

Joshua 11

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- [0 : 0 0] Good evening. Good evening. Warm welcome to the service this evening. Good to see some visitors with us as well, and you're especially welcome.
- The information you have on the white sheets, went through them in the morning, and there's still some white sheets at the door, so if you haven't had a chance to look through them, just grab one on the way out.
- If you could turn with me, please, in your Bibles to Joshua chapter 11. Joshua chapter 11, as we continue in our studies in this book.
- In the previous chapter, we see the southern cities being taken, and the kings that stand against God's people and God himself being overturned.
- We see God's hand in that miraculous work of the early part of the chapter. And now we come, and there's another step, you could say, as the children of Israel move into the promised land, and as they encounter resistance to that, we see God going before them and being with them.
- [1 : 1 8] Joshua chapter 11, and verse 1. When Jabin king of Hazar heard of this, he sent word to Jobab king of Madom, to the kings of Shimron and Akshaph, 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, to the Canaanites in the east and the west, to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the hill country, and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah.
- 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. All these kings joined forces and made camp together at the waters of Miron to fight against Israel.
- The Lord said to Joshua, Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand them over, all of them over to Israel slain. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.
- So Joshua and his whole army came against them suddenly at the waters of Miron and attacked them. And the Lord gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to greater Sidon, to Mizrephoth, Maim, and to the valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.
- Joshua did to them as the Lord had directed. He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots. At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and put its king to the sword.
- [3 : 0 0] Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms. Everyone in it they put to the sword. They totally destroyed them, not sparing anything that breathed. And he burned up Hazor itself.
- 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. Yet Israel did not burn any of the cities built on their minds except Hazor, which Joshua burned.
- 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.

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.

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, from Mount Halak, which rises towards Seir, to Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon.

[4 : 09] He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death. Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time, except for the Hivites living in Gibeon.

Not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle. 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.

At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country, from Hebron, Debir and Anah, from all the hill country of Judah and from all the hill country of Israel.

Joshua totally destroyed them and their tanks. No Anakites were left in Israelite territory. Only in Gaza, Gath and Ashtod did any survive.

So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave an inheritance to Israel, according to their tribal divisions.

[5 : 12] Then the land had rest from war. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word. To us.

It's been nice to have Jim Sim with us over the last few weeks, and I know that he's heading away this week, so I think I'll ask Jim to lead us in prayer, just as we come back to God's word. Let's pray together.

Amen. Dear Lord, we wait in the stillness to hear your voice.

We desire, Lord, your company and your presence. Desire, Lord, to hear what you have to teach us. And we thank you for these lovely words that we've just been singing, Lord.

We desire the day when the earth will be filled with your glory. And we know, Lord, that your word teaches us that that day will come.

[6 : 21] And that we should not fear, because you will keep your promises. And that you will come. And we rejoice, Lord, in the fact that we have a saviour who has defeated the grave, who was risen again, who ascended up into heaven and has promised us that he will return.

It may be in an hour when we think not. But we believe, our God, that you will come. And when we see this world, Lord, and the state that it is in, and the chaos that we seem to get ourselves into in all things, we thank you, Lord, that you have a plan.

We thank you, Lord, that you have written it in your book. And you have told us that the King will return. And he will take his own to be with him in a paradise that he has prepared for us.

So, Father, we thank you for Calvary. And we thank you for the blood that was shed there. And we thank you for the forgiveness of our sins, Lord, and for all that you have done for us.

And we thank you, Lord, that you are still on the throne and that you will come again. And we pray, our Heavenly Father, in this day that has been spent in your presence, we pray that you will bless the worship, Lord, and that you will honour it.

[7 : 55] We pray, Lord, that you will bless the word that has been preached here and in the other places in Tarbot and in our island and our nation. We ask you, Lord, to lift up the Saviour again.

He promised that if he was lifted up that he would draw all men unto him. So, Father, we ask that today that the Holy Spirit might go forth in this nation of ours and bring men and women to meet the Saviour.

And we pray for our time here now, Lord, as we turn to your word. We pray, Lord, that you would bless David and uphold him and strengthen him and give him power and authority with your word.

