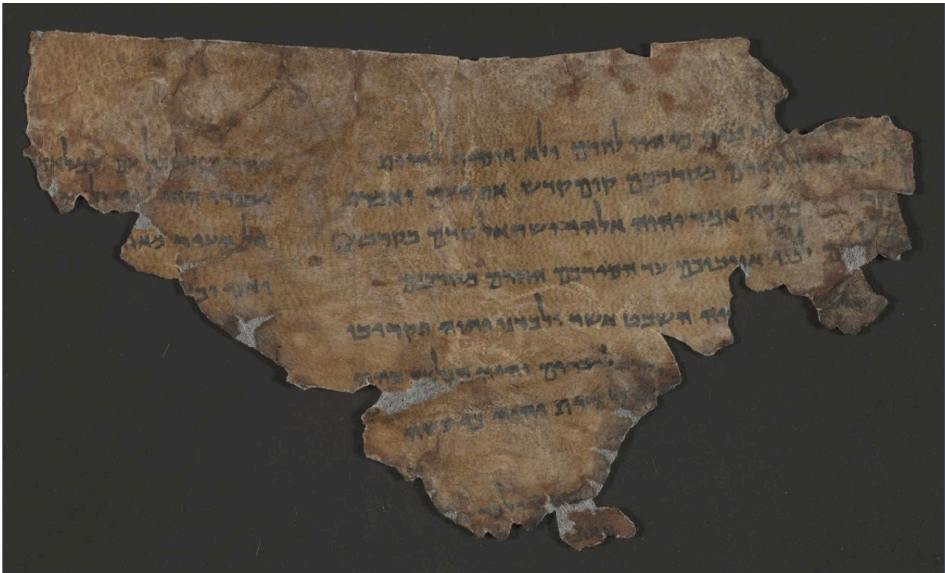


JOSHUA

They finally make it to the Promised Land!

AUTHOR	The book does not name its author. Jewish tradition in the Talmud says Joshua wrote it, Eleazar added Joshua's death, and Phinehas added Eleazar's. Joshua did write some things down, 24:26. Lines like to this day show someone also put it together later. Many modern scholars think it was finished in the 600s or 500s BC.
EVENTS TOOK PLACE	From the Jordan crossing to Joshua's death. The Bible does not say how long; the historian Josephus said about 25 years. The fighting took about seven years, 14:7 to 10.
DATE	The early date puts the crossing about 1406 BC, based on 1 Kings 6:1. The late date puts it in the 1200s BC. See When Was the Conquest?
WRITTEN TO	Israel, so every generation would remember that God kept His promise of the land.
KEY VERSE	Joshua 21:45. Not one of all Yahweh's good promises to the house of Israel had failed; everything was fulfilled.



THE OLDEST COPY OF JOSHUA

This is a piece of 4QJosh a, a scroll of Joshua found in Cave 4 at Qumran and copied in the last two centuries before Jesus. 4QJosh a puts the reading of the Law, 8:34 to 35, right after the Jordan crossing, in a different place than most Bibles. A second scroll from the same cave, 4QJosh b, is from about the same time.

After the scrolls, the oldest copies are in Greek, like Codex Vaticanus, and in Coptic, the language of Egypt's early Christians, like a papyrus book of Joshua from the 300s, kept partly in Dublin and partly in Geneva. The Greek Bible's Joshua is a little shorter in places. Photo Shai Halevi, Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, Israel Antiquities Authority.

Historical Setting

Moses is dead, and Israel is camped on the east side of the Jordan, across from Jericho. Forty years earlier their parents refused to go in. Now their children get their turn. Canaan is a land of walled city states, each with its own king, worshiping Baal and other gods. Joshua, Moses' assistant and one of the only two faithful spies, takes over.

What Was Going Wrong

HIDDEN SIN. Achan stole from Jericho and hid it in his tent, and Israel lost at Ai 7:1 to 26.
NOT PRAYING FIRST. Israel made a treaty with the Gibeonites without asking Yahweh 9:14.
HALF FINISHED. Several tribes did not drive out the Canaanites. Judah could not take Jerusalem, and Ephraim and Manasseh let Canaanites stay 15:63, 16:10, 17:12 to 13.
IDOLS IN THE TENT. Even at the end, Joshua had to tell the people to throw away the foreign gods still among them 24:14, 24:23.
A MISUNDERSTANDING. The tribes nearly went to war over an altar that turned out to be a memorial 22:10 to 34.

The Idiot Proof Summary

Joshua is the book where God's promise to Abraham finally comes true. Hundreds of years earlier, God told Abraham, To your offspring I will give this land, Genesis 12:7. Now Abraham's family crosses the Jordan on dry ground, watches Jericho's walls fall, and takes the land city by city. Then, with the fighting mostly done, Joshua divides the land among the twelve tribes, down to the last town and spring. The book ends with an old man calling the nation to choose. Serve the gods your fathers served, or serve Yahweh. As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh.

Joshua at a Glance

CH 1 to 5	GETTING READY A new leader, Rahab and the spies, the Jordan crossing, Gilgal.
CH 6 to 8	JERICO AND AI Walls fall, Achan sins, Ai falls on the second try.
CH 9 to 12	THE BIG CAMPAIGNS The Gibeonite trick, the long day, the south, the north, and Hazor.
CH 13 to 21	DIVIDING THE LAND Every tribe's borders, Caleb, Shiloh, refuge cities, Levite towns.
CH 22 to 24	LAST WORDS The altar by the Jordan, Joshua's farewell, the covenant at Shechem.

Where Jesus Shows Up

- JOSHUA 1:1** Joshua and Jesus have the same name. Yehoshua means Yahweh saves. Joshua led Israel into the land; Jesus leads His people into a better rest, Hebrews 4:8 to 10.
- JOSHUA 2:18** The scarlet cord in Rahab's window saved everyone inside her house. Clement of Rome, about AD 96, said it showed that redemption would come through the blood of the Lord.
- JOSHUA 2:1** Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, became the great great grandmother of King David and is named in Jesus' family tree, Matthew 1:5.
- JOSHUA 5:13 TO 15** The Commander of Yahweh's army accepts Joshua's worship. Many believe this is Jesus before He was born.

JOSHUA 1:5 I will never leave you nor forsake you. Hebrews 13:5 quotes God's promise to every believer.

GOD'S NAMES IN JOSHUA

Joshua calls God the living God 3:10 and the Lord of all the earth 3:11, 13. Rahab confesses that Yahweh your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below 2:11. Joshua warns that He is a holy God and a jealous God 24:19. See Why We Say Yahweh in the Old Testament Introduction.

What to Watch for in Joshua

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW	2:18, 5:14-15
PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE	1:1-2, 2:9-11, 5:1, 6:5, 6:26, 9:23, 10:40-42 and 6 more
THE HEART	11:20, 22:5, 23:14, 24:23
ARCHAEOLOGY	6:20, 8:28, 11:10-11
MIRACLES	3:14-17, 5:13, 10:11-14
DEMONIC	11:21-22, 12:4, 13:22, 15:13-14, 17:15, 22:17, 23:7 and 5 more
NOTABLE	1:8-9, 4:6-7, 7:20-21, 9:14, 24:15
GOD SPEAKING	Words in red are God speaking. Only the words He actually said are red.

Cool Stuff Most People Miss

THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

Jericho is one of the oldest cities on earth, with a stone tower built thousands of years before Joshua. See the Jericho Field Notes page.

THE SUN STOOD STILL

The most argued over day in the Bible. Even Martin Luther used it against Copernicus. See the Big Question pages.

CALEB AT 85

He asked for the hill country with the giants in it 14:10 to 12.

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

Joshua 24:15 hangs on the walls of more homes than almost any other verse.

Did It Last?

For a while. Israel served Yahweh all the days of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him, 24:31. But the next generation did not know Yahweh or what He had done, Judges 2:10, and the book of Judges begins. Still, the land was theirs, and God's promise to Abraham had come true.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

1

CHAPTER 1 IN 30 SECONDS

Moses is dead, and Joshua is in charge. God gives him a pep talk: Be strong and courageous, keep My word on your lips, and I will be with you. Three times God says it, because Joshua needed to hear it three times.

GOD INSTRUCTS JOSHUA // DEUTERONOMY 11:8-17

¹Now after the death of His servant Moses, Yahweh spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, ²"Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore arise, you and all these people, and cross over the Jordan into the land that I am giving to the children of Israel.

³I have given you every place where the sole of your foot will tread, just as I promised to Moses. ⁴Your territory shall extend from the wilderness and Lebanon to the great River Euphrates—all the land of the Hittites—and west as far as the Great Sea.

⁵No one shall stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so will I be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

⁶Be strong and courageous, for you shall give these people the inheritance of the land that I swore to their fathers I would give them.

⁷Above all, be strong and very courageous. Be careful to observe all the law that My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸This Book of the Law must not depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in all you do.

⁹Have I not commanded you to be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go."

JOSHUA TAKES CHARGE

¹⁰Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people: ¹¹"Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you will cross the Jordan to go in and take possession of the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess.'"

¹²But to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said,

¹³"Remember what Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you when he said, 'Yahweh your God will give you rest, and He will give you this land.' ¹⁴Your wives, your young children, and your livestock may remain in the land that Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But all your mighty men of valor must be armed for battle to cross over ahead of your brothers and help them, ¹⁵until Yahweh gives them rest as He has done for you, and your brothers also possess the land that Yahweh your God is giving them. Then you may return to the land of your inheritance and take possession of that which Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you on the east side of the Jordan."

¹⁶So they answered Joshua, "Everything you have commanded us we will do, and everywhere you send us we will go. ¹⁷Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. And may Yahweh your God be with you, as He was with Moses. ¹⁸Anyone who rebels against your order and does not obey your words, all that you command him, will be put to death. Above all, be strong and courageous!"

■ **JOSH 1:1 [FULFILLS]** Moses would see the land but not cross over. Joshua would lead the people in ← DT 3:27-28 p. 7

■ **JOSH 1:1 [NOTE]** JOSHUA'S NAME. Moses renamed him Yehoshua, Yahweh saves, Numbers 13:16. In Greek it is Iesous, the same name as Jesus, so the King James says Jesus in Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 when it means Joshua.

■ **JOSH 1:5 [QUOTED]** Quoted in the New Testament → HEB 13:5 p. 3

■ **JOSH 1:8 [NOTABLE]** God's pep talk to a nervous new leader. Success is tied to knowing and doing God's word, and courage comes from God being with you, not from being fearless.

■ **JOSH 1:8 [NOTE]** Meditate is the Hebrew hagah, to mutter. Ancient people read out loud, so meditating meant saying God's word over and over under your breath.

2

CHAPTER 2 IN 30 SECONDS

Joshua sends two spies into Jericho, and they end up at the house of Rahab, a prostitute. She hides them on her roof, lies to the king's men, and makes a deal: save my family. The sign is a scarlet cord in her window. Not your typical Sunday school hero, but God picked her anyway.

RAHAB WELCOMES THE SPIES // HEBREWS 11:30-31

¹Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim, saying, "Go, inspect the land, especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.

²And it was reported to the king of Jericho: "Behold, some men of Israel have come here tonight to spy out the land."

³So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab and said, "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, for they have come to spy out the whole land."

⁴But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. So she said, "Yes, the men did come to me, but I did not know where they had come from. ⁵At dusk, when the gate was about to close, the men went out, and I do not know which way they went. Pursue them quickly, and you may catch them!" ⁶(But Rahab had taken them up to the roof and hidden them among the stalks of flax that she had laid out there.)

⁷So the king's men set out in pursuit of the spies along the road to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as they had gone out, the gate was shut.

THE PROMISE TO RAHAB

⁸Before the spies lay down for the night, Rahab went up on the roof ⁹and said to them, "I know that Yahweh has given you

this land and that the fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who dwell in the land are melting in fear of you. ¹⁰For we have heard how Yahweh dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites across the Jordan, whom you devoted to destruction. ¹¹When we heard this, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for Yahweh your God is God in the heavens above and on the earth below.

¹²Now therefore, please swear to me by Yahweh that you will indeed show kindness to my family, because I showed kindness to you. Give me a sure sign ¹³that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will deliver us from death."

¹⁴"Our lives for your lives!" the men agreed. "If you do not report our mission, we will show you kindness and faithfulness when Yahweh gives us the land."

¹⁵Then Rahab let them down by a rope through the window, since the house where she lived was built into the wall of the city. ¹⁶"Go to the hill country," she said, "so that your pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there for three days until they have returned; then go on your way."

¹⁷The men said to her, "We will not be bound by this oath you made us swear ¹⁸unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother and brothers and all your family into your house. ¹⁹If anyone goes out the door of your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head, and we will be innocent. But if a hand is laid on anyone with you in the house, his blood will

■ JOSH 2:1 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → HEB 11:31 p.~

■ JOSH 2:1 [NOTE] RAHAB. The Hebrew word is zonah, a prostitute, and Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25 use the Greek word for prostitute too. In today's words, never underestimate the OnlyFans girl. God can use anyone. She ended up in Jesus' family tree, Matthew 1:5. See the Big Question pages Rahab: God Uses Anyone.

■ JOSH 2:4 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → JAS 2:25 p.~

■ JOSH 2:5 [NOTE] SHE LIED. Was that okay? Christians have argued about it since the early church. See Rahab's Lie in the Big Question pages.

■ JOSH 2:9 [FULFILLS] The nations of Canaan would hear and melt in fear ← EX 15:14-16 p.~

■ JOSH 2:15 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → JAS 2:25 p.~

■ JOSH 2:18 [PROPHECY] The scarlet cord in Rahab's window saved her whole household → HEB 11:31; JAS 2:25 · MEDIUM p.~

be on our heads. ²⁰And if you report our mission, we will be released from the oath you made us swear."

²¹"Let it be as you say," she replied, and she sent them away. And when they had gone, she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²²So the spies went out into the hill country and stayed there three days, until their pursuers had returned without finding them, having searched all along the road.

²³Then the two men started back, came down from the hill country, and crossed the river. So they came to Joshua son of Nun and reported all that had happened to them.

²⁴"Yahweh has surely delivered the entire land into our hands," they said to Joshua. "Indeed, all who dwell in the land are melting in fear of us."

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

RAHAB

God Uses Anyone

JOSHUA 2 · 6:17 TO 25 · MATTHEW 1:5 · HEBREWS 11:31 · JAMES 2:25

WHO SHE WAS

A Canaanite woman living in Jericho's wall. The Hebrew calls her zonah, a prostitute, and so do Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25. The Jewish historian Josephus, about AD 93, called her an innkeeper, and some old Jewish writers did too, but the plain word is prostitute.

