

Joshua Ch 11-13

It's been a while since we've been in this book since we've had the mid-week break over the new year with then starting off the year in a time of prayer with worship with so we pick up here in ch 11 in a place where Joshua with the children of Israel have just experienced tremendous victory in their lives. You recall how they had made peace with the Gibeonites having been deceived by them into thinking that they'd come from a far off land to make peace with them because they'd heard of the tremendous works of their God with they wanted to be right with them. And so instead of inquiring of God to see if what they were saying was true or not, Joshua, walking by sight, having looked at their attire with assuming that what they were saying was true; made a covenant of peace with them. And then come to find out, these men really just lived about 20 miles or so down the road with so Joshua spoke to them and said hey, why did you guys deceive us, and they said because we were scared for our lives, but now that you've made peace with us do whatever seems right in your eyes to do to us. And Joshua did the right thing with kept his word even though it was to his own detriment with didn't kill them but said Ok then you're going to be our woodcutters with water carriers, and they were like, that's cool with us, we just don't want to die. Well as a result of that, when the king of Jerusalem heard what had happened he freaked out, because the men of Gibeon were a fierce with war faring type of people, and yet they just surrendered to Israel, which meant a couple of things to him. #1 It meant that the men of Gibeon just betrayed the people of Canaan with gave up ground, and #2 he figured that he was probably on the list next for Israel to come against, and so he wanted to wipe out Gibeon for what they'd done. And so he conspired with 4 other kings of the land besides himself in order that they might go up with wipe out Gibeon with maintain the ground they'd given up. And so the 5 kings with their armies went out and began to make war with Gibeon with as you can probably imagine the odds were way against them, 5 full armies against them, and so they sent to Joshua with said hey come up here with protect us, and so Joshua, honoring his word took his men in a forced march all night long with God said don't fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand against you. And so Joshua ascended from Gilgal with came upon them suddenly the bible says, and began to slaughter them. God taking Joshua's mistake with using it to His glory by causing all of these armies to be wiped out at once instead of having to take all the time to war against each individual city. And I love that about God, He is able to turn our failures to His glory, and I don't know how He does it, but He so often does, it's the whole Rom 8:28 principal, "*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*" Now sometimes we don't get to see how all of it pans out on this side of eternity, but many times we do, and we come to learn that God is greater than our mistakes, and He can use it to His glory. Now obviously it would have been better had we just done what was right in the 1st place, but still yet God is greater than our mistakes.

And we read where God fought for Joshua with his army with began to cast great hailstones down on the armies of the enemy but not one fell on the army of Israel, and there were more who died from the hailstones then by the sword of Israel. And so when they had fought long with hard with they sun was beginning to go down, Joshua realizing that if the sun went down they'd be able to get away, shouted out, "Sun stand still", and it did, and I have no doubt that many minds were blown by that, but again it just goes back to how big is your God, and we talked about all that in our last study.

And we read in vs 14 of ch 10 (read), and you know what God fights for you to, if you love the Lord, He goes to war on your behalf with fights for you. So many people think that God is out there somewhere governing the universe with that He's got better things to do than to deal with me with my problems or my struggles, or my battles. You remember that's what Elijah was saying concerning Baal when he was taunting all those priests who were beseeching Baal for fire from heaven. Maybe he's out of the office today, maybe he's on vacation, or maybe you should yell a little louder, it could be that he's hard of hearing. But that's not the case with the one true Living God. He's not distant or remote; He's vitally interested in you with in your life personally, no matter how little the issue may seem, or how big of a deal it is, God wants to tend to your life if you'll only call upon Him. That's one of the lessons we learn in Joshua ch 10, you see, you're His child, He doesn't want to see you worried or distressed, He wants to reach out with help you, so don't think of God as way out there with untouchable. As Paul said to the Athenian philosophers, *"for in Him we live and move and have our being."* The bible says to Cast your cares upon Him because He cares for you, God is interested in you with He wants to demonstrate His love, and His presence, and His power to you, but so often we have not because we ask not. Well, at sometime these kings fled with hid themselves in a cave with when Joshua heard about it, he had the mouth of the cave covered over with stones until they had finished the battle. And then he returned to the cave with had the kings brought out with they were thrown down at the feet of Joshua with Joshua had his leaders draw near with put their feet on the necks of the kings with in vs 25 of ch 10 (read), and then Joshua killed them had them hanged until evening with then cast in the cave with the mouth covered back over with stones. At that point the children of Israel went around mopping up the southland, which brings us to ch 11. Now ch 11 along with the next several ch simply tell of more of the conquering of the land with the dividing up of the land with so we'll have quite a bit of reading to do with some of it we'll just mention with move on.

