse 15.

**v. 15 As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.**

“As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it;”

Isn't that great? The Lord commanded Moses, Moses commanded Joshua, and who's going to carry it out? Joshua! He did it! He's a doer of the Word and not just a hearer only.

And notice it says:

“he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.”

The one thing that will put us where we need to be—as far as our orientation to be ready to meet the Lord—that one thing is an OBEDIENT HEART. It is absolutely, positively top priority.

As we sit here, as far as we know, our heart is obedient to the Lord and is there no realm of rationalization or disobedience in our heart? Can we bear witness that such is the case?

We read in Mark chapter 3, “The Lord looked around at them and grieved at them for their callousness of heart.” (ref. Mark 3:5)

Why were they calloused of heart? Because they were disobedient. They were not living according to the commands and the precepts of the Word of God. Their hearts were filled with murder, jealousy and envy. And their hearts had grown calloused and had been rubbed so long by truth. They were in desperate need of hearts filled with obedience, just like Joshua.

“As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.”

Joni Eareckson Tada talks about obedience and the pain of

learning how to be obedient when in her book:

(Choices, Changes by Joni Eareckson Tada)

*Jesus learned obedience from the things that He suffered.* And Ken and I, servants no greater than our Master, learn to do the same. This is the gristmill of our marriage. And yet what peaceful fruit it yields. Ken and I are growing. Individually, yes. Together, so much more.

The heavy hand of heartache lays us low when we disobey. But we learn from suffering. My... [and then she catches herself] that is, *our* wheelchair, this strange and oftentimes unwelcomed addition to our life together, makes us trust. Teaches us to obey. And we find joy, fresh and invigorating, each day.

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The reason we don't feel very good today and we're not terribly excited is maybe we're fighting what God has permitted. He's saying, "Hey look, just be obedient! Just take it! Don't get your nose out of joint and keep fighting what I'm allowing! Take it as part of the curriculum!"

The Lord didn't want to do that either in the Garden of Gethsemane, but He gave Himself in resignation. He says, "Nevertheless, not my will but yours be done."

In the theological journal from Dallas Seminary there was this statement about the specific matter of being commissioned by the Lord to serve Him and obedience:

(Bibliotheca Sacra, published by Dallas Theological Seminary, Vol. 143, No. 572, October-December 1986)

But God's commission carries with it a set of conditions, qualifications to be met before one can become His messenger. God imposes careful standards on those who would be His spokesmen. *If* Christians meet God's criterion, *then* their work will be effective; if they fail to measure up, their work will be useless. Some seem to possess an exalted notion of their own importance to the work of God. They act as though Almighty God were so weak and dependent on them that the kingdom would collapse without them to hold it up. They are indispensable, or so they think, and the need God has is so critical—the emergency so acute—that God will accept any service they offer on their own terms. In arrogance they present themselves, like impure vessels, not realizing that God abhors their sin; they present themselves as leaky vases, presuming to contain the splendor of God's grace; they present themselves as damaged goods, remnants from a fire sale, and expect to model the righteousness of God.

pp. 296-97

The only way we model the righteousness of God is by the obedient heart. That is the way Jesus Christ is expressed and demonstrated. Not in a disobedient heart, but in one that is obedient.

When we get to verses 16 and 17 we start to get patriotic. That old heart-thumping pride when we go from “Sea to

shining sea.” Here’s the boundaries now of everything they’ve done.

**v. 16 So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills,**

“So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev,”—that’s way down in the south—“the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills,”

**v. 17 from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death.**

“from Mount Halak,”—that’s way in the south—“which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon.”

There’s Halak in the south and Hermon in the north!

“He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death.”

We can start singing “America, the Beautiful”:

O beautiful for spacious skies,

For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
(source unknown)

There's a better one than that. "This Land is Your Land" sounds a whole lot better doesn't it? Because we're there now! It's time to give it over to them—their inheritance is now theirs:

This land is your land, This land is my land,  
From California to the New York Island,  
From the redwood forest, to the Gulf Stream waters,  
This land was made for you and me.

I roamed and rambled, and I followed my footsteps  
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts.  
And all around me a voice was sounding,  
This land was made for you and me.  
(source unknown)

And boy it is! They're excited.

**v. 18 Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time.**

“Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time.”

How long is it? It's been seven years.

How do we get that? Well over in chapter 14 we're going to meet a really neat guy that's 85 years of age. He is one of the coolest guys in scripture. And we can take the statements that he makes about his age and we can attach the exact length of the campaign of 7 years for them to possess the land.

It was no little weekend safari on that southern deal. Well it's taken them 7 years for all of it, so it gives us an idea of how long they've been in battle and war to accomplish all this.

And then of course we have to have the "Except" in there don't we?

**v. 19 Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle.**

"Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle."

Joshua blew it once and he learned his lesson didn't he? And it's in the record.

