

# Against Overwhelming Odds

Joshua 11:1-11

Preached by Phillip Kayser at DCC on Sunday, August 27th 2023

Last week I focused most of the sermon upon the *typological* lessons that could be found in the Southern Conquest. I don't want to repeat myself as we now look at the Northern Conquest. Some of the same lessons are obviously illustrated here as well. But there are also some additional applications that I would like to make this morning and in the next two sermons. When you look at the map on the back of your outlines you will see that this particular battle is intriguing just in terms of military strategy. So I may comment a tiny bit on that.

I have titled this sermon, "Against Overwhelming Odds." And I think most of us have experienced or will experience times when we are called to trust God against overwhelming odds. Actually, turning America back to Christ seems like an absolutely impossible task, and it is easy to lose hope from discouragement. But if there is one overarching lesson from the book of Joshua that God keeps hammering home, it is that nothing is impossible for God, and we can have faith to expect anything that is consistent with God's revealed will. Is it consistent with God's revealed will to expect every nation (including America) to eventually bow its knees before King Jesus? Yes. Absolutely yes. So whatever the timing for that might be, we can at least begin sowing the seeds for when that will happen and claiming the promise that "Those who sow in tears *shall* reap in joy." That verse goes on to say, "He who continually goes forth weeping [and there is plenty to weep about, isn't there, but "He who continually goes forth weeping], bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." We need to have that long-term vision of a farmer, and the hard work of a farmer, and the expectation of harvest that a farmer has. Don't let the news media rob you of your faith, joy, and hope. Stay anchored in the Word of God. Anyway, let's dive into the text.

## I. Don't be surprised when slanted news begins spreading about us (v. 1a)

The first lesson is that we really should not be surprised when slanted news begins spreading about us. Verse 1 says, "And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard these things..." Did he have a good news source? Well, I'm sure it was a slanted news source. It was likely not giving *Israel's* perspective, and for sure not giving *God's* perspective that they deserved God's judgments. What did Jabin hear?

### A. Jabin heard about God's judgments (chapter 10 with 11:1)

Well, first, Jabin heard that Israel posed a threat. Any foreign power that could wipe out the southern forces so quickly was a power to be reckoned with. But if he only looked at the

conquest of the south in terms of geopolitical forecasts, he was missing the opportunity for repentance and salvation.

### **B. But he didn't hear about God's grace (see 11:19; 8:33,35; 14:6 with Gen. 15:19)**

You may question whether any nation in Canaan could have escaped God's judgments without engaging in the kind of deception that Gibeon engaged in. But verse 19 says, "There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All the others they took in battle." Commentators show that that verse *implies* that those cities could have had peace if they had repented of their ways and embraced God's grace. Already in chapter 8 we saw that there were numerous pagans who had become believers and were considered just as right in God's sight as the Israelites were. In a later chapter we will see that one of the heroes of the faith, Caleb, was not an Israelite in origin. His family had become Israelites by conversion. In chapter 14:6 and in two other passages (see Numb. 32:12; Josh 14:14) Caleb is called a Kenizzite. Did you realize that the Kenizzites are listed in Genesis 15:19 as one of the Canaanite tribes that was now under judgment and that would be dispossessed and given to Israel? Yes, he was a Canaanite in background, but an Israelite by faith. No Canaanite would have needed to perish in judgment if he had repented. That's the point. Canaanite cities wouldn't have had to deceive Israel as the Gibeonites did. All they would have had to have done was repent and believe. It's so simple, yet human nature bucks against God's simple plan, twists the truth, and ends up fighting God in so many creative ways. They look at life from a different perspective until God regenerates them.

So don't be surprised when people slander God or slander Christianity and paint it in a bad light. They are looking at the facts through the filter of different presuppositions and from a different perspective. Jabin was likely looking at these battles only in political terms of survival. As a result, he missed the most important news - that this was *God's* judgment, that they therefore *deserved* that judgment, and that their only hope was to cast their sins upon God and receive His forgiveness and grace. That is foreign to the natural man to do that. So don't be surprised when slanted news begins to spread about us.

