

## A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 12

- Vv. 1- 6 *Summary of Moses' conquest.* Moses led the people in battle with Sihon, king of the Amorites, and against Og, king of Bashan. These conquests are mentioned in a succinct fashion before more detailed consideration is given to a summary of the conquest of the people of Israel under the leadership of Joshua. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh settled in the land taken in the conquest led by Moses.
- Vv. 7- 8 *A general outline of Joshua's conquered territory.* The land which Joshua captured for the people of Israel is described in a general way as lying west of the Jordan River. It extended from the Lebanon Mountains in the north to the smooth mountain, Mt. Halak, near the territory of Edom in the south. Topographically it was mountains, valleys, plains, springs, wilderness, and the south country.
- Vv. 9-24 *A list of the kings defeated by Joshua.* Thirty-one kings were defeated by the children of Israel under the leadership of Joshua. The first one mentioned whom they attacked was the king of Jericho. The last one named was the king of Tirzah, evidently one of the kings who had taken part in the northern coalition.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Christian life is a warfare.* The Bible is replete with references which place God-fearing people in the role of fighters. This is true not only of the New Testament, but of the Old Testament as well. Moses was primarily the great law-giver, but it was also his lot

## STUDIES IN JOSHUA-JUDGES-RUTH

to lead Israel in their first battles. Although some may not be engaged in polemics in Christian living and teaching as much as others, all must "fight the good fight of faith" (I Timothy 6:12).

2. *God keeps His word.* When God called Abraham out of the Ur of Chaldees, He said He would make of him a great nation. Later he told him He would give him the land of Canaan as his possession, displacing the nations who dwelt in the land at the time (Genesis 15:18). This promise was repeated to Jacob as he lay on the ground at Bethel (Genesis 28:13). Abraham and Jacob did not see the fulfillment of these promises, but God kept His word. The promise was fulfilled in the days of Joshua as they drove the Canaanites from the Promised Land. God is just as faithful to His promises of special blessings to those who trust Him today. He never fails.
3. *None can withstand God.* Thirty-one different kings are listed among those who hardened their hearts and resisted the onrush of the people of God. The last verses of this chapter are like a casualty list of those who threw away their lives and reaped punishment as a result. Christians today should be very careful lest they should make the same mistake and eventually find their names are not in the book of life, but are rather listed with those who have attempted to resist God.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### *Summary of Moses' Conquest 12:1-6*

Now these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, from the river Arnon unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east:

2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon;

3 And from the plain to the Sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, even the Salt Sea on the east, the way to Beth-jeshimoth; and from the south, under Ashdoth-pisgah;

4 And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,

5 And reigned in mount Hermon, and in Salcah, and in all Bashan, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

6 Them did Moses the servant of the Lord and the children of Israel smite: and Moses the servant of the Lord gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

1. *What is the "other side" of Jordan?* 12:1

The reference to "the other side of Jordan towards the rising of the sun" is a phrase which reveals the point of view of the writer. Joshua wrote the book after he had crossed into the Promised Land. On occasions when the writer is east of the Jordan, he refers to the land of the Jordan as "the other side of Jordan." This area was sometimes called Perea, or Gilead. The main part of the land was west of the Jordan. That part which was east was called "the other side."

2. *Where were the Arnon, the Jabbok and Gilead?* 12:2

The Arnon was a river which flowed from the highlands east of the Dead Sea into the middle of that sea. The mouth was about one half the distance between the

northern and southern ends of the Salt Sea on the east side of the Sea. The Jabbok was a river which rose in the heights on the east of the Jordan River and flowed into the Jordan River about half-way between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Gilead was a term given to the territory which lay east of the Jordan River between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Sihon had ruled this area, and his people were known as the Amorites, the highlanders. His capital was in Heshbon, and his kingdom extended as far south as the town Aroer, sometimes called the "Beersheba of the east." Heshbon is almost due east of the point where the Jordan river enters the Dead Sea.

3. *Who were the children of Ammon? 12:2b*

The children of Ammon were descendants of Lot through his younger daughter. When the younger daughter bore her first child, she called his name Ben-Ammi. From him the children of Ammon were descended, and they occupied the territory which lay east of the country ruled by Sihon. Moses had not fought against the Amorites but had passed by and left them unmolested.

