

PART 3—THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN AND A SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL CONQUEST

F. The Conquest of the Great Northern Alliance and a Summary of All Victories: A Picture of the Believer's Spiritual Warfare, 11:1–12:24

(11:1–12:24) **Introduction:** wars are continually being fought all over the world, and there are always rumors of wars. There are constant uprisings, terrorist actions, and military struggles being waged, both among and within nations. But the wars and struggles being fought are not the only conflicts being waged in the lives of people. As tragic as all these conflicts are, there is a far more serious warfare being waged against mankind. That warfare is the spiritual conflict that every one of us experiences day by day. Conflict between good and evil, between right and wrong. This is the conflict known as spiritual warfare, the conflict that is struggling for the human soul. This spiritual conflict can defeat and destroy the human soul and take it into the pit of hell itself. If evil wins out over the soul of a human being, that human being is doomed to spend eternity out of the presence of God. He will never be accepted by God, not allowed to live in God's presence. The sinful, evil soul will spend eternity separated, cut off, doomed from God's presence eternally.

Thus the spiritual warfare being waged for the souls of people is the most critical battle that is being fought every day. Jesus Christ said that one soul is of more value than all the wealth in the world. Consequently, the loss of a soul to the conflict of evil is the worst imaginable fate. Evil dooms a soul eternally, forever and ever, time without end. This is the importance of this present passage of Scripture: it pictures for us the believer's spiritual warfare that is being constantly waged within his soul.

Joshua and the Israelites had just conquered the central and southern territories of Canaan. Joshua was a military genius. His strategy had been to spearhead a campaign across the middle of Canaan to divide the land, then to conquer the southern portion, and then to move against the northern coalition of city-states. As stated, the central and southern campaigns had already been spearheaded, and all the major city-states had been conquered. Now, only the northern kingdoms needed to be taken. But the task was not to be easy, for the strongest fortresses and armies were in the north. And the northern kingdoms would be prepared, for they were well aware that the LORD God had promised to give the land of Canaan to the Israelites as their inheritance. What happened in the northern campaign is the subject of this Scripture. Here is a picture of the spiritual conflict that is waged between the enemies of evil and the good for which the human heart craves. *The Conquest of the Great Northern Alliance and a Summary of All Victories: A Picture of the Believer's Spiritual Warfare, 11:1–12:24.*

1. The victory over the northern alliance: the picture of a last-ditch effort of the enemy to defeat and destroy the believer (vv.1–15).
2. The victory over the entire land (a summary): a picture of spiritual conquest and rest (vv.16–23).
3. The victory over the kings of East Jordan by Moses, the servant of the LORD (v.6): a picture of Christ, the servant of God, who gives victory over the enemies of this world (ch.12, vv.1–6).

4. The victory over the kings of West Jordan by Joshua, the savior of Israel: a picture of Christ who is the Savior of God's people (vv.7–24).

1 (11:1–15) Enemy, Spiritual, Purpose—Spiritual Enemy, Purpose of—Victory, of Israel—Israel, Military Victories of—Spiritual Warfare, Deliverance from: there was the victory over the northern alliance. This was a final effort by the enemy to stop the Israelites from entering the promised land. The enemy mobilized to defeat and destroy the Israelites, to keep them from securing their inheritance in the promised land. Spiritually, this is the picture of a last-ditch effort of the enemy to defeat and destroy the believer. Note the Scripture and outline:

OUTLINE

SCRIPTURE

1. The victory over the northern alliance: The picture of a last-ditch effort of the enemy to defeat & destroy the believer