Now we're going to get upset when we get to verse 20.

**v. 20 For it was the Lord himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the Lord had commanded Moses.**



“For it was the Lord himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

We don't like that do we?

The Lord “hardened their hearts” so they'd get mad and fight and He would wipe them out. Does God manipulate the will and the heart of man?

There's a process that goes on and it's simply this, the same sun that shines and melts the butter shines and hardens the clay. And our response to the loving rays of God's warm sunshine—our response to that determines the later ramifications of our life.

It is always a priority that first we harden our own heart and then God just lets it take its course and He comes to the point where He says, “That's it. There's no hope.” And it's all over. So both are true!

We read in Romans 1 that because of their sin and disobedience, “God gave them over to it.” (ref. Romans 1:24)

We read in 2 Timothy chapter 4, “Their conscience was seared with a hot iron.” (ref. 1 Timothy 4:2)

These Pharisees in Mark 3 had a “calloused heart.” It's getting

harder and harder. The Spirit of God cannot get through anymore. There's no vibrant thrill and dynamic enthusiasm about walking with God.

And there comes a time when it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and sure enough it happens—and judgment takes place. They've had all these years to respond. The Lord doesn't want anybody to perish, BUT a time comes when it's too late.

Matthew 25:34-41 says the same thing: "He says to those who are on His hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, into the kingdom which is inherited for you.'" But then in verse 41 He says, "To those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Well, the tragedy of the thing is, they have brought about their own demise by the hardening of their own hearts. And then the Lord just hardens their hearts the rest of the way.

We see that in the book of Exodus. Pharaoh hardened his heart. Then the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart. It's a back-and-forth kind of thing. And then he's finally wiped out in the Red Sea when it rolls back on all the forces there.

**v. 21 At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally**

**destroyed them and their towns.**

“At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns.”

Who are the Anakites? They're the giants in the land. Evidently the sons of God married the daughters of men back in the book of Genesis and their offspring were giants. One of those giants who became quite famous is biting the bullet when David took the sling and went down into the Valley of Elah, the Philistine from Gath.

Now what happens here is Joshua takes a safari south. This is part of that southern campaign. But he's coming back here now to take care of this.

Hebron's about 30 miles south of Gilgal, and these other two cities are right there in the area. They're kind of a pocket of these giants living in the land so he mops them up.

**v. 22 No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive.**

“No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive.”

Those cities are over on the coast and they're Philistine cities. The Philistines are not touched by this war. We don't know

why, but they become a real pain to Samuel under his judgeship, to Saul—many of his campaigns are against the Philistines—to David in many of his battles against the Philistines. And Goliath came from Gath—one of these cities.

So verse 23 is that great verse which is kind of like a hinge-verse in the Bible.

Once in a while we get a hinge-verse. It's where everything that's been said is said and everything that's going to be said is said in one verse—and it's called a HINGE VERSE.

Chapters 1-12 are in the first part of this verse, and 13-24 are in the back part of the verse. So the KEY VERSE to the whole book is this.

**v. 23 So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.**

“So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses,”—chapters 1-12—“and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions.”—chapter 13-24—“Then the land had rest from war.”

Now there's one more chapter. There's chapter 12. And all there is in it is the list of 31 kings.

Now don't form some premature conclusions about a dry,

dusty, musty study next, because we only have the names of 31 kings there.

Why don't we summarize as we come to rest from war and a point of change in the direction of our book from WAR to INHERITANCE. We remember that God told Joshua not to let the book depart from his mouth and he'd be successful. He hasn't and he's been successful. God has been faithful.

### Lamentations 3:22-26

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ...

And we should sing that hymn at the end of this:

To God be the glory—great things He hath done.  
(source unknown)

The Lord is mentioned 9 times here and 13 times in our last study. It's been the Lord's battle. He's only been an instrument.

Robert Foster was talking about Billy Graham receiving an honorary doctorate degree from a college. And when Graham stood up to receive that doctorate degree from that that school, this is what he said:

(Building Life on the Promises by Robert D. Foster)

“I humbly accept this honor on behalf of the One to Whom it rightfully belongs. I am merely the vessel and instrument that God has seen fit to use. I will hold this degree temporarily until He returns and then together we will give Him the honor, the praise and the splendor that only He deserves.”  
(source unknown)

That’s what Joshua’s doing. He says, “I’ve only been an instrument. I’ve been used by God with an obedient heart to bring about the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant in getting this land to the people to whom it belongs.”

And as the scenes of the final chapters begin to unfold, he’s an old man. He’s run his race, he’s done his thing. His last great act is going to be to give the people their inheritance. And we’re going to have fun studying that.

We have ten lessons.

Lesson #1: When things look hopeless in our eyes, God is ready to work.

Sand of the seashore, horses and chariots. God’s ready to work.