We pray for each one of us that's sitting here, Lord. Heavenly Father, each of us, we are sinners. And some of us are saved by grace and some of us may not be saved by grace tonight, Lord.

But we pray, Father, for every heart that is before you, that you would meet our needs of our heart. For those that don't know you as our Saviour, we plead with you, Father, that you would open their hearts this evening and show them a God that loved them, loved them so much that he put his own son upon a cross to take their place.

[9 : 21] So, Father, we desire tonight that Jesus might be uplifted, his name might be praised. We thank you for the blessings. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Thank you, Jim. I should have said it's nice to see Catherine as well, but I didn't want to alarm Catherine out of thinking I was going to ask her to pray. Joshua chapter 11, if you could turn with me to this chapter.

I know some here are, you know, bookworms and like to delve into books and sort of disappear into different stories.

Others, I know, are film buffs and there's hardly a film that's out there that they haven't explored the plot line. Now, whether you are someone who likes to get lost in books or whether you're someone who likes to disappear into the plot of films, I wonder what it is that you look for.

You know, when you pick up the book and you look at the back of it or you pick up the DVD and have a glance through the synopsis, what is it you're looking for? Now, some people love a good mystery and the more complex and harder to figure the mystery, the better it is in their opinion.

[11 : 02] Some people love a good battle. You know, things like Lord of the Rings or Braveheart, these films, these plots that just seem to go from one battle to the next.

Some people just can't get enough of that. Other people are looking for a love story and for within this plot there to be that prevailing sense that that love is winning through.

And Joshua chapter 11, it actually has it all. Might not be obvious in first glance, but it has all of that.

It has the, I think what is obvious is it has the hard to read, fierce battle scenes the details. This is the kind of stuff that the boys in Sunday school just can't get enough of.

It's got an underlying love story of God and how he loved his people and how he's faithful to the promises that he made to his people.

[12 : 02] And in the middle of it all, some of you may have kind of got stuck and become transfixed in a verse which is very mysterious. So all that is in this chapter and I want to just take a few minutes and step through it and see what we see.

Some of you might have heard of the film The Madness of King George. Well, this chapter tonight begins with the first point which is not the madness of King George but it's the madness of King Javan.

Yeah, the points are up there. There's four points tonight. The first point is the madness of King Javan and that takes us to verse 1 and it says there in verse 1 when Javan, king of Hazor heard of this and at that point we hit pause because when that chapter begins with something like that when Javan, king of Hazor heard of this we immediately have to hit pause and we have to take a glance back through into the previous chapter and the previous chapters before that to try and understand well, what is it that King Javan had actually heard?

And if we step back we can just imagine King Javan looking over his shoulder into the events of past months all that was being reported.

Javan likely will have heard about how thoroughly the Lord's people had defeated the southern cities. We just need to glance back to chapter 10 and we have a pretty gruesome account of how thoroughly there was a conquering of the cities in the south.

[13 : 53] King Javan likely will have heard about the treatment that the five Amorite kings received again in chapter 10 of Joshua and how these powerful men faced a very gritty difficult end as they met with God's judgment through Joshua.

He likely heard going back a few more chapters about how Joshua and Israel as a nation took Jericho and did it in such a supernatural incredible way.

He likely will have heard about how this nation miraculously were able to pass through the Jordan which looked to be absolutely an impossibility.

He's likely read in the local G.R. dollar whatever it is that they had in that area about the supernatural events that seemed to accompany this nation as they moved towards the land that God is said to have promised them.

He's heard that this nation are reported to be the instruments through which God's judgment is falling upon rebel nations and now he sees that they're heading in his direction and he's fearful.

[15 : 18] Judgment is coming. So what could he do? Well he has two options. He could ask for mercy or he could fight.

Now to ask for mercy option number one that would be the sensible thing. That would be the wise move on the part of King Jabin and all those that he had influence amongst.

He could simply follow the lead of the Gibeonites and simply come to Joshua fearful and without the pretenses of the Gibeonites with all their story about being far distant lands who are looking for help they could simply come Hazor could simply come on behalf of his people and tell Joshua that they are fearful and that they're looking for mercy.

they could put their hands up and they could surrender and ask that mercy would be shown to their people.