WHAT SHE KNEW

She had heard about the Red Sea and the kings east of the Jordan, and she made one of the clearest statements of faith in the Old Testament: Yahweh your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below, 2:11. Her whole city heard the same news and melted in fear. Only Rahab acted on it.

THE SCARLET CORD

She tied a scarlet cord in her window, 2:18, and everyone inside her house was saved, like the blood on the doors at Passover, Exodus 12:13. Clement of Rome, about AD 96, wrote that the cord showed that redemption would come through the blood of the Lord.

INTO THE FAMILY

Rahab lived among Israel from then on, 6:25. Matthew 1:5 says she married Salmon and became the mother of Boaz, so she was the great great grandmother of King David. Matthew names only four women before Mary in Jesus' family tree: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and the wife of Uriah, Bathsheba. Every one has a story. A Jewish tradition in the Talmud says instead that she married Joshua.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE HER

In today's words, never underestimate the OnlyFans girl. God can use anyone. Jesus told the religious leaders that tax collectors and prostitutes were entering the kingdom of God ahead of them, Matthew 21:31. Rahab is proof that your past is not your future.

Every View

JOSHUA 2:4 TO 6 · EXODUS 1:19 TO 20 · HEBREWS 11:31 · JAMES 2:25

WHAT SHE DID

When the king's men came, Rahab hid the spies under flax on her roof and said they had already left, 2:4 to 6. It was a lie, and it saved their lives. The Bible praises her faith but never says a word about the lie itself.

VIEW 1: A LIE IS ALWAYS WRONG

Augustine, about AD 420, said God rewarded Rahab's kindness and faith, not her lie. John Calvin agreed that she was not free from fault. The philosopher Immanuel Kant said in 1797 that you may not lie even to a murderer at your door. These say she should have trusted God or kept silent.

VIEW 2: THE GREATER DUTY

Some teach that when two duties clash, you obey the greater one. Saving innocent life outranks telling the truth to killers. The Hebrew midwives lied to Pharaoh, and God was good to them, Exodus 1:19 to 20. Norman Geisler called this graded absolutism, obeying the bigger rule.

VIEW 3: NO RIGHT TO THE TRUTH

Others say lying means deceiving someone who has a right to the truth. A killer has no right to know where his victims are. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who stood

MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

against Hitler, wrote in 1943 that telling the truth means more than just saying true words.

VIEW 4: WAR IS DIFFERENT

Rahab had already switched sides. In war, hiding and tricking the enemy is expected. God Himself told Joshua to set an ambush at Ai, 8:2.

A REAL QUESTION

Christians who hid Jews from the Nazis faced the same question, and they did not all answer it the same way.

WHAT ALL AGREE ON

Hebrews 11:31 praises her faith. James 2:25 says she was justified by what she did when she welcomed the spies and sent them off on another route. Her faith acted, and God saved her.

3

CHAPTER 3 IN 30 SECONDS

The priests carry the ark into the Jordan at flood stage. The moment their feet touch the water, the river stops and piles up far upstream at a town called Adam. All Israel walks across on dry ground. Forty years after the Red Sea, God does it again for the kids.

CROSSING THE JORDAN

¹Early the next morning Joshua got up and left Shittim with all the Israelites. They went as far as the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over.

²After three days the officers went through the camp ³and commanded the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God being carried by the Levitical priests, you are to set out from your positions and follow it. ⁴But keep a distance of about three thousand feet between yourselves and the ark. Do not go near it, so that you can see the way to go, since you have never traveled this way before."

⁵Then Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow Yahweh will do wonders among you." ⁶And he said to the priests, "Take the ark of the covenant and go on ahead of the people." So they carried the ark of the covenant and went ahead of them.

⁷Now Yahweh said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you just as I was with Moses. ⁸Command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant: 'When you reach the edge of the waters, stand in the Jordan.'"

⁹So Joshua told the Israelites, "Come here and listen to the words of Yahweh your God." ¹⁰He continued, "This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that He will surely drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites. ¹¹Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go ahead of you into the Jordan.

¹²Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. ¹³When the feet of the priests who carry the ark of Yahweh—the Lord of all the earth—touch down in the waters of the Jordan, its flowing waters will be cut off and will stand up in a heap."

¹⁴So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carried the ark of the covenant ahead of them.

¹⁵Now the Jordan overflows its banks throughout the harvest season. But as soon as the priests carrying the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, ¹⁶the flowing water stood still. It backed up as far upstream as Adam, a city in the area of Zarethan, while the water flowing toward the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷The priests carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel crossed over the dry ground, until the entire nation had crossed the Jordan.

■ JOSH 3:14 [MIRACLE] Jordan River stopped flowing while Israel crossed

■ JOSH 3:16 [NOTE] The water piled up at Adam, about 18 miles upstream. In 1927 an earthquake dropped the high banks near Adam, today Damiya, into the river and stopped the Jordan for about 21 hours. Some think God used something like that here. The Bible's point is the timing, the moment the priests' feet touched the water, 3:15.

NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

4

CHAPTER 4 IN 30 SECONDS

Twelve men carry twelve stones out of the river and stack them at Gilgal. When your children ask, What do these stones mean? tell them the story. The priests step out, and the river comes rushing back.

TWELVE STONES FROM THE JORDAN

¹When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, Yahweh said to Joshua, ²**"Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, ³and command them: 'Take up for yourselves twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan where the priests were standing, carry them with you, and set them down in the place where you spend the night.'"**

⁴So Joshua summoned the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, ⁵and said to them, "Cross over before the ark of Yahweh your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, ⁶**to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask, 'What do these stones mean to you?' ⁷you are to tell them, 'The waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters were cut off.' Therefore these stones will be a memorial to the Israelites forever."**

⁸Thus the Israelites did as Joshua had commanded them. They took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, one for each tribe of Israel, just as Yahweh had told Joshua; and they carried them to the camp, where they set them down.

⁹Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, in the place where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant stood. And the stones are there to this day.

■ **JOSH 4:6 [NOTABLE]** God wanted a pile of rocks that would make kids ask questions. Faith is passed on by telling the story of what God did.

■ **JOSH 4:9 [NOTE]** The Hebrew says Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, where the

¹⁰Now the priests who carried the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until the people had completed everything Yahweh had commanded Joshua to tell them, just as Moses had directed Joshua. The people hurried across, ¹¹and after everyone had finished crossing, the priests with the ark of Yahweh crossed in the sight of the people. ¹²The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over before the Israelites, armed for battle as Moses had instructed them. ¹³About 40,000 troops armed for battle crossed over before Yahweh into the plains of Jericho.

¹⁴On that day Yahweh exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they revered him all the days of his life, just as they had revered Moses.

¹⁵Then Yahweh said to Joshua, ¹⁶**"Command the priests who carry the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan."**

¹⁷So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up from the Jordan."

¹⁸When the priests carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came up out of the Jordan and their feet touched the dry land, the waters of the Jordan returned to their course and overflowed all the banks as before.

THE CAMP AT GILGAL

¹⁹On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. ²⁰And there at Gilgal Joshua set up the twelve stones they had taken from the Jordan.

²¹Then Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future, when your children ask their fathers, 'What is the meaning of these stones?' ²²you are to tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' ²³For Yahweh your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, just as He did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over. ²⁴He did this so that all the peoples of the earth may know that

priests stood. Many Bibles read it as a second pile; some read it as the same stones.

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

MIRACLES

GOD SPEAKING

the hand of Yahweh is mighty, and so that you may always fear Yahweh your God."

5

CHAPTER 5 IN 30 SECONDS

The kings of Canaan hear about the river and lose their nerve. Israel's sons born in the desert are circumcised at Gilgal, they keep the Passover, and the manna stops for good. Then a Man with a drawn sword meets Joshua near Jericho. He says He is the Commander of Yahweh's army, and Joshua takes off his sandals.

THE CIRCUMCISION AND PASSOVER AT GILGAL

1 Now when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the coast heard how Yahweh had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and their spirits failed for fear of the Israelites.

2 At that time Yahweh said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel once again." **3** So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

4 Now this is why Joshua circumcised them: All those who came out of Egypt—all the men of war—had died on the journey in the wilderness after they had left Egypt. **5** Though all who had come out were circumcised, none of those born in the wilderness on the journey from Egypt had been circumcised.

6 For the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness forty years, until all the nation's men of war who had come out of Egypt had died, since they did not obey Yahweh. So Yahweh vowed never to let them see the land He had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. **7** And He raised up their sons in their place, and these were the ones Joshua circumcised. Until this time they were still uncircumcised, since they had not been circumcised along the way.

■ **JOSH 5:1 [FULFILLS]** The nations of Canaan would hear and melt in fear ← EX 15:14-16 p.~

■ **JOSH 5:2 [NOTE]** A whole army healing from circumcision right next to the enemy. It only makes sense if God was going to fight for them. Genesis 34:25 shows how risky it was.

8 And after all the nation had been circumcised, they stayed there in the camp until they were healed.

9 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." So that place has been called Gilgal to this day.

10 On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, while the Israelites were camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, they kept the Passover. **11** The day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate unleavened bread and roasted grain from the produce of the land.

12 And the day after they had eaten from the produce of the land, the manna ceased. There was no more manna for the Israelites, so that year they began to eat the crops of the land of Canaan.

THE COMMANDER OF YAHWEH'S ARMY

13 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in His hand. Joshua approached Him and asked, "Are You for us or for our enemies?"

14 "Neither," He replied. "I have now come as Commander of Yahweh's army."

Then Joshua fell facedown in reverence and asked Him, "What does my Lord have to say to His servant?"

15 The Commander of Yahweh's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy."

And Joshua did so.

■ **JOSH 5:12 [NOTE]** Forty years of manna ended the day after they ate food from the land. God provides in different ways, but He provides.

■ **JOSH 5:13 [MIRACLE]** Commander of Yahweh's army appears to Joshua

■ **JOSH 5:13 [NOTE]** WHO IS THIS? He accepts Joshua's worship, and the ground is holy, like the burning bush in Exodus 3:5. Many believe He is Jesus before His birth, so His words are red; others say a high angel. See the Big Question pages Who Was the Commander?

■ **JOSH 5:14 [PROPHECY]** The Captain of the Lord's host → HEB 2:10 · MEDIUM p.~

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE GOD SPEAKING

6

CHAPTER 6 IN 30 SECONDS

God's battle plan: march around Jericho once a day for six days, seven times on the seventh, blow the horns and shout. Nobody would teach this at a military academy. The walls fall, the city is destroyed, and Rahab and her family are saved, just as promised.

THE WALLS OF JERICO

¹Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

²And Yahweh said to Joshua, "Behold, I have delivered Jericho into your hand, along with its king and its mighty men of valor. ³March around the city with all the men of war, circling the city one time. Do this for six days. ⁴Have seven priests carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark. Then on the seventh day, march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the horns. ⁵And when there is a long blast of the ram's horn and you hear its sound, have all the people give a mighty shout. Then the wall of the city will collapse and all your people will charge straight into the city."

THE BIG QUESTION

WHO WAS THE COMMANDER?

The Man with the Drawn Sword

JOSHUA 5:13 TO 6:2 · EXODUS 3:5 · HEBREWS 2:10

WHAT HAPPENED

Near Jericho, Joshua sees a Man with a drawn sword and asks, Are You for us or for our enemies? He answers, Neither. I have now come as Commander of Yahweh's army. Joshua falls facedown and worships, and the Commander tells him to take off his sandals, because the place is holy, 5:13 to 15.

CLUE 1: HE ACCEPTS WORSHIP

When John fell down before an angel, the angel said, Do not do that! Worship God, Revelation 22:8 to 9. This Commander does not stop Joshua.

CLUE 2: HOLY GROUND

Take off your sandals is almost word for word what God said to Moses at the

burning bush, Exodus 3:5. There, the angel of Yahweh in the fire turned out to be God speaking.

CLUE 3: THE NEXT VERSE

Right after this, Yahweh speaks to Joshua and gives him the battle plan for Jericho, 6:2. Many read 6:2 as the same conversation going on.

WHAT THE EARLY CHURCH SAID

Justin Martyr, about AD 155, said this Commander was Christ before He became a man. Origen, about AD 250, said the same in his sermons on Joshua.

THE QUESTION BEHIND THE QUESTION

Joshua asked whose side He was on. The answer was, Neither. The Commander did not come to join Joshua's side. The real question is whether we are on His.

Every View

JOSHUA 5:13 TO 15 · DANIEL 10:13 · 12:1 · REVELATION 12:7

VIEW 1: JESUS BEFORE HIS BIRTH

Many Christians believe this is the Son of God appearing before He was born in Bethlehem. The worship, the holy ground and 6:2 point to Him. Hebrews 2:10 calls Jesus the captain of their salvation in the King James. This is why His words are printed in red.

VIEW 2: THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

Daniel calls Michael one of the chief princes and the great prince who stands over Israel, Daniel 10:13 and 12:1, and Revelation 12:7 shows Michael leading God's armies. Some Jewish teachers linked him to Michael. David Kimhi, about AD 1200, explained the Commander by pointing to Michael, the great prince.

VIEW 3: A HIGH ANGEL

Others say He was a high angel. The ground was holy because God was present, and Joshua bowed in respect, as people sometimes bowed to angels and kings.

THE ANGEL OF YAHWEH

Elsewhere the angel of Yahweh speaks as God Himself. Hagar said, You are the God who sees me, Genesis 16:13, and Noah said, We have seen God, Judges 13:22. Many link the Commander

■ JOSH 6:5 [PROPHECY] God said the wall of Jericho would fall when the people shouted → JOSH 6:20 p.--

ARCHAEOLOGY BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

to this angel, and many see both as the Son before His birth.

A DIFFERENT TEACHING

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is the archangel Michael. Most churches reject that, because Hebrews 1:5 to 6 says God never called an angel His Son and tells all the angels to worship Him.

WHAT ALL AGREE ON

Joshua was not in charge of this war. God's army was already there before Joshua drew a sword, and the first thing Joshua had to do was bow.

⁶ So Joshua son of Nun summoned the priests and said, "Take up the ark of the covenant and have seven priests carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark of Yahweh."

⁷ And he told the people, "Advance and march around the city, with the armed troops going ahead of the ark of Yahweh."

⁸ After Joshua had spoken to the people, seven priests carrying seven rams' horns before Yahweh advanced and blew the horns, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed them. ⁹ While the horns continued to sound, the armed troops marched ahead of the priests who blew the horns, and the rear guard followed the ark.

