



Joshua - Chapter Twelve

II Joshua 6:1-12:24 - Taking the Land (continues/concludes)

II.f Joshua 11:1-12:24 - Conquest of the North and a List of Defeated Kings (continues/concludes)

Summary of Chapter Twelve

Now that the land has been conquered, and before it is apportioned, the full extent of the conquest is summarised. Verses 1-6 describe the land east of the River Jordan. This land consisted of the territories of the Transjordanian kings whom Israel had conquered under Moses' leadership, which Moses had allocated to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Verses 7-24 list the kings whom Joshua and the people of Israel defeated within the Promised Land, the total coming to thirty one.

II.f.iii Joshua 12:1-6 - The Kings Conquered by Moses

These verses look back to the campaign led by Moses in Transjordan, listing the kings who were defeated and the land that was then allocated to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

¹ Now these are the kings of the land, whom the Israelites defeated, whose land they occupied beyond the Jordan towards the east, from the Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon, with all the Arabah eastwards:

² King Sihon of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, and from the middle of the valley as far as the river Jabbok, the boundary of the Ammonites, that is, half of Gilead, ³ and the Arabah to the Sea of Chinneroth eastwards, and in the direction of Beth-jeshimoth, to the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, southwards to the foot of the slopes of Pisgah;

⁴ and King Og of Bashan, one of the last of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei ⁵ and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and all Bashan to the boundary of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and over half of Gilead to the boundary of King Sihon of Heshbon. ⁶ Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the Israelites defeated them; and Moses the servant of the Lord gave their land for a possession to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Josh. 12:1-6

Whose land they occupied beyond the Jordan towards the east. If the emphasis in the first half of the Book of Joshua is on the Lord's faithfulness in giving Israel the land, it now falls to Israel to prove faithful in occupying the territories that will be allocated to them. The account of the campaign in Transjordan is recorded in Numbers 21:21-35. The words rendered occupy, possess or possession appear with increased frequency in the second half of Joshua.

The half-tribe of Manasseh. Half of the tribe of Manasseh lived east of the Jordan River, and half of the tribe settled west of the Jordan River.

II.f.iv Joshua 12:7-24 - The Kings Conquered by Joshua

This subsection comprises of a list of the Canaanite kings defeated during the campaign to possess the Promised Land.

⁷ The following are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, that rises towards Seir (and Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments, ⁸ in the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negeb, the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites):

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-----|
| ⁹ | the king of Jericho | one |
| | the king of Ai, which is next to Bethel | 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 Bethel	one
17	the king of Tappuah	one
	the king of Hephher	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 in Carmel	one
23	the king of Dor in Naphath-dor	one
	the king of Goim in Galilee,	one
24	the king of Tirzah	one

thirty-one kings in all.

[Joshua 12:7-24](#)

The list of defeated kings begins with [the king of Jericho](#) and generally follows the sequence of the preceding narrative: central, southern, and northern campaigns. That some kings not mentioned in the preceding narrative appear in

the list reminds the reader that historical reportage can be selective; the Joshua narratives are meant to be more than a mere catalogue of historical information.

This list of thirty-one kings suggests Israel's overall success in gaining the upper hand in Canaan and in destroying the leaders of resistance, but it does not necessarily imply the destruction of the cities formerly ruled by these kings; refer to the comment made on Joshua 11:10-15.

Such lists as given in this chapter may seem unimportant and even tedious to the reader today. However, these descriptions are important because they make it clear that these things really happened, they are historic events. These are not fairy tales that begin with 'once upon a time,' this is history that begins with specific places, people and rulers. As well, it was a way that Israel could forever remember the great things God had done for them.

With all these kings conquered, with every one of these 'principalities and powers' over the land defeated, there is no doubt that the land belongs to Israel, but the individual tribes still have much to possess for their own. The work in establishing the Kingdom is never finished!