



Joshua Chapters 9 to 13 – 5 more Studies – Part 3

Please Note the following:

1. It is not necessary to answer the Bible Study Questions before meeting together for the Bible Study. Some people like to prepare beforehand whereas others like to think through the Bible Passages in a group setting. It is also not compulsory to answer ALL the questions.
2. It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.
3. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP**

Study 1 – They did not inquire of the Lord

Joshua 9:1-27

(Sermon on 31st May 2026)

Before we begin, we need some background

Read Exodus 23:31-33; 34:12

1. What instructions does God give the Israelites here about occupying the Promised Land ?

Exodus 23:31-33 - I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and from the desert to the Euphrates River. I will give into your hands the people who live in the land, and you will drive them out before you. ³² Do not make a covenant with them or with their gods. ³³ Do not let them live in your land or they will cause you to sin against me, because the worship of their gods will certainly be a snare to you.

Exodus 34:12 - Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you.

God warns the Israelites not to make a covenant with the people in Canaan, otherwise they will influence the Israelites and “be a snare to you”.

Read Deuteronomy 7:1-2

2. Likewise, what instructions does God give the Israelites here?

Deuteronomy 7:1-2 - When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you— ² and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.

God instructs the Israelites to totally destroy the Canaanites and to not make a treaty nor have mercy on them.

Read Deuteronomy 20:10-18

3. Summarise the instructions God gives the Israelites here.

Deuteronomy 20:10-18 - ¹⁰ When you march up to attack a city, make its people an offer of peace. ¹¹ If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be subject to forced labor and shall work for you. ¹² If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. ¹³ When the Lord your God delivers it into your hand, put to the sword all the men in it. ¹⁴ As for the women, the children, the livestock and everything else in the city, you may take these as plunder for yourselves. And you may use the plunder the Lord your God gives you from your enemies. ¹⁵ This is how you are to treat all the cities that are at a distance from you and do not belong to the nations nearby.

¹⁶ However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. ¹⁷ Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you. ¹⁸ Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the Lord your God.

Read Joshua 9:1-27

1. What causes the kings of Canaan to unite against the Israelites? (vv1-2)

The Kings of Canaan heard about Israel's victories against Jericho and Ai, and realize the threat the Israelites pose. Fear of Israel and of the Lord's power leads them to form a coalition against Joshua and the Israelites.

2. How do the Gibeonites act differently to the other nations? (vv3-6)

Instead of preparing for war, the Gibeonites seek peace. They use deception, pretending to come from a distant country, in order to secure a treaty with Israel. The Gibeonites will try to deceive Israel into making a peace treaty with them, though Israel was forbidden to make peace with any of the tribes of Canaan (Exodus 23:23-24).

3. What evidence do the Gibeonites offer to make their claim credible? (vv4-5, 12-13)

V4 – They present with donkeys with worn-out sacks and wineskins, cracked and mended.

V5 – They put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes.

V12 – They present with dry and moldy bread.

V13 – They present with cracked wineskins saying they were new when they left home. They present with worn out clothes and sandals, which they say are worn out for a very long journey.

Notice the methods of deception used by the Gibeonites. They were clever (**craftily**), they misrepresented themselves (**pretended**), and they even gave false “evidence” as part of their deception (**old sacks...old wineskins...old and patched sandals...dry and moldy bread**).

Beyond their deceptive appearance, the Gibeonites simply lied. They said, “**We have come from a far country**” when of course they had not. All their other devices simply lead to strengthen the deception offered.

The Gibeonites mentioned they were “**servants**” of Joshua and the Israelites in verse 8, 9, 10, 24. Plainly, the Gibeonites lied to Israel. But despite their lies, they have a proper admiration and honor for the God of Israel. **Because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard of His fame** shows that it is because God fights for Israel, they know it would be useless to oppose the nation.

Note: There could be many reasons why clothes/sandals are worn out and wineskins are cracked and bread is dry and moldy; not just from a long journey!

4. What do the Gibeonites claim they have heard about the Lord God? (vv9-10)

The Gibeonites claim they heard the fame of the Lord the God of Israel; they heard reports of what God did in Egypt (Plagues/Exodus/Red Sea Crossing); they heard what God did to the two Kings [Sihon King of Heshbon and Og King of Bashan] of the Amorites east of the Jordan.

5. What request do the Gibeonites make to Joshua? (vv6, 11)

V6 – “We have come from a distant country; make a **treaty** with us”

V11 – “We are you servants, make a **treaty** with us”

6. How is verse 14 a turning point? What important thing do the Israelites fail to do?

This is a turning point!

*V14 – The Israelites sampled their provisions **but did not inquire of the Lord!***

It's all very well listening to the Gibeonites story and sampling their provisions; but God's Word warned them about making a treaty with the occupants of Canaan; however they made the assumption that the Gibeonites were from a long way away rather than from Canaan, in which case, God had said to Moses, if a city that was not in the Promised Land, but from far away, it was permitted to offer peace to the occupants of the city and also subject them to forced labour!

The Gibeonite deception was clever, and therefore powerful. But the real problem was that Joshua and the leaders of Israel never sought the Lord.

The Israelites sampled the food but this shows that they trusted their senses instead of the Lord. "Look at this bread. Feel and taste how stale it is. Surely, they must have come a long way." They walked by sight, not by faith.

7. What covenant does Joshua make with the Gibeonites? (v15)

Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.

Because the Israelites believed that the Gibeonites were from a distant land, they made the treaty with them. God allowed Israel to make treaties with distant nations, but not with the Canaanites.

8. Why do the leaders refuse to attack the Gibeonites after discovering the deception? (vv18-20)

The Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. Even though the assembly grumbled against the leaders, the leaders stood firm because of the oath they had made. The leaders insist that they will let the Gibeonites live so that the wrath of God will not fall on the Israelites for breaking the oath they swore to the Gibeonites.

The rulers of Israel were wise in not allowing one sin (wiping out the Gibeonites) to follow another sin (making the oath without seeking the Lord), especially in light of

public pressure to do otherwise. It is a mark of godliness to hold to an oath, even when it is difficult. But he honors those who fear the Lord; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change. (Psalm 15:4)

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Later, King Saul broke this vow to the Gibeonites and his sin brought famine upon Israel in the days of David (2 Samuel 21:1-9). Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites." (2 Samuel 21:1)

9. What reason do the Gibeonites give for their actions? (v24)

The Gibeonites were afraid of being totally destroyed because they had heard that God had commanded Israel to destroy the whole land and to wipe out all the inhabitants of the land. They also say in verse 25 "we are in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you"

10. Why do you think the Gibeonites chose deception instead of war? (vv.3–6)

They knew they could not defeat Israel militarily. Their deception was an act of desperation for survival.

11. What does this chapter teach about relying on appearances rather than seeking God? (vv.4–5, 12–14)

*Appearances can be misleading. Human judgment alone is insufficient. God's people need wisdom and guidance from the Lord rather than relying merely on what seems obvious. **Every matter (however small) needs to be brought before the Lord in prayer and with reference to God's Word, which contains ALL the wisdom we need!***

12. What does Israel's decision to keep the covenant reveal about truthfulness and integrity? (vv.18–20)

*God's people are to honour their word and their promises, even when keeping them becomes costly or inconvenient. Integrity matters because **promises are made before God.***

13. How do mercy and judgment both appear in Joshua's treatment of the Gibeonites? (vv.22–27). Is there a spiritual benefit for the Gibeonites here?

Judgment:

- *Their deception is exposed and punished.*
- *They become servants: serving as woodcutters and water carriers for the assembly, to provide for the needs of the altar of the Lord.*

Mercy:

- *Their lives are spared; they are not wiped out!*
- *They are brought into Israel's community.*

Spiritual benefit:

Yes. They are assigned to serve at the place of worship and near the altar. They come into close contact with the worship of the true God. Their physical rescue leads to spiritual privilege. They will hear the Word of God and His Law each day as they serve!

Significantly, there seems to be no complaint from the Gibeonites. They simply say, "here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us."

Essentially, they were happy with the prospect of being incorporated into Israel, and being made servants of the Lord, even if it was in menial service.

i. In this, the Gibeonites express the same heart David did in Psalm 84:10: For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

ii. It is essential to see that they did this out of a love for the God of Israel, not out of weakness. Indeed, it was said of Gibeon that all its men were mighty (Joshua 10:2).

The Gibeonites found salvation in the God of Israel much as Rahab did in Joshua 2.

- *Both Rahab and the Gibeonites came to the God of Israel as sinners, Rahab as a harlot, and the Gibeonites as liars.*
- *Both Rahab and the Gibeonites were willing to risk the forsaking of their former associations and be counted among God's people. The risk the Gibeonites took*

was explained in Joshua 10:4, where they were a target of attack for their dealings with Israel.

- *Both Rahab and the Gibeonites, after they found salvation through the God of Israel, had a rich history.*

The Gibeonites after Joshua 9.

- *The Gibeonites became servants at the tabernacle, just as Joshua had commanded.*
- *Gibeon becomes a priestly city; the ark of the covenant stayed at Gibeon often in the days of David and Solomon (1 Chronicles 16:39-40 and 21:29).*
- *At least one of David's mighty men was a Gibeonite (1 Chronicles 12:4).*
- *God appeared and spoke to Solomon at Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4-5).*
- *Gibeonites were among those who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem with Nehemiah (Nehemiah 3:7 and 7:25).*
- *Prophets such as Hananiah the son of Azur came from Gibeon (Jeremiah 28:1).*

14. In what situations can Christians today make decisions without seeking God's guidance? (v.14)

Examples where Christians make decisions today without seeking God's guidance:

- *Study options*
- *Career/employment choices.*
- *Relationships.*
- *Ministry decisions.*
- *Financial commitments.*
- *Major purchases.*
- *Church leadership decisions.*

Sometimes we rely on our experience, our logic, or appearances instead of prayer and Scripture.

15. What are some ways people can be spiritually deceived by appearances or persuasive words?

- *False teaching that sounds biblical. For example: "God is for love, therefore why would He be against loving same sex relationships"*
- *Charismatic leaders who have poor character.*

- *Promises of prosperity without teaching repentance.*
- *Worldly values presented as wisdom.*
- *Online influences and social media personalities.*

16. Why is it important for Christians to keep their promises even when it is difficult? (vv.18–20)

Because God is always faithful and as His people and His image-bearers we are called to reflect His character. Keeping promises demonstrates integrity, trustworthiness, and obedience. Always, when we make promises we are making them before God!