In the 1st 3 vs of ch 11, you can read it if you like, but what you find there is that this one particular king caught wind of what was going on down south with so he rallied together these other kings with their armies (And these are now northern armies, in the Galilee with upper Galilee region) with they went out to make war against Israel once again trying to take them out on the basis of overwhelmingly out numbering them.

Now by the way this is worded it eludes to the fact that Israel is facing a challenge now, unlike they never have before, this is much bigger, then what they've previously faced. It makes sure to note that we know that they were facing an army that was so huge that it was innumerable, "as the sand that is on the seashore." with That from a military stand point, they were out gunned technologically as well, because the opposing force had, "very many horses with chariots." Which would be to us to say we were on foot, they were in tanks, and their ground force was innumerable, and so what seems to be happening is that the challenges brought to Israel seem to increase at each step; from Jericho, to Ai, to the battle with the southern kings, to now this battle. And many times when it comes to the battles that we're confronted with as believers it works much the same way, the confrontation of each step seeming to increase more with more, and God uses the previous victories as a springboard (more or less) for what we're going to face in the future.

Assuring us of His ability to deliver us with give us victory, not giving us more than we can handle (through Him), but stretching us a little more each time with keeping us looking to with dependant upon Him. Because whatever it is that we're up against (apart from Him) is more than us. And that's a good place to be in because when it's not more than us, or at least when we think it's not more than us, we have a tendency to try with deal with the circumstance ourselves with out the Lord with that's when things go south. We've seen that hold true in the life of Joshua, whenever it was that he didn't inquire of the Lord with His direction, there was defeat or compromise. And so it's good to be in a place of dependency upon the Lord, even though in the midst of it we can sometimes feel a bit overwhelmed, but we know that we know that this is all you God, and when God does a work, He alone gets the glory. And take note of the fact that they were coming against Israel because of the fact of what they'd heard concerning their victories, when you walk in victory with are surrendered to the Spirit of God in your life, you will become the enemies target. And as I said sometimes we can get overwhelmed with we need to be encouraged in the Lord with such would seem to be the case with Joshua here, seeing what they were up against with how it was so much more than them.

Vs6

You see God bore him up with encouraged him, reminded him of the fact that it wasn't his fight anyway with that He would deliver them into Israel's hands with when you're up against an overwhelming situation in life, take heart because as it was with Joshua so it is with you, you serve the same God with the battles belong to Him.

Vs7-9

Notice that, Joshua followed God's word, and the result was victory, it would seem to me that there would be a temptation to take their horses with chariots with use them for ourselves, again that would be common sense, but not kingdom sense.

Many times God would have us engage the enemy on a completely different level than what would seem to be of benefit to us, He wants us to be on a level of complete trust in Him, not looking to our own strength with advantages, why, so that no flesh will glory in His presence, but as it is written let him who glories, glory in the Lord. Joshua was obedient to the Lord, and he fought with passion with commitment, he stayed at it until God's will was accomplished, "they left none of them remaining."

Vs10

And this whole thing was his bright idea.