Or option number two is he could fight. He could go head to head with this nation that seems to have God on their side and hope for the best.

[16 : 46] and Joshua chapter 11 is an account of the fact that sadly and actually madly King Jeroen he goes for option number two.

He's going to fight. He's going to fight against God. He's going to fight against God's people. and he's going to take a whole raft of other kings and nations with him down that mad track.

And that's what we see in verse one through to verse five. When Jabin King of Hazar heard of this he sent word to Job King of Madden he gathers the people that he has some connection with and he says to them we are coming under attack here so let's fight let's gather all the resources that we can muster up and let's fight let's go against this nation let's go against our God and let's fight so he sent word to Job King of Malon to the kings of Shimron and Akshaph and to the northern kings who were in the mountains in the Arabah south of Kinnerath in the western foothills and in Naphthoth Dor in the west to the Canaanites in the east and west to the Amorites Hittites Perizzites the Ebusites in the hill country and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah 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 all these kings joined forces and made camp together at the waters of

Miron to fight against Israel now you might say you know why have we got all these details here why have we got all these names and these places and these lands and you know the horses and the chariots and this picture painted of all these specific nations we don't know them we don't know anything much about their history why waste the ink we might say but the ink is never wasted in God's word and what we're to see here as this vast group of people are painted in words for us is that this is an immense powerful gathering of people this is a huge army that determines that they are going to fight against God but the thing is it doesn't matter how big the army is such a fight is deeply unwise it's madness till we see here the madness of King

Javon and in application here I want to ask the question is there anyone here this evening who is determining to fight against God is there anyone this evening who is determining that they will be a rebel may not be an aggressive out and out atheistic rebel but is there anyone in any area of their life who is determining that they will not listen to God in fact they will actually make war against the Lord and his word as he approaches and encroaches on our lives if that's you and if that's me to behave in that way that's madness that's a fight you're never going to win that's a fight that you and I should never engage in why would we want to make war with the almighty

[21 : 00] God and as we think even more about this why would we want to make war with the almighty God who is not against us but who is for us why would we want to make war with the God who is immortal invisible only wise the God who loves us and has told us of that love and has shown us that love and who was willing to lay his life down so that we could be his friends and not his enemies Jesus said in John 15 greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends now my sin and your sin makes us enemies of God by nature but in Christ we're offered mercy in

Christ we're offered friendship and we receive it if we simply ask for it if we confess our sin if we surrender our lives to the God who's promised that he knows us and he has plans not to prosper not to harm us but to prosper us and to give us hope and a future so what we see here in the first instance is we see King Jabron the madness of King Jabron as he determines he is going to make war against God so the first point here is the madness of King Jabron the second point that we come to in this chapter as we progress through this is the majesty of God on Wednesday evening those who were at the prayer meeting we were in Psalm 68 and in Psalm 68 the first point that we came to the first thing that we could see was the majesty of

God and we saw that in the fact that he is more powerful than any or all of his enemies in fact move to Psalm 68 just for a moment and let's just glance at some of the verses in the psalm psalm 68 and verse 1 David the psalmist there as he is aware of the constant opposition that he faces he comes to God he prays he speaks to God and he says may God arise may his enemies be scattered may his foes flee before him as smoke is blown away by the wind may you blow them away as wax melts before the fire may the wicked perish before God and then you look at verse 11 of that same psalm it says there the Lord announced the word and great was the company of those who proclaimed it kings and armies flee in haste in the camps men divide the plunder so in that psalm the note that we said is constant through that psalm is the majesty of

God the power the might the majesty of this God and that's seen in the fact that he prevails always prevails over any and all of his enemies and what we see in Joshua chapter 11 from verse 6 through to verse 17 is exactly that in action we see that note that tone of psalm 68 the majesty of God we see it in action and we see it as the Lord and does this to his people and he overcomes his enemies in verse 6 of Joshua 11 the Lord said to Joshua do not be afraid of them because this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel slain and then from verses 7 to 17 that I'm not going to read again you know we have a very graphic account of the Lord's word and will coming to pass and in all of this the thing that is very plain for us to see is the majesty and the power and the might of

