

# Joshua 11:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.

## Analysis

**Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire**—The verb **houghed** (רִקֵּעַ, iqquer, hamstrung) means cutting the leg tendons, permanently disabling war horses. This radical act of faith destroyed valuable military assets worth a fortune, obeying God's command against trusting in horses (Deuteronomy 17:16).

Burning the **chariots** (רְקֵבָה, rekhev) eliminated the temptation to adopt Canaanite military methods. God required total dependence on Him, not human weaponry. This obedience cost Israel strategic military advantage but gained spiritual purity. As Zechariah later prophesied: 'I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem... and he shall speak peace unto the heathen' (Zechariah 9:10). True victory comes through dependence on God, not superior armaments.

## Historical Context

Hamstringing captured horses was extremely rare in ancient warfare—enemy chariots were highly prized spoils. A single chariot represented months of a craftsman's wages; a trained war horse, even more. Joshua's obedience demonstrated that covenant faithfulness trumped military pragmatism. This decision shaped Israel's military culture for centuries, distinguishing them from chariot-based empires.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. What 'chariots'—symbols of worldly power and security—is God calling you to destroy?
2. How does obedient sacrifice of valuable resources demonstrate faith in God's provision?
3. When has trusting in human methods compromised your dependence on God?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיַּעֲשֵׂ	לִקְמָ	עַ	רְ	יְהוָשָׁ	כִּאֵשׁ	אָמַר	לֹ	וְ	יְהִ
<b>did</b>	H0	<b>And Joshua</b>	H834	<b>bade</b>	H0	<b>unto them as the LORD</b>			
H6213		H3091		H559			H3068		
אָתָ	סְוִסִּיתָ	מִ	עַקְ	רְ	מְרַכְבָּתִיםָ	שָׁבָ	רְ	בְּאֵשׁ:	
H853	<b>their horses</b>		H6131	<b>him he houghed</b>	H853	<b>their chariots</b>	<b>and burnt</b>	<b>with fire</b>	H784
	H5483				H4818		H8313		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Joshua 11:6** (References Lord): 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.