17. Have you ever faced the dilemma of conflicting laws or commands? How did you handle that?

Some examples to consider:

- *Telling the truth versus protecting someone's feelings*
- *Honouring parents when they are telling us to do things which are contrary to God's Word*
- *Compromised at work when boss wants us to lie or deceive which goes against our Christian principles*
- *Being asked to except a transgender person's decision to changed gender and to call a transgender person by their transgender name*

18. When did you last inquire of the Lord? How did the Lord answer?

This is a personal reflection question. I have inquired of the Lord many times recently.

Here are some ways God answers:

- *Through words from Scripture when reading the Bible*
- *Through answers to my prayers*
- *Through wise Christian counsel from Godly Christians*
- *Through circumstances guided by God's sovereignty*
- *Through God's quiet voice*
- *Through prompting/leading by the Holy Spirit*

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 9:1-27**?

- *In contrast to Joshua and the Israelites, Jesus is NEVER DECEIVED; we should be pleased and comforted by that. We might be deceived or we might deceive other people but no-one can deceive Jesus. He knows where we come from, where we are going; He knows what we think; He knows what we post on social media, even if we post anonymously*
- *Like Joshua and the Israelites, Jesus makes a covenant/treaty of peace with sinners. Joshua and the Israelites are deceived when they make this treaty whereas Jesus is not deceived; He knows what He is doing and in making this covenant of peace, He takes the penalty/punishment of sin off sinners and on to Himself. Sinners who come to Jesus, must come in absolute surrender to Jesus to be saved.*
- *Just like Joshua and the elders, Jesus is a covenant keeper*
- *As always in Joshua; Jesus is the greater Joshua – He never acts independently of God the Father, whereas Joshua failed to seek God and was deceived*
- *The Gibeonites deserved judgment but they sought refuge among God's people. Likewise sinners deserve judgment but find mercy/refuge in Jesus*
- *The Gibeonites' inclusion is a picture of the Gentiles inclusion into Jesus, through the blood of Jesus which was shed for Jews and Gentiles alike*
- *Jesus is our true refuge. The Gibeonites flee to Israel for safety; sinners flee to Jesus for salvation.*

19. How do the following passages relate to **Joshua 9:1-27**?

Psalm 15:4

The righteous person keeps an oath even when it hurts. Israel models this by honouring the covenant they made with the Gibeonites

Proverbs 2:1-6

Proverbs 2 says God gives wisdom to those who seek Him. Israel's mistake was failing to seek God's wisdom.

Matthew 5:33-37

Jesus teaches that previously people were taught not to break oaths and vows; but He urges people it's better not to make oaths/vows but simply to mean "Yes" when you say "Yes" and to mean "No" when you say "No". Jesus teaches honesty and faithfulness in speech. Israel's leaders keep their word despite the circumstances.

Matthew 23:16-22

Jesus condemns manipulative distinctions about oaths. He says oaths are made before God are therefore serious and binding. Joshua and the Israelites operate that way!

Ephesians 5:15-17

Believers are to walk wisely and discern God's will. Joshua 9 shows the consequences of failing to do so.

Ephesians 6:10-18

The Gibeonite deception reminds believers that spiritual warfare involves truth and discernment, not merely physical conflict. We are also in spiritual warfare and so we need to put on God's armour for protection described in Ephesians 6:10-18.

James 1:5

James encourages to ask God for wisdom and God will give freely. Israel needed the wisdom but they failed to ask God.

James 4:2

James 4:2 says "you do not have because you do not ask". Israel failed to ask God.

James 5:12

James encourages Christians not to swear by Heaven or Earth or by anything else, but to simply say "Yes" or "No". They are to be dependable. James is not forbidding all formal oaths (God Himself makes covenant promises, and lawful oaths appear elsewhere in Scripture). Rather, he is teaching that Christians should be so truthful

that their ordinary words can be trusted. There should be no need for elaborate oath-taking to convince people.

Israel treated their oath seriously and with integrity, even though they discovered they had been deceived by the Gibeonites. James would agree that words spoken before God are not casual matters.

*Whereas **the Gibeonites' whole strategy depended on lies.** Their deception created a difficult situation for Israel. James teaches believers to be people of straightforward honesty—"Yes" means yes and "No" means no. The Gibeonites are an example of the opposite.*

God's people should be known for integrity

Joshua and the leaders could have argued:

- *"We were tricked."*
- *"The treaty was based on false information."*
- *"Let's break it."*

Instead, they chose integrity over convenience. James calls Christians to the same kind of reliability in speech and commitments.

1 John 4:1

John warns his readers not to believe every spirit but to test the spirits to see if they are from God, because there are many false prophets in the world. Joshua and the Israel believed the Gibeonites story without "testing" it!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 9:1-27?

God's people must seek the Lord's wisdom rather than relying on appearances, and having made promises in His name, must honour them with integrity.

OR

Trust God's guidance, not human appearances, and keep your word because God is faithful.



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V14 - The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You that You are wise, faithful, and full of mercy. Please help us to seek Your guidance instead of relying on appearances or our own understanding. Give us discernment, integrity, and humble hearts that trust You in every decision. Thank You that through Jesus You bring outsiders near and make us part of Your people by grace. Help us to walk faithfully with You this week.. Amen.

Study 2 – Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel!

Joshua 10:1-43

(Sermon on 7th June 2026)

Read Joshua 10:1-15

1. Why were the kings of the Amorites alarmed about Gibeon joining Israel? (vv1–2)
King Adoni-Zedek, the King of Jerusalem and the Kings of Amorites were alarmed because Gibeon was a large and important city with mighty warriors, and its alliance with Israel strengthened Israel's position and weakened the Amorite coalition.

Adoni-Zedek also had reason to be concerned from a strategic perspective. The previous victories across the middle of Canaan effectively separated Canaan between north and south. "Israel controlled the Benjaminite plateau, the crossroads between the hill country and the Judean wilderness. It provided access to the coastal plain and lowlands to the west via the Beth Horon pass."

2. What did the five kings decide to do against Gibeon? (vv3–5)

*They united their armies and attacked Gibeon because it had made peace with Israel. In addition, the surrender and subordination of the Gibeonites caused Adoni-Zedek to be afraid. Gibeon was a **great city** and its **men were mighty** — if they surrendered to Israel, things were bad for the Canaanites.*

3. What message did the men of Gibeon send to Joshua? (v6)

They sent word to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said " Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because all the Amorite kings from the hill country have joined forces against us."

This would have been a good opportunity for Joshua and the Israelites to get out of the oath they made when they were deceived by the Gibeonites. But Joshua had much more integrity than that!

Gilgal was an important place for Israel's conquest of Canaan.

- *Gilgal was the **place of memorial** (Joshua 4:20).*
- *Gilgal was the **place of radical obedience** (Joshua 5:2-3).*
- *Gilgal was the **place where reproach was removed** (Joshua 5:9).*
- *Gilgal was the **place of obedience and the remembrance of salvation** (Joshua 5:10).*

- *Gilgal was **the place where the manna stopped**, and they began to live from what the Promised Land provided (Joshua 5:11-12).*

4. What encouragement did the Lord give Joshua before the battle? (vv7-8)

God told Joshua not to fear because He had given the enemy into Israel's hands and not one of them would be able to withstand Israel.

Fear takes away our ability to fight God's battles. Even in the face of strong enemies, Joshua was commanded to not fear. For Joshua, fear was unbelief — being unwilling to believe what God promised. So it is with us today.

5. How does verse 9 show that Joshua is committed to help Gibeon? (v9)

Joshua marched all night from Gilgal, making a difficult and exhausting journey so he could come to Gibeon's aid quickly.

Literally going the extra mile as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

With the assurance of God's promise (Joshua 10:8), Joshua did not sit back to passively watch God work without his participation. He went to great effort to participate in the work and will of God.

This took hard work and initiative on Joshua's part. The march from Gilgal to Gibeon involved a climb of 3,300 feet (1,000 meters), over a distance of about 20 miles (32 kilometers). This was eight to ten hours of hard marching, all through the night.

i. God does His work, but He draws us into working with Him. Often God waits to see our initiative, our willingness to be a partner with Him, before He does what only He can do.

ii. This is not the idea that "God helps those who help themselves." The idea is "God wants to draw His people into partnership with Him in seeing His work done."

6. Who is really in control of the battle? How? (vv10-11)

The Lord is sovereign and in control. He threw the enemy into confusion, enabled Israel to defeat them, and sent large hailstones that killed more of the enemy than Israelites' swords.

*The **hailstones** that killed the retreating armies of the Canaanites were obviously miraculous. The hail itself could have been a phenomenon of nature, but its aim and timing were evidence of the hand of God.*

i. *“The Canaanites, who worshipped nature deities, must have thought that their own gods were aiding the Israelites.” (Madvig)*

ii. *In Worlds in Collision, Immanuel Velikovsky suggested that this rain of hailstones was actually a sustained meteor show, the train of a comet. He also theorized that the passing of the comet was related to the next amazing work of God for Israel and Joshua.*

God’s miraculous work was much greater than Israel’s work. Yet we notice that Joshua didn’t wait around for the hail to come. He did what he could do in partnership with God, and God did what only God could do.

7. What prayer did Joshua offer up and how was it answered? (vv12-14)

Joshua prayed for the sun to stand still over Gibeon and the moon over the Valley of Aijalon. God answered by extending the day so Israel could complete its victory.

Seeing God’s miraculous hand in action gave Joshua the boldness to ask for an even more remarkable miracle — to keep the day going, to keep the sun from setting, so that Israel had time to accomplish a complete victory before darkness fell.

i. *The sun and the moon had long stood as silent witnesses to the sin, wickedness, and demonic religion of these Canaanites. Now, under the command of God, they helped Joshua to complete this victory over the Canaanites.*

*In a completely unique miracle, God answered Joshua’s bold prayer and **the Lord fought for Israel** in a unique way during Israel’s conquest of Canaan.*

i. *Some people wonder how the length of the day was extended. It could have been a slowing of the earth’s rotation; it could have been a tilting of the earth’s axis; it could have been a miracle of reflection of light; it could have been simply the presence of God manifested in light.*

ii. *However it was done, the result was clear. The sun seemed to stay still in the sky, and Israel was able to complete the victory.*

iii. *In Worlds in Collision, Immanuel Velikovsky suggested that the long day was caused by the near pass of a comet, that was powerful enough to tilt the axis of the earth. “The tilting of the axis could produce the visual effect of a retrogressing or arrested sun; a greater tilting, a multiple day or night” [page 385]. He also noted that there are records among the ancient Americans that speak of an extraordinarily long night in the same approximate time.*

iv. Some criticize this account, saying that obviously, since the sun is still, and the earth rotates around the sun, that Joshua is wrong when he says **the sun stood still**. This kind of criticism doesn't account for our normal way of speaking. We use the terms sunrise and sunset without a second thought. In addition, more modern astronomy tells us that the sun is in motion; perhaps the sun did literally stand still.

v. Hundreds of years later, God used the prophet Isaiah to bring a heavy word of coming judgment to His people. In that word, God remembered Gibeon, where He had won a great victory for Israel in Joshua's day (Isaiah 28:20-22). Isaiah warned the people that this miraculous strength of God would be turned against His people if they did not repent. As Isaiah put it, this use of God's strength against His people is surely His awesome work, or as the King James Version puts it, His strange work. Joshua did not ask God to do the fighting for him, even though God did do some of that. Joshua simply asked that God miraculously give him the opportunity to fight for Him.

i. Like Joshua, we often wish that time would stay still. We would do well to imitate Joshua's reasons for an extended time. Joshua wanted time to stay still so that:

- God would be glorified.
- God would be obeyed.
- God's work would be continued without hindrance.
- God's people would triumph.