## **II. Don't be surprised when disunited enemies unite against God and the church (vv. 1b-3)**

Second, we should not be surprised when disunited enemies unite together against God and the church. It's not like these Canaanite nations were previously friendly with each other or united in purpose. For the most part they were not. Archaeology shows that these nations were at each other's throats - conquering, being conquered, or being perpetually at odds. Keep in mind that chapter 12 will mention 31 kings who ruled over 31 city-states within Canaan, each of which competed for territories between them. Matthew Henry says,

“Whatever separate clashing interest they have among themselves, against the people of God they consult with one consent (v. 5).”<sup>1</sup> Look at verses 1-3.

Josh. 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard these things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, Josh. 11:2 and to the kings who were from the north, in the mountains, in the plain south of Chinneroth, in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west, Josh. 11:3 to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, and the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

When you read of the conflict between these nations and city-states, it makes people astounded that they would band together even in the face of a common enemy. They didn't trust each other. But it is important to understand the demonic that drives opposition to God's kingdom. These were all nations in competition with each other, but they put down their differences to oppose God and His truth. Democrats and Republicans might fight each other, but if both are confronted with God's law being brought back into America, they will for the most part band together in opposing that idea.

I don't normally read long sections from books, But what Dan Fortner said about Mark chapter 12 in his book on the Gospel is spot on and helps to explain what is happening in this chapter. Fortner says,

The next thing we see in these verses is the fact that lost men and women who are mutual enemies, people who utterly despise one another, will unite in opposition to Christ and his gospel. The Pharisees were religious fundamentalists, superstitious ceremonialists and self-righteous moralists. Religion was their life. They lived to go to church and do religious stuff. The Herodians were mere worldlings. They had absolutely no use for religion. They cared no more for the honor of God (his name, his will, his glory) than for the life of a maggot.

Yet, when the Lord Jesus Christ came preaching the gospel, the Pharisees and the Herodians were united like blood kin in the common cause of opposing him. Both the religious crowd and the worldly crowd despised the gospel of God's free and sovereign grace in Christ, as Christ himself preached it and personified it.

That is the way it has always been... The cross of Christ is an offense to unregenerate men, both religious and irreligious (Galatians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 1:17-24).

All lost men hate God and the gospel of Christ. All despise those things revealed in the gospel. There are no exceptions. God's sovereignty offends man's pride and sense of self-determination. Fallen man desperately wants some credit for the salvation of his soul. Man is repulsed by the Bible doctrine of election because he thinks it is unfair for God to be gracious to whom he will be gracious. The teaching

---

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 864.

of Holy Scripture that man is totally depraved offends man's sense of self-worth and his love of his own imaginary righteousness. The Bible's teaching about Christ's limited...[atonement for only the elect] enrages men who think God owes sinners salvation, that he owes men a "chance" to be saved. The fact that salvation comes by the revelation of God the Holy Spirit in irresistible grace offends man's love of wisdom. When faced with the plain declaration of the gospel, men who despise one another, always unite in opposition to it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 3:13 says, "Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you." Do not marvel. It's to be expected.

### III. Don't be surprised when God tests your faith with overwhelming odds (vv. 4-5)

Third, don't be surprised when God tests your faith with overwhelming odds. God is in the business of growing us up, and if it takes tests like the tests that we see in verses 4-5 to do that, He will do it. God has been putting tests into my life, and I am embracing them.

Beginning at verse 4:

Josh. 11:4 So they went out, they and all their armies with them, as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots. Josh. 11:5 And when all these kings had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

Talk about intimidating. According to Josephus their combined strength was 300,000 armed foot soldiers, 10,000 cavalymen, and 20,000 chariots.<sup>3</sup> Others think it was a *lot* more than that. But whatever the case, for foot soldiers to go up against cavalry and chariots could have been hugely intimidating.