¹⁰ But Joshua had commanded the people: "Do not give a battle cry or let your voice be heard; do not let one word come out of your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you are to shout!" ¹¹ So he had the ark of Yahweh carried around the city, circling it once. And the people returned to the camp and spent the night there.

¹² Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests took the ark of Yahweh. ¹³ And the seven priests carrying seven rams' horns kept marching ahead of the ark of Yahweh and blowing the horns. The armed troops went in front of them and the rear guard followed the ark of Yahweh, while the horns kept sounding. ¹⁴ So on the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

¹⁵ Then on the seventh day, they got up at dawn and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. That was the only day they circled the city seven times.

¹⁶ After the seventh time around, the priests blew the horns, and Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For Yahweh has given you the city!" ¹⁷ Now the city and everything in it must be devoted to Yahweh for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all those with her in her house will live, because she hid the spies we sent. ¹⁸ But keep away from the things devoted to destruction, lest you yourself be set apart for destruction. If you take any of these, you will set apart the camp of Israel for destruction and bring disaster upon it. ¹⁹ For all the silver and gold and all the articles of bronze and iron are holy to Yahweh; they must go into His treasury."

²⁰ So when the rams' horns sounded, the people shouted. When they heard the blast of the horn, the people gave a great shout, and the wall collapsed. Then all the people charged straight into the city and captured it. ²¹ With the edge of the sword they devoted to destruction everything in the city—man and woman, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys.

²² Meanwhile, Joshua told the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the house of the prostitute and bring out the woman and all who are with her, just as you promised her." ²³ So the young spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother and brothers, and all who belonged to her. They brought out her whole family and settled them outside the camp of Israel.

■ **JOSH 6:17 [NOTE] DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION.** The Hebrew word is *herem*, set apart for God. Why did God command this? See Holy War and the Canaanites in Deuteronomy, p.~.

■ **JOSH 6:20 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Kathleen Kenyon's debated dating; Bryant Wood's reanalysis supports Late Bronze destruction matching biblical chronology → FIELD NOTES p.12

■ **JOSH 6:20 [MIRACLE]** Walls of Jericho fell after seven days of marching

■ **JOSH 6:20 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → HEB 11:30 p.~

■ **JOSH 6:20 [FULFILLS]** God said the wall of Jericho would fall when the people shouted → JOSH 6:5 p.~

■ **JOSH 6:23 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → HEB 11:31 p.~

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM, THE DATE IS DEBATED

JERICO

JOSHUA 2:1 TO 24 · 6:1 TO 27 · 1 KINGS 16:34 · HEBREWS 11:30



Tell es Sultan, ancient Jericho, with the deep trench Kathleen Kenyon dug in the 1950s. Photo Berthold Werner. Public domain.

WHAT IT IS

Tell es Sultan, the ruin hill of ancient Jericho, next to a big spring in the Jordan Valley, about 850 feet below sea level. Jericho is one of the oldest towns on earth.

HOW OLD IT IS

People lived here more than 10,000 years ago. A stone tower about 28 feet tall was built about 8000 BC, thousands of years before Joshua. The city walls Joshua's story is about are much later. Their date is the big debate below.

WHERE AND WHEN DUG

Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger, 1907 to 1909. John Garstang, 1930 to 1936. Kathleen Kenyon, 1952 to 1958. An Italian and Palestinian team from 1997. In 2023 it was named a World Heritage Site.

WHAT WAS FOUND

A city surrounded by a stone retaining wall with a mudbrick wall on top. A thick layer of ash. Fallen mudbricks piled at the foot of the wall. Many jars still full of grain, burned. Joshua 6 says the city was burned and nothing was to be taken. Grain is usually the first thing an army steals.

THE BIG DEBATE

Garstang said the city fell about 1400 BC, just when the early date puts Joshua. Kenyon redated it to about 1550 BC and said Jericho had no real city around 1400. In 1990 Bryant Wood looked again at the pottery and Egyptian scarabs and argued for about 1400. A 1995 carbon test on burned grain gave about 1560 BC. Most archaeologists still follow Kenyon, but the debate is not over.

THE SPRING

Jericho sits beside a big spring that still flows today, Ein es Sultan. Christians call it Elisha's Spring, because Elisha made its bad water good, 2 Kings 2:19 to 22. That spring is why people lived here for ten thousand years.

LATER JERICHO

Hiel rebuilt the city in Ahab's day, 1 Kings 16:34. The Jericho of Jesus, where He met Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1 to 10, was a newer town a mile or two to the south, with King Herod's winter palaces.

RIGHT AFTER HARVEST

Joshua 3:15 says the Jordan was flooding at harvest time, in the spring. Those who hold the early date say the full grain jars fit a city taken right after harvest after a short siege, because the food was never eaten up.

RAHAB'S HOUSE

Joshua 2:15 says Rahab's house was built into the city wall. The German team found houses between the inner and outer walls, where a stretch of wall did not fall. Some see Rahab's house there, but most archaeologists date those houses earlier.

THE WALLS FELL OUT

The diggers found mudbricks lying in a heap at the foot of the stone wall, as if the wall above had tumbled outward. A pile like that makes a ramp, and Joshua 6:20 says the people went straight up into the city.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No inscription names Joshua or Israel. It shows a walled city that burned with its grain inside. Whether that was Joshua's Jericho depends on which date is right.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

²⁴ Then the Israelites burned up the city and everything in it. However, they put the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of Yahweh's house.

²⁵ And Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her father's household and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent to spy out Jericho. So she has lived among the Israelites to this day.

²⁶ At that time Joshua invoked this solemn oath:

"Cursed before Yahweh is the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho; at the cost of his firstborn he will lay its foundations; at the cost of his youngest he will set up its gates."

²⁷ So Yahweh was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

7

CHAPTER 7 IN 30 SECONDS

Israel attacks the little town of Ai and loses.

Joshua falls on his face, and God tells him why: someone stole from the things devoted to Him.

Achan confesses. I saw, I wanted, I took, I hid. It does not end well for Achan.

THE DEFEAT AT AI

¹ The Israelites, however, acted unfaithfully regarding the things devoted to destruction. Achan son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of what was set apart. So the anger of Yahweh burned against the Israelites.

² Meanwhile, Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven to the east of Bethel, and told them, "Go up and spy out the land." So the men went up and spied out Ai.

³ On returning to Joshua, they reported, "There is no need to send all the people; two or three thousand men are enough to go up and attack Ai. Since the people of Ai are so few, you need not wear out all our people there."

⁴ So about three thousand men went up, but they fled before the men of Ai. ⁵ And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of them, chasing them from the gate as far as the quarries and striking them down on the slopes. So the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

⁶ Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown before the ark of Yahweh until evening, as did the elders of Israel; and they all sprinkled dust on their heads.

⁷ "O, Lord Yahweh," Joshua said, "why did You ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to be destroyed? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan! ⁸ O Lord, what can I say, now that Israel has turned its back and run from its enemies? ⁹ When the Canaanites and all who live in the land hear about this, they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. Then what will You do for Your great name?"

¹⁰ But Yahweh said to Joshua, "**Stand up! Why have you fallen on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have transgressed My covenant that I commanded them, and they have taken some of what was devoted to destruction. Indeed, they have stolen and lied, and they have put these things with their own possessions. ¹² This is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies. They will turn their backs and run from their enemies, because they themselves have been set apart for destruction. I will no longer be with you unless you remove from among you whatever is devoted to destruction.**

¹³ **Get up and consecrate the people, saying, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, for this is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: Among you, O Israel, there are things devoted to destruction. You cannot stand against your enemies until you re-**

■ JOSH 6:26 [PROPHECY] Joshua cursed the rebuilder of Jericho: would lay its foundation at the cost of his firstborn and gate at the cost of his youngest → 1KI 16:34 p.---

■ JOSH 6:26 [NOTE] Centuries later, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho and lost his oldest and youngest sons, 1 Kings 16:34. Some think he buried them in the foundations as a pagan sacrifice; others think they simply died.

■ JOSH 7:1 [NOTE] One man stole, but the verse says the Israelites acted unfaithfully. In God's eyes the whole camp was tied together.

NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

move them. ¹⁴ In the morning you must present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe that Yahweh selects shall come forward clan by clan, and the clan that Yahweh selects shall come forward family by family, and the family that Yahweh selects shall come forward man by man. ¹⁵ The one who is caught with the things devoted to destruction must be burned, along with all that belongs to him, because he has transgressed the covenant of Yahweh and committed an outrage in Israel."

THE SIN OF ACHAN

¹⁶ So Joshua arose early the next morning and had Israel come forward tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was selected.

¹⁷ He had the clans of Judah come forward, and the clan of the Zerahites was selected. He had the clan of the Zerahites come forward, and the family of Zabdi was selected. ¹⁸ And he had the family of Zabdi come forward man by man, and Achan son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was selected.

¹⁹ So Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and make a confession to Him. I urge you to tell me what you have done; do not hide it from me."

²⁰ "It is true," Achan replied, "I have sinned against Yahweh, the God of Israel. This is what I did: ²¹ When I saw among the spoils a beautiful cloak from Shinar, five pounds of silver, and a bar of gold weighing a pound and a quarter, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

²² So Joshua sent messengers who ran to the tent, and there it all was, hidden in his tent, with the silver underneath. ²³ They took the things from inside the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites, and spread them out before Yahweh.

²⁴ Then Joshua, together with all Israel, took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the cloak, the bar of gold, his sons and daughters, his oxen and donkeys and sheep, his tent, and everything else he owned, and brought them to the Valley of Achor.

²⁵ "Why have you brought this trouble upon us?" said Joshua. "Today Yahweh will bring trouble upon you!" And all Israel stoned him to death. Then they stoned the others and burned their bodies. ²⁶ And they heaped over Achan a large pile of rocks that remains to this day. So Yahweh turned from His burning anger. Therefore that place is called the Valley of Achor to this day.

8

CHAPTER 8 IN 30 SECONDS

Round two at Ai. Joshua sets an ambush, pretends to run, and the whole army of Ai chases him out of town. The ambush takes the empty city and burns it. Then Joshua builds an altar on Mount Ebal and reads the whole Law to the people, just as Moses said.

THE CONQUEST OF AI

¹ Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid or discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. See, I have delivered into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. ² And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king, except that you may carry off their plunder and livestock for yourselves. Set up an ambush behind the city."

³ So Joshua and the whole army set out to attack Ai. Joshua chose 30,000 mighty men of valor and sent them out at night ⁴ with these orders: "Pay attention. You are to lie in ambush behind the city, not too far from it. All of you must be ready. ⁵ Then I and all the troops with me will advance on the city. When they come out against us as they did the first time, we will flee from them. ⁶ They will pursue us until we have drawn them away from the

■ JOSH 7:20 [NOTABLE] Saw, coveted, took, hid: the same steps as Eve in Genesis 3:6. One man's hidden sin cost Israel the battle at Ai and 36 lives.

■ JOSH 7:26 [NOTE] Achor means trouble. Centuries later God promised to make the Valley of Achor a door of hope, Hosea 2:15.

ARCHAEOLOGY GOD SPEAKING

city, for they will say, 'The Israelites are running away from us as they did before.' So as we flee from them, ⁷you are to rise from the ambush and seize the city, for Yahweh your God will deliver it into your hand. ⁸And when you have taken the city, set it on fire. Do as Yahweh has commanded! See, I have given you orders."

⁹ So Joshua sent them out, and they went to the place of ambush and lay in wait between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai. But Joshua spent that night among the people.

¹⁰ Joshua got up early the next morning and mobilized his men, and he and the elders of Israel marched before them up to Ai. ¹¹ Then all the troops who were with him marched up and approached the city. They arrived in front of Ai and camped to the north of it, with the valley between them and the city.

¹² Now Joshua had taken about five thousand men and set up an ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. ¹³ So the forces were stationed with the main camp to the north of the city and the rear guard to the west of the city. And that night Joshua went into the valley.

¹⁴ When the king of Ai saw the Israelites, he hurried out early in the morning with the men of the city to engage them in battle at an appointed place overlooking the Arabah. But he did not know that an ambush had been set up against him behind the city. ¹⁵ Joshua and all Israel let themselves be beaten back before them, and they fled toward the wilderness. ¹⁶ Then all the men of Ai were summoned to pursue them, and they followed Joshua and were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷ Not a man was left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel, leaving the city wide open while they pursued Israel.

¹⁸ Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Hold out your battle lance toward Ai, for into your hand I will deliver the city." So Joshua held out his battle lance toward Ai, ¹⁹ and as soon as he did so, the men in ambush rose quickly from their position. They

rushed forward, entered the city, captured it, and immediately set it on fire.

²⁰ When the men of Ai turned and looked back, the smoke of the city was rising into the sky. They could not escape in any direction, and the troops who had fled to the wilderness now turned against their pursuers. ²¹ When Joshua and all Israel saw that the men in ambush had captured the city and that smoke was rising from it, they turned around and struck down the men of Ai. ²² Meanwhile, those in the ambush came out of the city against them, and the men of Ai were trapped between the Israelite forces on both sides. So Israel struck them down until no survivor or fugitive remained. ²³ But they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

²⁴ When Israel had finished killing all the men of Ai who had pursued them into the field and wilderness, and when every last one of them had fallen by the sword, all the Israelites returned to Ai and put it to the sword as well. ²⁵ A total of twelve thousand men and women fell that day—all the people of Ai. ²⁶ Joshua did not draw back the hand that held his battle lance until he had devoted to destruction all who lived in Ai. ²⁷ Israel took for themselves only the cattle and plunder of that city, as Yahweh had commanded Joshua.

28 So Joshua burned Ai and made it a permanent heap of ruins, a desolation to this day. ²⁹ He hung the king of Ai on a tree until evening, and at sunset Joshua commanded that they take down the body from the tree and throw it down at the entrance of the city gate. And over it they raised a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day.

JOSHUA RENEWS THE COVENANT // DEUTERONOMY 27:1-10

³⁰ At that time Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal to Yahweh, the God of Israel,

■ JOSH 8:28 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Khirbet el-Maqatir excavations support a Late Bronze Age destruction at this site → FIELD NOTES p.16

■ JOSH 8:30 [FIELD NOTES] A stone platform found on Mount Ebal may be this altar. See the Mount Ebal Altar Field Notes page in Deuteronomy, p.-.

■ JOSH 8:30 [TEXT] The oldest Hebrew copy of Joshua, a Dead Sea Scroll called 4QJosh a, puts the reading of the Law, 8:34 to 35, right after the Jordan crossing, before

³¹just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded the Israelites. He built it according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: “an altar of uncut stones on which no iron tool has been used.” And on it they offered burnt offerings to Yahweh, and they sacrificed peace offerings.