8. What does verse 14 teach about God's relationship with His people?

God listens to the prayers of His people and acts powerfully on their behalf. And of course the key phrase "**Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel!**"

9. How do verses 1 to 15 show God's power and human responsibility working together?

Joshua and Israel marched, fought, and obeyed God's commands, while God provided victory through His sovereign intervention. Israel worked faithfully, but God secured the victory. **Often God involves us in His work!**

10. What encouragement does this passage give us about bringing impossible situations to God in prayer?

Nothing is too difficult for God. *We can confidently pray about situations that seem impossible, trusting that He is able to act according to His will and power.*

Read Joshua 10:16-27

11. Where did the five kings hide and how did Joshua handle that? (vv16-18)

They hid in a cave at Makkedah. Joshua ordered large stones rolled over the cave entrance and posted guards there. Then he continued to pursue the enemies, knowing he could deal with the five kings later!

12. Why did Joshua tell the Israelites to continue pursuing the enemy instead of stopping at the cave? (v19)

Because the battle was not yet finished and Joshua knew the Lord had given the enemy into his hands. Joshua wanted to complete the victory and prevent the enemy from escaping into fortified cities.

Note on v21: No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel: *The people of Canaan knew — beyond any doubt — that God was with Joshua and the nation of Israel.*

i. By analogy and application, the church — just like Israel — should be feared in the sense that it should be a place where people know God will conquer them. They should have the idea “If I keep coming here, God is going to conquer me. I’ll have to submit my life to Him.” Too many churches present a harmless sort of God who demands no surrender from His people.

13. What happened to the kings after the battle was completed? (vv22–27)

They were brought out of the cave, humiliated before Israel's leaders, executed, and hung on trees until evening before being buried in the same cave they hid in! Joshua did not spare any of the Kings — this meant if Joshua was ever captured, he knew he would suffer the same fate!

V24 - Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings: *This was dramatic and undeniably brutal. Joshua, directed by God, wanted to give these **captains of the men***

of war courage and the sense of victory in obedience to God. This said, “God has allowed you to conquer kings.”

14. Why do you think Joshua told the leaders not to be afraid or discouraged? (v25). See 2 Corinthians 1:4 for help.

God's victory over these kings would strengthen Israel's faith and courage for future battles. As believers are comforted so they can comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:4), Joshua encouraged the leaders with God's faithfulness so they could encourage the nation. Also, back in Joshua 1:6, 7, 9 – God had told Joshua not to be strong and courageous and not to be afraid, because God would be with him. Joshua, having now experienced God being with him through many battles, has the confidence to pass this on to his army now! We can do the same with a fellow brothers and sisters in Christ!

15. How does God’s victory over the kings encourage believers facing spiritual opposition today?

It reminds us that God is greater than every spiritual enemy and that ultimate victory belongs to Him. We can face opposition with confidence in His power.

Read Joshua 10:28-43

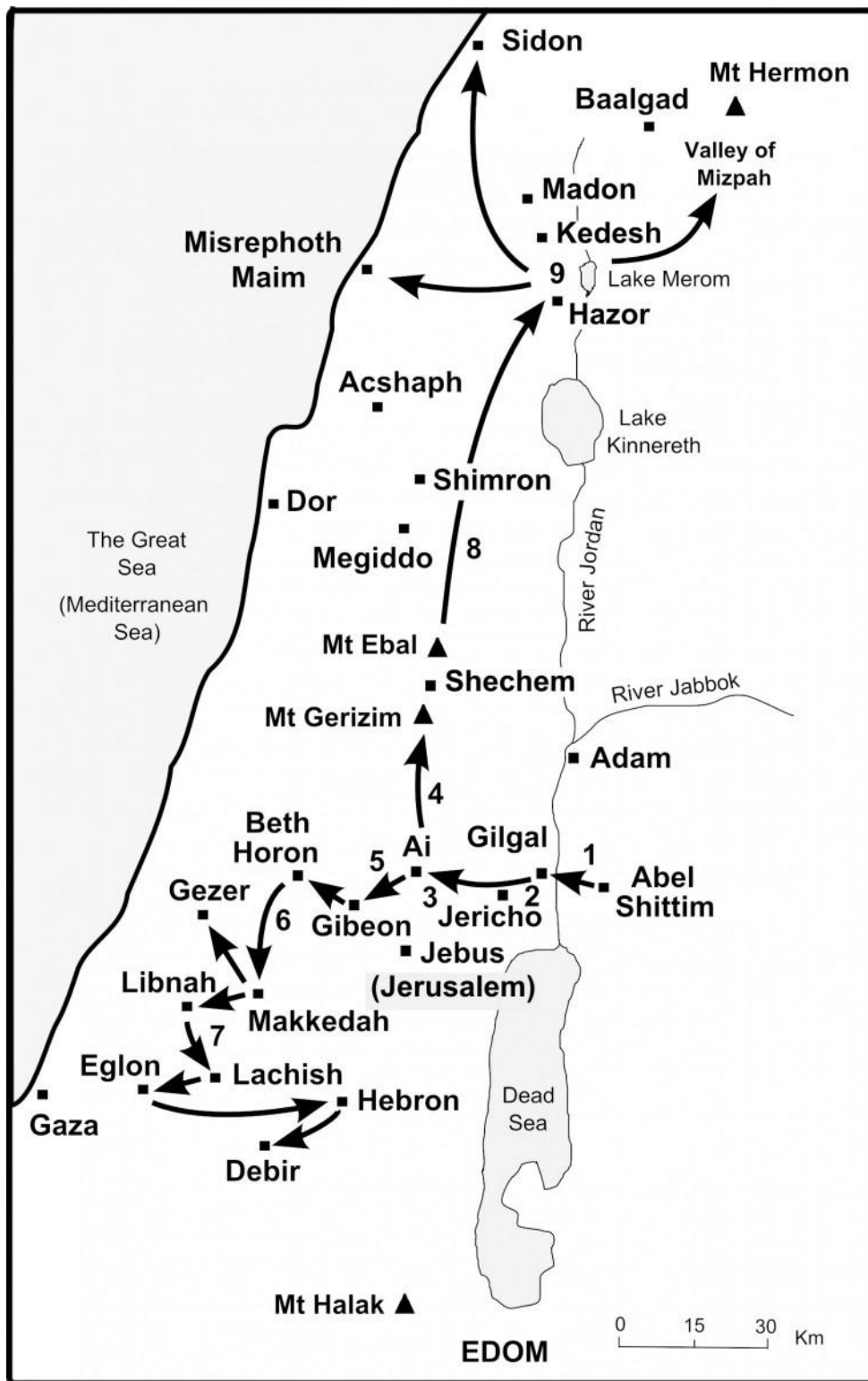
16. Which cities and kings are specifically mentioned as defeated by Joshua? (vv28–39)

Makkedah (v28); Libnah (v29); Lachish (vv31-32); Gezer (whose King came to help Lachish – v33); Eglon (vv34-35); Hebron (vv36-37); Debir (vv38-39).

17. What repeated phrase shows the completeness of Israel’s victory? Why is that an important phrase? (vv28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 39)

“He left no survivors” or “totally destroyed”

Remember this is a Holy War where a Holy God is passing judgment on an evil/wicked nation that has continued to reject the one true God and worship false gods and idols and carry out the most abominable wicked practices. God uses Israel to implement His just judgment on evil. The phrase shows that Israel carried out God’s judgment and commands without compromising!



18. According to verse 40, how is the victory described and how is victory possible?

Joshua conquered the whole region and defeated all the kings. Victory was possible because the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded it and fought for His people.

19. What geographical areas were conquered in this campaign? (vv40–41)
The hill country, the Negev, the western foothills, and the mountain slopes—from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from Goshen to Gibeon.

20. What summary statement is given in verse 42 about the reason for Israel's success?

"The LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel."

21. What lessons can we learn about obedience and trusting God from this chapter?

- *We can trust in God's promises*
- *Our obedience should be immediate and complete.*
- *Prayer is powerful when it is according to God's will and its purpose is to bring glory to God!*
- *God often works His miracles through ordinary human effort.*
- *Victory comes from God, not human strength.*
- *God's people should persevere rather than give up. God CAN be trusted!*

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 10:1-43**?

There are a few ways that Jesus is in Joshua 10:1-43:

- *Joshua protected the Gibeonites who were sinners yet they were surrendered to Joshua. Likewise once we submit to Jesus, He protects us, even though we are sinners!*
- *In his own way; Joshua had authority over the created order (stopping the sun) which points to Jesus, the one who has ALL authority over ALL creation. Jesus could walk on water; calm a storm; heal the sick; raise the dead! Joshua had a shadow of this authority; Jesus had the reality of it!*
- *Victorious Joshua points to victorious Jesus. Joshua's victory was not for him alone but for all his people; likewise Jesus' victory was not for Him alone but for all His people*

- *Joshua's victories were real and significant, but they were not the final victory. In a similar way, Christ has won the decisive victory over sin, death, and Satan, yet we still await the day when every enemy is finally subdued.*
- *In v18 – five Kings were in a cave and Joshua commanded “roll large rocks up to the mouth of the cave, and post some men there to guard it” – this points to the King of Kings placed in a cave/tomb with a large rock rolled in front of the entrance and armed guards placed there. The five Kings did not survive, they could not escape death but the King of Kings, was raised to life after three days and the rock was rolled away; the tomb was empty!*

22. How do the following passages relate to **Joshua 10:1-43**?

Luke 18:1-8

The widow was persistent and bold in her prayers. Like Joshua's bold prayer for the sun to stand still, believers should pray persistently and trust that God will answer according to His divine purposes.

