

Joshua 11:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

Analysis

Much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many—The northern coalition's overwhelming force (רַב, rov, great abundance) represents humanity's greatest military threat to Israel. The comparison to **sand** (חֵל, chol) echoes God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 22:17), ironically juxtaposing covenant blessing against Canaanite opposition.

The emphasis on **horses and chariots** (סוּסִים וְרֶכֶב, susim v'rekhev) highlights advanced military technology—the ancient equivalent of tanks and air support. Yet God specifically commanded Israel not to rely on such weaponry (Deuteronomy 17:16), teaching dependence on divine power rather than human strength. This foreshadows David's later psalm: 'Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God' (Psalm 20:7).

Historical Context

Hazor was the largest Canaanite city-state in the north (200 acres), controlling vital trade routes. Archaeological excavations confirm massive destruction layers from this period (1230-1220 BC). The coalition's chariotry represented cutting-edge Bronze Age military technology, giving them overwhelming tactical superiority on the northern plains—making Israel's victory impossible without divine intervention.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What modern 'chariots and horses' do you trust in rather than God's power?
2. How does God use overwhelming opposition to demonstrate His faithfulness to His promises?
3. Why does God often place His people in situations where human resources are insufficient?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּצְאוּ And they went out H3318	וְהָם H1992	וְכָל H3605	מְחַנֵּיהֶם they and all their hosts H4264	עַמָּם H5973	עַם people H5971	רַב many H7227
כִּי וְלִ even as the sand H2344	אֶשֶׁר H834	עַל H5921	שְׂפַת shore H8193	הַיָּם that is upon the sea H3220	לְרַב in multitude H7230	
וְסוּסִים with horses H5483	וְרֶכָב and chariots H7393	רַב many H7227	מְאֹד: very H3966			

Additional Cross-References

Judges 7:12 (Parallel theme): And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude.

1 Samuel 13:5 (Parallel theme): And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.

Genesis 22:17 (Parallel theme): That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Genesis 32:12 (Parallel theme): And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

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