³²And there in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua inscribed on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. ³³All Israel, foreigners and citizens alike, with their elders, officers, and judges, stood on both sides of the ark of the covenant of Yahweh facing the Levitical priests who carried it. Half of the people stood in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded earlier, to bless the people of Israel.

³⁴Afterward, Joshua read aloud all the words of the law—the blessings and the curses—according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. ³⁵There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua failed to read before the whole assembly of Israel, including the women, the little ones, and the foreigners who lived among them.

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM, THE SITE IS DEBATED

WHERE WAS AI?

JOSHUA 7:2 · 8:1 TO 29 · GENESIS 12:8



Left, et Tell, the traditional site of Ai, with walls from about 2400 BC. Photo Alex Ostrovski, CC BY SA 4.0. Right, Khirbet el Maqatir. Photo Tom Miller, CC BY SA 2.0.

WHAT IT IS

Ai was a small town east of Bethel, 7:2. Its name means the ruin. Joshua burned it and made it a heap forever, 8:28. The question is which ruin is Ai.

THE TRADITIONAL SITE

Et Tell, about ten miles north of

Jerusalem. Judith Marquet Krause dug it from 1933 to 1935 and Joseph Callaway from 1964 to 1972. They found a big city destroyed about 2400 BC, then nothing until a small village about 1200 BC. No city stood there in Joshua's day by either date.

HOW OLD IT IS

Et Tell's walls are from about 3000 to 2400 BC, more than a thousand years before Joshua. That is the problem.

ANOTHER CANDIDATE

Bryant Wood, Scott Stripling and the Associates for Biblical Research dug Khirbet el Maqatir, less than a mile west of et Tell, from 1995 to 2001 and 2009 to 2016. They found a small fort from the Late Bronze Age, about the size the Bible describes, with a gate on the north and signs that it burned. They argue it fits Joshua 7 and 8 better.

THE BIG DEBATE

Most archaeologists say et Tell is Ai and the story is not history, or that the name was given to a ruin people already knew. Some say Bethel itself is in the wrong place, which would move Ai too. Supporters of Maqatir say et Tell was simply the wrong guess. Maqatir also has later ruins, from the time of Jesus and a Byzantine monastery.

WHAT JOSHUA 8 DESCRIBES

A small town. The spies said two or three thousand men could take it, 7:3. Its men chased Israel and left the gates open, 8:17. Joshua burned it and made it a heap, a tel, and piled stones over its king's body at the gate, 8:28 to 29.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No sign at either site says Ai. The debate is about which hill fits the Bible's map and dates.

9

CHAPTER 9 IN 30 SECONDS

The people of Gibeon show up in worn out sandals with moldy bread and say, We come from a very far country. Israel never asks God and signs a peace treaty. Three days later they find out the Gibeonites live next door. A promise is a promise, so the Gibeonites become woodcutters and water carriers.

5:2. Many scholars think the altar story stood there too. The Greek Bible puts it after 9:2. Copies did not all agree on where the story belongs.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE **NOTABLE**

THE DECEIT OF THE GIBEONITES

¹Now when news of this reached all the kings west of the Jordan—those in the hill country, the foothills, and all along the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon (the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites)—²they came together to wage war against Joshua and Israel.

³But the people of Gibeon, having heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai,⁴ acted deceptively and set out as envoys, carrying on their donkeys worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended.

⁵They put worn, patched sandals on their feet and threadbare clothing on their bodies, and their whole supply of bread was dry and moldy. ⁶They went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land; please make a treaty with us."

⁷But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you dwell near us. How can we make a treaty with you?"

⁸"We are your servants," they said to Joshua.

Then Joshua asked them, "Who are you and where have you come from?"

⁹"Your servants have come from a very distant land," they replied, "because of the fame of Yahweh your God. For we have heard the reports about Him: all that He did in Egypt,¹⁰ and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites beyond the Jordan—Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth.

¹¹So the elders and inhabitants of our land told us, 'Take provisions for your journey; go to meet them and say to them: We are your servants. Please make a treaty with us.'

¹²This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But look, it is now dry and moldy. ¹³These wineskins were new when we filled them, but look, they are cracked.

And these clothes and sandals are worn out from our very long journey."

¹⁴Then the men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not seek the counsel of Yahweh.

¹⁵And Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore an oath to them.

¹⁶Three days after they had made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites learned that they were neighbors, living among them. ¹⁷So the Israelites set out and on the third day arrived at their cities—Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁸But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn an oath to them by Yahweh, the God of Israel. And the whole congregation grumbled against the leaders.

¹⁹All the leaders answered, "We have sworn an oath to them by Yahweh, the God of Israel, and now we cannot touch them. ²⁰This is how we will treat them: We will let them live, so that no wrath will fall on us because of the oath we swore to them." ²¹They continued, "Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for the whole congregation." So the leaders kept their promise.

²²Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, "Why did you deceive us by telling us you live far away from us, when in fact you live among us? ²³Now therefore you are under a curse and will perpetually serve as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."

²⁴The Gibeonites answered, "Your servants were told clearly that Yahweh your God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land and wipe out all its inhabitants before you. So we greatly feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we have done this. ²⁵Now we are in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you."

■ JOSH 9:3 [FIELD NOTES] Gibeon has been found and dug. See the Pool of Gibeon Field Notes page.

■ JOSH 9:4 [NOTE] The oldest trick in the book: dress the part. Worn sacks, cracked wineskins, patched sandals and dry, moldy bread.

■ JOSH 9:14 [NOTABLE] The Gibeonites fooled Israel with moldy bread and worn out sandals. Israel trusted their own eyes and never prayed about it.

■ JOSH 9:23 [FULFILLS] Noah said Canaan would become a servant to his brothers ← GEN 9:25 · MEDIUM p.~

²⁶ So Joshua did this and delivered them from the hands of the Israelites, and they did not kill the Gibeonites. ²⁷ On that day he made them woodcutters and water carriers, as they are to this day for the congregation of Yahweh and for the altar at the place He would choose.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH
FOR GIBEON, LATER THAN JOSHUA FOR THE POOL

THE POOL OF GIBEON

JOSHUA 9:3 TO 27 · 10:1 TO 12 · 2 SAMUEL 2:13 · JEREMIAH 41:12



The steps cut into the rock inside the great pool at el Jib, ancient Gibeon. Photo PikiWiki Israel, CC BY 2.5.

WHAT IT IS

A round shaft cut into solid rock, about 37 feet across and 35 feet deep, with steps spiraling down the side. A tunnel keeps going down to water, about 80 feet below the top. It is at el Jib, a village about six miles northwest of Jerusalem.

HOW OLD IT IS

It was cut in the Iron Age, the time of Israel's judges and kings, about 1100 to 700 BC. That is after Joshua.

HOW WE KNOW IT IS GIBEON

James Pritchard dug here from 1956 to 1962 and found dozens of jar handles with the name Gibeon scratched on them in old Hebrew letters. The site is no longer a guess.

WHAT ELSE WAS FOUND

Dozens of cellars cut into the rock, which Pritchard thought could hold about 25,000 gallons of wine. Gibeon was a wine town.

IN THE BIBLE

The Gibeonites tricked Joshua, chapter 9, and Joshua's long day happened over Gibeon, 10:12. Later Joab and Abner's men met by the pool of Gibeon, 2

Samuel 2:13, and Jeremiah 41:12 mentions the great pool in Gibeon.

THE BIG DEBATE

Pritchard found tombs from Joshua's age but very little of a town. Some say the town of that time has not been found under the village; others see a problem for the story.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The pool is later than Joshua. It shows that Gibeon was real, was where the Bible says, and kept its name for thousands of years.

10

CHAPTER 10 IN 30 SECONDS

Five Amorite kings attack Gibeon, and Joshua marches all night to help. God throws hailstones, and Joshua asks the sun to stand still over Gibeon. It does. The five kings hide in a cave and get found. Then Joshua sweeps through the south.

THE DAY THE SUN STOOD STILL

¹ Now Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had captured Ai and devoted it to destruction—doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king—and that the people of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were living near them. ² So Adoni-zedek and his people were greatly alarmed, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were mighty.

³ Therefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent word to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, ⁴ “Come up and help me. We will attack Gibeon, because they have made peace with Joshua and the Israelites.”

⁵ So the five kings of the Amorites—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon—joined forces and advanced with all their armies. They camped before Gibeon and made war against it.

■ JOSH 10:1 [FIELD NOTES] In the 1300s BC a king of Jerusalem named Abdi Heba wrote to Pharaoh for help. See the Amarna Letters Field Notes page.

MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

⁶ Then the men of Gibeon sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: "Do not abandon your servants. Come quickly and save us! Help us, because all the kings of the Amorites from the hill country have joined forces against us."

⁷ So Joshua and his whole army, including all the mighty men of valor, came from Gilgal.

⁸ Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for I have delivered them into your hand. Not one of them shall stand against you."

⁹ After marching all night from Gilgal, Joshua caught them by surprise. ¹⁰ And Yahweh threw them into confusion before Israel, who defeated them in a great slaughter at Gibeon, pursued them along the ascent to Beth-horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah. ¹¹

As they fled before Israel along the descent from Beth-horon to Azekah, Yahweh cast down on them large hailstones from the sky, and more of them were killed by the hailstones than by the swords of the Israelites.

¹² On the day that Yahweh gave the Amorites over to the Israelites, Joshua spoke to Yahweh in the presence of Israel:

"O sun, stand still over Gibeon,
O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."

¹³ So the sun stood still
and the moon stopped
until the nation took vengeance
upon its enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar?

"So the sun stopped
in the middle of the sky
and delayed going down
about a full day."

■ JOSH 10:11 [MIRACLE] Large hailstones killed more enemies than Israel's sword

■ JOSH 10:12 [MIRACLE] Sun stood still over Gibeon — Joshua's long day

■ JOSH 10:12 [NOTE] THE LONG DAY. Did the earth stop turning? See the Big Question pages Did the Sun Stand Still?

■ JOSH 10:13 [NOTE] The Book of Jashar, the Book of the Upright One, was a book of old songs and poems. It is quoted again in 2 Samuel 1:18 and has been lost. The Book of Jashar sold today was written in later centuries.

¹⁴ There has been no day like it before or since, when Yahweh listened to the voice of a man, because Yahweh fought for Israel.

¹⁵ Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

DID THE SUN STAND STILL?

Joshua's Long Day

JOSHUA 10:12 TO 14 • HABAKKUK 3:11 • ISAIAH 38:8

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

During the battle for Gibeon, Joshua said, O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. There has been no day like it, before or since, 10:12 to 14. Habakkuk 3:11 remembers it too.

WHERE IT HAPPENED

Joshua had marched all night from Gilgal and chased the five kings down the pass of Beth Horon, 10:9 to 11. The sun was over Gibeon in the east and the moon over the Valley of Aijalon in the west. Isaiah 28:21 remembers what God did in the Valley of Gibeon.

THE HEBREW WORDS

The word for stand still, dom, usually means be silent or be still. In 10:13 the sun stood, amad. Those words are why people read the verse different ways.

A POEM INSIDE THE STORY

The lines Joshua spoke are a poem, and 10:13 says they were written in the Book of Jashar, a lost book of songs. The prose around them says the day was longer than any other.

THE GALILEO FIGHT

Martin Luther, at his dinner table in 1539, laughed off Copernicus' new idea that the earth moves around the sun. Joshua told the sun to stand still, he said, not the earth. Galileo answered with this very verse in his 1615 Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina. The Catholic Church condemned his view in 1616 and put him on trial in 1633.

THE NASA STORY

For years a story went around that NASA computers found a missing day that

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH FOR THE LETTERS, DEBATED FOR THE HABIRU

THE AMARNA LETTERS

JOSHUA 10:1 TO 5 · 11:1 · 24:1



A letter from Abdi Heba, king of Jerusalem, to Pharaoh. Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

About 380 clay tablets, mostly letters, written in cuneiform to Pharaohs Amenhotep III and Akhenaten. Many come from kings of Canaanite cities that Joshua names: Jerusalem, Hazor, Gezer, Lachish and Shechem.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 1360 to 1335 BC. That is after Joshua by the early date and before him by the late date.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In 1887 a local woman digging at Tell el Amarna, Akhenaten's capital in Egypt, found them. They are now in museums in Berlin, London, Cairo and elsewhere.

WHAT THEY SAY

The kings fight each other and beg Pharaoh for soldiers. Abdi Heba of Jerusalem writes that the Habiru are plundering all the king's lands, and that the land of Shechem was handed to the Habiru. Joshua 10 says another king of Jerusalem, Adoni Zedek, led five kings against Israel.

WHO WERE THE HABIRU?

The word was used for outsiders, raiders and hired soldiers all over the Near East for hundreds of years, from Syria to Egypt. It sounds like Hebrew, *ivri*.

THE BIG DEBATE

Some who hold the early date think some Habiru were the Israelites, or that the letters show Canaan in chaos after Joshua. Most scholars say Habiru was a social group, not a people, though the Hebrews may have been counted among them. The letters never name Israel or Joshua.

A SHECHEM CLUE

Joshua never tells of a battle for Shechem, yet Israel gathers at Mount Ebal beside Shechem in 8:30 to 35, and at Shechem itself in 24:1. The Amarna letters show Shechem already working with the Habiru, which some find interesting.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

They do not prove the conquest. They show what Canaan was like: many small kings, walled cities, and no help coming from Egypt.

proved Joshua's long day. NASA says it never happened, and computers cannot find a missing day.

Every View

JOSHUA 10:11 TO 14 · 2 KINGS 20:9 TO 11

VIEW 1: THE EARTH STOPPED

God slowed or stopped the earth's turning and held everything else in place.

~~The God who made the sun can stop it.~~
2 Kings 20:9 to 11 tells of a shadow going backward.

VIEW 2: THE LIGHT STAYED

God did not stop the earth but made the light last, perhaps by bending sunlight, so the land stayed bright for the battle.

VIEW 3: STOP SHINING

Since dom can mean be silent, some say Joshua asked the sun to stop beating down on his tired men, and God sent the hailstorm of 10:11 to cool and darken the sky.

VIEW 4: AN ECLIPSE

In 2017 Colin Humphreys and Graeme Waddington argued that it was an eclipse of the sun visible in Canaan on October 30, 1207 BC. Back in 1918 Robert Dick Wilson of Princeton argued that the Hebrew words meant the sun was eclipsed. Others say an eclipse does not fit a day that lasted longer.

VIEW 5: A SIGN IN THE SKY

John Walton and others point out that ancient peoples read the sun and moon as signs. They think Joshua asked for the sun and moon to be in a position that meant victory for Israel and doom for the enemy.