God there's an army that we're told it's like the sand of the seashore and they're all against Israel and Israel just a small nation and yet when God speaks and says I will give them to you what God speaks happens even though the odds seem to be massively stacked against that happening because God says it and because God is majestic and powerful that is the will that prevails and just in case we missed that between verses 7 and verse 17 it's reinforced again in verses 21 and 22 it says in verse 21 and 22 at that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country from Hebron Debiah Anab from all the hill country of Judah and from all the hill country of

[26 : 35] Israel Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns no Anakites were left in Israelite territory only in Gaza Gath and Ashdod did any survive now you might say well what's the significance of this who are the Anakites they sound like from South Harris don't they the Anakites were the incredible hulks of that area the Anakites were those who we find in the Bible and in biblical history as a nation that were giants they were terrifying and everybody that came against them was utterly frozen with fear if we go back 40 or so years to Numbers chapter 13 then we have that account in Numbers 13 in fact let's go there for a moment please it's a passage that we'll know well as we look at it in

Numbers chapter 13 it's that passage in the Bible here is entitled Exploring Canaan and what we have in that chapter is Israel as a nation sending some spies into the promised land basically to see if they could take it now God had promised Israel that that land they could take because he was going to give it to them but they were just a small nation and they didn't want to just career off ahead and not know what they were facing so they sent these spies into the land they weren't so sure that this land could be taken and then the report came back from the spies and Numbers 13 and at verse 30 it says there then Caleb silenced the people before Moses so you can imagine all the people of Israel and they're gathered together they're waiting for the report of the survey to come back and Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said we should go up and take possession of the land for we can certainly do it why did he say that simply because

God had promised that they could do it verse 31 but the men who had gone up with them said we can't attack those people they are stronger than we are and they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored they said the land we explored devours those living in it all the people we saw there are of great size we saw the Nephilim there the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim we seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes and we looked the same to them so they're saying we saw the Anakites we saw the giants we saw the incredible hulks of the area and they're all over the place and look at us we can't proceed we're too weak we can't we can't move forward and yet almost as a footnote here we see in verses 21 and 22 of Joshua chapter 11 that these giants were no problem for the majestic

God we don't even have a long graphic account of how they battled and waged war and overcame them it's almost like they're in irrelevance they were swept aside with the rest and what we learn here is that not even the giants no nation no army of nations could stand against the Lord and his people so verse 23 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 and then the land had rest from war thankfully the majestic God and this is something that we see in a land far away at a time long ago and yet what we need to remember tonight in this place at this time is that the

God who has called us to worship him is this same God the same God that we are reading of in these verses is the God who has promised that he will be here with us tonight and if we are trusting him if we are his people then we have nothing and no one to fear do you have giants that terrify you between two and three in the morning have you got worries have you got concerns have you got problems in your family life in your workplace in your mind in your heart that as you survey them put the feet of death into you well the message of

[32 : 04] Joshua 11 is don't worry about them hand them over to the God who was and who is majestic and powerful and this is good news for for everyone this is good news for the adults we may struggle ourselves or we may be aware of people and we see them and they they grieve us when we see them because they're they're battling with an addiction that they just can't crack we want to help them and yet we can't help them because we're not strong enough and they don't seem to be able to help themselves well we have a God a majestic God who is able to do anything and overturn any army of issues any raft of giants that stand against us

Philippians chapter 4 and verse 13 says I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me Romans chapter 8 verse 32 says if God is for us who can be against us so tonight if you are if you are one who knows that God is for you if you're trusting him fear not that's the encouragement of point two and I suppose the warning note of point one is if you are here tonight and you are determined to stand against us God be very afraid and repent and turn to him the third point here is the mercy of God and you might have gone through this chapter and said where on earth is the mercy of God now I can see the judgment of

God very clearly but where is his mercy I can't see it and the answer to that is it's there but we can't see it in this snapshot and the reason that we can't see it in this snapshot is that there is no one willing to ask for it and there's no one in this account that's willing to receive it Jabin took his people and he took other nations with him into this gruesome long war that he could never win rather than bending the knee to God and asking for mercy that's the point that's made in verses 18 and 19 it says there Joshua waged war against all these kings for and I've underlined this a long time except for the high rights living in Gibeon not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites who took them all in battle now we may look at this and think this is just blood and guts and war and judgment but what we don't see here until we think about it is that

