

JOSHUA

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 10

- Vv. 1-14 *The southern coalition.* Five kings of the Amorites banded themselves together to punish the inhabitants of Gibeon because they had made peace with the Israelites. They did not attack Israel, but vented their rage on the Canaanites who inhabited the Hivite towns under the direction of Gibeon. These kings were utterly defeated by Joshua near Beth-horon in the battle where God miraculously interfered by causing the sun to stand still for a whole day.
- Vv. 15-27 *The death of the five kings.* After the battle was over; Joshua made sure that none escaped, not even the kings. He did not make the same mistake as that made by Saul when he saved Agag, the king of the Amalekites, and some of the best of the spoils, even though he had been commanded to destroy them utterly.
- Vv. 28-43 *The summary of the conquest.* Different towns were listed as those completely subjugated by Joshua as he led the Israelites in their victorious battles. The land which they subdued was that which stretched from Kadesh-Barnea in the south to Gibeon in the north. Joshua returned to his camp in Gilgal after the southern coalition was defeated.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Politics make strange bed-fellows.* The combination of the five kings of the Amorites who banded themselves

to punish the inhabitants of Gibeon indicates the way in which these Canaanites would ordinarily fight against themselves. The kings did not attack the Israelites directly; but they went out to punish one of their own cities, because the people there had made a league with the invading Israelites. Probably the king of Hebron and the king of Jebus would not ordinarily get along together at all. When they faced a common enemy, however, they were willing to drop their differences and go out in a unified campaign.

2. *He put the stars in place.* The miracle of the sun standing still has drawn a lot of attention. Many different explanations have been given as to how the phenomenon could have occurred. Some suggest that gases bent the sun's rays so that it was light for a long time on the earth. Others have suggested that it only seemed that the day was long because the Israelites were so busy in fighting that they forgot to notice the time. All these explanations cannot explain the plain historical statement of fact that the sun stood still. God fought for Israel. He who put the sun, moon, and stars in place in the beginning (Genesis 1:14) caused them to stop in their places while Israel won this battle.
3. *Victory belongs to the faithful.* Joshua learned his lesson after Jericho. He knew it was not enough to come close to doing what God asked him to do. He did not spare any of the kings who had fought against God's people. All of them were executed according to the commandments of the law. After these campaigns were waged, he was able to return in peace to his camp at Gilgal. Christians have the same hope of eventual victory and the Sabbath rest in heaven.

CHAPTER TEN

The Southern Coalition 10:1-14

Now it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;

2 That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.

3 Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,

4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

5 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.

7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor.

8 And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.

10 And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

11 And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

12 Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;
and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
until the people had avenged themselves
upon their enemies.

Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

14 And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel.

1. *Who was Adoni-zedek?* 10:1

The name means "lord of righteousness." It is almost synonymous with Melchizedek which means "king of righteousness." This may have been a title of the Jebusite kings, as Pharaoh was the Egyptian rulers and Caesar was later of the Roman. Adoni-zedek does not appear to have any of the righteous inclinations which belong to Melchizedek, the high priest to whom Abraham paid the tithe. Instead

of being a friend of God's people and the descendants of Abraham, he was an enemy with a burning desire to resist the wrath of God.

2. *Where was Jerusalem? 10:1b*

This word means "the foundling or possession of peace." It was called Salem in the time of Abraham (Genesis 14:18). It was the proper name of the town which was also frequently called Jebus (Judges 19:10, 11; I Chronicles 11:4), or "city of the Jebusites" (Judges 19:11). During the division of the land it was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (18:28); but being situated upon the border of Judah (15:8), it was conquered and burned by the sons of Judah after the death of Joshua (Judges 1:8). It was very soon taken again by the Jebusites whom the sons of Judah were not able to destroy (Joshua 15:63, Judges 19:12); so both Benjaminites and Judahites lived there along with the Jebusites (Judges 1:21; Joshua 15:63). The upper town, especially upon the summit of Mt. Zion, remained a fortification in the possession of the Jebusites until David conquered it (II Samuel 5:6 ff.). He made it the capital of his kingdom and called it by his own name, "the city of David," after which the old name of Jebus fell into disuse.