Did He do that when the disciples were caught in the boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee in the storm? “Lord, You don’t care. You’re lying there asleep while we’re drowning!” The Lord just stands up half asleep and says, “Peace be still.” It

solves the problem.

Lesson #2: The Lord has a message for Joshua in the midst of this crisis.

And He has one for you too.

Lesson #3: The Lord is the one responsible for the victory.

Lesson #4: Joshua has an obedient heart.

Lesson #5: Joshua is a doer of the word, and not just a hearer only.

That's James 1:22: "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."

Lesson #6: God has been faithful over all the years of conflict.

And we're going to be able to say the same thing.

"What we suffer now is nothing worthy to be compared to the glory that will be revealed in us later." (Romans 8:18)

Lesson #7: 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

Yes, their hearts were hardened. Judgment came but the Lord was not desirous for that to happen.

Lesson #8: God is faithful to fulfill His promises to Joshua.

It'd be good to go back and read chapter 1 at this point. Just go back and review the promises God made to him.

Lesson #9: Rest follows the conflict.

A couple of verses to put there:

### Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.”

And our last lesson is that first observation we made when we were talking about Satan early in the study.

Lesson #10: The further you get along in the Christian life, the bigger and more difficult the battles.

Satan is a defeated foe. He's “like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,” (ref. 1 Peter 5:8) but “greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.” (ref. 1 John 4:4)

James 4 says resist him and he will flee. (ref. James 4:7)

God is greater and He'll provide the victory if we'll just trust Him and express that trust with an obedient heart. That's the key to the whole thing.



Father, we come to You and we thank You that we've had the wonderful privilege of looking into Your Word again. Some very sobering thoughts. We pray if there is someone that has not yet come to know Jesus Christ in a personal way, they'd open their lives and hearts to You this very moment and discover the thrill of having a right relationship with You. Father we pray that there will be those who will retire with the words of David on their lips: "Search me, O God and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me. Any way of disobedience, and lead me in the way everlasting." Lord, we want to express to You the one thing You desire above all else, and that is an obedient heart living comfortably under divine authority. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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# A Practical Study of JOSHUA

## “The Path of Obedience Leads to Victory”

### Study Number Eleven – Joshua 11:1-23

### NOTES

- v. 1 When Jabin king of Hazor heard of this, he sent word to Jobab king of Madon, to the kings of Shimron and Acshaph,
- v. 2 and to the northern kings who were in the mountains, in the Arabah south of Kinnereth, in the western foothills and in Naphoth Dor on the west;
- v. 3 to the Canaanites in the east and west; to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites in the hill country; and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah.
- v. 4 They came out with all their troops and a large number of horses and chariots—a huge army, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.
- v. 5 All these kings joined forces and made camp together at the Waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.
- v. 6 The Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel, slain. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.”
- v. 7 So Joshua and his whole army came against them suddenly at the Waters of Merom and attacked them,
- v. 8 and the Lord gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.
- v. 9 Joshua did to them as the Lord had directed: He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.
- v. 10 At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and put its king to the sword. (Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms.)
- v. 11 Everyone in it they put to the sword. They totally destroyed them, not sparing anything that breathed, and he burned up Hazor itself.
- v. 12 Joshua took all these royal cities and their kings and put them to the sword. He totally destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded.
- v. 13 Yet Israel did not burn any of the cities built on their mounds—except Hazor, which Joshua burned.
- v. 14 The Israelites carried off for themselves all the plunder and livestock of these cities, but all the people they put to the sword until they completely destroyed them, not sparing anyone that breathed.

## NOTES

v. 15 As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.

v. 16 So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills,

v. 17 from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death.

v. 18 Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time.

v. 19 Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle.

v. 20 For it was the Lord himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

v. 21 At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns.

v. 22 No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive.

v. 23 So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Read Joshua 11:1-23 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. Describe what happened in the north after Joshua's victory in the south, according to verses 1-5.

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3. What statement does the Lord make to Joshua in verse 6?

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4. What is the key to Joshua's success, according to verse 9?

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5. Describe the chain of command in verse 15.

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6. How did the Lord help Joshua to victory, according to verse 20?

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7. Who are the Anakites that are destroyed in verses 21 & 22?

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8. What does Joshua do in verse 23?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

**LESSON #1:** When things look hopeless in our eyes, God is ready to work.

LESSON #2: The Lord has a message for Joshua in the midst of this crisis.

LESSON #3: The Lord is the one responsible for the victory.

LESSON #4: Joshua has an obedient heart.

LESSON #5: Joshua is a doer of the word, and not just a hearer only.

LESSON #6: God has been faithful over all the years of conflict.

LESSON #7: The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

LESSON #8: God is faithful to fulfill His promises to Joshua.

LESSON #9: Rest follows the conflict.

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