Romans 8:31

This verse says "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Joshua 10 vividly demonstrates this truth as God fights for Israel against overwhelming opposition.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57

Joshua's military victories point forward to Christ's greater victory over death, won through His resurrection.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

As believers our fights are spiritual battles rather than physical ones, and we must rely on God's power to overcome strongholds and opposition.

James 5:16-18

James emphasizes the effectiveness of the prayers of a righteous person. Joshua's prayer illustrates the effectiveness of the prayers of a righteous person. Like Elijah, Joshua prayed boldly and God answered powerfully.

Revelation 19:11-16

The historical battle and victory of Joshua in Joshua chapter 10 points to Jesus' ultimate and final victory of Jesus in Revelation 19 when Jesus returns in glory to judge the living and the dead.

In both Joshua 10 and Revelation 19:11-16:

- 1. Both show God's Warrior King defeating His enemies. Joshua's victory is local and temporary. Jesus' victory is universal and eternal!*
- 2. Both emphasize the battle belongs to the Lord*
- 3. Both involve the defeat of Kings who oppose God's rule. Joshua defeats five kings; Jesus defeats the beast, the false prophet and the kings of the Earth and their armies*
- 4. The name Joshua (Hebrew: Yehoshua) and Jesus (Greek: Iēsous) come from the same name meaning: "The LORD saves."*
- 5. Both passages call God's people to have courage: Repeatedly Joshua is told not to be afraid and he tells his leaders in 10:25 – "do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous". Likewise Revelation was written to Christians facing persecution and opposition. The vision of Jesus' final triumph assures Christians that no matter what powerful evil appears now. Christ will ultimately win!*
- 6. Joshua's victory is incomplete; Jesus' is complete! One of the themes of Joshua is that although great victories were won, enemies still remained. Jerusalem itself was not yet captured, and much of the land still needed to be possessed. In contrast, Revelation 19 points to the complete and final defeat of all God's enemies. There will be no further battles to fight and no enemies left unconquered!*

Because of Jesus, as Romans 8:37 says: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 10:1-43?

Because the Lord fights for His people, we can trust His promises, obey His commands, and pray boldly, knowing that victory belongs to Him.

OR

The Lord God fights for His people!



What light globe moment did you have?

Even though the King of Jerusalem was killed, Jerusalem itself was not listed as one of the cities that Joshua captured!

There are a few reasons for this:

- 7. Joshua's focus was to defeat the coalition army of five kings*
- 8. Jerusalem was a strongly fortified city – it sat on ridge and was naturally defended. Later in Judges 1:21 we read “But the people of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem”*
- 9. Joshua's conquest was substantial but not complete. The conquest of Canaan was not finished in his lifetime. God had already told the Israelites that the land would be taken gradually “I will not drive them out before you in a single year... Little by little I will drive them out before you” (Exodus 23:29-30)*
- 10. Jerusalem was later captured by King David in 2 Samuel 5:6-9. When David captured Jerusalem, he made it the capital and it became known as the “City of David”*

Joshua's victories were real and significant, but they were not the final victory. In a similar way, Christ has won the decisive victory over sin, death, and Satan, yet we still await the day when every enemy is finally subdued.

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You that You are mighty, faithful, and able to fight for Your people. Help us to trust You when we face battles, fears, and

difficulties. Give us courage to obey You, faith to pray boldly, and confidence that Jesus has already won the greatest victory of all for us. Strengthen us to stand firm and walk faithfully each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Study 3 – The Lord’s Victory and Israel’s Rest

Joshua 11:1-23

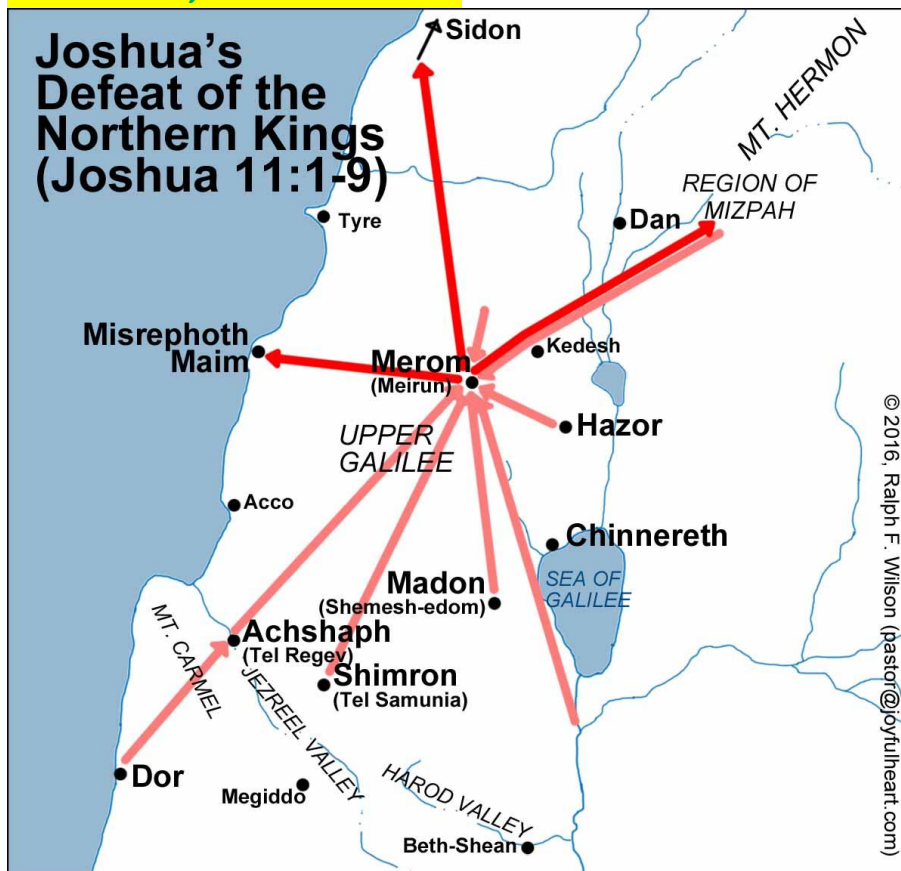
(Sermon on 14th June 2026)

Read Joshua 11:1-23

1. What did the Northern Kings do and who took the lead? (vv1–3)

The northern kings [Jabin of Hazor; Jobab of Madon; Kings of Shimron and Akshaph; and the northern kings in the mountains, in the Arabah south of Kinnereth, in the western foothills and Napoth Dor on the west, the Canaanites in the east and west; the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites in the hill country; and the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah] formed a large coalition to fight against Israel. The leader was King Jabin of Hazor. No mistake, this was a HUGE army!

All this was prompted by what the northern kings heard regarding Israel’s success and victory. Walking in victory means that we become targets — when we are awakened, so is the devil.



2. How is this Northern army coalition described? (v4)

A huge army, as numerous as the sand on the seashore; with a large number of chariots and horses; something that the Israelites do not have!

3. Where did the kings gather together to fight Israel? (v5)

They gathered at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

4. What command and encouragement did the Lord give Joshua before the battle? (v6)

God told Joshua: "Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them, slain, over to Israel. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots."

This would have been of great encouragement to Joshua and the Israelites; especially facing such a huge army.

Do not be afraid because of them: *This means that fear was an issue for Joshua and the people of Israel. God has a reason for everything He does, and He would not have assured them do not be afraid unless there was a reason for the encouragement.*

5. Why do you think God told Joshua not to fear such a vast army? (Romans 8:31)
Because victory depended on God's power, not Israel's strength. Romans teaches: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" God's presence removes fear even when enemies seem overwhelming.

6. What military resources does the enemy have that Israel does not? (v6)

The enemy had horses and chariots — advanced military technology Israel largely lacked.

Two things indicate that now Israel faced challenges they had never faced before.
First, the size of the enemy army: as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude. Second, the technological superiority of the Canaanites: with very many horses and chariots.

i. The challenges brought to Israel seem to increase at each step, from Jericho, to Ai, to the battle with the southern kings, now to this battle.

ii. We often find that the challenges facing us in our Christian lives increase at each step. God uses each previous victory as a springboard for what we face in the future.

7. How did Joshua respond to the Lord's command? (v7)

Joshua obeyed immediately. He and his army came suddenly against the enemy and attacked them at the waters of Merom.

8. Who gave the enemy into Israel's hand? (v8)

The Lord gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.

9. What did Joshua do to the chariots and horses? (v9) Why? (see v6)

Joshua hamstringed the horses and burned the chariots, exactly as the Lord commanded. This prevented Israel from taking them and trusting in military power rather than trusting in God.

Joshua fought with obedience, doing exactly what the Lord told him to do, even destroying the Canaanite weapons (the horses and the chariots) instead of taking them for his own army.

Here is a lesson in the matter of "taking the devil's tools." Many Christians do not hesitate to use the "horses and chariots" of their spiritual enemy. Perhaps they should believe that God wants them to fight the battle on a different level — a level of complete trust in Him.

10. What does Joshua's obedience in verse 9 teach us?

True faith obeys God even when His commands may seem unusual, strange, or strategically unnecessary. God's people are called to trust His wisdom over human wisdom and strength.

11. What happened to Hazor and its King? (vv10-11)

Joshua captured Hazor, killed its king, and burned the city. Everyone in it was completely destroyed.

The staggering completeness of the destruction (especially in human terms) shows us the completeness of God's judgment, Israel's obedience, and the depravity of the Canaanites.

12. What repeated statement shows Joshua's faithfulness to God's commands? (vv12, 15)

V12 - as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded.

V15 - all that the Lord commanded Moses.

13. What regions of the land did Joshua capture? (vv16–17) How long was the battle? (v18)

Joshua captured:

- *The hill country*
- *The Negev*
- *Goshen*
- *The western foothills*
- *The Arabah*
- *The mountains of Israel and surrounding lands from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon.*

The battles lasted "a long time."

14. Who made peace? (v19)? Who resisted and why? (v20) (cf. Exodus 14:17; Romans 9:18)

No city except the Hivites [aka Gibeonites] of Gibeon made peace with Israel.

Everyone else resisted because the Lord Himself had hardened their hearts.

Exodus 14:17 – ¹⁷ I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen.

Romans 9:18 - Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

We are told that in part, this judgment on the Canaanites was accomplished when God did harden their hearts against Israel. The hardening of men's hearts is when God gives man up to the sin that is in his heart (Romans 1:24-28).