3. *Why were the Jebusites afraid? 10:2*

The Jebusites were afraid not only because they had heard what the Israelites had done at Jericho and Ai but also because one of their cities had made a league with them. They might have believed the Gibeonites would assist the Israelites and make war against the rest of the Canaanites. Indeed the Hivites who lived in Gibeon would be bound by their treaty to assist the Israelites in whatever way they were directed. In addition, the other Canaanites must have felt a sense of reproach and shame that one of their own cities had signed a treaty with the enemy. This

revealed internal weakness, and they decided to attack immediately.

4. *Where was Hebron?* 10:3a

Hebron, the town of Arba the Anakite (Joshua 15:13; cf. Genesis 23:2), was about twenty miles south of Jerusalem. It lay in a deep and narrow valley upon the mountains of Judah and was a town of the greatest antiquity (Numbers 13:22). It is now called *el Kbalil*, i.e., "the field" (of God), with reference to Abraham's sojourn there. The ruins include an ancient colossal mosque which contains, according to the Mohammedan tradition, the burial-place of the patriarchs (See Genesis 23:17).

5. *Where was Jarmuth?* 10:3b

Jarmuth was in the lowlands of Judah (Joshua 15:35; Nehemiah 11:29). A hamlet, Jermucha, is on the road to Jerusalem, and is identified as the modern Jarmuk. This village is on a lofty hill and has remains of walls and cisterns of a very ancient date. The name is called Tell 'Armuth by the Arabs.

6. *Where was Lachish?* 10:3c

Lachish was in the lowlands of Judah (15:39) and was fortified by Rehoboam (II Chronicles 11:9). It was besieged by Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 18:17; 19:8; Jeremiah 34:7) but was still inhabited by Jews after the return from captivity (Nehemiah 11:30). It is probably to be found in *Um Lakis*, an old place upon a low round hill. The site is covered with heaps of small round stones thrown together in great confusion containing relics of marble columns.

7. *Where was Eglon?* 10:3d

Eglon was in the lowlands of Judah (15:39). The present name is Ajlan, a heap of ruins. It lies to the east of *Um Lakis*. Eglon was very closely associated with the affairs of the Philistines and was the city most remote from the center of the land. The king must have been

able to contribute something to the campaign led by Adonizedek, and these people joined with their fellow Canaanites in waging a campaign against the Hivites who had made peace with Israel.

8. *Why did the Gibeonites appeal to Joshua? 10:6*

When the men of Gibeon saw that the other Canaanites were attacking them, they sent to Joshua for help. Since the two peoples had entered into a league with each other, the Israelites were honor bound to assist the Gibeonites. Consequently, Joshua left his camp at Gilgal and took with him his full complement of soldiers led by his mighty men of valor.

9. *What was the ascent of Beth-horon? 10:10*

This was the ascent to Upper Beth-horon (*Beit Ur, el Foka*), which was nearest to Gibeon, only a short way distant on the northwest. It lay on a lofty promontory between two valleys, one on the north, the other on the south, and was separated from Lower Beth-horon, which lay further west, by a long steep pass. The ascent to Upper Beth-horon is very steep and rocky, though the rock has been cut away in many places and a path made by means of steps. This pass between the two places leads downwards from Gibeon towards the western plain and was called sometimes the ascent, or going up to Beth-horon, and sometimes the descent, or going down from it (v. 11). Frequent references to this passageway are found both in Biblical and extra-Biblical sources.

10. *Where was Makkedah? 10:10b*

This site is believed to be found in Summeil, a considerable village on an eminence in the plain. It has a large public well 110' deep and 11' in diameter, with strongly built walls of hewn stones. There is also part of an old wall which to all appearances must have belonged to a large square castle built of uncemented stones.

11. Where was Azekah? 10:11

Both Azekah and Makkedah are in the lowland on the west of Canaan. Azekah is in the hill-country between the mountains and the plain (15:35); Makkedah, in the plain itself (15:41). Azekah was fortified by Rehoboam (II Chronicles 11:9) and was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 34:7) but still inhabited after the captivity (Nehemiah 11:30). It was not far from Socoh, according to Joshua 15:35.

12. What were the hailstones? 10:11

The large stones which the Lord threw upon the flying foe at the slope of Beth-horon were hailstones (see Isaiah 30:30). It was not stone-hail or a shower of stones, but a terrible hailstorm, in which hail fell upon the foe in pieces as large as stones. There was no evidence that Israel was equipped well enough with slingers in order to hail stones upon the army. The author is not trying to express this, but is rather telling the reader that God interfered in the affairs of men. From the heavens which are controlled by the Creator of the heavens poured forth those hailstones which would normally come in less quantity and with less severity. On this occasion, God interfered with what we call the laws of nature and caused such a storm to come upon the Canaanites that they were routed by Israel.