4. *What was "the plain"? 12:3*

The plain is sometimes called the Arabah. The term is applied to the great valley between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba in most contexts, but here it is used as the name of the valley lying between Mt. Hermon and the Dead Sea. From the Sea of Galilee to the south end of the Dead Sea, the Arabs call it the Ghor, or depression. Some geographers feel that an exact point of division may be made between the Ghor and the Arabah along a line of white cliffs which crosses the valley at an angle between the flat marsh land to the south of the Dead Sea. From that point to the gulf of Aqaba it is thus known as the Arabah, but that which lies north to the Sea of Galilee

is better known as the Ghor. The Sea of Chinneroth is the Sea of Galilee, and the Sea of the Plain is identified as the Dead Sea. Beth-jeshimoth is an Anglicized form of the word which means "the house or place of deserts." It was a town in Moab not far east of the mouth of the Jordan River. Ashdoth-pisgah is a word pointing to the springs of Pisgah, the mountain where Moses was buried. It lay to the south of the north end of the Dead Sea. All these points were within the kingdom of Sihon.

5. *Was Og a giant?* 12:4

The conquest of Og is more fully described in Deuteronomy 3:1-13 and Numbers 21:33-35. The American Standard Version describes Og as being of the remnant of the Rephaim. His bedstead was preserved and was a matter of public interest (Deuteronomy 3:11). This does not mean necessarily that he was as large as his bed. A king would probably have a very impressive throne and bed. No doubt he was a mighty man and one of the men of renown. He may have been of large stature, but there is insufficient evidence to justify taking the view that he was of terribly unusual stature. Bashan, his territory, was east of the Sea of Galilee. His headquarters were at Ashtaroth and Edrei, two cities in his territory. Tell Ashtaroth is located twenty-one miles east of the Sea of Galilee, and Edrei is now known as Ed-derah and is another twenty miles south and east of Ashtaroth. His territory embraced Mt. Hermon to the north. Salcah is the modern Salkhad and reached to the border of the Geshurites, a Syrian principality. The Maachathites were a small kingdom probably in the stony desert which lay east of Argob. Og thus ruled over half of Gilead, the half which lay north of the kingdom of Sihon. This land then became the possession of the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

*A General Outline of Joshua's Conquered Territory 12:7, 8*

7 And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions;

8 In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

*6. To what points did the Promised Land reach? 12:7*

The Promised Land extended from Baal-gad near Mount Hermon on the north to Mount Halak, a smooth mountain near the territory of Edom on the south. All the mountain ranges, including Mount Tabor, Mount Carmel, Mount Ebal, and Mount Gerizim were theirs to terrace and cultivate. The valleys, especially those of the Jordan River and Jezreel, belonged to them. The Maritime plains of Sharon and Philistia made up a part of this land God gave to Israel. The *South*, the Negeb, was Israel's to inhabit. From the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the Arabian Desert on the east, Palestine belonged to the sons of Jacob.

*7. Why did Joshua repeat the names of the Canaanite tribes? 12:8b*

Along with a listing of the various sections of the country which were possessed by the Israelites, Joshua listed the tribes of Canaanites who were dispossessed. These tribes were first listed when God predicted the fate of his descendants (Genesis 15:19-21). At that time, ten different tribes were listed; but in Joshua only six are given. All of them are embraced in the name, Canaanites. When different groups are placed under a general title, such as

Amorite, a smaller number is given than when such bands as Girgashites, Kadmonites, and Hittites are listed individually. None of the Canaanites escaped completely from the avenging sword of Joshua as it exacted God's punishment of those whose cup of iniquity was full and overflowing. All were driven out of Canaan; and the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their children was finally given to the people led by Joshua.

*A List of the Kings Defeated by Joshua 12:9-24*

9 The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Beth-el, one;

10 The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

11 The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

12 The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one;

13 The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

14 The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

15 The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

16 The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Beth-el, one;

17 The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hepher, one;

18 The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;

19 The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

20 The king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

21 The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

22 The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one;

23 The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one;

24 The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

8. *Why was the king of Bethel not mentioned? 12:9*

The men of Bethel joined with the men of Ai when they were ambushed by the Israelites. The town of Bethel was close to Ai, and there was apparently no separate battle fought against Bethel itself at this time. Ai was the main city known as a regal city; and when Ai fell, it also brought the downfall of Bethel. The "children of Joseph" later possessed the city, and the conquest of Bethel by these men of Ephraim is described in some detail in Judges 1:22-26.

9. *Who was the king of Jerusalem? 12:10*

Jerusalem was known as Jebus, and her king was Adonizedek. Adonizedek was the leader of the southern league of kings who tried to join themselves together to attack the Gibeonites after they made peace with Israel. The next kings in the list were those who were in this southern coalition. Jerusalem was ruled by a king as early as the days of Abraham; for when he came back from rescuing Lot, he was met by Melchizedek, the king of Salem (Genesis 14:18). It is easy to see how this city once called Jebus and again called Salem eventually became known as Jerusalem.