Vs11-15

The thorough completeness of God's judgment, God doesn't play games, and He gave the people of Canaan over 400yrs to repent, but when they'd filled up the wine cup of the wrath of God with iniquity God pressed it to their lips with made them drink of His judgment. And the same will hold true for all who refuse to repent of their sin, right now grace is available, but judgment is coming with will fall uncompromisingly on all who have refused to repent of their sin with receive Jesus Christ

Vs16-18

Warren Wiersbe calculates this "long time" at about 7 years using the fact that Caleb was 40 yrs old when they 1st approached the promised land with had to wander in the desert for some 38 more years making him 78 at that time with when he was given his plot of land in ch 14 he states that he is 85 with so if you deduct 78 from 85 you get 7yrs of warfare or somewhere thereabouts.

Vs19-20

Now this hardening of their hearts always somehow seems to stumble some people, but in reality this literally means, "to make strong", or to strengthen their position, or to confirm where they already were. It's not that they were thinking of repenting with then God stopped them and made them wicked, it's that He gave them over to that which was already in their hearts, and we read of this type of thing in Rom 1:21-28 where Paul wrote with said, *"although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.” You see, there comes a time whereby if you want to just keep on keeping on in your life of sin with you don't want anything to do with God that God will say ok, that's it, and He will give you over to that which you've given yourself over to with having rejected the truth you will be given over to the lie. And God will honor that choice with make firm your position, so that's why it's so critical that we be seeking the Lord with not toying with sin, because you see if we choose with purpose in our hearts to follow after God, He will honor that as well, and strengthen us in that choice. Either way we reap the consequences accordingly, either God's blessing with favor with everlasting life, or God's judgment with eternal separation from Him.

Vs21-23

When it says that Joshua took the whole land, we know that all the land was never taken with the 1st vs of ch 13 makes it clear that not all the land was taken, what this means is that all the land in the sense of all the major dominating kingdoms had been subdued. But there was still plenty of little “pocket” communities that were yet to be conquered however it would be up to each tribe to conquer those people that were with in the land that they were given. "Much territory was yet to be possessed, but it was left to each tribe to possess what potentially it had received through the conquest of the whole people in which it had taken part. Each tribe was to apply individually the lessons it had learned in united war if it was to possess its inheritance. That the tribes failed to do so was not a reflection on the power of God, but on the failure to take for themselves what Joshua had given and allotted to each one of them" (Redpath)

There was a failure on the part of the children of Israel to take the whole land that God had given to them. Because you remember that God told them that every place that they would put the sole of their foot He had given to them. But unfortunately they didn't tread on it all, they didn't take it all, the city of Jerusalem wasn't taken until the time of David, he was the one who took the city of Jerusalem with that's why it's referred to as the city of David. And there were other cities that they left as well, and as a result they had problems; had they wiped them all out as God had commanded them to, things would've been ok, but because the failed to keep all of God's word pertaining to the Land it would be a snare to them in years to come.

Ch 12

In ch 12 we see a list of the kings that Israel conquered under the leadership of both Moses with Joshua, in vs 2 it mentions Sihon who was the king of the Amorites, and in vs 4 we see Og who was the king over Bashan. These guys were on the east side of the Jordan with were conquered under the leadership of Moses with the tribe of Rueben with Gad with ½ the tribe of Manasseh would inherit that land.

The remainder of the chapter lists out all the kings that were defeated under Joshua's leading of the people if you want to read through them you may, it's not so significant to us, though to them it was of extreme importance, in vs 24 you find out that there was 31 kings that Joshua overcame with destroyed, again even though you read in vs 10 that he conquered the king of Jerusalem, for whatever reason they never took the city until the time of David.