13. Are there valid objections to the miracle of the sun standing still? 10:13

Several objections are raised. First, it is said, "No annals of other nations contain such an account." For that matter, annals of many nations do not go back to this period. Second, it is urged that the motion of the stars is unchangeable. These so-called "laws," however, are nothing more than phenomena, or forms of manifestation, of those divine creative powers, the true character of which no mortal has ever fathomed. Third, it is objected that

such a sudden stoppage of the revolution of the earth upon its axis would have dashed to pieces all the works of human hands which were to be found upon its surface and hurled the earth itself with its satellite, the moon, out of their orbits. This leaves out of sight the fact that the omnipotent hand of God, which not only created the stars but gave them the power to revolve with regularity in their orbits as long as this universe endures, is not too short to guard against such disastrous consequences. There can be no valid objections to the view that this was a miracle worked by God Himself.

The Death of the Five Kings 10:15-27

15 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp of Gilgal.

16 But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah.

18 And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them:

19 And stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the Lord your God hath delivered them into your hand.

20 And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities.

21 And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

22 Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

23 And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

24 And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

25 And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

26 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening.

27 And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day.

14. *Where was the cave of Makkedah?* 10:15

The place has been identified with *el-Mugbar*, a spot southwest of Ekron. The name, *el-Mugbar*, means "the caves." The area is very far away from where the battle was fought, and the location is really not certain. Makkedah is best known only for this fact recorded here. The kings hid there, and nothing else of importance to Bible history occurred there. The place was later assigned to the tribe of Judah as part of their inheritance (Joshua 15:41).

15. *Where were the fenced cities?* 10:20

The fenced cities were scattered throughout the land. Only cities which were of substantial size and importance

would have these walls around them. There were enough of them that they provided hiding places to all who escaped from the war between Israel and the five kings of the South. Israel was not in a position to begin its total campaign against the Canaanites at the end of the battle with the kings associated with Adoni-zedek. There were still strong forces in the North which had to be subdued before the armies of Israel could lay siege against the fenced cities to force out those who had escaped from the battles fought in the open field. Eventually this task was to be performed by those tribes who settled in the area where the fenced cities were located.

16. *Why did the men put their feet on the necks of the kings? 10:24*

This action was symbolic of the fact that the kings were utterly beaten. The inscription at Behistan shows clearly a picture of Cyrus with a group of vassal kings prostrate on the ground before him. He has his foot on the neck of one of the kings symbolizing the fact that he has completely overthrown his enemies. Israel was told not to leave the dead people hanging after sundown. These kings had been incarcerated in caves until the battle was finished; but when it was over, they were brought out and promptly executed. Their bodies were then thrown back into the caves and great stones were rolled across the doors making rock-hewn tombs for these beaten enemies of the armies of God.

The Summary of the Conquest 10:28-43

28 And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho.

29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah:

30 And the Lord delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho.

31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it:

32 And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it:

35 And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it:

37 And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein.

38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought against it:

39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the

sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40 So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded.

41 And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon.

42 And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel.

43 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

17. *Where was Libnah?* 10:29

Libnah was one of the towns of the plain of the hill-country of Judah. It was allotted to the priests (21:13). The people revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (II Kings 8:22). Later, it was besieged by Sennacherib (Isaiah 37:8). It is in the South, but on the northeast of Lachish.

18. *Where was Gezer?* 10:33

Gezer was on the southern boundary of Ephraim (16:3) and was given up by that tribe to the Levites (16:9, 10; 21:20, 21). David pursued the Philistines to Gezer after they had been defeated at Gibeon (II Samuel 5:25; I Chronicles 14:16). At a later period it was conquered by Pharaoh and presented to his daughter who was married to Solomon. Solomon built, i.e., fortified, it (I Kings 9:16, 17). The site has been excavated in modern times and has yielded many striking examples of artifacts in burial customs. Gates and walls dating from the time

of Solomon have been uncovered, and the massive fortifications found there attest the strategic military importance of this site which overlooks the maritime plain of the Mediterranean and guards the ascent to the hill country of Judah.