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| <p>a. The huge alliance: Formed by king Jabin of Hazor</p> <p>1) The urgent call to war: Was apparently sent out to every known king in the north</p> <p>2) The response: A huge army mobilized with their horses & chariots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbered as the sand on the seashore • Met & camped at the Waters of Merom <p>b. The assurance of the LORD to Joshua</p> <p>1) He was not to fear: Victory would be his by tomorrow</p> <p>2) He was to cripple their horses & burn their chariots</p> <p>c. The major battle</p> <p>1) Joshua launched a surprise attack: At the Waters of Merom</p> | <p>And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard <i>those things</i>, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph,</p> <p>2 And to the kings that <i>were</i> 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,</p> <p>3 <i>And</i> to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and <i>to</i> the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and <i>to</i> the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh.</p> <p>4 And they went out, they and all their hosts & with them, much people, even as the sand that <i>is</i> upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.</p> <p>5 And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
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- The enemy was routed, fleeing8 And the LORD delivered them into the hand for their lives of Israel, who smote them, and chased them
 - The Israelites pursued them9 until no survivors were left unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining.
- 2) Joshua obeyed the LORD: Crippled9 And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade their horses & burned their chariots him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.
- d. The capture of the northern cities 10 And Joshua at that time turned back, and
- 1) Joshua captured Hazor: A large, important city, took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms.
- Executed the king (Jabin)
 - Executed the population 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.
 - Burned the city
- 2) Joshua captured all the cities & kings12 And all the cities of those kings, and all
- 3) Joshua executed them as Godthe kings of them, did Joshua take, and commanded (v.20; “cup was full of smote them with the edge of the sword, *and* iniquity,” beyond repentance, Ge. he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the 15:16) servant of the LORD commanded.
- 4) Joshua did not burn the cities built13 But *as for* the cities that stood still in their on mounds, except Hazor: Keptstrength, Israel burned none of them, save them for the people to live in Hazor only; *that* did Joshua burn.
- 5) Joshua gave the plunder & livestock14 And all the spoil of these cities, and the to the Israelites 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.
- e. The decisive victory: The clear result of15 As the LORD commanded Moses his obedience servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and
- 1) The LORD had commanded Moses & so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all Moses had commanded Joshua that the LORD commanded Moses.

2) Joshua did it: Obeyed God—left
nothing undone

a. A huge alliance was formed by King Jabin of Hazor (vv.1–5). Hazor was obviously the largest city-state and fortress north of the Sea of Galilee, wielding more power than the other city-states. This means that King Jabin was the most powerful king throughout northern Canaan. All the military exploits and crushing victories that Joshua had achieved no doubt spread throughout the surrounding nations. The Canaanite kings had heard how the LORD was giving His people victory after victory as they marched forth to lay claim to the inheritance of the promised land. There was only one hope for the enemy: to make one last, determined effort to stop and destroy the Israelites. Consequently, the most powerful king in northern Canaan, Jabin of Hazor, sent an urgent call for every known king in the north to mobilize for war (vv.2–3). There were at least thirty-one kings. However, the thirty-one kings who joined in the battle were probably only the more important rulers of the northern city-states. There were most likely many others scattered throughout the land.

The response led to the mobilization of a huge army with their horses and chariots (vv.4–5). The Jewish historian Josephus says that the northern coalition of armies numbered 300,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 20,000 chariots. In the words of Joshua, the enemy numbered as the sand on the seashore (v.4). All thirty-one plus kings mobilized their armies and marched to the waters of Merom where the armies were combined into one mighty military force. Obviously, days were needed to lay military strategy and to work the various armies into a cohesive and powerful military machine. The very thought, not to mention the sight, of such a large army with so many military men and chariots was enough to strike fear into the hearts of Joshua and the Israelites.

b. But note what happened: the LORD gave strong assurance to Joshua (v.6). He was not to fear, not at all. For victory would be his by the next day. Only one day would be needed to defeat this mighty army of the enemy.

Note the special instruction given to Joshua. Once the enemy was defeated, he was to cripple or lame their horses and burn their chariots. These weapons of warfare were never again to be used in combat, not by Israel nor by other armies. The trust and dependence of Israel was not to be in horses and chariots—in military armaments and technology, but in the LORD (see De. 17:16; 2 S. 8:4; Is. 31:1).

c. Joshua wasted no time in striking out at the enemy (vv.7–9). He launched a swift, surprise attack at the waters of Merom. This district sits in the mountains or hills about 4,000 feet above sea level; consequently, chariots would not have room enough to maneuver nor to be an effective force in battle.

