

## **The Lord Your God is He Who Fights for You**

### **Josh 23:9-11**

The LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but as for you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day. 10 One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you. 11 Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. NKJV

These words we read today were spoken about 3,500 years ago by Joshua the great military commander of the Lord's army to the children of Israel before his death. They had been very successful in their military campaigns. But Joshua did not take the credit. Nor would he give the credit to the people. Instead he gave the credit to God.

Now I do not think that the USA has replaced Israel in God's overall plan. But I do think that in many passages like this one, that there are principles that go beyond just the nation of Israel. One of those principles is that a nation who seeks God and does what is right in God's sight will be blessed by God. I truly think that is the key to our nation's success. I am sort of a history buff but no expert by any means. And I read after mostly conservative authors. And what I have found is that God blessed our nation, even in our past wars. He gave us victory, not easily, but we have been successful.

Tomorrow millions will gather across America to remember those brave souls who sacrificed their lives so that we might still enjoy freedom today. Freedom always comes with a price. And there always seems to be a new threat on the horizon that would take that freedom away. So freedom requires a constant vigilance.

But our founding fathers had a novel idea. That idea was that freedom does not come from a government. It does not come at the whim or will of rulers. But rather freedom is something that God has endowed to every person. And since freedom is not given by government, then government cannot take it away.

Against threats to our freedom, over 1.25 million service personnel have sacrificed their lives. Over our history many wars have been waged. Many lives have been lost, but freedom has been secured for us and our children.

Now some mock the idea of freedom as though it does not matter. But many have thought of freedom as worth dying for. Those famous words of Patrick Henry still ring true today. "Give me liberty or give me death."

But the question that I present to you is whether or not our nation will continue to go undefeated. What was Israel's record, how long did it last and what was their downfall? Is there a lesson in all this for us?

I. What was Israel's record?

A. Their first battle

1. It is found in Exodus 17 where the Amalekites came out to defeat Israel.

2. Joshua and his men would prevail only as long as Moses was able to hold up the rod.
3. This was done to teach them that God gives victory to whom He wills.
4. They learned the lesson.

B. Jericho

1. Joshua and his army had never encountered such a fortified city before.
2. As Joshua is alone, contemplating the way to take the city, the Angel of the Lord appears to Joshua.
3. Joshua finds out that he is not the captain of the Lord's army but God Himself was.
4. Josh 5:13-And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?" 14 So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" 15 Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so. NKJV

C. Ai

1. At Ai Israel shows their pride and self-sufficiency
2. There was sin among them and God refused to bless them as a whole until they dealt with it.

D. Under the judges

1. There who purpose seem to deliver the nation from their oppressors after they had been judged by God for their sins.
2. God would allow a neighboring nation to oppress them until they repented and returned to God.
3. Then God would raise up a judge to deliver them.

E. Under David

1. They achieved their greatest dominion and the greatest victories.
2. Even though David had his failures, he had a great desire to give God His true place in his life and in the nation.
3. After David, Solomon's kingdom enjoyed 40 years of prosperity and peace.

4. And even though Solomon betrayed the Lord by building altars to other gods yet God did not remove the kingdom from him but from his son.
5. This was the beginning of the end for the entire nation.
  - a. Within 210 years the northern kingdom of ten tribes would go into captivity, never to return and to be scattered over the world.
  - b. Within 345 years the beautiful temple built by Solomon and even Jerusalem itself would be just a pile of rubble.

F. Subsequent generations

1. With each passing generation it seemed that the nation went farther and farther from God.
2. There were a few who tried turn it around but the trend was continually downward.
3. God sent prophets to them to warn them but they were proud in their sin and would not turn away from all that they had come to love.

II. How long did it last?

- A. For nearly 900 years
- B. But God had a covenant relationship with Israel that He does not have with this nation.
  1. With Abraham.
  2. With David & Solomon
- C. Finally after years of warnings God delivered the whole nation over to a ruthless people who abused them tremendously.
  1. Read the book of Lamentations.
  2. All because they had forgotten their God.

III. What brought about their downfall.

- A. They rejected God and worshiped other gods.
- B. They became more and more wicked, living lavish lifestyles while they oppressed the poor, the marginalized.

IV. Is there a lesson in this for us?

- A. We do well to honor those who gave their lives that we might enjoy ours today.
- B. We do better still to maintain faith in the God our founding fathers worshiped.
  1. Today God has been replaced by tolerance.

2. That is the god of the USA
  3. We tolerate every god, every idea, except true Christianity.
  4. They talk about Jesus a lot but in reality they despise His narrowness.
  5. They hate His claim to exclusivity.
- C. We do best to honor God remembering that He has promised to bless that nation who's God is the Lord.
1. Ps 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD , The people He has chosen as His own inheritance. NKJV
  2. Ex 19:5-6 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' NKJV
  3. Josh 1:7-9 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." NKJV