Let me quickly describe the Hittite war chariots. They were state of the art war technology. The Hittites had hugely improved upon the earlier Egyptian chariots. In fact, the technology was instantly recognized as being *so* superior that the Hittites (who also were the first to forge iron and use iron in their chariots) sold massive amounts of incredibly sturdy chariots to other countries.

Where the Egyptian soldiers stood just in front of the axle, thus placing more weight on the horses and slowing them down, the Hittite soldiers stood directly over the axle, freeing up the horses to give them more speed. In addition, they innovated with an iron wheel, which was much more sturdy than the previous wheels. They further strengthened the wheels by making them with six or eight spokes (as opposed to previous four spokes), greatly

---

<sup>2</sup> Don Fortner, *Discovering Christ in the Gospel of Mark* (Danville, KY: Don Fortner, 2008), 528–529.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, V:1:18.

improving the endurance, speed, and maneuverability. The Hittite innovations enabled them to have one driver and two to three fighters, unlike the Egyptian chariots, which could only hold one driver and one fighter. When they added spinning swords to the wheels it mowed down soldiers who were standing near the chariots as they wheeled into troops. I included a painting of one such battle where the Hittite forces were decimating the Egyptian infantry. But the Hittite hand weapons were also superior. Their iron tipped arrows had greater penetrating power than the copper and bronze arrows of the Egyptians.

The point is that the news of the relatively new war technology could have easily been terrifying. Yet Joshua sped north to meet them as soon as he knew they were gathering. He met the test of faith. Don't be surprised when God tests our faith with overwhelming odds. Faith doesn't look to odds; it looks to God's promises.

#### **IV. Always be ready to accept new challenges given by God (vv. 6-8)**

Fourth, always be ready to accept new challenges that are given by God. We see several new challenges in verses 6-8.

##### **A. The challenge of conquering fear (v. 6a)**

Verse 6 gives the first challenge - to conquer our fears: "But the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them..." There was plenty about that massive army that could have induced fear, and Joshua may have had to fight to keep fear at bay. God commands Joshua not to fear because he knows that Joshua might otherwise be prone to fear. Don't think you are the only one who has ever struggled with fear. Almost all the great leaders of the Bible struggled to not let fear grip them or control them. But they recognized that fear was incompatible with faith, so they refused to give in to fear.

So what are the antidotes to fear? This chapter displays three things that helped Joshua to keep fear at bay. The first was faith in God's promises. If God promises victory, it doesn't matter whether victory looks possible or not, faith believes it will happen. Fearing the enemy would have caused him to doubt God's promises, so faith and fear are in opposition. And later in this book Joshua will call upon Israel to trust God's promises implicitly. If you want to conquer fear, you have got to build and strengthen your faith. And where does faith come from? Romans 10:17 says, "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." And memorizing, meditating upon, and praying the promises of God is one way to build faith. Make a long list of Scripture promises that meet the needs you are seeing and systematically memorize them, pray them, and claim them for yourself.

The second thing that keeps fear at bay is deep love. 1 John 4:18 says, "There is no fear in love." Well, if that is the case, then developing a deep love for God and for each other is a key, isn't it? The verse goes on: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear... He who fears has not been made perfect in love." Are you a fearful person? John says that you need to grow in love. I heard a story of a mother chasing off a bear who was about to touch her toddler. She later was astonished that she could do it, but the only thought that was in

her mind was that her son was in danger. Strong love banishes fear. And I'll read a verse from Joshua illustrating that in a moment.

But before I do that, let me give you the third thing that wards off fear. Taking steps of obedience wards off fear. As you take steps of obedience by faith just as Joshua did, you see will see God coming through, and as God comes through, it will increase your boldness to take more steps.

So let me read a verse in Joshua that gives all three antidotes to fear. In Joshua 22:5 Joshua says,

But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

So conquering fear was the first challenge. I grew up a very fearful person. And it was not until I licked fear that I began growing in grace like crazy. Fear is an enemy of the soul. So heed this admonition that was given to Joshua: "Do not be afraid because of them..."