VIEW 6: POETIC LANGUAGE

Some read it as poetry from the Book of Jashar, the way Judges 5:20 says the stars fought from heaven. The point is that God fought for Israel.

WHAT ALL AGREE ON

Something happened that day that had never happened before. Yahweh listened to a man, because Yahweh fought for Israel, 10:14. And the hailstones killed more than the swords did, 10:11.

THE VICTORY AT MAKKEDAH

¹⁶ Now the five kings had fled and hidden in the cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷ And Joshua was informed: "The five kings have been found; they are hiding in the cave at Makkedah."

¹⁸ So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and post men there to guard them. ¹⁹ But you, do not stop there. Pursue your enemies and attack them from behind. Do not let them reach their cities, for Yahweh your God has delivered them into your hand."

²⁰ So Joshua and the Israelites continued to inflict a terrible slaughter until they had finished them off, and the remaining survivors retreated to the fortified cities. ²¹ The whole army returned safely to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah, and no one dared to utter a word against the Israelites.

²² Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me." ²³ So they brought the five kings out of the cave—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon.

²⁴ When they had brought the kings to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the army commanders who had accompanied him, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings."

So the commanders came forward and put their feet on their necks.

²⁵ "Do not be afraid or discouraged," Joshua said. "Be strong and courageous, for Yahweh will do this to all the enemies you fight."

²⁶ After this, Joshua struck down and killed the kings, and he hung their bodies on five trees and left them there until evening. ²⁷ At sunset Joshua ordered that they be taken down from the trees and thrown into the cave in which they had hidden. Then large stones were placed against the mouth of the cave, and the stones are there to this day.

²⁸ On that day Joshua captured Makkedah and put it to the sword, along with its king. He devoted to destruction everyone in the city, leaving no survivors. So he did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

CONQUEST OF THE SOUTHERN CITIES

²⁹ Then Joshua and all Israel with him moved on from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against Libnah. ³⁰ And Yahweh also delivered that city and its king into the hand of Israel, and Joshua put all the people to the sword, leaving no survivors. And he did to the king of Libnah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY GOD SPEAKING

³¹ And Joshua and all Israel with him moved on from Libnah to Lachish. They laid siege to it and fought against it. ³² And Yahweh delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, and Joshua captured it on the second day. He put all the people to the sword, just as he had done to Libnah.

³³ At that time Horam king of Gezer went to help Lachish, but Joshua struck him down along with his people, leaving no survivors.

³⁴ So Joshua moved on from Lachish to Eglon, and all Israel with him. They laid siege to it and fought against it. ³⁵ That day they captured Eglon and put it to the sword, and Joshua devoted to destruction everyone in the city, just as he had done to Lachish.

³⁶ Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron and fought against it. ³⁷ They captured it and put to the sword its king, all its villages, and all the people. Joshua left no survivors, just as he had done at Eglon; he devoted to destruction Hebron and everyone in it.

³⁸ Finally Joshua and all Israel with him turned toward Debir and fought against it.

³⁹ And they captured Debir, its king, and all its villages. They put them to the sword and devoted to destruction everyone in the city, leaving no survivors. Joshua did to Debir and its king as he had done to Hebron and as he had done to Libnah and its king.

⁴⁰ So Joshua conquered the whole region—the hill country, the Negev, the foothills, and the slopes, together with all their kings—leaving no survivors. He devoted to destruction everything that breathed, just as Yahweh, the God of Israel, had commanded. ⁴¹ Joshua conquered the area from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, and the whole region of Goshen as far as Gibeon.

⁴² And because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for Israel, Joshua captured all these kings and their land in one cam-

paign. ⁴³ Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal.

11

CHAPTER 11 IN 30 SECONDS

The kings of the north gather an army like the sand on the seashore, with horses and chariots. God says, Do not be afraid. Joshua wins, burns Hazor, the head of all those kingdoms, and takes the land. And the land had rest from war.

CONQUEST OF THE NORTHERN CITIES

¹ Now when Jabin king of Hazor heard about these things, he sent word to Jobab king of Madon; to the kings of Shimron and Achshaph; ² to the kings of the north in the mountains, in the Arabah south of Chinnereth, in the foothills, and in Naphoth-dor to the west; ³ to the Canaanites in the east and west; to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the hill country; and to the Hivites at the foot of Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

⁴ So these kings came out with all their armies, a multitude as numerous as the sand on the seashore, along with a great number of horses and chariots. ⁵ All these kings joined forces and encamped at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

⁶ Then Yahweh said to Joshua, **“Do not be afraid of them, for by this time tomorrow I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You are to hamstring their horses and burn up their chariots.”**

⁷ So by the waters of Merom, Joshua and his whole army came upon them suddenly and attacked them, ⁸ and Yahweh delivered them into the hand of Israel, who struck them down and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward as far as the Valley of Mizpeh. They struck them down, leaving no survivors. ⁹ Joshua treated them as Yahweh had told him; he hamstringed their horses and burned up their chariots.

¹⁰ At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and put its king to the sword, because Hazor was formerly the head of all these kingdoms. ¹¹ The Is-

■ JOSH 10:40 [FULFILLS] The fourth generation would return ← GEN 15:16 p.~

■ JOSH 11:10 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Hazor destruction by fire → FIELD NOTES p.23

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE THE HEART DEMONIC

raelites put everyone in Hazor to the sword, devoting them to destruction. Nothing that breathed remained, and Joshua burned down Hazor itself.

¹² Joshua captured all these kings and their cities and put them to the sword. He devoted them to destruction, as Moses Yahweh's servant had commanded. ¹³ Yet Israel did not burn any of the cities built on their mounds, except Hazor, which Joshua burned.

¹⁴ The Israelites took for themselves all the plunder and livestock of these cities, but they put all the people to the sword until they had completely destroyed them, not sparing anyone who breathed. ¹⁵ As Yahweh had commanded His servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua. That is what Joshua did, leaving nothing undone of all that Yahweh had commanded Moses.

JOSHUA TAKES THE WHOLE LAND

¹⁶ So Joshua took this entire region: the hill country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah, and the mountains of Israel and their foothills, ¹⁷ from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon at the foot of Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death.

¹⁸ Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long period of time. ¹⁹ No city made peace with the Israelites except the Hivites living in Gibeon; all others were taken in battle. ²⁰ For it was of Yahweh to harden their hearts to engage Israel in battle, so that they would be set apart for destruction and would receive no mercy, being annihilated as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

²¹ At that time Joshua proceeded to eliminate the Anakim from the hill country of

Hebron, Debir, and Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah and of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction, along with their cities. ²² No Anakim were left in the land of the Israelites; only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod did any survive.

²³ So Joshua took the entire land, in keeping with all that Yahweh had spoken to Moses. And Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to the allotments to their tribes. Then the land had rest from war.

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENTIAL

DENCE: HIGH FOR THE FIRE, DEBATED FOR WHO SET IT

HAZOR BURNED

JOSHUA 11:1 TO 15 · JUDGES 4:2 · 1 KINGS 9:15



Stones of the Late Bronze Age palace at Hazor, cracked by the fire that burned the city. A modern roof now shelters them. Photo Bukvoed, CC BY 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Tel Hazor, north of the Sea of Galilee, was the biggest Canaanite city in the land, about 200 acres. Joshua 11:10 calls it the head of all those kingdoms, and 11:13 says it was the only northern city Joshua burned.

HOW OLD IT IS

The great Canaanite city lasted from about 1750 BC until a huge fire in the 1200s BC. Hazor's king is even named in letters from the 1700s BC found at Mari in Syria, and in letters from the 1300s BC found in Egypt.

WHERE AND WHEN DUG

Yigael Yadin, 1955 to 1958 and 1968. Amnon Ben Tor of the Hebrew University, from 1990. It is a World Heritage Site.

WHAT WAS FOUND

A thick burn layer over the whole city. In the palace the fire was so hot that the

■ JOSH 11:13 [NOTE] ONLY THREE CITIES BURNED. The book names only three cities Joshua burned: Jericho, 6:24, Ai, 8:28, and Hazor, 11:13. Israel moved into the other cities, Deuteronomy 6:10 to 11. That matters for archaeology. See When Was the Conquest? in the Big Question pages.

■ JOSH 11:20 [HEART] God hardened the hearts of the Canaanite kings so they would fight. Some see God confirming a choice they had already made, like Pharaoh's; others see His judgment at work.

■ JOSH 11:21 [DEMONIC] Joshua cut off the Anakim from the mountains; remnant only in Gaza, Gath, Ashdod
■ JOSH 11:23 [FULFILLS] The fourth generation would return ← GEN 15:16 p.-

basalt slabs cracked and the mudbrick turned partly to glass. Statues of gods and kings were found with their heads and hands cut off, as if the attackers hated the city's religion.

THE BIG DEBATE

Ben Tor thinks the Israelites burned it, and points to the broken idols, Deuteronomy 7:5. Others blame the Egyptians, the Sea Peoples, or a revolt of Hazor's own poor. Those who hold the early date say this 1200s fire was in Deborah's time, Judges 4, and look for Joshua's fire in an earlier layer.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No inscription says who lit the fire. It does show that Hazor was a great city, burned, with its idols smashed, as Joshua 11 describes.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

WHEN WAS THE CONQUEST?

The Early Date and the Late Date

1 KINGS 6:1 · JUDGES 11:26 · EXODUS 1:11 · JOSHUA 11:13

THE EARLY DATE

1 Kings 6:1 says Solomon began the temple 480 years after Israel left Egypt. Solomon's fourth year was about 966 BC, so the Exodus was about 1446 BC and the Jordan crossing about 1406 BC. Judges 11:26 says Israel had lived in the land for three hundred years by Jephthah's time. John Garstang's Jericho findings in the 1930s fit this date.

THE LATE DATE

Exodus 1:11 says Israel built the city of Rameses, a name tied to pharaohs of the 1200s BC. The Merneptah Stele, about 1208 BC, already names Israel in Canaan. Several cities burned in the 1200s BC. William Albright and many others put the conquest about 1230 BC and read the 480 years as twelve generations of forty years.

THE EXODUS QUESTION

Both dates depend on when the Exodus happened. See *When Was the Exodus?* in Exodus, p. x, and the Merneptah Stele Field Notes page there.

A KEY VERSE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

The book names only three cities that Joshua burned: Jericho, 6:24, Ai, 8:28,

and Hazor, 11:13. The rest they moved into. So most cities would not show a burn layer from Joshua at all, and digging for burned cities everywhere misreads the book.

THE BIBLE'S OWN PICTURE

Joshua 11:23 says Joshua took the whole land, but 13:1 says very much land remained, and Judges 1 lists towns never taken. The book describes armies beaten and kings killed, followed by a long, slow settling.

Every View

JOSHUA 11:13 · 13:1 · 24:13 · JUDGES 1

VIEW 1: A REAL CONQUEST

Joshua happened much as written. Early date supporters like Bryant Wood point to Jericho, Khirbet el Maqatir and an earlier burn at Hazor. Late date supporters, like Albright and G. Ernest Wright in the mid 1900s, pointed to cities burned in the 1200s BC.

VIEW 2: A SLOW MOVE IN

Albrecht Alt in 1925 and Martin Noth said Israel's tribes drifted into the empty hill country over many years, mostly in peace, and the battle stories came later.

VIEW 3: A REVOLT

George Mendenhall in 1962 and Norman Gottwald in 1979 said poor Canaanite farmers rose up against their city kings and joined a new faith in Yahweh.

VIEW 4: ISRAEL CAME FROM CANAAN

Israel Finkelstein, William Dever and others say Israel grew up inside Canaan. Surveys found about 250 new villages in the hill country about 1200 to 1000 BC, mostly without pig bones, unlike their neighbors. They see these villages as the first Israelites.

WHAT EACH SIDE ANSWERS

Critics say Jericho and Ai were empty in Joshua's day. Supporters answer that the dates or the sites are wrong, that 11:13 means few burn layers, and that the villages fit people who moved in after the war.

WHAT ALL AGREE ON

Most scholars agree that by about 1200 BC a people called Israel lived in the hill country of Canaan, worshiped a God named Yahweh, and remembered that

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

He gave them the land. Joshua 24:13 says it plainly: a land you did not work for, cities you did not build.

12

CHAPTER 12 IN 30 SECONDS

A list of the kings Israel defeated: two east of the Jordan under Moses and thirty one west of it under Joshua. It reads like a scoreboard. God kept every promise, and somebody wrote it down.

THE KINGS DEFEATED EAST OF THE JORDAN

¹Now these are the kings of the land whom the Israelites struck down and whose lands they took beyond the Jordan to the east, from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon, including all the Arabah eastward:

²Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon. He ruled from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Valley, along the middle of the valley, up to the Jabbok River (the border of the Ammonites), that is, half of Gilead, ³as well as the Arabah east of the Sea of Chinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), eastward through Beth-jeshimoth, and southward below the slopes of Pisgah.

⁴And Og king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei. ⁵He ruled over Mount Hermon, Salecah, all of Bashan up to the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and half of Gilead to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

⁶Moses, the servant of Yahweh, and the Israelites had struck them down and given their land as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

THE KINGS DEFEATED WEST OF THE JORDAN

⁷And these are the kings of the land that Joshua and the Israelites conquered beyond the Jordan to the west, from Baalgad in the Valley of Lebanon to Mount Hakkak, which rises toward Seir (according to the allotments to the tribes of Israel, Joshua gave them as an inheritance ⁸the

hill country, the foothills, the Arabah, the slopes, the wilderness, and the Negev—the lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites):

⁹the king of Jericho, one;
the king of Ai, which is near Bethel, one;
¹⁰the king of Jerusalem, one;
the king of Hebron, one;
¹¹the king of Jarmuth, one;
the king of Lachish, one;
¹²the king of Eglon, one;
the king of Gezer, one;
¹³the king of Debir, one;
the king of Geder, one;
¹⁴the king of Hormah, one;
the king of Arad, one;
¹⁵the king of Libnah, one;
the king of Adullam, one;
¹⁶the king of Makkedah, one;
the king of Bethel, one;
¹⁷the king of Tappuah, one;
the king of Hephher, one;
¹⁸the king of Aphek, one;
the king of Lasharon, one;
¹⁹the king of Madon, one;
the king of Hazor, one;
²⁰the king of Shimron-meron, one;
the king of Achshaph, one;
²¹the king of Taanach, one;
the king of Megiddo, one;
²²the king of Kedesh, one;
the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one;
²³the king of Dor in Naphath-dor, one;
the king of Goiim in Gilgal, one;
²⁴and the king of Tirzah, one.

So there were thirty-one kings in all.