19. *Where was Debir?* 10:38, 39

This town was formerly called Kirjath-sepher, i.e., "book town" (Judges 1:11), and Kirjath-sannah, i.e., in all probability "the city of palm branches" (15:49). It was given up by Judah to the Levites (21:15). It stood upon the mountains of Judah (15:49), to the south of Hebron, but has not been certainly discovered.

20. *Where was Goshen?* 10:41

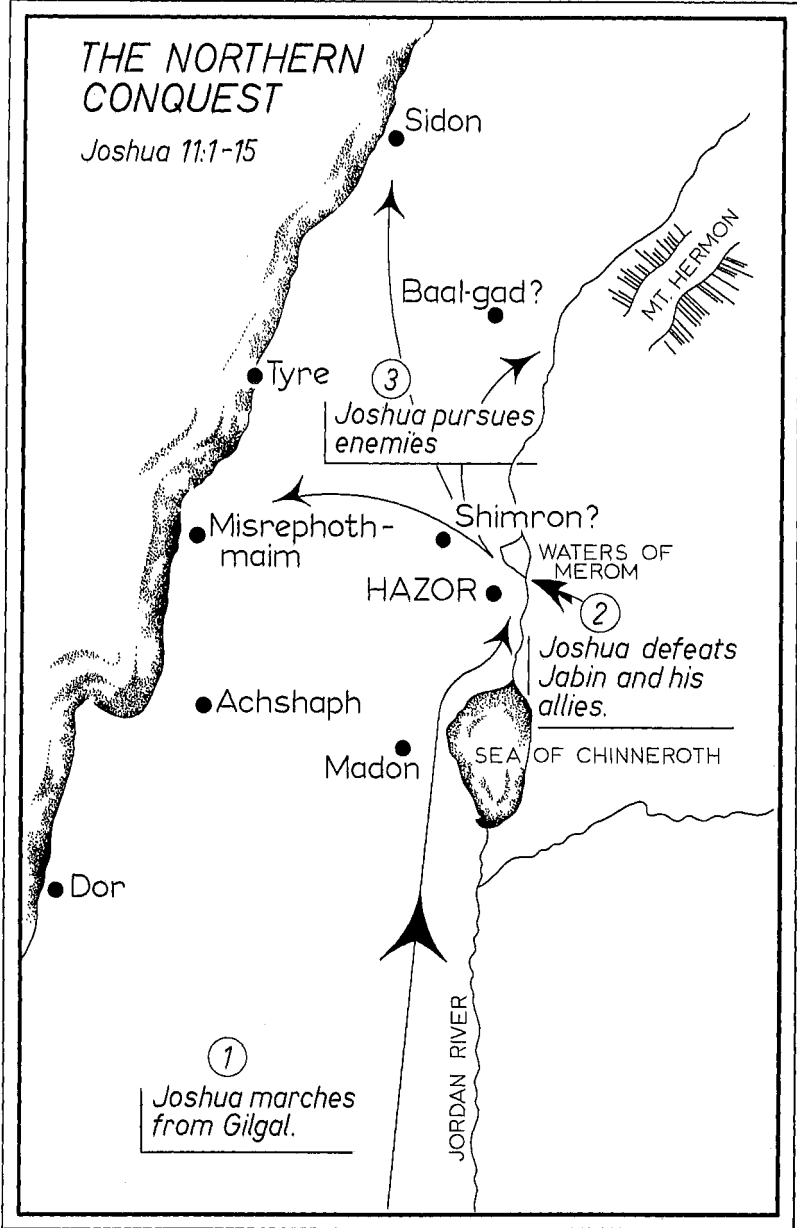
This is a different place from the Goshen of Egypt, deriving its name in all probability from the town of Goshen on the southern portion of the mountains (Joshua 15:51). As the line "from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza" defines the extent of the conquered country from south to north on the western side, so the parallel clause, "all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon," probably defines the extent from south to north on the eastern side. Therefore, we should look for Goshen in the South near the Dead Sea.