Ch 13

Vs1

You see, there was still a lot of work to be done with when it says here that he is old with advanced in years that's carrying the idea with it that he is beginning to get a bit feeble in his old age. But we see here the fact that there was failure to take all the land, and you may recall the fact that we've spoken of the parallel that there is to our own life in the Spirit as it relates to the Promised Land. The taking of the Promised Land though it was literal, also serves for us as a type of walking in the Spirit with claiming victory over the life of the flesh with the struggles of the flesh. Because God has promised you victory over your flesh life, all you have to do is claim that victory, every place the sole of your foot treads God has given it to you for a possession. But the tragedy of so many Christians is that they start off in the Spirit in a powerful way, making these great spiritual strides of accomplishment with conquering of the flesh through the power of the Spirit. But then what happens is that they seem to hit this spiritual plateau where this complacency seems to settle in over them. And they're no longer really striving towards the mark, for the prize of the upward call that is in Christ Jesus, they're no longer really eager for conquest with the intimate things of God, but rather they've just sort of began to kick back spiritually with take it easy, and they seem rest on past victories. And so when you talk to them they're always speaking of some victory or incredible experience of the past, but there's never really anything fresh with up to date. And that's a sign of spiritual stagnation, when you have to look back to relate to some vital experience with God, why, because God wants you to have an up to the moment experience of His love with grace with victory in your life. But you see the children of Israel came to the point where they were satisfied, they were content, they didn't press on to the full victory that God wanted them to have, so beware of Spiritual plateau's. And that spiritual complacency, where you come to that place where you're satisfied with this is really as far as I need to go, and as far as the rest of the things in my life, they're nothing huge with I can put up with them; be careful. Whenever you can dwell comfortably with the flesh, you're in danger spiritually. Why, because the flesh stands in opposition to the Spirit, they are contrary to one another, they oppose each other. So there can be no satisfaction with partial victory, God would have us to press on, but here's the catch as long as we dwell in this tent we'll never obtain all that God would have for us.

But as we learned Sunday morning we're to be growing nonetheless with developing with maturing in our walk in the Spirit, and we'll arrive when we see Jesus face to face & we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

So be careful concerning growing to comfortable in your spirituality, there still remains much land to be possessed, (until we come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.)

Now, vs 2-6 speaks of the land that is yet to be conquered with we read in vs 6 (read)

You see as I said, the battle is the Lords, He will give you victory, but that doesn't annul human responsibility. God initiates, He promised to do His part, but there is also human responsibility, they're going to have to believe God for it, and trust God for it with respond accordingly, in taking the necessary actions, their faith in God is going to have to produce that work. And it works the same way for us, works don't save us, they're simply the outcropping of my faith in Jesus Christ

Now in vs 8 we begin to see how the land is divided up for the children of Israel as their inheritance starting with the land east of the Jordan, which we went over a few minutes ago. And in vs 13 it mentions the people that weren't driven out from that region, and in vs 14 we read once again where the tribe of Levi got no inheritance as far as land was concerned, but their inheritance was to be a portion of the sacrifices that were made by Israel to the Lord.

So the remainder of Ch 13 deals with the territory east of the Jordan with how it was divided up, vs 15-23 to the tribe of Reuben, vs 24-28 to the tribe of Gad, and vs 29-32 to one ½ of the tribe of Manasseh. In vs 22 you learn that the children of Israel killed Balaam with the sword, you recall that he was the one who was hired to curse the Israelites, but every time he would set out to curse them, God would cause him to bless them, why because you cannot curse the children of God. So vs 22 says (read)

And in vs 33 again concerning the tribe of Levi (read)

Not only the sacrifices given to the Lord would be theirs but even greater than this the Lord Himself was their inheritance, so in reality they got the most incredible blessing of all. And if the Christian were to relate (spiritually) to any of the tribes of Israel, it would most definitely be to the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe. 1 Peter 2:5 says that we are, "*a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*" We have as our inheritance, the Lord Himself, Eph 1:11 tells us that, "*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance.*" So we aren't to get upset when with if we don't receive all these material things as some purport you get if your truly in touch with God, with many of us that would only ruin us with take our eyes off of God. But as priests unto our God, He Himself is our inheritance.