13

CHAPTER 13 IN 30 SECONDS

Joshua is old, and much land is still not taken. God tells him to divide it anyway. The tribes east of the Jordan get their land, and the Levites get no land, because God Himself is their inheritance. Balaam shows up one last time, as a casualty.

LANDS YET UNCONQUERED // JUDGES 1:1-7

¹Now Joshua was old and well along in years, and Yahweh said to him, “You are old and well along in years, but very much

■ JOSH 12:4 [DEMONIC] Og, one of the last of the Rephaim

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

of the land remains to be possessed.²

This is the land that remains:

All the territory of the Philistines and the Geshurites,³ from the Shihor east of Egypt to the territory of Ekron on the north (considered to be Canaanite territory)—that of the five Philistine rulers of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, as well as that of the Avvites;

⁴to the south, all the land of the Canaanites, from Mearah of the Sidonians to Aphek, as far as the border of the Amorites;

⁵the land of the Gebalites; and all Lebanon to the east, from Baalgad below Mount Hermon to Lebohamath.

⁶All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim—all the Sidonians—I Myself will drive out before the Israelites. Be sure to divide it by lot as an inheritance to Israel, as I have commanded you. ⁷Now therefore divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

THE INHERITANCE EAST OF THE JORDAN // NUMBERS 32:1–42; DEUTERONOMY 3:12–22

⁸The other half of Manasseh, along with the Reubenites and Gadites, had received the inheritance Moses had given them beyond the Jordan to the east, just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had assigned to them:

⁹The area from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Valley, along with the city in the middle of the valley, the whole plateau of Medeba as far as Dibon,¹⁰ and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the Ammonites;

¹¹also Gilead and the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites, all of Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salecah—¹²the whole kingdom of Og in Bashan, who had reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei and had remained as a remnant of the Rephaim.

Moses had struck them down and dispossessed them,¹³ but the Israelites did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites. So Geshur and Maacath dwell among the Israelites to this day.

¹⁴To the tribe of Levi, however, Moses had given no inheritance. The food offerings to Yahweh, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, just as He had promised them.

REUBEN'S INHERITANCE

¹⁵This is what Moses had given to the clans of the tribe of Reuben:

¹⁶The territory from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Valley, along with the city in the middle of the valley, to the whole plateau beyond Medeba,¹⁷ to Heshbon and all its cities on the plateau, including Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon,¹⁸ Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath,¹⁹ Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-shahar on the hill in the valley,²⁰ Beth-peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth—²¹all the cities of the plateau and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon until Moses killed him and the chiefs of Midian (Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba), the princes of Sihon who lived in the land.

²²The Israelites also killed the diviner Balaam son of Beor along with the others they put to the sword.²³ And the border of the Reubenites was the bank of the Jordan.

This was the inheritance of the clans of the Reubenites, including the cities and villages.

GAD'S INHERITANCE

²⁴This is what Moses had given to the clans of the tribe of Gad:

²⁵The territory of Jazer, all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer, near Rabbah;

²⁶the territory from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir;

²⁷and in the valley, Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, with the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon (the territory on the east side

■ JOSH 13:1 [NOTE] Joshua 11:23 says Joshua took the whole land, but here much land is still left. The first is the big picture: the armies were beaten. The second is the work still to do: settling every town.

■ JOSH 13:22 [DEMONIC] Balaam son of Beor, who practiced divination

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

of the Jordan up to the edge of the Sea of Chinnereth).

²⁸ This was the inheritance of the clans of the Gadites, including the cities and villages.

MANASSEH'S EASTERN INHERITANCE

²⁹ This is what Moses had given to the clans of the half-tribe of Manasseh, that is, to half the tribe of the descendants of Manasseh:

³⁰ The territory from Mahanaim through all Bashan—all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, including all the towns of Jair that are in Bashan, sixty cities; ³¹ half of Gilead; and Ashtaroth and Edrei, the royal cities of Og in Bashan.

All this was for the clans of the descendants of Machir son of Manasseh, that is, half of the descendants of Machir.

³² These were the portions Moses had given them on the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan, east of Jericho.

³³ To the tribe of Levi, however, Moses had given no inheritance. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, just as He had promised them.

14

CHAPTER 14 IN 30 SECONDS

Caleb is eighty five and still strong. He reminds Joshua that forty five years ago he gave an honest report, and Moses promised him Hebron. Give me this hill country, he says, giants and all. Retirement is for other people.

LAND DIVISION WEST OF THE JORDAN

¹ Now these are the portions that the Israelites inherited in the land of Canaan, as distributed by Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the families of the tribes of Israel. ² Their inheritance was assigned by lot for the nine and a half tribes, as Yahweh had commanded through Moses. ³ For Moses had given the inheritance east of the Jordan to the other two and a half tribes. But he granted no inheritance among them to the Levites.

⁴ The descendants of Joseph became two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. And no portion of the land was given to the

Levites, except for cities in which to live, along with pasturelands for their flocks and herds.

⁵ So the Israelites did as Yahweh had commanded Moses, and they divided the land.

CALEB REQUESTS HEBRON

⁶ Then the sons of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what Yahweh said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh-barnea about you and me. ⁷ I was forty years old when Moses the servant of Yahweh sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back to him an honest report.

⁸ Although my brothers who went with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear, I remained loyal to Yahweh my God.

⁹ On that day Moses swore to me, saying, 'Surely the land on which you have set foot will be an inheritance to you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed Yahweh my God.'

¹⁰ Now behold, as Yahweh promised, He has kept me alive these forty-five years since He spoke this word to Moses, while Israel wandered in the wilderness. So here I am today, eighty-five years old, ¹¹ still as strong today as I was the day Moses sent me out. As my strength was then, so it is now for war, for going out, and for coming in.

¹² Now therefore give me this hill country that Yahweh promised me on that day, for you yourself heard then that the Anakim were there, with great and fortified cities. Perhaps with Yahweh's help I will drive them out, as Yahweh has spoken."

¹³ Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. ¹⁴ Therefore Hebron belongs to

■ JOSH 14:6 [FULFILLS] That generation would die in the wilderness over 40 years ← NUM 14:28-35 p.-

■ JOSH 14:7 [HEART] Caleb told the truth that was in his heart. The other spies made the people's hearts melt.

■ JOSH 14:10 [NOTE] Caleb was forty when Moses sent the spies, 14:7, and eighty five now. Israel wandered thirty eight more years after the spies, Deuteronomy 2:14, so the fighting in the land took about seven years.

■ JOSH 14:12 [DEMONIC] Caleb requested Hebron — driving out the Anakim

■ JOSH 14:13 [FULFILLS] Caleb would enter the land and his descendants would inherit it ← NUM 14:24 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE DEMONIC

Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite as an inheritance to this day, because he wholly followed Yahweh, the God of Israel. ¹⁵ (Hebron used to be called Kiriath-arba, after Arba, the greatest man among the Anakim.)

Then the land had rest from war.

15

CHAPTER 15 IN 30 SECONDS

Judah's borders, town by town. Caleb drives out three sons of Anak and offers his daughter Achsah to the man who takes Kiriath Sepher. Achsah asks her dad for springs of water, and gets two. But Judah could not drive the Jebusites out of Jerusalem.

JUDAH'S INHERITANCE

¹Now the allotment for the clans of the tribe of Judah extended to the border of Edom, to the Wilderness of Zin at the extreme southern boundary:

²Their southern border started at the bay on the southern tip of the Salt Sea, ³proceeded south of the Ascent of Akrabbim, continued on to Zin, went over to the south of Kadesh-barnea, ran past Hezron up to Addar, and curved toward Karka. ⁴It proceeded to Azmon, joined the Brook of Egypt, and ended at the Sea. This was their southern border.

⁵The eastern border was the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan.

The northern border started from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan, ⁶went up to Beth-hoglah, proceeded north of Beth-arabah, and went up to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. ⁷Then the border went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, turning north to Gilgal, which faces the Ascent of Adummim south of the ravine. It continued along the waters of En-shemesh and came out at En-rogel. ⁸From there the border went up the Valley of Benhinnom along the southern slope of the Jebusites (that is, Jerusalem) and ascended to the top of the hill that faces the Valley of Hinnom on the west, at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. ⁹From the hilltop the bor-

der curved to the spring of the Waters of Nephtoah, proceeded to the cities of Mount Ephron, and then bent around toward Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim). ¹⁰The border curled westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, ran along the northern slope of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon), went down to Bethshemesh, and crossed to Timnah. ¹¹Then it went out to the northern slope of Ekron, curved toward Shikkeron, proceeded to Mount Baalah, went on to Jabneel, and ended at the Sea.

¹²And the western border was the coastline of the Great Sea.

These are the boundaries around the clans of the descendants of Judah.

CALEB'S PORTION AND CONQUEST // JUDGES 1:8-26

¹³According to Yahweh's command to him, Joshua gave Caleb son of Jephunneh a portion among the sons of Judah—Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.) ¹⁴And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak—the descendants of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak.

¹⁵From there he marched against the inhabitants of Debir (formerly known as Kiriath-sepher). ¹⁶And Caleb said, "To the man who strikes down Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give my daughter Achsah in marriage." ¹⁷So Othniel son of Caleb's brother Kenaz captured the city, and Caleb gave his daughter Achsah to him in marriage.

¹⁸One day Achsah came to Othniel and urged him to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What do you desire?"

¹⁹"Give me a blessing," she answered. "Since you have given me land in the Negev, give me springs of water as well." So Caleb gave her both the upper and lower springs.

THE CITIES OF JUDAH

²⁰This is the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Judah. ²¹These were the

JOSH 15:13 [DEMONIC] Caleb drives out the three sons of Anak from Hebron

southernmost cities of the tribe of Judah in the Negev toward the border of Edom: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²² Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³ Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴ Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵ Hazor-hadattah, Keriath-hezron (that is, Hazor), ²⁶ Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷ Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, ²⁸ Hazar-shual, Beer-sheba, Biziothiah, ²⁹ Baalah, lim, Ezem, ³⁰ Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, ³¹ Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³² Lebaath, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon—twenty-nine cities in all, along with their villages.

³³ These were in the foothills:

Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴ Zanoah, Engannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵ Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶ Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (or Gederothaim)—fourteen cities, along with their villages.

³⁷ Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, ³⁸ Dilan, Mizpeh, Joktheel, ³⁹ Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, ⁴⁰ Cabbon, Lahmas, Chitlish, ⁴¹ Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah—sixteen cities, along with their villages.

⁴² Libnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³ Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, ⁴⁴ Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah—nine cities, along with their villages.

⁴⁵ Ekron, with its towns and villages; ⁴⁶ from Ekron to the sea, all the cities near Ashdod, along with their villages; ⁴⁷ Ashdod, with its towns and villages; Gaza, with its towns and villages, as far as the Brook of Egypt and the coastline of the Great Sea.

⁴⁸ These were in the hill country:

Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, ⁴⁹ Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), ⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, ⁵¹ Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—eleven cities, along with their villages.

⁵² Arab, Dumah, Eshan, ⁵³ Janim, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴ Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior—nine cities, along with their villages.

⁵⁵ Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶ Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷ Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah—ten cities, along with their villages.

⁵⁸ Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹ Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon—six cities, along with their villages.

⁶⁰ Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), and Rabbah—two cities, along with their villages.

⁶¹ These were in the wilderness:

Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah, ⁶² Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En-gedi—six cities, along with their villages.

⁶³ But the descendants of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites living in Jerusalem. So to this day the Jebusites live there among the descendants of Judah.

16

CHAPTER 16 IN 30 SECONDS

The land for Joseph's sons, starting with Ephraim. Ephraim does not drive out the Canaanites of Gezer, who end up as forced labor. Partial obedience is becoming a pattern.

EPHRAIM'S INHERITANCE

¹ The allotment for the descendants of Joseph extended from the Jordan at Jericho to the waters of Jericho on the east, through the wilderness that goes up from Jericho into the hill country of Bethel. ² It went on from Bethel (that is, Luz) and proceeded to the border of the Archites in Ataroth. ³ Then it descended westward to the border of the Japhletites as far as the border of Lower Beth-horon and on to Gezer, and it ended at the Sea.

⁴ So Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, received their inheritance. ⁵ This was the territory of the descendants of Ephraim by their clans:

The border of their inheritance went from Ataroth-addar in the east to Upper Beth-horon ⁶ and out toward the Sea. From Michmethath on the north it turned eastward toward Taanath-shiloh and passed by it to Janoah on the east. ⁷ From Janoah it went down to Ataroth and Naarah, and then reached Jericho and came out at the Jordan. ⁸ From Tappuah the border went

■ JOSH 15:63 [NOTE] Jerusalem stayed a Jebusite city until King David took it centuries later, 2 Samuel 5:6 to 7.

DEMONIC

westward to the Brook of Kanah and ended at the Sea.

This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Ephraim, ⁹ along with all the cities and villages set apart for the descendants of Ephraim within the inheritance of Manasseh. ¹⁰ But they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer. So the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day, but they are forced laborers.

17

CHAPTER 17 IN 30 SECONDS

Half of Manasseh gets its land, and the daughters of Zelophehad claim the inheritance Moses promised them. The tribe of Joseph complains that it is too crowded. Joshua says, Then go clear the forest. You are many, you can handle it.

MANASSEH'S WESTERN INHERITANCE

¹ Now this was the allotment for the tribe of Manasseh as Joseph's firstborn son, namely for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh and father of the Gileadites, who had received Gilead and Bashan because Machir was a man of war. ² So this allotment was for the rest of the descendants of Manasseh—the clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. These are the other male descendants of the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph.

³ But Zelophehad son of Hepher (the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh) had no sons but only daughters. These are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ⁴ They approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders, and said, "Yahweh commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers."

So Joshua gave them an inheritance among their father's brothers, in keeping with the command of Yahweh. ⁵ Thus ten shares fell to Manasseh, in addition to the land of Gilead and Bashan beyond the Jordan, ⁶ because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons. And the land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the sons of Manasseh.

⁷ Now the border of Manasseh went from Asher to Michmethath near Shechem, then southward to include the inhabitants of En-tappuah. ⁸ The region of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah itself, on the border of Manasseh, belonged to Ephraim. ⁹ From there the border continued southward to the Brook of Kanah. There were cities belonging to Ephraim among the cities of Manasseh, but the border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook and ended at the Sea. ¹⁰ Ephraim's territory was to the south, and Manasseh's was to the north, having the Sea as its border and adjoining Asher on the north and Issachar on the east.

¹¹ Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh was assigned Beth-shean, Ibleam, Dor (that is, Naphath), Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo, each with their surrounding settlements.

