

**Joshua 11:1** ¶ And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard *those things*, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph,

**Joshua 11:2** And to the kings that *were* on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west,

**Joshua 11:3** And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh.

**Joshua 11:4** And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that *is* upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

**Joshua 11:5** And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

The New Bible Commentary describes Hazor as, "...a huge, strongly fortified city in Joshua's time, covering 200 acres with a population of about 40,000. It was one of the major cities along the trade route between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Archaeology and ancient Near Eastern literatures corroborate the statement that *Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms*"

When Jabin the king of Hazor heard what the Israelites had done to the cities in the south of Canaan, he formed a coalition of the northern kings to go to war against them. His coalition included Jobab king of Madon (in the heart of Galilee), the king of Shimron, the king of Achshaph and other kings whose lands were in the north. The coalition also included the kings in the plains south of Chinneroth or the Galilee over to the borders of Dor on the west "the most southern settlement of the Phoenicians on the coast of Syria." It was a coalition that included Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites and the Hivites that lived by Mount Hermon.

We are told that they gathered along the shores of Merom to prepare for battle. As I read the description of this area in Easton's, I got the sense that this represented a type for the staging of the final battle of Armageddon when the forces of evil gather once again at the end of the tribulation to fight against Israel and her God.

JFB provides the following note: "Their combined forces, according to JOSEPHUS, amounted to three hundred thousand infantry, ten thousand cavalry, and twenty thousand war chariots."

**Joshua 11:6** And the LORD said unto Joshua, **Be not afraid because of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.**

Word obviously reached Joshua that this huge coalition of armies was preparing to attack the people of Israel. The LORD told Joshua once again that he had nothing to fear because He was going to "deliver them up slain" before Israel by this time tomorrow. He instructed Joshua to hamstring the horses and burn

their chariots with fire.

Again JFB provides insight on what it means to hamstring: “Houghing the horses is done by cutting the sinews and arteries of their hinder legs, so that they not only become hopelessly lame, but bleed to death.”

**Joshua 11:7 So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them.**

**Joshua 11:8 And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephothmaim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining.**

**Joshua 11:9 And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.**

Joshua didn't hesitate. He took all of his troops and made a surprise attack against the enemy. The LORD delivered them as promised and they chased them to Zidon (the mother city to Tyre on the coast of the Mediterranean), to Misrephothmaim and on to the valley of Mizpeh toward the east. The Israelites destroyed every single man of the enemy troops.

Joshua did exactly as the LORD commanded and hamstrung the horses and burned the chariots with fire.

**Joshua 11:10 ¶ And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms.**

**Joshua 11:11 And they smote all the souls that *were* therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying *them*: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire.**

Joshua and his forces next turned their attention to the cities of the enemy kings. First was Hazor, since their king held the chief position among them. They killed king Jabin and all the people of Hazor and then burned it to the ground.

**Joshua 11:12 And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, *and* he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded.**

**Joshua 11:13 But *as for* the cities that stood still in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; *that* did Joshua burn.**

They proceeded to do the same against every one of the enemy kings and the people of their cities. It is noted that the command to completely destroy the people as they took the land was first delivered by Moses.

*Deuteronomy 7:1–2 “When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD*

*thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them...."*

As I read the other translations, it seems that verse 11 is saying that they did not burn the other cities; they only destroyed Hazor with fire.

**Joshua 11:14** And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe.

It is noted that the Israelites were allowed to take the spoil of all these cities as well as the livestock. All the people, however, were destroyed.

**Joshua 11:15** ¶ As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

**Joshua 11:16** So Joshua took all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same;

**Joshua 11:17** *Even* from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them.

**Joshua 11:18** Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

Joshua did everything according to the LORD's command as delivered through Moses. Verses 16-17 seem to be a summary indicating that possession of the land was finally accomplished through these battles—though the war lasted a long time.

The NIV Commentary adds the following insight: "Joshua gained control of the whole region even though he did not take every individual city. The last of the Canaanites were not subjected to Israel's authority until the reign of David. The author describes in great detail the geography of the Promised Land that Joshua had captured—from north to south and from east to west. The western coastal plains where the Canaanites were able to use their chariots are not mentioned (cf. 9:1) because Joshua did not conquer those areas (cf. 17:16; Jdg 1:19). The southern coastland was the stronghold of the Philistines, who continued to harass Israel until they were finally subdued by David."

**Joshua 11:19** There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all *other* they took in battle.

**Joshua 11:20** For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Not one city made peace with the people of Israel except for Gibeon, the Hivite city. This is because the LORD hardened their hearts in their decision to attack Israel. He was determined to destroy them so that they could not influence the

Israelites for evil.

This is a hard truth. The fact is that the LORD is the Creator, and we have no right to question how He chooses to interact with His creatures. He did not cause these people to act against their will; they wanted to kill the Israelites. He just gave them over to their sin, essentially strengthening them in their determination to reject God; and He no longer attempts to get them to repent. We assume that as long as a person has breath, he has time to repent. Though technically that is true; the fact is that scripture declares that the LORD sometimes gives people over to their sins in accordance with a greater purpose. We need to remember that the LORD knows the end from the beginning, and I do not believe He hardens the heart of anyone that would eventually turn to Him in faith and obedience. Though the LORD's thoughts are far beyond our ability to understand, I reason that these people were already doomed to hell because they were never going to humble themselves to repent. The LORD destroyed them in order to save others.

*Romans 1:21–24 “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God...and their foolish heart was darkened....Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts....”*

*Isaiah 55:8–9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”*

**Joshua 11:21** And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities.

**Joshua 11:22** There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.

During this time Joshua killed all the descendants of Anak that lived in the mountains of Hebron, Debir, Anab and the mountains of Judah and Israel. He also destroyed their cities. The Anakim were the descendants of the giants.

*Numbers 13:33 “And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”*

Joshua points out that descendants of Anak still lived in the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath and Ashdod—cities that the Israelites never conquered.

Guzik provides some insight from Redpath: “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.”

**Joshua 11:23** So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.

This verse declares that at this point Joshua had led the troops of Israel in victory over the whole land according to the LORD's command to Moses. He then divided the land among the tribes to possess for an inheritance.

And the land rested from war.