God's mercy is there God's mercy has been offered but it's been refused constantly there was a protocol for the army that Joshua led and you can read about that in Deuteronomy 10 we're not going to go there but what they did as an army is they would march up to the city and they would stand at the city gate and then they would offer terms of peace and not until these terms of peace were swept aside would the sword be drawn and this would have happened every time with every nation and every location they march up to the city they stand at the gate they offer terms of peace and yet we read here that not one city would make peace each one of them went to war and we read here that the war that was going on went on for a long time and this long time gave opportunity for these people in the midst of the war and the trauma of everything that they were in the midst of it gave them the opportunity to repent and say enough hands up can we have mercy but no one would ask they'd rather fight and this gives us an insight into the devil's mind and strategies now we learned this morning he's finished he's defeated there is no way that ultimately he can win he is going down to the pit his cause is a hopeless cause and yet he will never give up until he is in that fiery lake he will never give up even though he knows he's defeated even though he knows he's fighting a losing battle he will never give up and he will take as many thousands and millions of souls with him into death and destruction that he possibly can he'll never give up what we see in king jabron as he leads these nations to war is that dark devilish mindset and as we see king jabron and these nations persevere a long time in this ill-advised mad hopeless war as we see this dark devilish mindset mercy was available but no one was willing to receive it they had hardened their hearts against the lord and his people and now the chilling aspect of this as we come to the conclusion is that the lord was hardening their hearts against him that's the final point the mystery of the hardened heart says in verse 24 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 now one of the crazes today if you've got children at all or if you see children around much one of the crazes that children are focused on is slime have you seen this slime they're walking about with these balls of slime probably got slime in their pockets just now we'll find them on the chairs later in the day and when the slime comes out of the wee box it's stretchy and it's soft and you can mould it and you can shape it and you can use it but over time it gets hard and it gets brittle and soon enough it can't be shaped anymore so it gets burned and actually that's what was happening here you know if you're all the way back to Genesis 15 we're finishing so fear not in Genesis 15

[39 : 54] God made a promise to Abraham and he promised him this land that we are reading about here see the nations who were occupying the land were wicked in the extreme and if they would not repent if they would not seek God's mercy God made clear to Abraham that they would need to face judgment and they would need to be driven off the land so that's a promise back in Genesis 15 we're now in Joshua chapter 11 now do you know how long passed between God's promise of the land to Abraham if these nations would not repent and what we're reading today in terms of judgment the time that passed was 400 years and in that 400 years generation after generation hardened their own hearts willingly and determined that they would be against

God and now the Lord says to them in essence have it your way your will be done they had hardened their hearts over time and now God in his judgment set their hearts hearts in that hardened state Psalm 103 it says God is slow to anger he is abounding in love he is merciful and he is gracious but he will not force his mercy and his grace and his love upon us and if you and I sit here week after week and those that we love sit here week after week and month after month and year after year hardening our own hearts the warning note in this chapter is that there may come a time when the

Lord will set our hearts in such a state of hearts so much so that we can receive his mercy no more and judgment will be inescapable and yet ironically judgment and not peace is what we will have chosen c.s.

lewis said there are only two kinds of people in the end those who say to god thy will be done receiving his mercy and those to whom god says in the end thy will be done all that are in hell says c.s.

lewis choose it and if this worries you and the good news is that your heart is not yet in that hardened state you still have opportunity so today if you hear his voice do not harden your heart do not reject god's terms of peace in christ but rather receive his mercy look to the lord jesus and be saved heavenly father we pray as we go from here meditating upon a chapter which is sobering and serious help us we pray to hear the the winsome call of the gospel to receive the mercy of god and the grace of god and to be saved enable us we pray not to harden our hearts not to turn away from you as you call to us but enable us we pray to receive that grace of the lord jesus christ into no salvation and for any lord who may have been wandering for a period and whose hearts have been hardening over time we pray for them particularly that they would return to the lord who has promised that when we return to him he will return to us help us we pray in jesus amen and may the grace of our lord jesus christ and the love of god the father and the fellowship of god the holy spirit be with us all both now and forever more amen