¹² But the descendants of Manasseh were unable to occupy these cities, because the Canaanites were determined to stay in this land. ¹³ However, when the Israelites grew stronger, they put the Canaanites to forced labor; but they failed to drive them out completely.

¹⁴ Then the sons of Joseph said to Joshua, "Why have you given us only one portion as an inheritance? We have many people, because Yahweh has blessed us abundantly."

¹⁵ Joshua answered them, "If you have so many people that the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, go to the forest and clear for yourself an area in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim."

¹⁶ "The hill country is not enough for us," they replied, "and all the Canaanites who live in the valley have iron chariots, both in Beth-shean with its towns and in the Valley of Jezreel."

¹⁷ So Joshua said to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—"You have many people and great strength. You shall not have just one allotment, ¹⁸ because the hill country will be yours as

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

well. It is a forest; clear it, and its farthest limits will be yours. Although the Canaanites have iron chariots and although they are strong, you can drive them out."

18

CHAPTER 18 IN 30 SECONDS

The tabernacle is set up at Shiloh. Seven tribes still have no land, and Joshua asks, How long will you wait? He sends surveyors to map the land, then casts lots before Yahweh. Benjamin's land lands between Judah and Joseph.

THE REMAINDER DIVIDED

¹Then the whole congregation of Israel assembled at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. And though the land was subdued before them, ²there were still seven tribes of Israel who had not yet received their inheritance.

³So Joshua said to the Israelites, "How long will you put off entering and possessing the land that Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has given you? ⁴Appoint three men from each tribe, and I will send them out to survey the land and map it out, according to the inheritance of each. Then they will return to me ⁵and divide the land into seven portions. Judah shall remain in their territory in the south, and the house of Joseph shall remain in their territory in the north. ⁶When you have mapped out the seven portions of land and brought it to me, I will cast lots for you here in the presence of Yahweh our God.

⁷The Levites, however, have no portion among you, because their inheritance is the priesthood of Yahweh. And Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have already received the inheritance that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave them beyond the Jordan to the east."

⁸As the men got up to go out, Joshua commanded them to map out the land, saying, "Go and survey the land, map it out, and return to me. Then I will cast lots

for you here in Shiloh in the presence of Yahweh."

⁹So the men departed and went throughout the land, mapping it city by city into seven portions. Then they returned with the document to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh.

¹⁰And Joshua cast lots for them in the presence of Yahweh at Shiloh, where he distributed the land to the Israelites according to their divisions.

BENJAMIN'S INHERITANCE

¹¹The first lot came up for the clans of the tribe of Benjamin. Their allotted territory lay between the tribes of Judah and Joseph:

¹²On the north side their border began at the Jordan, went up past the northern slope of Jericho, headed west through the hill country, and came out at the wilderness of Beth-aven. ¹³From there the border crossed over to the southern slope of Luz (that is, Bethel) and went down to Ataroth-addar on the hill south of Lower Beth-horon.

¹⁴On the west side the border curved southward from the hill facing Beth-horon on the south and came out at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a city of the sons of Judah. This was the western side.

¹⁵On the south side the border began at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim and extended westward to the spring at the Waters of Nephtoah. ¹⁶Then it went down to the foot of the hill that faces the Valley of Ben-hinnom at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim and ran down the Valley of Hinnom toward the southern slope of the Jebusites and downward to En-rogel. ¹⁷From there it curved northward and proceeded to En-shemesh and on to Geiloth facing the Ascent of Adummim, and continued down to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. ¹⁸Then it went on to the northern slope of Beth-arabah and went down into the valley.

■ JOSH 18:1 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → ACTS 7:45 p.~

■ JOSH 18:1 [NOTE] Shiloh became Israel's worship center until the days of Eli and young Samuel, 1 Samuel 1 to 4.

■ JOSH 18:16 [FULFILLS] Benjamin ← DT 33:12 · MEDIUM p.~

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

¹⁹ The border continued to the northern slope of Beth-hoglah and came out at the northern bay of the Salt Sea, at the mouth of the Jordan. This was the southern border.

²⁰ On the east side the border was the Jordan.

These were the borders around the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Benjamin.

²¹ These were the cities of the clans of the tribe of Benjamin:

Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, ²² Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, ²³ Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴ Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba—twelve cities, along with their villages.

²⁵ Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, ²⁶ Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, ²⁷ Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸ Zelah, Haeleph, Jebus (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath-jearim—fourteen cities, along with their villages.

This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Benjamin.

19

CHAPTER 19 IN 30 SECONDS

Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan get their land. Dan loses part of its land and has to go north to find more. Last of all, Israel gives Joshua the town he asks for. The leader gets his share after everyone else.

SIMÉON'S INHERITANCE

¹ The second lot came out for the clans of the tribe of Simeon:

Their inheritance lay within the territory of Judah ² and included Beersheba (or Sheba), Moladah, ³ Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴ Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁵ Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, ⁶ Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhén—thirteen cities, along with their villages.

⁷ Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four cities, along with their villages, ⁸ and all the villages surrounding these cities as far as Baalath-beer (Ramah of the Negev).

This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Simeon. ⁹ The inheritance of the Simeonites was taken from the territory of Judah, because the share for Judah's descendants was too large for them. So the Simeonites received an inheritance within Judah's portion.

ZEBULUN'S INHERITANCE

¹⁰ The third lot came up for the clans of the tribe of Zebulun:

The border of their inheritance stretched as far as Sarid. ¹¹ It went up westward to Maralah, reached Dabbesheth, and met the brook east of Jokneam. ¹² From Sarid it turned eastward along the border of Chisloth-tabor and went on to Daberath and up to Japhia. ¹³ From there it crossed eastward to Gath-hepher and to Eth-kazin; it extended to Rimmon and curved around toward Neah. ¹⁴ Then the border circled around the north side of Neah to Han-nathon and ended at the Valley of Iphtah-el. ¹⁵ It also included Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. There were twelve cities, along with their villages.

¹⁶ This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Zebulun, including these cities and their villages.

ISSACHAR'S INHERITANCE

¹⁷ The fourth lot came out for the clans of the tribe of Issachar:

¹⁸ Their territory included Jezreel, Chesul-loth, Shunem, ¹⁹ Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰ Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹ Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez. ²² The border reached Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and ended at the Jordan. There were sixteen cities, along with their villages.

²³ This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Issachar, including these cities and their villages.

ASHER'S INHERITANCE

²⁴ The fifth lot came out for the clans of the tribe of Asher:

²⁵ Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, ²⁶ Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. On the west the border

GOD SPEAKING

touched Carmel and Shihor-libnath, ²⁷ then turned eastward toward Beth-dagon, touched Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtah-el, and went north to Beth-emek and Neiel, passing Cabul on the left. ²⁸ It went on to Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon. ²⁹ The border then turned back toward Ramah as far as the fortified city of Tyre, turned toward Hosah, and came out at the Sea in the region of Achzib, ³⁰ Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob. There were twenty-two cities, along with their villages.

³¹ This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Asher, including these cities and their villages.

NAPHTALI'S INHERITANCE

³² The sixth lot came out for the clans of the tribe of Naphtali:

³³ Their border started at Heleph and the great tree of Zaanannim, passing Adami-nekeb and Jabneel as far as Lakkum and ending at the Jordan. ³⁴ Then the border turned westward to Aznoth-tabor and ran from there to Hukkok, touching Zebulun on the south side, Asher on the west, and Judah at the Jordan on the east. ³⁵ The fortified cities were Ziddim, Zer, Ham-math, Rakkath, Chinnereth, ³⁶ Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷ Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, ³⁸ Iron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh. There were nineteen cities, along with their villages.

³⁹ This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Naphtali, including these cities and their villages.

DAN'S INHERITANCE

⁴⁰ The seventh lot came out for the clans of the tribe of Dan:

⁴¹ The territory of their inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, ⁴² Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³ Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴ Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵ Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, ⁴⁶ Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, including the territory across from Joppa.

⁴⁷ (Later, when the territory of the Danites was lost to them, they went up and fought against Leshem, captured it, and put it to

the sword. So they took possession of Leshem, settled there, and renamed it after their father Dan.)

⁴⁸ This was the inheritance of the clans of the tribe of Dan, including these cities and their villages.

JOSHUA'S INHERITANCE

⁴⁹ When they had finished distributing the land into its territories, the Israelites gave Joshua son of Nun an inheritance among them, ⁵⁰ as Yahweh had commanded. They gave him the city of Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim, as he requested. He rebuilt the city and settled in it.

⁵¹ These are the inheritances that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the families distributed by lot to the tribes of Israel at Shiloh before Yahweh at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. So they finished dividing up the land.

20

CHAPTER 20 IN 30 SECONDS

Six cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan, where someone who kills a person by accident can run and be safe until a fair trial. God built mercy into the map.

SIX CITIES OF REFUGE // NUMBERS 35:9-34; DEUTERONOMY 4:41-43; DEUTERONOMY 19:1-14

¹ Then Yahweh said to Joshua, ² "Tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed you through Moses, ³ so that anyone who kills another unintentionally or accidentally may flee there. These will be your refuge from the avenger of blood. ⁴ When someone flees to one of these cities, stands at the entrance of the city gate, and states his case before its elders, they are to bring him into the city and give him a place to live among them.

⁵ Now if the avenger of blood pursues him, they must not surrender the manslayer into his hand, because that man killed his neighbor accidentally without prior malice. ⁶ He is to stay in that city until he stands trial before the assembly and until

■ **JOSH 20:2 [NOTE]** God first gave this law to Moses, Numbers 35 and Deuteronomy 19. Now it goes on the map.

the death of the high priest serving at that time. Then the manslayer may return to his own home in the city from which he fled."

⁷So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.

⁸And beyond the Jordan, east of Jericho, they designated Bezer on the wilderness plateau from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh.

⁹These are the cities appointed for all the Israelites and foreigners among them, so that anyone who kills a person unintentionally may flee there and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood prior to standing trial before the assembly.

21

CHAPTER 21 IN 30 SECONDS

The Levites get forty eight towns with pasturelands, spread through every tribe. Then the big summary: Yahweh gave Israel all the land He promised. Not one of His good promises failed. Every one came true.

FORTY-EIGHT CITIES FOR THE LEVITES // NUMBERS 35:1-8; 1 CHRONICLES 6:54-81

¹Now the family heads of the Levites approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the other tribes of Israel ²at Shiloh in the land of Canaan and said to them, "Yahweh commanded through Moses that we be given cities in which to live, together with pasturelands for our livestock."

³So by the command of Yahweh, the Israelites gave the Levites these cities and their pasturelands out of their own inheritance:

⁴The first lot came out for the Kohathite clans. The Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest received thirteen cities by lot from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

⁵The remaining descendants of Kohath received ten cities by lot from the

tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

⁶The descendants of Gershon received thirteen cities by lot from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

⁷And the descendants of Merari received twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

⁸So the Israelites allotted to the Levites these cities, together with their pasturelands, as Yahweh had commanded through Moses.

⁹From the tribes of Judah and Simeon, they designated these cities by name ¹⁰to the descendants of Aaron from the Kohathite clans of the Levites, because the first lot fell to them:

¹¹They gave them Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), with its surrounding pasturelands, in the hill country of Judah. (Arba was the father of Anak.) ¹²But they had given the fields and villages around the city to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his possession.

¹³So to the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave these cities, together with their pasturelands: Hebron, a city of refuge for the manslayer, Libnah, ¹⁴Jattir, Eshtemoa, ¹⁵Holon, Debir, ¹⁶Ain, Juttah, and Beth-shemesh—nine cities from these two tribes, together with their pasturelands.

¹⁷And from the tribe of Benjamin they gave them Gibeon, Geba, ¹⁸Anathoth, and Almon—four cities, together with their pasturelands.

¹⁹In all, thirteen cities, together with their pasturelands, were given to the priests, the descendants of Aaron.

²⁰The remaining Kohathite clans of the Levites were allotted these cities:

From the tribe of Ephraim ²¹they were given Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim (a city of refuge for the manslayer), Gezer, ²²Kibzaim, and Beth-horon—four cities, together with their pasturelands.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE THE HEART

- ²³ From the tribe of Dan they were given Elteke, Gibbethon, ²⁴ Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon—four cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ²⁵ And from the half-tribe of Manasseh they were given Taanach and Gath-rimmon—two cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ²⁶ In all, ten cities, together with their pasturelands, were given to the rest of the Kohathite clans.
- ²⁷ This is what the Levite clans of the Gershonites were given:
From the half-tribe of Manasseh they were given Golan in Bashan, a city of refuge for the manslayer, and Beeshterah—two cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ²⁸ From the tribe of Issachar they were given Kishion, Daberath, ²⁹ Jarmuth, and En-gannim—four cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ³⁰ From the tribe of Asher they were given Mishal, Abdon, ³¹ Helkath, and Rehob—four cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ³² And from the tribe of Naphtali they were given Kedesh in Galilee (a city of refuge for the manslayer), Hammoth-dor, and Kartan—three cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ³³ In all, thirteen cities, together with their pasturelands, were given to the Gershonite clans.
- ³⁴ This is what the Merarite clan (the rest of the Levites) were given:
From the tribe of Zebulun they were given Jokneam, Kartah, ³⁵ Dimnah, and Nahalal—four cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ³⁶ From the tribe of Reuben they were given Bezer, Jahaz, ³⁷ Kedemoth, and Mephaath—four cities, together with their pasturelands.
- ³⁸ And from the tribe of Gad they were given Ramoth in Gilead, a city of refuge for the manslayer, Mahanaim, ³⁹ Heshbon, and Jazer—four cities in all, together with their pasturelands.

⁴⁰ In all, twelve cities were allotted to the clans of Merari, the remaining Levite clans.

⁴¹ For the Levites, then, there were forty-eight cities in all, together with their pasturelands, within the territory of the Israelites. ⁴² Each of these cities had its own surrounding pasturelands; this was true for all the cities.

⁴³ Thus Yahweh gave Israel all the land He had sworn to give their fathers, and they took possession of it and settled in it.

⁴⁴ And Yahweh gave them rest on every side, just as He had sworn to their fathers. None of their enemies could stand against them, for Yahweh delivered all their enemies into their hand.

⁴⁵ Not one of all Yahweh's good promises to the house of Israel had failed; everything was fulfilled.

22

CHAPTER 22 IN 30 SECONDS

The eastern tribes go home and build a huge altar by the Jordan. The other tribes almost go to war, thinking it is rebellion. It turns out to be a memorial, a witness that we serve Yahweh too. Talking first saves a civil war.

THE EASTERN TRIBES RETURN HOME

¹ Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh ² and told them, "You have done all that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you, and you have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. ³ All this time you have not deserted your brothers, up to this very day, but have kept the charge given you by Yahweh your God.