15. Who were the Anakites, and what happened to them? (vv21–22)

The Anakites were giant warriors [the incredible hulks of Canaan] feared by Israel earlier (cf. Numbers 13). Joshua defeated and removed them from most of the land, except for a few remaining in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

See Numbers 13: 28-33

28 But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.

30 Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”

31 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.”

Note: Israel faced the “biggest” enemy last. God prepared them through the other battles!

Here, the foes of 40 years ago fall. They were no match for an army that was blessed and directed by God.

i. Significantly, Israel faced the Anakim last, only after God had trained them in battle and in working with Him through the months of conquest.

ii. When Israel refused to enter Canaan out of fear of the Anakim, they did not realize that God would so guide events that they would face this most difficult challenge last. God knows how to manage the battles in our lives.

iii. And we must allow God to manage those battles. All too often we are convinced that we must go out and fight the Anakim first, when God would have us face them last.

The Anakim remained only in these coastal cities occupied by the Philistines. The giant **Goliath** comes from the city of Gath some five hundred years later (1 Samuel 17:4)

What giants do we face in our lives? God is there with us!

16. What summary statement are we given in v23?

V23 - So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

So Joshua took the whole land: This brings us to another section of the book of Joshua. The power of the Canaanite kings within the land has been crushed, and in this sense, **Joshua took the whole land**. Yet not every small town and village had been conquered and occupied. That was up to each individual tribe to do in the land that was apportioned to them.

17. What does the phrase “the land had rest from war” mean? (v23) (cf. Exodus 33:14; Matthew 11:28-30)

Just like God rested at Creation, when He completed His work; likewise Israel can rest from their “work” of war!

The phrase means that the Israelites can “rest in the Lord”; It means God gave His people relief, peace, and security after conflict.

This points forward to:

- *God’s promised rest in Exodus 33:14 - The Lord replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”*
- *The deeper spiritual rest Jesus gives in Matthew 11:28–30 - ²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Ultimately, true rest is found in Christ.

i. “Much territory was yet to be possessed, but it was left to each tribe to possess what potentially it had received through the conquest of the whole people in which it had taken part. Each tribe was to apply individually the lessons it had learned in united war if it was to possess its inheritance. That the tribes failed to do so was not a reflection on the power of God, but on the failure to take for themselves what Joshua had given and allotted to each one of them.” (Redpath)

ii. In the same sense, Jesus has already defeated the enemy and conquered the land, but He also calls us into battle to gain what is ours.

18. Why is obedience such an important theme in Joshua chapter 11
Because Israel's success did not depend on the size of the army or the weapons they had; but on faithful obedience to God's word. Joshua models to us covenant faithfulness and obedience by doing exactly what God commanded. Obedience brings victory; peace and rest!

19. How can we remain faithful and obedient to God over long struggles or seasons of hardship?

Here are some ways:

- *By trusting God's promises rather than circumstances that we face*
- *By worship, Bible study and devotions we can draw closer to God and this encourages us to be faithful and obedient!*
- *By having a greater knowledge of God's Word, so that we understand that God is always with His people*
- *Through faithful prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit*
- *By encouraging one another in our Christian community*
- *By remembering what God did in the past*
- *By fixing our eyes on Jesus and persevering day by day*
- *Persevering in trials in God's strength allows us to remain faithful and obedient*

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 11:1-23**?

- *Joshua leads God's people into victory; Jesus is the greater Joshua who defeats sin, death, and Satan.*
- *Joshua brings temporary rest in the land; Jesus brings eternal rest for God's people.*
- *Joshua obeys God fully; Jesus obeys His Heavenly Father perfectly.*
- *Joshua conquers earthly enemies; Jesus conquers spiritual enemies through the cross and resurrection.*
- *Joshua had to do "hard" things; Jesus did the ultimate hard things!*
- *The name "Joshua" itself is related to "Jesus" and means "The LORD saves."*

20. How do the following passages relate to **Joshua 11:1-23**?

John 8:29

Jesus says in John 8:29 that **“He always does what pleases the One who sent Him”**. Likewise in Joshua 11, Joshua always does what the Lord says! **In other words, we must be like Jesus! If we do not keep God’s command, we cannot claim God’s protection!**

Hebrews 3:12-13

Hebrews 3 warns believers not to harden their hearts through unbelief. In Joshua 11:20 – tragically, God hardened the hearts of the Northern Kings, because they resisted God in their unbelief. **Note: in previous chapters Rahab and the Gibeonites were spared because they believed the power of Israel’s God!**

Hebrews 4:8-10

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. ⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰ for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.

Hebrews 4 points out that Joshua’s rest was only temporary. There still remains greater rest for the people of God.

Jesus fulfils the rest that Joshua foreshadowed.

This rest is in a person not a place — in Jesus Christ, more than in doctrines and ideas. If you meet a troubled, crying child and try to comfort them and give them rest using ideas and logic, it won’t do much good. But when mummy comes, the child is happy again.

Those who preach this rest must possess it themselves. “Not long ago, one of our ministers was preaching upon salvation, and the work of the Spirit in the heart, when one of the congregation rose and asked him respectfully, ‘Sir, do you know all this by the report of others, or has this taken place in your own experience?’ The preacher was by no means put about by the question, but rather rejoiced in

it; for he could honestly reply, 'I have trusted Christ. I am saved, and I know and feel the peace which results there from.' If he could not have made that solemn statement, he would have had no influence over the person who had put the question." (Spurgeon)

1. Present Rest — Rest in Christ Now

Jesus gives spiritual rest now to those who trust Him.

For example: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."(Matthew 11:28)

This includes:

- *Rest from trying to earn salvation by works*
- *Peace with God*
- *Confidence that Christ has completed the work of salvation*
- *Rest for weary souls amid life's burdens*

Hebrews 4:10 says:

"Anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works..."

Meaning we stop relying on our own efforts to make ourselves righteous before God.

2. Future Rest — Eternal Rest with God

The passage also points ahead to the final rest believers will experience: in God's presence, free from sin, free from suffering, free from temptation, free from death, and free from spiritual warfare.

That's why Hebrews still speaks of a rest that believers are moving toward:

"Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest" (4:11).

Christians already belong to Christ, yet still await the fullness of what He has promised.

3. Sabbath Rest Fulfilled

The word "Sabbath-rest" in Hebrews 4 also connects back to:

- *God resting after creation (Genesis 2),*
- *Israel resting in the land when they conquer it,*

- and the weekly Sabbath we are meant to enjoy.

All of these point ultimately to the deeper rest Jesus brings: a restored relationship with God, peace, security, and eternal fellowship with Him. This is the peace that the Apostle Paul describes as “a peace that surpasses all understanding”. It’s a peace that is not dependent on our circumstances but knows “all is well with us” because we are yoked to Jesus!

Hebrews 12:1-3

Hebrews 12 calls Christians to persevere with endurance by fixing their eyes on Jesus. Likewise, Joshua, in this long military battle had to persevere with faithfulness and remain steadfast and obedient over a long period of time. We are required to do the same!

1 John 2:3-6

1 John 2 teaches that those who know and love God obey Him. This is precisely what Joshua did in his military campaign, He obeyed God completely. Likewise, Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father completely.

What’s the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 11:1-23?

God gives victory and rest to His people as they faithfully trust and obey Him, pointing forward to Jesus Christ, the greater Joshua, who brings ultimate victory and eternal rest.

OR

God gives victory and true rest to those who trust and obey Him through Jesus Christ.



What light globe moment did you have?

The continued pattern of obedience in the Book of Joshua. When Joshua and the Israelites fully obey God, things go smoothly; when they disobey God, it’s a disaster!

If we do not keep God’s command, we cannot claim God’s protection!

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V15 - As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.

V23 - So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for reminding us through Joshua 11 that You are faithful, powerful, and worthy of our trust. Help us not to be afraid when we face difficulties, but to walk in obedience and faith each day. Strengthen us to persevere through long battles and to fix our eyes on Jesus, who gives true victory and eternal rest. May Your Holy Spirit help us encourage one another and live faithfully for You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Study 4 – Great is Thy Faithfulness

Joshua 12:1-24

(Sermon on 21st June 2026)

Before we begin

Read Numbers 21:21-35 and summarize what happened...

Israel asked permission to pass through the land of the Amorites, but King x refused and attacked them. God gave Israel victory, and they captured Sihon's cities and territory. Then King Og of Bashan came out to fight Israel, but God assured Moses of victory. Israel defeated Og and his army and took possession of his land as well.

Read Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11 and summarize what happened...

Moses recalls how God commanded Israel to begin taking possession of the land east of the Jordan. God hardened Sihon's heart so that Israel would defeat him and inherit his territory. God also delivered Og king of Bashan into Israel's hands. These victories demonstrated God's power and faithfulness in giving Israel the land He had promised. Og is described as one of the last Rephaim (giants), and his enormous bed is mentioned as evidence of his great size.

Read Joshua 12:1-6

1. What area of land did Moses and the Israelites conquer east of the Jordan? (v1)

The land east of the Jordan River, stretching from the Arnon Gorge in the south to Mount Hermon in the north, including all Eastern side of Arabah