### B. The challenge of believing God's promises (v. 6b)

The second challenge was to believe God's promises. Verse 6 goes on to say, "for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel." All of them? Really? All of them? Was there anything visual that would have made it easy to believe that promise? No. Nothing. The northern coalition had the advantage of numbers, terrain, and technology. Chariots and horses charging against ground troops could have potentially been terrifying. But God promises them that all the coalition army would be slain the next day. That's astounding. That's mind-blowing. And yet they believed the promise because they knew that God is not a God who is capable of lying. He *is* the truth.

And God has given us equally astounding promises - that if we will take Him at His Word, He will give us victory over our besetting sins. If you struggle in your Christian walk and nothing has worked thus far, I would encourage you to start memorizing the promises of God and daily appropriating them for yourself. We've already seen that this can help with fear as well. It helps in many other areas of our sanctification. It helps to put off negative thinking.

### C. The challenge of removing substitutes to trust (v. 6c)

The next challenge was to not put their trust in technology or anything other than God. So faith issues keep coming up, don't they? In one sense the last command in verse 6 seems counter-intuitive. It says, "You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." Why did God make that command? Deuteronomy 17 didn't absolutely prohibit horses or new technology. It simply said, "he shall not *multiply* horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to *multiply* horses..." (Deut. 17:16). He didn't want horses and technology to be the basis for trust. They could be tools, but so frequently tools become substitutes for trust. And it would have been easy for this generation to begin transferring

trust from the Lord to the technologies that the pagans trusted in. And anytime your trust is in a creature or creation rather than in the Creator, then that part of creation has become an idol. And God is in the business of destroying idols. He makes them fail you. He *wants* them to fail you. It never pays to trust anything more than God.

But I do want to address the side-issue (and it really is a side-issue) of cruelty to animals. Why would God make these horses suffer? After all, Proverbs 12:10 says that the righteous regards the life of his animal, but the wicked can be cruel. The phrase, "Regards the life of his animal" can be rendered as "has compassion on his animal," "cares about his animal," or "thinks about his animal." Doesn't this seem like the opposite? In Genesis 49:6-7 Jacob rebukes Simeon and Levi for having hamstrung oxen and curses that expression of anger as being cruel and sinful. But there are several differences between those passages and this one.

First, God commanded this, and so it did not flow from wilfulness or sinful motives. God has the right to kill and to make alive. They are just following God's orders, and it is never wrong to follow God's orders.

Second, the horses were specifically being used as war equipment against Israel, and therefore on the *herem* principle they could have been destroyed. But God did not destroy them; He just rendered them unable to pull the chariots. So God is actually showing mercy by not making them destroy the animals. But the point is, they were war equipment that could be used by the enemy and needed to be treated as war equipment.

Third, horse drawn chariots were used for invasion of other territory, and God did not want Israel getting used to being an aggressor once they got into the land. And thus the call to destroy these Hittite chariots and the horses trained to pull them. Once established as a nation, God did not want them invading other countries.

Fourth, and probably most importantly, God did not want them transferring trust from Him to horses and technology. Psalm 20:7 says, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God." Isaiah 31:1 says, "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!" God will occasionally take away things that we depend upon to test whether are still trusting Him. It's OK to have technology, but it must never be a substitute for faith.

Fifth, the operation wasn't necessarily a cutting of the hamstring tendon, which would have rendered the animal useless and completely lame. It may have been the cutting of the rear tarsal tendon or some other tendon that would enable the animal to do farm work, mate, and otherwise get around, but would not allow the animal to be involved in aggressive warfare. David Firth is one of several who believes that this *was* the operation rendered. He says,

Hamstringing the horses probably involved a process that rendered them useless for military activity but would still permit their use in agriculture.<sup>4</sup>

#### D. The challenge of being proactive rather than reactive (v. 7)

Of course, trusting God does not preempt being smart, so the next point says, “The challenge of being proactive rather than reactive.” Joshua immediately has his army sprint into action, going up to Merom. Let me read the verse, and then I will tell you the significance of this swift move.