The enemy was routed, fleeing for their lives. And the Israelites pursued them all the way to the coast (Great Sidon and Misrephoth-Maim) to the valley of Mizpah on the east. The Israelites chased the enemy until no survivors were left. The enemy was completely routed and total victory was achieved. The resistance of the enemy was now broken. Note that Joshua obeyed the LORD in the specific instruction He had given: the military commander crippled the horses of the enemy and burned their chariots (v.9).

d. Having broken the back of enemy resistance, Joshua now turned to the capture of the northern cities (vv.10–14).

- 1) Joshua first struck at Hazor, the largest, most important fortress in northern Canaan. This significant city-state had apparently been the capitol of all these kingdoms (v.10). Joshua executed King Jabin and the population and burned the city to the ground (vv.10–11).
- 2) Joshua then turned and began to capture all the cities and kings of the great northern alliance (v.12). Note that all the cities were *royal cities*, that is city-states that were ruled over by a king. Joshua executed everyone in the cities, both the kings and the citizens.
- 3) Why would Joshua execute the citizens as well as the kings and their military? Because the Canaanites were an evil, brutal, savage people whose “cup of iniquity” was full (Ge. 15:16). The people were beyond repentance, beyond ever turning to the LORD. The LORD had given them centuries, hundreds and hundreds of years, to repent and turn back to Him. However, they had refused and had reached the point of no return, of never repenting. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jos. 11:20 for more discussion).
- 4) Note that Joshua did not burn the cities built on mounds, except Hazor (v.13). He kept these cities so that the Israelites could occupy and live in them. They were a part of the inheritance to be given to God’s people.
- 5) Joshua gave all the plunder and livestock to the Israelites as well (v.14). But note, the judgment of God upon the Canaanite enemies is again stressed. Not a single Canaanite was to be spared. The enemy was to be destroyed, put to death under the word of God’s judgment.

e. The victory was decisive, the clear result of obedience (v.15). Obedience was the key to victory for God’s people. Again, obedience is stressed: the LORD had commanded Moses, and Moses had commanded Joshua. What God commanded through His servant Moses, Joshua did. The emphasis is clear: he left nothing undone. He did exactly what God commanded.

Thought 1. The last-ditch effort of the great northern alliance against God’s people paints two strong pictures or lessons for us.

(1) The picture of the enemy mobilizing in a last-ditch effort is a scene of being fierce, violent, menacing, bloodthirsty, cruel, dangerous, vicious, and threatening. This is a clear picture of the spiritual enemy that confronts us as believers, the enemy known as Satan, that old serpent, the devil. The devil seeks to entice and lure us into evil, to commit the acts of ...

- sin, wickedness, and unrighteousness
- lawlessness and violence
- hatred, bitterness, and malice
- selfishness, neglect, and disregard
- assault, murder, and war
- immorality, drunkenness, and drug abuse
- abuse, brutality, and savagery

- greed, covetousness, and hoarding
- mistreatment, disrespect, and dishonor

(2) The devil is always engaged in a last-ditch effort to defeat us, to cause us to stumble and eventually destroy ourselves. There is a constant warfare waging around us between good and evil, right and wrong—a constant warfare that is caused by the roaring lion, the devil himself. There is a constant warfare that is being waged in the spiritual world, the world that lies behind the physical universe—a constant warfare launched by the devil to cut the heart of God by defeating and destroying the people of God. This is the clear teaching of Scripture:

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Mt. 4:1).

“When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side” (Mt. 13:19).

“The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels” (Mt. 13:38–39).

“And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it” (Lu. 4:6).

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of *your* father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (Jn. 8:44).

“Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (Jn. 12:30–31).

“And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s *son*, to betray him” (Jn. 13:2).

“To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me” (Ac. 26:18).

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Co. 4:3–4).

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Co. 11:14–15).

“And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in

the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Ep. 2:1–3).

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*” (Ep. 6:12).

“Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us” (1 Th. 2:18).

“*Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Th. 2:9).

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (He. 2:14–15).

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world” (1 Pe. 5:8–9).

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 Jn. 3:8).

“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Re. 2:10).

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Ge. 3:4–5).

“Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD” (Jb. 1:9–12).

“So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown” (Jb. 2:7).

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Is. 14:12–15; see Eze. 28:11–19).

“And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him” (Zec. 3:1).