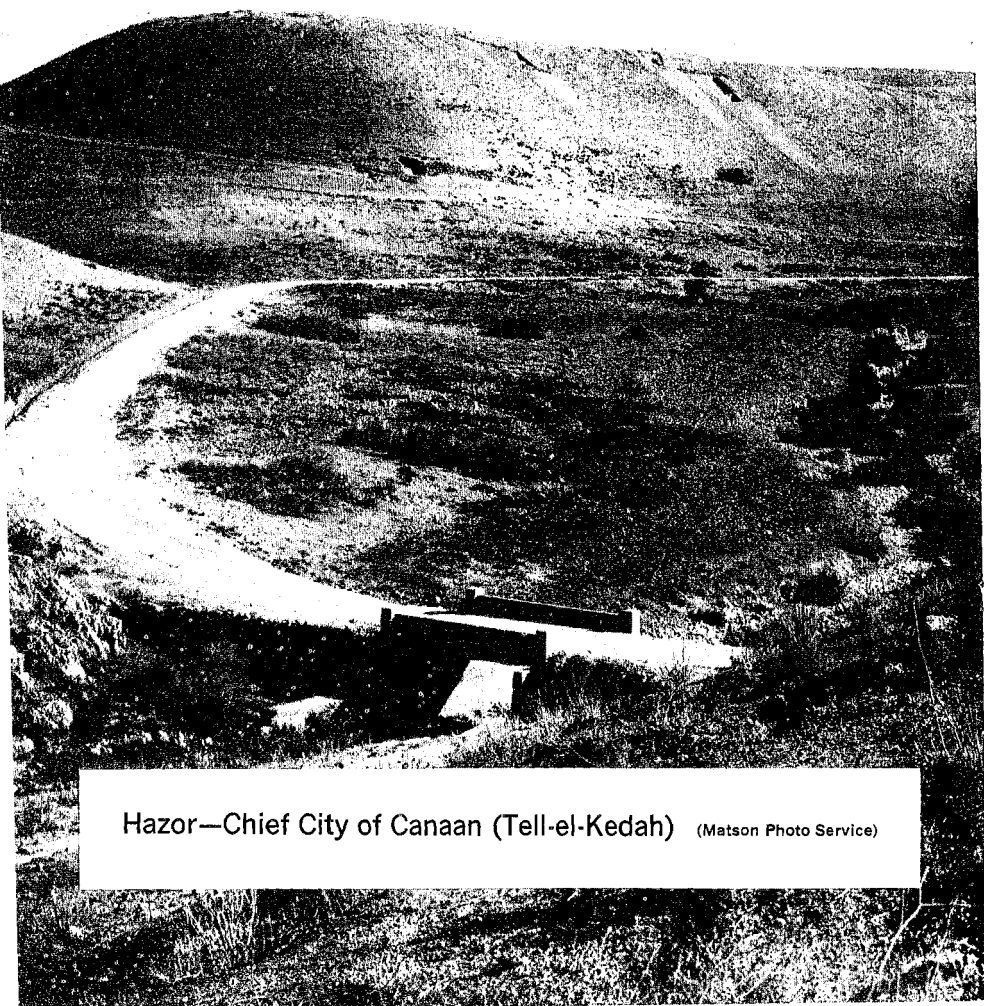
TEN QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER 10

1. What was the name of the king who led in the forming of the southern coalition?
2. Of what city was he the ruler?
3. What five other cities joined in the coalition?
4. What city in Canaan did these kings attack?
5. Where was the camp of Israel at the time?
6. Along the way to what city did Israel chase the Canaanites?
7. Over what valley was the moon standing while the battle was fought?

THE NORTHERN CONQUEST

Joshua 11:1-15





Hazor—Chief City of Canaan (Tell-el-Kedah) (Matson Photo Service)

JOSHUA

8. Over what city was the sun standing while the battle was fought?
9. What territory on the South is listed as the southern border of the conquered territory?
10. What city is listed as being on the northern border of the conquered territory?

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 11

- Vv. 1-9 *The defeat of Jabin.* Jabin was the king of Hazor. He formed an alliance with the kings in his area, and they attempted to hold the northern part of Canaan against the on-rushing Israelites. Joshua attacked them near the waters of Merom and completely routed them.
- Vv. 10-15 *The destruction of Hazor.* Joshua was careful to follow the commandments of the Lord explicitly. He completely destroyed the city of Hazor and burned it with fire. He also wiped out the inhabitants so that there would be no remaining cesspool of sin in the land. As for the other kings, he completely overthrew them; but he did not destroy their cities which were walled. The people of Israel were allowed to take spoils in this northern campaign, but they did utterly annihilate the wicked inhabitants.
- Vv. 16-23 *A summary of Joshua's campaigns.* Joshua took all of the land. Every division is mentioned—the hills, the *negeb*, the Jordan River Valley, the Mediterranean plains, and the mountain ranges. In all these areas there was not a single city which sued for peace except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All the rest were destroyed.