2. Which two Amorite kings defeated by Moses are named in this section? (vv2–4)

King Sihon of Heshbon

King Og of Bashan

3. What territories were ruled by King Sihon? (vv2–3)

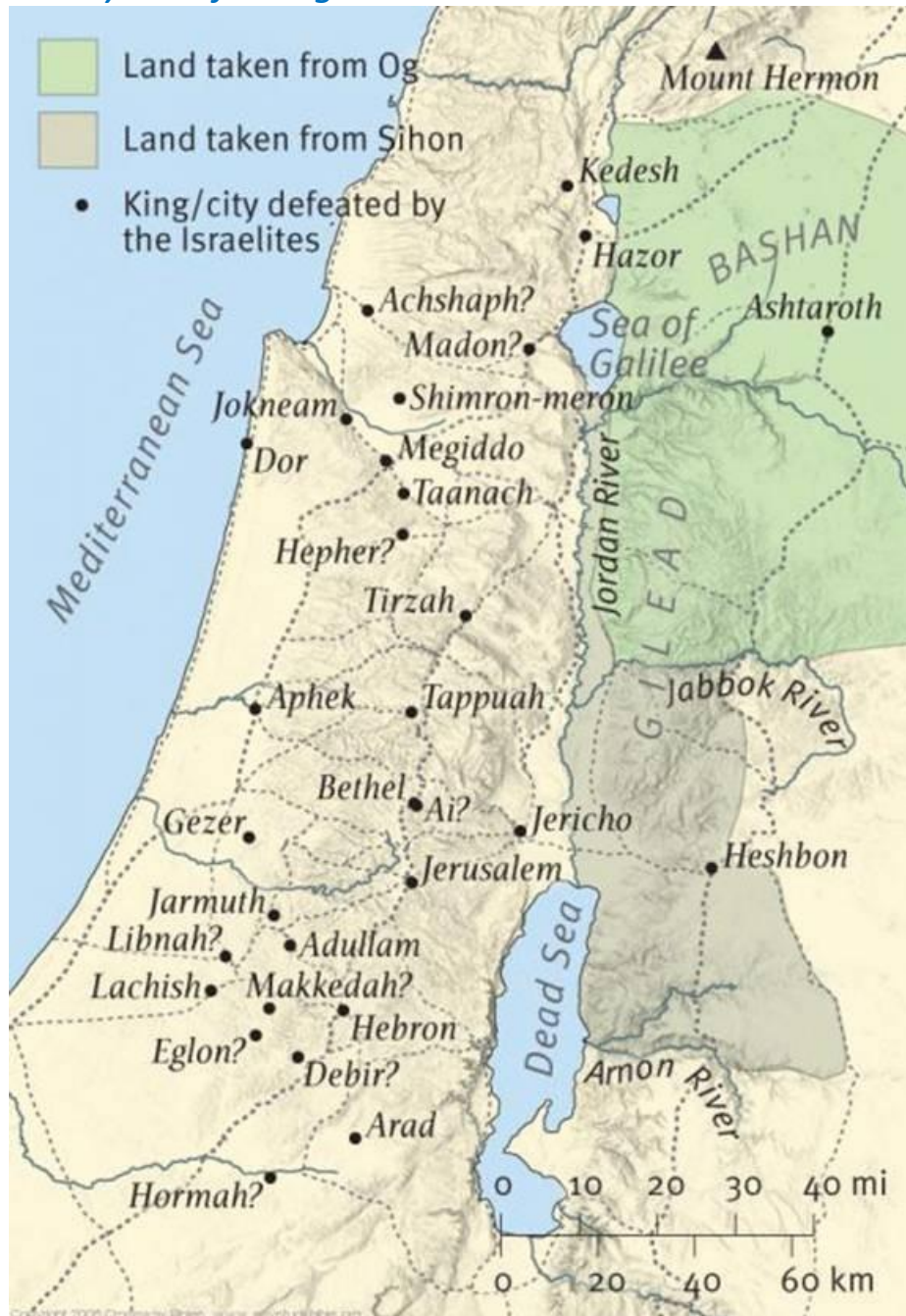
Sihon ruled from Aroer on the Arnon Gorge through Gilead to the Jabbok River, as well as the Arabah (Jordan Valley) down to the Dead Sea.

4. What is said about Og king of Bashan? (v4 & v5)

Og king of Bashan was one of the last survivors of the Rephaim, a people known for their great size and strength (v4). He ruled over Ashtaroth and Edrei and governed a

large territory that included Mount Hermon, Salekah, all Bashan, and part of Gilead, extending to the borders of the Geshurites and Maacathites (v5).

This highlights both the power of the enemy Israel faced and the greatness of God's victory in defeating him.



5. Which tribes received the land conquered by Moses? (v6)

Reuben

Gad

The half-tribe of Manasseh

The two and half eastern tribes feared the day might come when they would be regarded as non-Israel by the western tribes (see Joshua 22:21-29), that the majority settled in Canaan proper would exclude them from the circle of Yahweh's people. So the writer of Joshua carefully includes in the survey of conquered kings the record of the conquest of Sihon and Og; as if to say, "remember Yahweh gave victories east of the Jordan too; don't forget Israel lives over there as well". (Dale Ralph Davis) This sort of thing can happen in Christianity where one denomination frowns upon another or even within a church where some believers might feel others don't belong because of their socio-economic circumstances (James 2:1-9 where favouritism is forbidden). This is also why the Apostle Paul told the cocky Corinthians to take a look at themselves and they would see that "God chose what is foolish in the world..., God chose what is weak in the world..., God chose what is low and despised in the world" (1 Corinthians 1:27-28). (Dale Ralph Davis)

6. Why do you think the chapter begins by remembering victories under Moses before listing Joshua's victories?

It shows that a) the occupation of the land had begun a long time ago and the conquest was one continuous work of God; and b) The conquest, occupation and the victories did not depend on a particular leader but on God's faithfulness to His promises.

7. What does this section teach us about God's faithfulness across different generations of leaders?

God remains faithful regardless of who leads His people. He fulfilled His promises through Moses and continued fulfilling them through Joshua. We can even recall the faithfulness of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; when the promises of Land were first made.

Read Joshua 12:7-24

8. What area of land did Joshua conquer west of the Jordan? (v7)

The west side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir.

9. Which different regions or landscapes are mentioned in verse 8?

The hill country, the western foothills, the Arabah, the mountain slopes, the wilderness and the Negev. These were the lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

10. How many kings in total were defeated by Joshua? (v24)

Thirty-one kings in total were defeated by Joshua.

11. Why do you think the names of all these kings and cities are carefully recorded?

To provide an accurate historical record of God's victories; to testify to the fulfilment of God's promises, and to remind future generations of Israel (and us) what God had done for His people.

But though each of those summarily mentioned was previously given more in detail, there is very good reason for here placing before our eyes as it were a living picture of the goodness of God, proving that there had been a complete ratification and performance of the covenant made with Abraham as given in the words, "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 20:18).

These verses do not drip with tedium, they tingle with excitement, "The King of Tappuah one; the king of Hopher one; (v17) – those words are not an excerpt from a dull archive; they are the lyrics of a song! Verses 7-24 constitute the stanzas for Israel's version of "Great is Thy Faith Faithfulness". Yahweh's ancient word has proven faithful!

"We should get rid of some of the tripe in our prayers like 'thank you for our many blessings'. Name one or two of those blessings instead! Why do we use such general 'lingo-ese' in our prayers (and worse yet, teach it to our children"?) (Dale Ralph Davis)

12. How would this chapter encourage Israel as they prepared to settle in the land?

It would remind them that God had already gone before them and overcome every enemy they encountered. The same God who gave them all these victories would remain with them in the land and enable them to live faithfully in the land.

13. What does Joshua 12 teach about remembering and celebrating God's faithfulness?

As God's people, we should intentionally remember His works. Recording and recounting God's faithfulness strengthens faith, encourages obedience, and gives confidence for future challenges.

14. Why is it important for believers to remember past answers to prayer and victories God has given?

Remembering God's faithfulness:

- *Help us build trust in God during present difficult times.*
- *Encourages us to persevere.*
- *Guards us against forgetfulness and unbelief.*
- *Gives us confidence that God will continue to keep His promises and will continue to be with us.*

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 12:1-24**?

- *Joshua's name means "The LORD saves"; Jesus' name has the same meaning.*
- *Joshua led God's people into their earthly inheritance; Jesus leads His people into their eternal inheritance.*
- *Joshua defeated earthly kings; Jesus defeats sin, Satan, death, and every spiritual enemy.*
- *Joshua secured rest in the land; Jesus gives the true and lasting rest spoken of in Hebrews 4.*
- *The list of defeated kings anticipates the day when every enemy will finally be placed under Christ's feet (Psalm 8:6; 110:1; Ephesians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 15:25)*

15. How do the following passages relate to **Joshua 12:1-24**?

Romans 4:18-21 (especially v21)

Abraham was fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. Joshua 12 is evidence that God kept His promise He made to Abraham, to give Abraham's descendants the land.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul reminds believers of Israel's history in the wilderness. Although the Israelites experienced God's mighty acts—passing through the sea, receiving spiritual food and drink, and witnessing His power—many still fell into unbelief, idolatry, and disobedience. Paul says these events were written down "as examples for us" and "for our instruction" (vv. 6, 11). Basically, so that we learn from the mistakes of God's people and don't make the same mistakes ourselves!

The lessons we can learn from Joshua 12 are:

- 1. **God is ALWAYS completely faithful to His promises.** The victories in Joshua 12 show that God did exactly what He said He would do for Israel.*
- 2. **God's people MUST respond with faithful obedience.** The generation that entered the land experienced God's blessings, but Paul reminds Christians not to repeat the sins of earlier generations who saw God's works yet turned away from Him.*
- 3. **Remembering God's acts should strengthen faith.** Joshua 12 preserves a record of God's victories so that future generations would trust Him. Paul uses Israel's history for the same purpose—to encourage believers to persevere in faith and avoid complacency.*
- 4. **These Earthly victories point to a greater salvation.** Israel's conquest of Canaan was not the ultimate goal. It pointed forward to the greater victory won by Jesus Christ over sin, death, and Satan. Just as Israel was called to trust God as they entered their inheritance, as Christians we are called to persevere in faith as they await their final inheritance in Christ.*

Joshua 12 teaches us what God has done; 1 Corinthians 10 teaches us how we should respond. God's faithfulness in the past should encourage us to trust, obey, and persevere in the present.

Notice too, at the end of the 1 Corinthians 10 passage; v12 tells us to 'stand firm and to be careful we don't fall (into temptation and then sin!). And v13 reminds us that temptation is common to all people; we all get tempted. Yet Paul says 'God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you bear'. AND – Paul says "when you are tempted, God will provide a way out so that you can endure it!". For example: Even with Adam and Eve in the Garden; when Eve was tempted by the serpent (aka the Devil), there WAS a way out; Adam could simply have said "No Eve! God send we must not eat from that tree!"

Philippians 1:6

God finishes what He starts. The victories listed in Joshua 12 demonstrate God's commitment to completing His saving purposes for His people. Likewise, when we become a Christian, God promises to complete the work He has started in us!

2 Timothy 2:1-2, 8

*Paul urges Timothy to faithfully pass on the gospel and remember Jesus Christ. Joshua 12 similarly records God's works so that future generations will remember and continue trusting Him. **It is our Christian duty and responsibility and calling to remember what God has done and pass it on to the next generation!***

Revelation 11:15

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah."

Joshua's victories in Joshua 12 foreshadow Christ's final and complete victory when every kingdom will belong to Him forever.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 12:1-24?

The Lord faithfully keeps His promises by giving victory over every enemy and securing the inheritance of His people.

OR

Remember God's victories in the past so that you will trust His faithfulness for the future.



What light globe moment did you have?