So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom, and they attacked them.

These armies were no doubt planning to come down to where Joshua was, but Joshua meets them on terrain that gave him a little bit more of an advantage for him. He brings the battle to them rather than letting them bring the battle to him. I gave you a terrain map so that you can see where they moved from and where they moved to. They were coming from more level open ground, and if they had stayed there, they would have been at a huge disadvantage against horses and chariots. But Merom was 4000 feet above sea level, and was in slightly hilly and more crowded country that would have been a little more difficult for chariots to sweep around in wide maneuvers. Joshua’s sudden appearance because of instant obedience to God’s first two commands takes them by surprise.

But it would have still taken faith for them to quickly travel up to Merom. Let me read at length a tactician’s analysis of why the Canaanite coalition picked Merom. Merom was still a place that was dangerous to Israel. He says,

Coalition troops moved to the Waters of Merom. This was an area at just the right altitude for the cultivation of olives, a product of millennial importance. The main reason the enemy chose that ground was that Merom was the natural junction between several routes of communication in northern Galilee, therefore being an ideal zone to assemble the vast force in the field.

By its 360 degree disposition, this also had the enormous strategic advantage of allowing one or more contingents to strike in any direction necessary – sort of like a queen on a chess board.

Defense against such a well laid out force, under these circumstances, would have been disastrous and should Joshua have been less aggressive in this theater his

---

<sup>4</sup> David G. Firth, *The Message of Joshua*, ed. Alec Motyer and Derek Tidball, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2015), 133. Matthews says something similar: “Hamstringing involves cutting through the rear tarsal tendon in the hock joint (the equivalent of the human Achilles tendon).” Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Jos 11:6.”

army would surely have disappeared off the map and the Jewish people off to some obscure footnote of history...

Considering that Scripture points to approximately ten kingdoms and six independent peoples from that region of the Levant, this was undoubtedly the tremendous force hurled against the Hebrews to date; hence the hyperbolic “as numerous as the sand on the seashore” description. This army group gathered at the Waters of Merom, an area around present-day Lake Merom in the Hula Valley. This was fertile spacious land for the fighting hordes.

Aside from the sheer number of their foes, Israel had to contend, for the first time, with a new deadly weapon: iron chariots on open ground. Until now Israel had been fighting (and winning) its battles on mountainous terrain mostly against local semi-isolated dwellers. Facing professional armies with state-of-the-art weaponry was not what Joshua had signed up for in the natural. His faith was stretched again just like in the Battle of Jericho.<sup>5</sup>

But the main point is that if Joshua had not had instant obedience and sped north to meet these armies, it would have been even worse on the much more open plains. And I see several principles that we can take to heart and apply in our lives.

First, instant obedience to the Lord pays off. We tried to teach instant obedience to our children in our day-to-day training as well as in our times of boot-camp remedial training. And if you have a problem child, I highly recommend bootcamp. Bootcamp is where you set aside an entire day to do nothing but training that child in the same behavior over and over again until he gets it. In the bootcamp we would give numerous arbitrary commands, and there was immediate discipline brought against slowness. And this training was done with enough frequency that the child learned instant obedience fairly quickly. In any case, we tried to make dawdling obedience a punishable offense with our toddlers and instant obedience a thing that really paid off. It trains them to have instant obedience to God as adults.

Second, faith produces boldness to tackle difficult things. And the faith-driven boldness of the leaders was no doubt contagious. Christians should never see leaders afraid of the enemy. Fear is contagious just as bold faith is contagious.

