

Deuteronomy 11:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves.

Analysis

The promise: 'Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you.' Victory over Canaan depends on covenant obedience, not military strength. The phrase 'nations greater and mightier than yourselves' acknowledges enemy superiority in human terms. Yet covenantal obedience guarantees divine intervention: God will 'drive out' (yarash, שָׁרַשׁ, dispossess) Israel's enemies. This echoes Exodus 23:27-30, where God promises gradual conquest. The conditional 'then' ties military success to spiritual faithfulness. This theology reappears throughout Judges: obedience → victory; apostasy → defeat.

Historical Context

Canaanite cities like Jericho, Hazor, and Megiddo had fortified walls, iron chariots (Judges 1:19), and professional armies. By human calculation, scattered Israelite tribes couldn't prevail. But Jericho's miraculous fall (Joshua 6), the Gibeonite hailstorm (Joshua 10:11), and other divine interventions proved God's promise. Conversely, Ai's defeat after Achan's sin (Joshua 7) showed disobedience's consequences. Archaeological evidence confirms widespread destruction of Canaanite cities in late Bronze Age, consistent with conquest accounts.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does this passage challenge trust in human strength, technology, or strategy above reliance on God?
2. What 'giants' in your life seem 'greater and mightier' than your resources, requiring divine intervention?
3. How do we balance human effort (fighting battles) with trust in divine provision (God giving victory)?

Interlinear Text

וִירְשֶׁתָּם	יְהוָה	אֶת	כָּל	גוֹיִם	הָאֵלֶּה
drive out	Then will the LORD	H853	H3605	all these nations	H428
H3423	H3068			H1471	
מִלִּפְנֵיכָם	וִירְשֶׁתָּם	גוֹיִם	גָּדֹל	וְעָצָם	יִם:
from before	drive out	all these nations	greater	and mightier	H4480
H6440	H3423	H1471	H1419	H6099	

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 4:38 (Parallel theme): To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 9:1 (Parallel theme): Hear, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven,

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