⁴ And now that Yahweh your God has given your brothers rest as He promised them, you may return to your homes in the land that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you across the Jordan. ⁵ But be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of Yahweh

■ JOSH 21:43 [FULFILLS] Israel would enter and possess the land sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ← DT 1:8 · MEDIUM p. –

■ JOSH 21:44 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → HEB 4:8 p. –

■ JOSH 22:4 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → HEB 4:8 p. –

DEMONIC

gave you: to love Yahweh your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

⁶ So Joshua blessed them and sent them on their way, and they went to their homes. ⁷ (To the half-tribe of Manasseh Moses had given land in Bashan, and to the other half Joshua gave land on the west side of the Jordan among their brothers.) When Joshua sent them to their homes he blessed them, ⁸ saying, “Return to your homes with your great wealth, with immense herds of livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, iron, and very many clothes. Divide with your brothers the spoil of your enemies.”

THE ALTAR OF WITNESS

⁹ So the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh left the Israelites at Shiloh in the land of Canaan to return to their own land of Gilead, which they had acquired according to the command of Yahweh through Moses. ¹⁰ And when they came to Geliloth near the Jordan in the land of Canaan, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an imposing altar there by the Jordan.

¹¹ Then the Israelites received the report: “Behold, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the border of the land of Canaan, at Geliloth near the Jordan on the Israelite side.” ¹² And when they heard this, the whole congregation of Israel assembled at Shiloh to go to war against them.

¹³ The Israelites sent Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest to the land of Gilead, to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. ¹⁴ With him they sent ten chiefs—one family leader from each tribe of Israel, each the head of a family among the clans of Israel.

¹⁵ They went to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in the land of Gilead and said to them, ¹⁶ “This is what the whole congregation of Yahweh says: ‘What is this breach of faith you have committed today against the God of Israel by turning away from Yahweh and building for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel against Yahweh this day?’

¹⁷ Was not the sin of Peor enough for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves to this day? It even brought a plague upon the congregation of Yahweh.

¹⁸ And now, would you turn away from Yahweh? If you rebel today against Yahweh, tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel.

¹⁹ If indeed the land of your inheritance is unclean, then cross over to the land of Yahweh’s possession, where Yahweh’s tabernacle stands, and take possession of it among us. But do not rebel against Yahweh or against us by building for yourselves an altar other than the altar of Yahweh our God.

²⁰ Was not Achan son of Zerah unfaithful regarding what was set apart for destruction, bringing wrath upon the whole congregation of Israel? Yet it was not only Achan who perished because of his sin!”

²¹ Then the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the leaders of the clans of Israel: ²² “Yahweh, the Mighty One, is God! Yahweh, the Mighty One, is God! He knows, and may Israel also know. If this was in rebellion or breach of faith against Yahweh, do not spare us today. ²³ If we have built for ourselves an altar to turn away from Him and to offer burnt offerings and grain offerings on it, or to sacrifice peace offerings on it, may Yahweh Himself hold us accountable.

²⁴ But in fact we have done this for fear that in the future your descendants might say to ours, ‘What have you to do with Yahweh, the God of Israel?’ ²⁵ For Yahweh has made the Jordan a border between us and you Reubenites and Gadites. You

■ JOSH 22:5 [HEART] Be careful to obey the law, and serve God with all your heart.

■ JOSH 22:10 [NOTE] The other tribes thought this altar broke God’s law of one place of sacrifice, Deuteronomy 12. They were ready to fight, but Phinehas asked questions first.

■ JOSH 22:17 [DEMONIC] The sin of Peor still stains Israel

DEMONIC

have no share in Yahweh!’ So your descendants could cause ours to stop fearing Yahweh.

²⁶ That is why we said, ‘Let us take action and build an altar for ourselves, but not for burnt offerings or sacrifices. ²⁷ Rather, let it be a witness between us and you and the generations to come, that we will worship Yahweh in His presence with our burnt offerings, sacrifices, and peace offerings.’ Then in the future, your descendants cannot say to ours, ‘You have no share in Yahweh!’

²⁸ Therefore we said, ‘If they ever say this to us or to our descendants, we will answer: Look at the replica of the altar of Yahweh that our fathers made, not for burnt offerings or sacrifices, but as a witness between us and you.’

²⁹ Far be it from us to rebel against Yahweh and turn away from Him today by building an altar for burnt offerings, grain offerings, or sacrifices, other than the altar of Yahweh our God, which stands before His tabernacle.”

³⁰ When Phinehas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation—the heads of Israel’s clans who were with him—heard what the descendants of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh had to say, they were satisfied. ³¹ Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest said to the descendants of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, “Today we know that Yahweh is among us, because you have not committed this breach of faith against Him. Consequently, you have delivered the Israelites from the hand of Yahweh.”

³² Then Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, together with the other leaders, returned to the Israelites in the land of Canaan and brought back a report regarding the Reubenites and Gadites in the land of Gilead. ³³ The Israelites were satisfied with the report, and they blessed God and spoke no more about going to war against them to destroy the land where the Reubenites and Gadites lived. ³⁴ So the Reubenites and Gadites named the altar Witness, for they said, “It is a witness between us that Yahweh is God.”

23

CHAPTER 23 IN 30 SECONDS

Joshua is very old and gathers the leaders. You know with all your heart, he says, that not one promise failed. So love Yahweh, do not mix with the nations or their gods, because the warnings will come true too.

JOSHUA’S CHARGE TO LEADERS

¹ A long time after Yahweh had given Israel rest from all the enemies around them, when Joshua was old and well along in years, ² he summoned all Israel, including its elders, leaders, judges, and officers. “I am old and well along in years,” he said, ³ “and you have seen everything that Yahweh your God has done to all these nations for your sake, because it was Yahweh your God who fought for you.

⁴ See, I have allotted as an inheritance to your tribes these remaining nations, including all the nations I have already cut off, from the Jordan westward to the Great Sea. ⁵ Yahweh your God will push them out of your way and drive them out before you, so that you can take possession of their land, as Yahweh your God promised you.

⁶ Be very strong, then, so that you can keep and obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, not turning aside from it to the right or to the left. ⁷ So you are not to associate with these nations that remain among you. You must not call on the names of their gods or swear by them, and you must not serve them or bow down to them. ⁸ Instead, you shall hold fast to Yahweh your God, as you have done to this day.

⁹ Yahweh has driven out great and powerful nations before you, and to this day no one can stand against you. ¹⁰ One of you can put a thousand to flight, because Yahweh your God fights for you, just as He promised. ¹¹ Therefore watch yourselves carefully, that you love Yahweh your God. ¹² For if you turn away and cling to the rest of these nations that remain among you, and if you intermarry and as-

■ JOSH 23:7 [DEMONIC] Do not call on or swear by the names of their gods

THE HEART DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

sociate with them, ¹³ know for sure that Yahweh your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. Instead, they will become for you a snare and a trap, a scourge in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land that Yahweh your God has given you.

¹⁴ Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know with all your heart and soul that not one of the good promises Yahweh your God made to you has failed. Everything was fulfilled for you; not one promise has failed. ¹⁵ But just as every good thing Yahweh your God promised you has come to pass, likewise Yahweh will bring upon you the calamity He has threatened, until He has destroyed you from this good land He has given you. ¹⁶ If you transgress the covenant of Yahweh your God, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of Yahweh will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from this good land He has given you."

24

CHAPTER 24 IN 30 SECONDS

At Shechem Joshua retells the whole story, from Abraham's idol worshiping family to the land, in God's own words. Then he puts the choice on the table. Choose this day whom you will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh. Joshua dies at 110, and Joseph's bones are finally buried at Shechem.

JOSHUA REVIEWS ISRAEL'S HISTORY

¹ Then Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges, and officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God.

² And Joshua said to all the people, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your fathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates and worshiped

other gods.' ³ But I took your father Abraham from beyond the Euphrates and led him through all the land of Canaan, and I multiplied his descendants. I gave him Isaac, ⁴ and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau Mount Seir to possess, but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.

⁵ Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I afflicted the Egyptians by what I did there, and afterward I brought you out. ⁶ When I brought your fathers out of Egypt and you reached the Red Sea, the Egyptians pursued them with chariots and horsemen as far as the Red Sea. ⁷ So your fathers cried out to Yahweh, and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, over whom He brought the sea and engulfed them. Your very eyes saw what I did to the Egyptians. Then you lived in the wilderness for a long time.

⁸ Later, I brought you to the land of the Amorites who lived beyond the Jordan. They fought against you, but I delivered them into your hand, that you should possess their land when I destroyed them before you. ⁹ Then Balak son of Zippor, the king of Moab, set out to fight against Israel. He sent for Balaam son of Beor to curse you, ¹⁰ but I would not listen to Balaam. So he blessed you again and again, and I delivered you from his hand.

¹¹ After this, you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The people of Jericho fought against you, as did the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and I delivered them into your hand. ¹² I sent the hornet ahead of you, and it drove out the two Amorite kings before you, but not by your own sword or bow. ¹³ So I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities that you did not build, and now you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant.'

■ **JOSH 23:14 [HEART]** Joshua tells them to know it in all their hearts: not one of God's good promises failed.

■ **JOSH 23:14 [NOTABLE]** An old man's testimony at the end of his life. Joshua had seen every promise kept, and he wanted Israel to know it in their bones.

■ **JOSH 23:16 [DEMONIC]** Serving other gods will cause Israel to perish

■ **JOSH 24:2 [DEMONIC]** Abraham's family once worshiped other gods

■ **JOSH 24:2 [NOTE]** RED LETTERS. Joshua is passing on God's words, so only God's words are red, from Long ago to the end of 24:13.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE THE HEART DEMONIC NOTABLE

CHOOSE WHOM YOU WILL SERVE // DEUTERONOMY 10:12–22

¹⁴ Now, therefore, fear Yahweh and serve Him in sincerity and truth; cast aside the gods your fathers served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt, and serve Yahweh.

¹⁵ But if it is unpleasing in your sight to serve Yahweh, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh!"

¹⁶ The people replied, "Far be it from us to forsake Yahweh to serve other gods! ¹⁷ For Yahweh our God brought us and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and performed these great signs before our eyes. He also protected us throughout our journey and among all the nations through which we traveled. ¹⁸ And Yahweh drove out before us all the nations, including the Amorites who lived in the land. We too will serve Yahweh, because He is our God!"

¹⁹ But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve Yahweh, for He is a holy God; He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your rebellion or your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake Yahweh and serve foreign gods, He will turn and bring disaster on you and consume you, even after He has been good to you."

²¹ "No!" replied the people. "We will serve Yahweh!"

²² Then Joshua told them, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve Yahweh."

"We are witnesses!" they said.

²³ "Now, therefore," he said, "get rid of the foreign gods among you and incline your hearts to Yahweh, the God of Israel."

²⁴ So the people said to Joshua, "We will serve Yahweh our God and obey His voice."

²⁵ On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people, and there at Shechem he established for them a statute and ordinance. ²⁶ Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak that was near the sanctuary of Yahweh. ²⁷ And Joshua said to all the people, "You see this stone. It will be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words Yahweh has spoken to us, and it will be a witness against you if you ever deny your God."

²⁸ Then Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance.

JOSHUA'S DEATH AND BURIAL // JUDGES 2:6–9

²⁹ Some time later, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of Yahweh, died at the age of 110.

³⁰ And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ³¹ Israel had served Yahweh throughout the days of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had experienced all the works that Yahweh had done for Israel.

³² And the bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up out of Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the plot of land that Jacob had purchased from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of silver. So it became an inheritance for Joseph's descendants.

³³ Eleazar son of Aaron also died, and they buried him at Gibeah, which had been given to his son Phinehas in the hill country of Ephraim.

■ JOSH 24:14 [DEMONIC] Choose this day whom you will serve

■ JOSH 24:15 [NOTABLE] One of the most quoted verses on home signs. Joshua made the choice for his family first, out loud, before the people answered.

■ JOSH 24:16 [DEMONIC] Choose this day whom you will serve

■ JOSH 24:19 [DEMONIC] Serving foreign gods will bring disaster

■ JOSH 24:23 [HEART] Get rid of the foreign gods and turn your hearts to Yahweh. Idols in the tent mean a divided heart.

■ JOSH 24:23 [DEMONIC] Get rid of the foreign gods among you

■ JOSH 24:26 [FIELD NOTES] A huge standing stone still stands at the temple of ancient Shechem. See Shechem's Standing Stone Field Notes page.

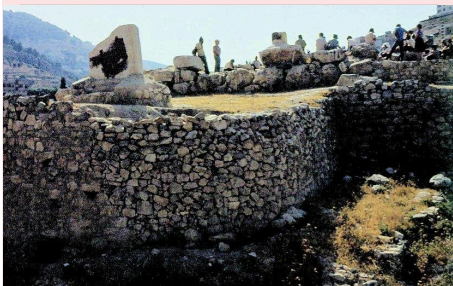
■ JOSH 24:29 [NOTE] Joshua died at 110, the same age as Joseph, Genesis 50:26. Egyptians thought 110 was the perfect lifespan.

■ JOSH 24:32 [FULFILLS] Joseph said God would bring Israel out of Egypt and to take his bones with them ← GEN 50:24–25 p.~

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM, THE LINK TO JOSHUA IS DEBATED

SHECHEM'S STANDING STONE

JOSHUA 24:1 · 24:25 TO 27 · GENESIS 12:6 · JUDGES 9:46



The standing stone, top left, above the thick walls of the temple at Tell Balata, ancient Shechem. Photo Daniel Ventura, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A tall slab of white limestone standing in front of a big temple at Tell Balata, the ruins of Shechem, inside the city of Nablus today. Joshua 24:26 says Joshua set up a large stone under the oak by the sanctuary of Yahweh at Shechem, as a witness.

HOW OLD IT IS

The temple was built about 1650 BC and used until about 1100 BC. Its walls are about 17 feet thick. The standing stone belongs to the later phase of the temple, in the Late Bronze Age.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Ernst Sellin dug Shechem in the 1910s and 1920s and found the broken stone. An American team led by G. Ernest Wright dug from 1956 to 1973 and set the stone back up in its socket.

IN THE BIBLE

Abraham built his first altar in the land at Shechem, Genesis 12:6 to 7. Joseph's bones were buried there, Joshua 24:32. Later the temple of Baal Berith, also called El Berith, and its tower burned there, Judges 9:46 to 49.

THE BIG DEBATE

Wright thought this was the temple of Judges 9, and some think the stone could be Joshua's. Others say it was a Canaanite sacred stone, the kind the

Law told Israel to tear down, Deuteronomy 7:5.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No writing is on the stone. It shows that Shechem had a temple and a great standing stone in Joshua's era, the kind of place where Joshua 24 says the covenant was made.