Third, though our battles with the enemy tend to be in the invisible realm rather than the physical realm, there *is* a place for Joshua’s preemptive attack in the legal courts of today. Heritage Defense and Alliance Defending Freedom have been very successful in taking on strategic cases in strategic jurisdictions where there are friendly courts, in order to gain an advantage for churches all over America. And they have been pressing the advantage in courts even when the enemy was willing to back off. By winning strategic battles in federal courts, it has taken major momentum away from the enemy.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://godswarplan.com/battle-of-waters-of-merom-northern-kings-canaan-northern-campaign-joshua-11>

Fourth, though they saw miracles in the southern campaign, God enabled them to win this battle without any miracles. Either way, *God is the one who prospered what they did*. That's important to realize. Too many Christians mistakenly believe that God is not working if they don't see miracles. But that is wrong. God is sovereign on when and where He gives miracles, so we cannot demand them. But at the same time, we can trust God to work *supernaturally* through us whether with or without miracles. We always have access to His supernatural power.

### E. The challenge of perseverance (v. 8)

But there is *another* challenge that is mentioned here. It is seen in verse 8 - a call to perseverance.

And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who defeated them and chased them to Greater Sidon, to the Brook Misrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward; they attacked them until they left none of them remaining.

This one verse covers a huge expanse of time. Easy to read, but difficult to persevere through. Yet perseverance is an essential of the Christian faith. The proof of the pudding of our authentic Christianity is not whether we have had major victories or supernatural experiences in the past, but whether we keep slogging on when the going gets tough. They would have been bone weary by the end of this day.

## V. Leave nothing undone that God has commanded (v. 9)

Related to this, but somewhat distinct is the call to leave nothing undone that God has commanded. Verse 9 begins, "So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him..." We like to think that we are obedient sons and daughters - doing exactly what God has called us to do. But sometimes there are tests of our obedience. Verse 9 shows two such tests.

### A. The distasteful tasks (v. 9a)

The first test was whether they would be willing to obey God on the issues that might appear distasteful. It says that Joshua "hamstrung their horses." Whatever the process, it must have seemed distasteful to have such magnificent, beautiful, powerful creatures taken from running to plodding. I love horses, and I might have cried having to do that. But I trust that I would have followed through even if it was distasteful.

But we can ask ourselves, what kinds of distasteful responsibilities do we shirk in our own day? It might be bringing a rebuke to someone we know God wants us to rebuke. It might be learning to witness on a street corner. It might be tithing, fasting, or memorizing Scripture. You alone know what things God is prompting you to do that might seem distasteful to you. That's a test of the nature of your obedience.

## B. The counter-intuitive tasks (v. 9b)

The second test of their obedience was the counter-intuitive task of destroying the chariots. According to many scholars, these Hittite chariots were the newest war technology on the market, and it would have seemed like such a waste of money and technology to destroy such things. Let's use them, or at least sell them and make some money. But if God called for their destruction, they were going to do it.

What commands of God seem counter-intuitive to you? It might be the role relationships between husbands and wives - and you want to reverse that. It might be tithing when you are flat broke - and you want to postpone that. But you can never out-give God. When you are sold out to the Lord and you obey Him on everything that He asks, you find that the Lord delights in blessing you with more. He certainly gave them an amazing victory against the northern coalition.

## VI. Don't leave business unfinished (vv. 10-11)

And we will end with that victory in verses 10-11. These verses show that Joshua modeled the principle that you don't leave business unfinished. In verses 10-11 we have the burning and total destruction of the leading city in the north - Hazor. It says,

Josh. 11:10 Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor, and struck its king with the sword; for Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms. 11 And they struck all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them. There was none left breathing. Then he burned Hazor with fire.

He made an example of the city by burning it. Only three cities were destroyed in Canaan: Jericho, Ai, and Hazor. The rest were inherited by the Israelites as a gift from God - houses with pantries full, tables, couches, and the comforts of life. In Deuteronomy 6:10-11 God had promised that they would inherit "large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant." But on this particular city, it was raised and everything in it destroyed. He left no unfinished business.

So even though this is a passage that describes a war that is not normative for us today, I think you can see that there are still principles that apply in every age. May the Lord cause us to grow as we seek to imitate Joshua on these principles. Amen.