What *questions* do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V7 - Here is a list of the kings of the land that Joshua and the Israelites conquered on the west side of the Jordan...

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your faithfulness to Your people throughout every generation. As we reflect on the victories You gave Israel, help us to remember Your goodness, power, and grace in our own lives. Strengthen us for the spiritual battles we face, and help us to trust in Jesus, our victorious King, who has overcome sin and death for us. Keep us faithful, thankful, and persevering until we enter Your eternal rest. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Study 5 – Receiving our inheritance

Joshua 13:1-33

(Sermon on 28th June 2026)

Read Joshua 13:1-7

1. What does the Lord say to Joshua in verse 1, and why is it significant at this stage of Israel's journey?

God tells Joshua, "You are now very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over."

A few observations on Joshua's age:

- *Joshua was one of the adult spies sent into Canaan about 40 years before Israel entered the land (Numbers 13–14), so he was at least around 20 years old at that time.*
- *Israel then spent 40 years in the wilderness.*
- *The conquest of Canaan under Joshua took several years (often estimated at about 5–7 years).*
- *Joshua died at **110 years old** (Joshua 24:29).*

*Since Joshua 13 occurs before the land is fully allotted and well before his death, many commentators estimate that Joshua was probably **in his 90s**, perhaps around **100 years old**.*

Even while acknowledging Joshua's advanced years, God still tells him about a job that needs to be done. No matter how much we have done in our Christian lives, there still remains much to do.

*This is significant because Joshua's major military campaigns are complete, yet the conquest is not fully finished. Israel has experienced many victories, but God's work is not yet complete. The focus now shifts from conquering the land to distributing the inheritance among the tribes. **And it will now be the responsibility of the individual tribes to complete the occupation.***

While there is still much to do, there can be no satisfaction with a partial inheritance — God wants us to keep pressing on.

For Christians – there is no retirement – retirement is not mentioned in the Bible!

2. What areas are listed as still remaining to be conquered? (vv2-5)

The remaining territories include:

The regions of the Philistines (Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron)

The territory of the Avvites

Areas extending from the south near Egypt

The land of the Canaanites

The territory of the Sidonians

The regions of Lebanon

The mountainous areas from Baal Gad to Lebo Hamath

These were significant regions that Israel had not yet fully possessed.

See map below...

Twelve Tribes

Joshua 13-22

1400 BC

6 City-State Empires in 1406 BC

Amorite 15 city state Basham empire
 King Jabin at Hazor
 Hazor, Madon, Shimron, Achshaph, Dor.
 Joshua 11:1-3,10; Judges 4:2

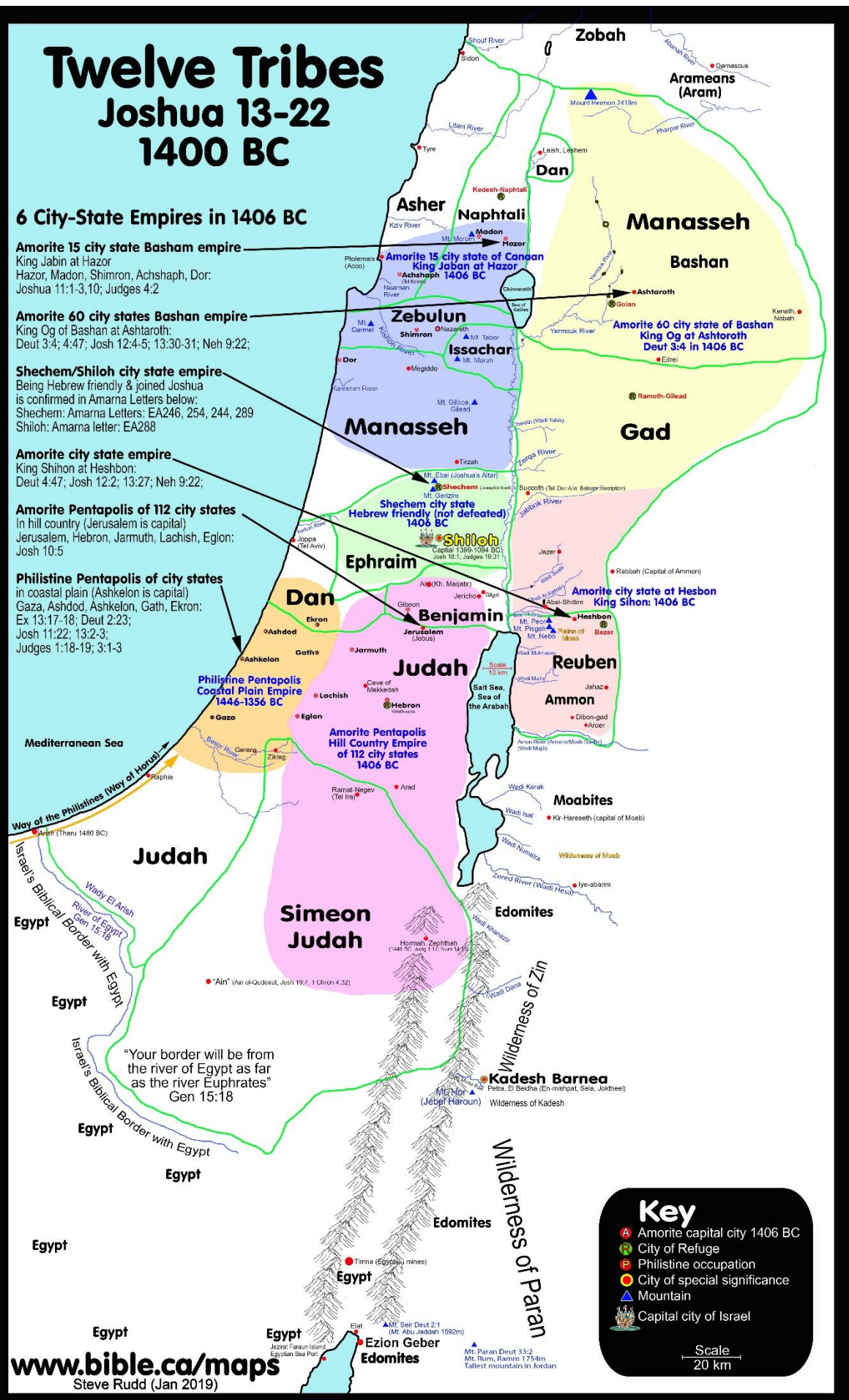
Amorite 60 city states Bashan empire
 King Og of Bashan at Ashtaroth:
 Deut 3:4; 4:47; Josh 12:4-5; 13:30-31; Neh 9:22;

Shechem/Shiloh city state empire
 Being Hebrew friendly & joined Joshua
 is confirmed in Amarna Letters below:
 Shechem: Amarna Letters: EA246, 254, 244, 289
 Shiloh: Amarna letter: EA288

Amorite city state empire
 King Sihon at Heshbon:
 Deut 4:47; Josh 12:2; 13:27; Neh 9:22;

Amorite Pentapolis of 112 city states
 In hill country (Jerusalem is capital)
 Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, Eglon:
 Josh 10:5

Philistine Pentapolis of city states
 in coastal plain (Ashkelon is capital)
 Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, Ekron:
 Ex 13:17-18; Deut 2:23;
 Josh 11:22; 13:2-3;
 Judges 1:18-19; 3:1-3



Key

- ▲ Amorite capital city 1406 BC
- City of Refuge
- Philistine occupation
- City of special significance
- ▲ Mountain
- 🏰 Capital city of Israel

Scale
20 km

3. Why do you think God lists specific peoples and regions that remain unconquered?

God's detailed list demonstrates:

- *He has a complete knowledge of the land and knows exactly what He wants*
- *That no part of His promise has been forgotten.*
- *The task ahead is clear and specific for the Israelites to follow.*
- *Israel still has responsibilities despite previous victories.*
- *The list reminds Israel that God's promises are larger than what they have already experienced.*
- ***God's promises never remove human responsibility***

4. What promise and what instruction are given in verse 6?

*The **promise**: “I myself will drive them (inhabitants of the mountain regions from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim, that is, all of Sidonians) out before the Israelites”*

The instruction: “Be sure to allocate this land to Israel as an inheritance [among the nine tribes and half of the tribe of Manasseh (v7)], as I have instructed you”.

God promised I will drive [them] out before the children of Israel, but He intended that each tribe trust God for this in the portion of land divided to them by lot.

*Each tribe was responsible to possess their own land completely. God emphasizes the idea of personal responsibility and initiative. This is not only because that is how things get done, but also because that is how people are blessed in service. **We are blessed by personally taking responsibility and initiative in trusting God to do what He has called us to do.***

5. How do you reconcile “God has given the land” (promise) with “there is still much land to be taken” (reality)? What does this teach us about God’s promises and human responsibility?

God's sovereignty and human responsibility run in parallel and sometimes intertwine.

God's promise was certain, but Israel still had to act in faith and obedience.

This teaches that:

- *God's sovereignty does not eliminate human responsibility.*
- *God's promises often unfold progressively.*
- *Faith trusts God's promises and acts accordingly.*

Israel was to possess what God had already promised to give.

Similarly, Christians have received salvation in Christ, yet continue to grow in holiness and obedience.

Read Joshua 13:8-14

6. What land allocations are described in verses 8 to 12?

These verses review the territories east of the Jordan that Moses had already assigned to:

- *The tribe of Reuben*
- *The tribe of Gad*
- *Half the tribe of Manasseh*

These lands had previously belonged to Kings Sihon and Og and were conquered before Israel crossed the Jordan. We learnt about this in the last study!

7. Why is the land of the Geshurites and Maacathites noted as still unconquered? (v13)?

V13 notes that Israel had not driven out the Geshurites and Maacathites. This serves as a reminder and warning that:

- *Israel's obedience was incomplete.*
- *Some enemies remained among God's people.*
- *This disobedience will create future problems.*

Indeed, these groups continued to exist in Israel's territory for generations.

- David later married a princess from Geshur, and she was the mother of his son Absalom (2 Samuel 3:3). Absalom returned to Geshur and used it as a place to plot against his father David (2 Samuel 13:37-38, 14:23, and 14:32).*
- The Maachathites may have come from the Maachah mentioned in Genesis 22:24, who was a nephew of Abraham. Later, when Sheba rebelled against David, he fled and may have taken refuge in one of the cities of the Maachathites (2 Samuel 20:14-15).*

8. How is the Levite's inheritance different? Why? (vv14, 33)

V14 - But to the tribe of Levi he gave no inheritance, since the food offerings presented to the Lord, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, as he promised them.

