

What We Learn in Wrapping Up Life's Battles

Joshua 11:16-23

As we see Joshua wrap up the battle for the last big cities in Canaan, we are going to receive some reminders that we need to keep in mind as we face life's future battles.

- **Reminder #1: LIFE'S BATTLES OFTEN DEMAND MUCH.**

So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills, ¹⁷from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death.¹⁸ Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time. Joshua 11:16-18 (New International Version)

Why Would God Allow Life's Battles to Cost so Much?

- . . . because God wants believers to develop an eternal perspective.

To see beyond the here and how; to evaluate events in light of eternity.

. . . he has given us new birth . . . into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you . . . In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

1 Peter 1:3-4, 6 (NIV)

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. Romans 8:18 (NIV)

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV)

- . . . because character change happens slowly.

See Colossians 1:10-11)

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. Philippians 2:13 (New Living Translation)

- **Reminder #2: GOD'S SOVEREIGN DECISIONS AND JUDGMENTS CALL THE SHOTS.**

Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle. ²⁰For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. Joshua 11:19-20 (NIV)

God's sovereignty = the exercise of God's rule over His creation

So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good. 1 Peter 4:19 (NIV)

When the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and fear and terror came over him. ¹³The LORD said to him, "Your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land; they will be slaves there and will be treated cruelly for four hundred years. ¹⁴But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and when they leave that foreign land, they will take great wealth with them. ¹⁵You yourself will live to a ripe old age, die in peace, and be buried. ¹⁶It will be four generations before your descendants come back here, because I will not drive out the Amorites until they become so wicked that they must be punished." Genesis 15:12-16 (Good News Translation)

See Romans 1:24-26; James 4:13-15; Genesis 50:19-20.

Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. Psalm 115:3 (NIV)

- **Reminder #3: OUR FEARS ARE NEEDLESS.**

At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns. ²²No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive. ²³So Joshua took the entire land, just as the LORD had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war. Joshua 11:21-23 (NIV)

But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are."³² . . . They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. ³³We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them." Numbers 13:31-33 (NIV)

*Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator . . .
²⁶Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. Romans 1:24-26 (NIV)*

*Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." ¹⁴Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."
James 4:13-15 (NIV)*

But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ²⁰You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." Genesis 50:19-20 (NIV)