2 (11:16–23) Victory, Example of—Spiritual Conquest, Example of—Spiritual Rest, of Israel: there was the victory over the entire land of Canaan. This is a summary of the conquest of the promised land by Joshua and the Israelites. But note this fact: the smaller city-states were not conquered by Joshua and the army of Israel. The smaller cities, towns, and hamlets were left up to the individual tribes to conquer. Only the major forces, the major city-states and fortresses, were conquered by Joshua. He broke the back of the enemy resistance so that a massive army could not be mobilized against the Israelites. Simply stated, Joshua gained control of the promised land, but it was the task of the individual tribes to conquer the small towns scattered throughout the territory they were to inherit (see 13:1;15:63;16:10). This point is a clear picture of the spiritual conquest and rest God gives to His people.

OUTLINE

SCRIPTURE

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| <p>2. The victory over the entire land (a summary): A picture of spiritual conquest & rest</p> <p>a. The land conquered</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1) The areas of the land described</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">2) The southern point: Mt. Halak</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3) The northern point: Baal Gad</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">4) The lands of all the kings within this area were conquered & possessed</p> <p>b. The duration of the conquest: A long time (7 years: 14:7; De. 2:14; 14:10)</p> <p>c. The hard, stubborn, unbelieving hearts of the Canaanites</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1) Demonstrated by none seeking a peace treaty—except Gibeon</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">2) Demonstrated by God’s hardening their hearts (not to keep them from being saved but from making peace with evil hearts that would corrupt God’s people—see Rahab & the Gibeonites)^{DS1}</p> | <p>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;</p> <p>17 <i>Even</i> from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them.</p> <p>18 Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.</p> <p>19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites of the inhabitants of Gibeon: all <i>other</i> they took in battle.</p> <p>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, <i>and</i> that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.</p> |
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- d. The special mission of God's people: To21 And at that time came Joshua, and cut off defeat the Anakites, the giants whothe Anakims from the mountains, from opposed God Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all
- 1) Were totally destroyed within the mountains of Judah, and from all the Israelite territory mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities.
 - 2) Were left alone outside the land: In22 There was none of the Anakims left in the Gaza, Gath, Ashdad land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.
- e. The results of the victory over the land 23 So Joshua took the whole land, according
- 1) The people received theirto all that the LORD said unto Moses; and inheritance, the promised land Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel
 - 2) The people experienced theaccording to their divisions by their tribes. promised "rest" And the land rested from war.

a. The land conquered was a vast area (vv.16–17). Keep in mind that Joshua had been a brilliant military strategist. He had launched his attack across the Jordan River against Jericho and cut straight across to the Mediterranean Sea, splitting apart the land of Canaan. He had then launched his attack against the southern nations and then, as seen in this passage, against the great northern alliance who had formed against him. The land conquered by Joshua and the Israelites included:

- ⇒ the hill country (of Judah)
- ⇒ all the south country or Negev
- ⇒ the lowland or Shephelah
- ⇒ Goshen, which was a territory between the hill country of the central mountain range and the Negev (this was not the Goshen of Egypt)
- ⇒ the western foothills that stretched throughout Canaan or Palestine from north to south, somewhat inland from the coastal plain
- ⇒ the Arabah or the Jordan Valley
- ⇒ all the mountains and valleys or lowlands of Israel
- ⇒ the southern point of Mt. Halak that lay close to Kadesh-Barnea (see 10:41)
- ⇒ the northern point of Baal Gad which lay in the valley of Lebanon and below Mt. Hermon

Joshua conquered all the lands of all the major kings within the promised land. Through the power of God, he broke the back of their resistance. The people of God were on the verge of receiving their promised inheritance.

b. Note the duration, how long it took Joshua to conquer these enemies: a long, long time— a period of seven years. This is known because Caleb was forty years old when Israel tragically failed, demonstrated their terrible unbelief at Kadesh-Barnea (De. 2:14, see Jos. 14:7). It took Israel thirty-eight years of wandering in the wilderness before they crossed the Jordan to begin

their conquest of the promised land. This means that Caleb was seventy-eight years old when Israel began to march into the promised land. Now, as the conquest is ending, Caleb states that he is eighty-five years old (14:10). Thus Joshua and the Israelites were waging war against the enemies of the promised land for a period of seven long, difficult years.

c. Note the hard, stubborn, unbelieving hearts of the Canaanites (vv.19–20). This is seen in the fact that no nation sought a peace treaty with the Israelites except Gibeon.