V33 - But to the tribe of Levi, Moses had given no inheritance; the Lord, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as he promised them.

The Levites received no land as an inheritance.

Their role was to serve in the worship and ministry of God initially in the mobile tabernacle and later in the Temple. They were provided for from the offerings and sacrifices and tithes brought by the people. These were their "financial security" in the land.

This emphasized that their greatest possession was not the land, but the Lord Himself. Surely that's the same for us – possessions don't matter – belonging to God's family does!

Levi, the priestly tribe, was to receive no "province" such as the other tribes received; they would be given certain cities (Joshua 20-21).

In this sense, if there is any tribe that Christians are spiritually connected to, it is the tribe of Levi. We also are called priests (1 Peter 2:5) and have a special inheritance in God (Ephesians 1:11, Colossians 1:12, and 1 Peter 1:4).

Many of us are dissatisfied with our place before God. We wish He would have given us something different, and we can even get bitter towards God about this. The primary answer to this is to see ourselves as priests and to understand that our real inheritance is God Himself.

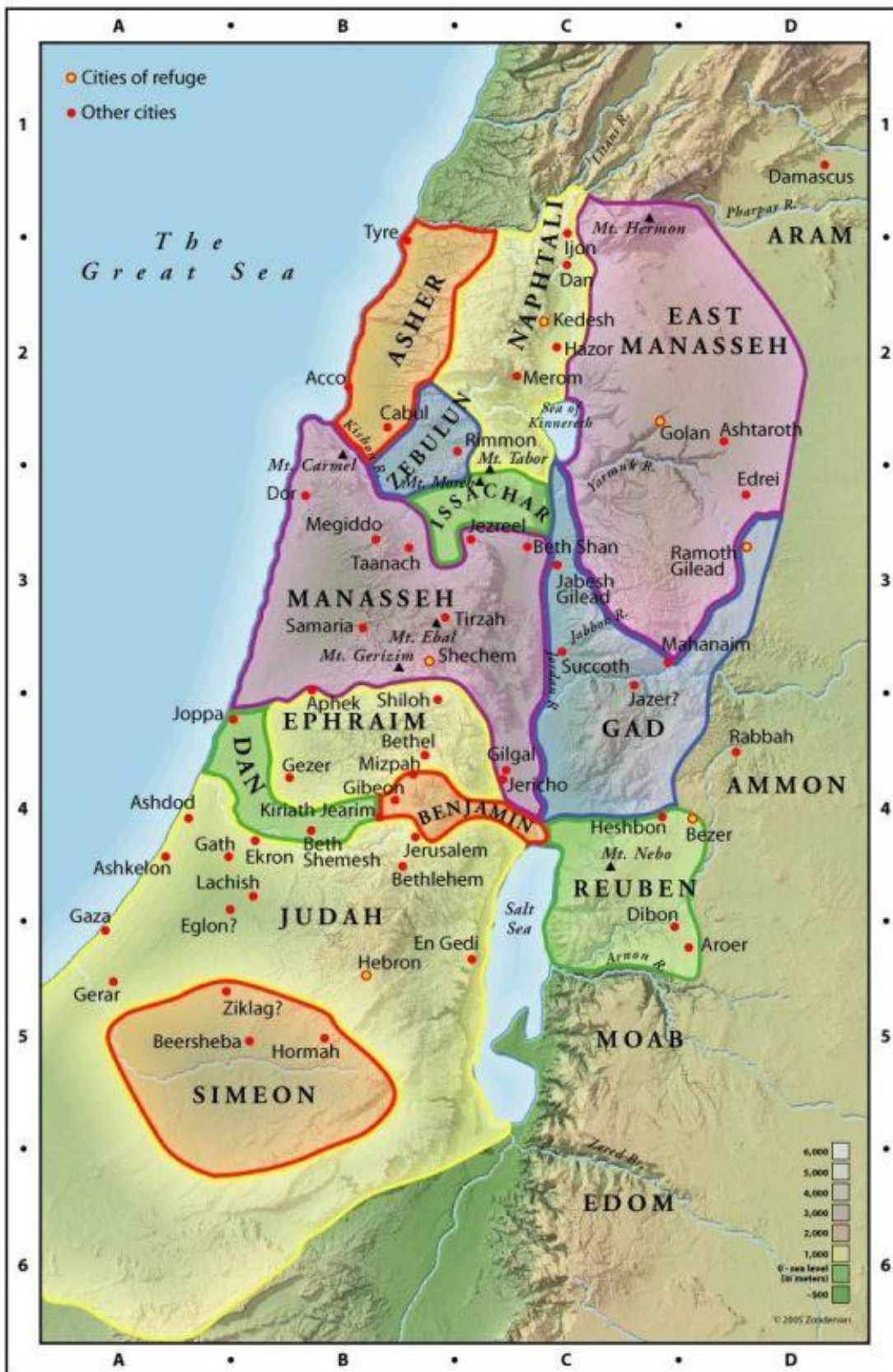
Read Joshua 13:15-33

9. How is the land given to the tribe of Reuben described? (vv15–23)

The territory from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Gorge to Heshbon...the boundary of the Reubenites was the bank of the Jordan. These towns and their villages were the inheritance of the Reubenites, according to their clans.



Map 4: LAND OF THE TWELVE TRIBES



Note: the death of **Balaam** in verse 22.

Balaam was a diviner or prophet-for-hire from Mesopotamia whom King Balak of Moab hired to curse Israel (Numbers 22–24). Although God prevented Balaam from cursing Israel and instead made him pronounce blessings, Balaam later advised Moab how to lead Israel into sin through idolatry and sexual immorality (Numbers 31:16; Revelation 2:14). As a result, many Israelites fell under God's judgment.

Balaam's story is a warning that:

- Knowing God's truth is not the same as obeying Him.
- Greed and compromise can lead to spiritual ruin.
- God protects His people, but He also calls them to holiness.

His death in Joshua 13 shows that God's judgment eventually came upon one who opposed His purposes and led His people into sin.

10. What key cities or regions are included in Gad's inheritance? (vv24–28)

See map above!

The territory of Jazer, all the towns of Gilead and half the Ammonite country as far as Aroer, near Rabbah, and from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the territory of Debir; and in the valley, Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Sukkoth and Zaphon with the rest of the realm of Sihon king of Heshbon (the east side of the Jordan, the territory up to the end of the Sea of Galilee).

11. What portion is given to half the tribe of Manasseh? (vv29–31)

The territory extending from Mahanaim and including all of Bashan... all the settlements of Jair in Bashan, sixty towns, ³¹ half of Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei (the royal cities of Og in Bashan).

12. Why is it important that Moses obeyed even though he did not enter the promised land?

Moses' example teaches:

- Faithfulness is more important than personal reward.
- God's work is bigger than one individual.
- We serve future generations through obedience today.

Moses trusted God's purposes even when he could not see their full completion. Just like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob trusted God's promises without fully realizing them!

13. **Ponder:** How can believers avoid spiritual complacency after past victories?

Believers can avoid complacency by:

- *Give thanks for the past – but don't live in or on the past – and don't dwell on past mistakes either!*
- *Remembering that growth in holiness is ongoing.*
- *Continuing to depend on God's grace.*
- *Remaining vigilant against temptation.*
- *Staying devoted to prayer and Scripture. This should be a daily walk! "Give us this day, our daily bread"*
- *Seeking to serve rather than simply celebrating past successes.*

Past victories should encourage future faithfulness, not spiritual laziness.

We should not be "cruise-control" Christians!

14. How does Joshua 13 challenge us about incomplete obedience or unfinished spiritual battles?

Israel possessed the land but still faced enemies.

Likewise, Christians have victory in Christ, yet continue to battle sin. We must not settle for partial obedience. We are called to persevere in faith and holiness.

Joshua 13 warns against being satisfied with incomplete spiritual progress.

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 13:1-33**?

- ***Jesus is the greater Joshua.*** *Joshua brings physical (earthly) inheritance; Jesus brings eternal inheritance to His people.*
- ***Jesus completes what Joshua could not.*** *Joshua could not fully conquer every enemy nor bring complete rest. Jesus will ultimately defeat every enemy, including sin, death, and Satan, and bring His people into perfect rest.*
- ***The Levites' inheritance was the Lord Himself.*** *In Christ, believers receive something even greater—not merely blessings from God, but God Himself.*

- *What the land was to Israel, Jesus is to us. We are to possess all of Him, and to keep pressing on to have all of Jesus. How much of Jesus do you have? How much of the Bible do you possess as yours? Do you walk in the blessing of leading others to Jesus Christ? Of answered prayer? Of meeting the needs of others in God's family? Do you share Jesus with others?*

15. How do the following passages relate to **Joshua 13:1-33**?

Ephesians 1:11-14

Paul teaches that believers have:

- *Obtained an inheritance in Christ which is ultimately in Heaven*
- *Been chosen according to God's purpose.*
- *Received the Holy Spirit as a deposit guaranteeing that inheritance.*

Just as Israel was assigned a promised inheritance, Christians receive an eternal inheritance secured by Christ.

Colossians 1:9-14

Paul thanks God because believers have been:

- *Qualified to share in the inheritance of God's holy people.*
- *Rescued from darkness.*
- *Transferred into Christ's kingdom.*

The Israelites had endurance, patience and obedience to inherit the Promised Land. Likewise we must do the same!

Joshua describes entry into an earthly inheritance; Colossians points to the greater spiritual inheritance found in Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-5

Peter speaks of:

- *An inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade.*
- *An inheritance kept in heaven.*

- *God's power shielding believers until the coming of salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Israel's inheritance could be threatened by enemies, but the believer's inheritance is eternally secure.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 13:1-33?

God's promises are certain, His inheritance is secure, and His people must continue in faithful obedience until every promise is fulfilled.



What light globe moment did you have?

- 1. The punishment of Baalam (see his story in Numbers 22-25) – this shows God eventually catches up with evil-doers and must face His wrath and judgment!***
- 2. There is a hint of disobedience in verse 13 where the Israelites did not drive out the people of Geshur and Maakah. This is going to cause them a problem later on. Partial obedience is NOT good enough for God!***

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the **verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Joshua 13:33 - *"But to the tribe of Levi, Moses had given no inheritance; the LORD, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as he promised them."*

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You that You are the faithful God who keeps Your promises and gives good inheritance to Your people. Help us not to become settled or complacent, but to keep trusting You for all You have called us to. Thank You that in Christ we have a far greater inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. Teach us to walk in obedience, to be faithful in what You have given us, and to rest in Your ongoing work in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.