10. *Who was the king of Hazor? 12:19*

Jabin was the king of Hazor. It was he who led the league in the North as the kings in that area banded themselves together to fight against Israel. The next kings in the list were those who formed this northern coalition. None of these kings was successful in defending his city against the people of Israel. All of them fell, and their cities were destroyed. With the fall of the kings in the



northern and southern coalitions, the major part of the resistance of the Canaanites was destroyed.

11. *Who was the "king of the nations"?* 12:23

Some commentators view the Hebrew word for nations as a proper noun. They thus translate this passage like the others and talk about the king of the Goiim. They thus make the word *Goiim* a proper name both here and in Genesis 14:1 where Tidal is called the king of the nations. Some identify the location as that of Gitum; and inasmuch as all the other names are proper names of cities, it would seem better to describe this man as the king of Goiim. Otherwise, we are left at a loss to know over what nations he ruled.

12. *How many kings were there in all?* 12:24

There were thirty-one kings who were overthrown by the Israelites as they swept into Canaan and took possession of the land which was promised to them. Most of these kings have been met in the account which precedes this summary and further study of the exact battles in which they were involved would lead to a review of the preceding text. These were kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—nations whom God was driving out from before Israel.

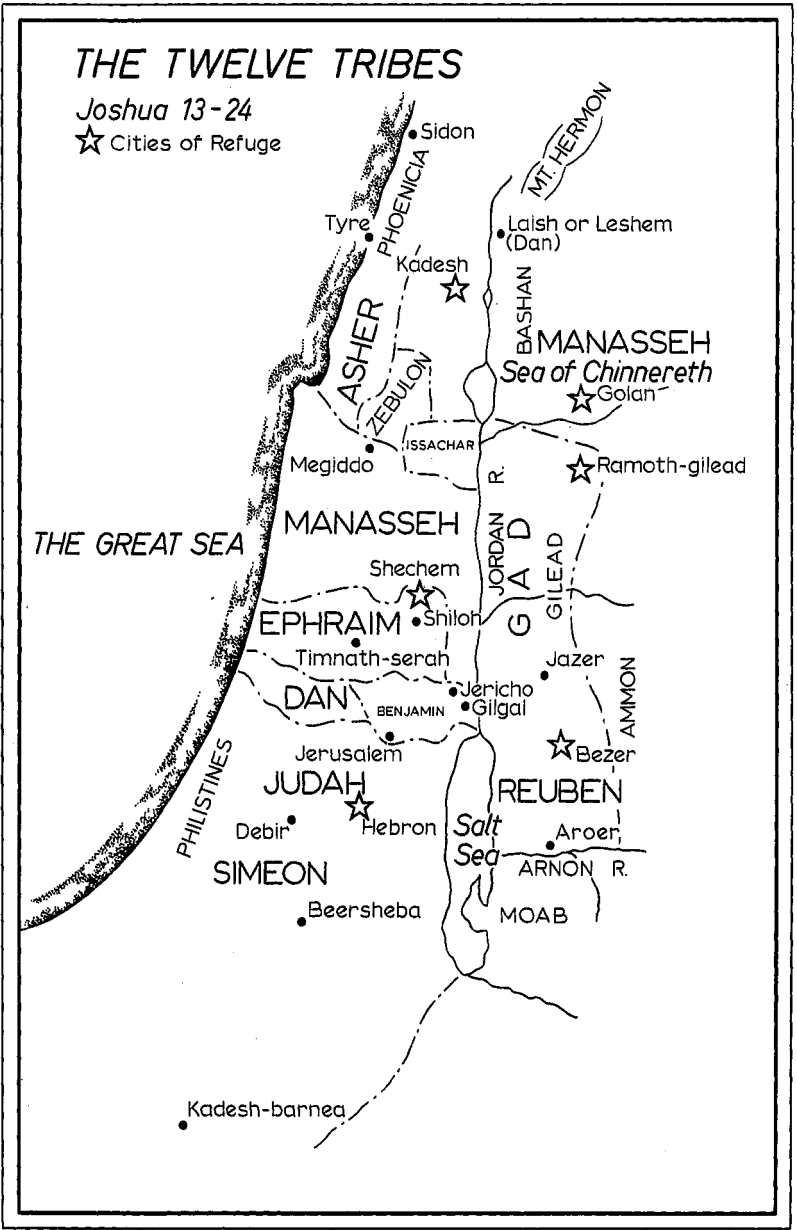
## TEN QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER 12

1. What two kings did Moses overthrow?
2. What three tribes settled in the land taken by Moses?
3. On which side of the Jordan River was the land taken by Moses?
4. What river formed the southern border of the land taken by Moses?
5. What mountain was on the northern border of the land taken by Moses?

# THE TWELVE TRIBES

Joshua 13-24

☆ Cities of Refuge





Beth Shemesh—Section of the North Wall—Valley of Sorek on the left—Judean Hills in Distance (Matson Photo Service)