The stubborn, unbelieving hearts of the Canaanites is also seen in the fact that they hardened themselves against God (v.20). Notice exactly what Scripture says: the LORD Himself hardened their hearts (v.20). What does this mean?

It does not mean that God kept the Canaanites from being saved, but He kept them from making peace with evil, unrepentant hearts that would in time corrupt God's people. Rahab and the Gibeonites show that the Canaanites could have been saved if they had been willing to repent. But as Scripture makes abundantly clear, over the centuries the Canaanites had given themselves over to evil, to total rejection of God. Thus, their hearts as a people became hard, grew more and more stubborn. Their hearts grew beyond repentance, beyond any desire or will to ever be saved. As a result, the judgment of God was to be executed upon them by the hands of the Israelites. Their "cup of iniquity" had been filled to the brim, beyond any hope of repentance (DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jos. 11:20 for more discussion).

d. Note the very special mission of God's people, that of defeating the Anakites, the giants who opposed God (vv.21–22). Joshua totally destroyed the Anakites within the promised land. There were no giants, no large enemies left to combat God's people within the promised land. There were giants, huge enemies, only in the nations outside the promised land.

e. At long last, that for which the people of God had yearned so long was theirs. They were now to receive their inheritance, the wonderful inheritance of the promised land itself. They were to experience the promised rest for which they had so long hoped. This verse is a simple statement that introduces what is to follow in the rest of the great book of Joshua: the actual distribution of the inheritance of the promised land (chs.13–19).

Never in the history of Israel had the Israelites been able to possess land, not a single acre; nor had they been able to build a home, to have a place that they could call their own. The father of their nation was Abraham, and Abraham had been a pilgrim upon this earth marching to the promised land of God. He was only a temporary resident upon this earth, living in a tent and moving from place to place. But he held the undying hope within his heart, the undying hope for the permanent possession of the inheritance promised by God. And ever since Abraham, every Israelite had lived only as a pilgrim, a temporary resident upon this earth, moving about as the need arose, pitching his tent and breaking camp. But the Israelite was always looking forward to the wonderful hope of the promised land, of receiving the inheritance of the promised land.

Now, at long last—the Israelites had conquered all the enemies who were trying to keep them out of the promised land. The promised land was now theirs. They were now to receive the glorious inheritance for which they had so long hoped. The promise of God was now to be experienced. The promised land was to be theirs, and they were to know the promised rest of God. They were now to experience rest from all struggle, restlessness, depravation, suffering, conflict, and warfare. This is the meaning of this great moment in the history of the Israelites, God's dear people. This was a phenomenal, pivotal point in their history. (See notes—Jos. 1:10–15; 14:15; 21:44, pt.2; 22:4; 23:1–2 for more discussion).

Thought 1. After the struggle, conflict and warfare, there was the promised rest for the Israelites. The same is true with us, all genuine believers. God promises us spiritual rest from all the conflict and struggle of this life. As we march forth to conquer the promised land of God, victory is assured. But while we are achieving victory, there is warfare to be waged. We must fight the battles, go through the conflicts and struggles, the pain and suffering, the afflictions that are cast against us. But in the midst of all the trials and temptations of this life, there is the *promised rest* of the LORD, a spiritual rest of soul, a rest that finds solace, peace, comfort, encouragement, security and assurance of the future. The *promised rest* of the LORD strengthens us against all the trials and temptations of life. There is a spiritual rest, the promised rest of God for the believer.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Mt. 11:28–29).

“Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest” (He. 3:8–11).

“But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” (He. 3:17–19).

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it” (He. 4:1).

“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world” (He. 4:3).

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (He. 4:9–11).

“And he said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest” (Ex. 33:14).

“And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve” (Is. 14:3).

“To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear” (Is. 28:12).

“Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee” (Ps. 116:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:20) Iniquity, Cup of: because of the length of this DEEPER STUDY # 1, it is being placed at this end of this commentary.¹

¹ Leadership Ministries Worldwide. (2003). [*The Book of Joshua*](#) (pp. 122–128). Leadership Ministries Worldwide.