

Joshua 11:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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,

Analysis

The northern Canaanite coalition's formation demonstrates how God's mighty acts provoke opposition. King Jabin of Hazor, learning of Israel's southern victories, organized a massive northern alliance. Hazor was the premier city-state of northern Canaan, described as 'the head of all those kingdoms' (verse 10). The Hebrew *melech* (מֶלֶךְ, 'king') indicates these were autonomous city-state rulers who united under Hazor's leadership against the common Israelite threat. The coalition's formation fulfills Psalm 2:1-2—earthly kings conspiring against the Lord and His anointed. Yet their confederation, however militarily formidable, cannot withstand God's purposes. This pattern recurs throughout redemptive history: opposition to God's people often intensifies just before divine deliverance. The naming of specific kings and cities demonstrates Scripture's historical precision—these were real rulers of real places forming an actual military alliance, not mythological accounts.

Historical Context

Hazor was the largest Canaanite city in Palestine, covering approximately 200 acres with an estimated population of 40,000. Archaeological excavations by Yigael Yadin uncovered massive fortifications, palaces, and temples confirming Hazor's regional dominance in the Late Bronze Age. The city controlled major trade routes connecting Mesopotamia to Egypt, making its conquest strategically vital. Jabin's coalition assembled forces from multiple regions—Galilee, coastal plains, and

inland valleys—creating the most formidable army Israel yet faced. The alliance included not only infantry but also cavalry and iron chariots (verse 4), representing superior military technology that had dominated Near Eastern warfare. Israel, primarily infantry without cavalry or chariots, faced overwhelming odds requiring divine intervention. The historical Jabin who later oppressed Israel in Judges 4 was likely a dynastic title (like Pharaoh or Caesar) rather than the same individual, explaining the name's recurrence.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the formation of powerful opposition against God's work encourage rather than discourage you about God's ultimate victory?
2. What superior 'weapons' or resources do your opponents possess that tempt you to fear rather than trust God's promises?
3. How can you maintain faith when facing coalitions or alliances that seem humanly unstoppable?

Interlinear Text

יָהִי י'	כְּשֶׁמָּע	יָבִין	מֶלֶךְ	חֲצֹר
H1961	had heard	And it came to pass when Jabin	and to the king	of Hazor
	H8085	H2985	H4428	H2674
וְשָׁלַח	אֶל	יֹאבֵב	מֶלֶךְ	מָדֹן
those things that he sent	H413	to Jobab	and to the king	of Madon
H7971		H3103	H4428	H4068
מֶלֶךְ	שִׁמְרוֹן	וְאֶל	מֶלֶךְ	אַחֲשָׁפִי:
and to the king	of Shimron	H413	and to the king	of Achshaph
H4428	H8110		H4428	H407

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 11:10 (Kingdom): 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.

Judges 4:2 (Kingdom): And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

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