

# Joshua

## The Conquest Of Canaan



*View from the ancient tell of Jericho*

“Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them —the children of Israel” (Joshua 1:2)

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(The above outline is from *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts*, pp. 68–69)

# **PART ONE: THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN (1:1–13:7)**

## **I. ISRAEL IS PREPARED FOR THE CONQUEST (1:1–5:15)**

### **A. Joshua Replaces Moses (1:1–18)**

1. What were the borders of the Promised Land?
2. What charge did God give to Joshua?
3. What encouragement did God give to Joshua?
4. What arrangement had to be made with the “Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh”?
5. What did the people promise Joshua?

### **B. Joshua Prepares Israel Militarily (2:1–5:1)**

1. What did Rahab do to protect the men of God?
2. What did Rahab know about the God of Israel?
3. What did the men of God promise to do for Rahab?

4. Describe the manner in which the Israelites crossed the Jordan.
  
5. Name the people who were to be driven out of the Promised Land.
  
6. Describe what happened when the priests crossed the Jordan.
  
7. What did the Israelites do after they crossed the Jordan?
  
8. Where did the Israelites camp before they went to Jericho?
  
9. How did the kings of the Amorites react when the Israelites crossed over the Jordan?

### **C. Joshua Prepares Israel Spiritually (5:2–12)**

1. Why had circumcision not been practised while they were in the wilderness?
  
2. What feast did the Israelites celebrate in Gilgal?
  
3. What part of God's providence ceased in Gilgal?

### **D. The Commander of the Lord Appears (5:13–15)**

1. Who appeared to Joshua in Gilgal?
2. What did this person say to Joshua?

## **II. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN BY ISRAEL (6:1–13:7)**

### **A. Conquest of Central Canaan (6:1–8:35)**

1. Describe the manner in which Israel was to capture Jericho.
2. Who was to be saved during the destruction of Jericho?
3. After the walls of Jericho collapsed, what did Israel do to the remainder of the city?
4. What sin did Achan commit?
5. What happened to the army of Israel at Ai? Why?
6. What happened to Achan as a result of his sin?

7. Describe the second attack on Ai.

8. What did Joshua do at Mount Ebal?

## **B. Conquest of Southern Canaan (9:1–10:43)**

1. What crafty plan did the Gibeonites devise?

2. What mistake did the men of Israel make in dealing with the Gibeonites?

3. What did the Israelites do to the Gibeonites?

4. Who were the five kings who went to Gibeon to make war against Israel?

5. What was the purpose of the sun and moon standing still over Gibeon?

6. What happened to the five Amorite kings?

7. Was Joshua successful in the rest of his southern campaign?

### **C. Conquest of Northern Canaan (11:1–15)**

1. What happened by the waters of Merom?
  
2. What happened to the city of Hazor?

### **D. Conquest of Canaan Is Summarized (11:16–12:24)**

1. How many cities made peace with the Israelites?
  
2. Describe the area occupied by Israel in the twelfth chapter of Joshua.

### **E. Unconquered Parts of Canaan (13:1–7)**

1. What land remained to be conquered?
  
2. What command was given concerning the land?

# **PART TWO: THE SETTLEMENT IN CANAAN (13:8–24:33)**

## **I. THE SETTLEMENT EAST OF THE JORDAN (13:8–33)**

### **A. Geographical Boundaries (13:8–13)**

1. Who received the land east of the Jordan?
  
2. What groups of people were not driven out of the land?

### **B. Tribal Boundaries (13:14–33)**

1. What tribe received no inheritance in the land? Why?
  
2. What cities were given to the tribe of Reuben?
  
3. Why was Balaam mentioned in this chapter? What had he done?
  
4. What cities were given to the tribe of Gad?
  
5. What cities were given to half of the tribe of Manasseh?



## **II. THE SETTLEMENT WEST OF THE JORDAN (14:1–19:51)**

### **A. The First Settlement Done at Gilgal (14:1–17:18)**

1. How did Joshua, Eleazar and the heads of the tribes distribute the land?
2. What happened to the tribe of Joseph?
3. What property did the Levites receive?
4. What was given to Caleb? Why?
5. What were the main borders of the land of Judah?
6. What were the main cities in the land of Judah?
7. What did the children of Judah fail to accomplish?
8. What did the Ephraimites fail to accomplish?
9. What did the children of Manasseh fail to accomplish?

10. What great task did the descendents of Joseph have set before them?

## **B. The Second Settlement Done at Shiloh (18:1–19:51)**

1. Where was the tabernacle of meeting set up at?

2. How many men were sent back into the land to survey it? Why?

3. The tribe of Benjamin was located between what two tribes?

4. List a few of the better-known cities of Benjamin.

5. List a few of the better-known cities of Simeon.

6. List a few of the better-known cities of Zebulun.

7. List a few of the better-known cities of Issachar.

8. List a few of the better-known cities of Asher.

9. List a few of the better-known cities of Naphtali.

10. List a few of the better-known cities of Dan.

11. What was given to Joshua? What did he build?

### **III. THE SETTLEMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY (20:1–21:42)**

#### **A. Six Cities of Refuge (20:1–9)**

1. What was the purpose of the cities of refuge?

2. Name the six cities of refuge.

#### **B. Selection of the Levitical Cities (21:1–42)**

1. How many cities were given to the Levites?

2. What was the “common land” they were given?

#### **C. The Settlement of Israel Is Completed (21:43–45)**

1. How much of what God promised concerning the land was now fulfilled?

2. How many enemies were still standing against Israel?

## **IV. THE CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED SETTLEMENT (22:1–24:33)**

### **A. The Altar of Witness (22:1–34)**

1. Where did the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh return to?
2. What admonition did Joshua give to these people?
3. What did the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh build by the side of the Jordan?
4. What did the other tribes accuse them of?
5. How did the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh defend themselves?

### **B. Blessings of God Come Only Through Obedience (23:1–24:28)**

1. What admonition did Joshua give to the elders of the people?
2. What warning did Joshua give to the elders of the people?

3. What had God done for the descendents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?
  
4. What sin had Balak committed against Israel?
  
5. What choice did Joshua set before the people?
  
6. What promise did the people make to Joshua?
  
7. What covenant was made at Shechem?
  
8. What was the purpose of putting a large stone under the oak tree?

### **C. Joshua and Eleazar Die (24:29–33)**

1. How old was Joshua when he died? Where was he buried?
  
2. What was done with the bones of Joseph?

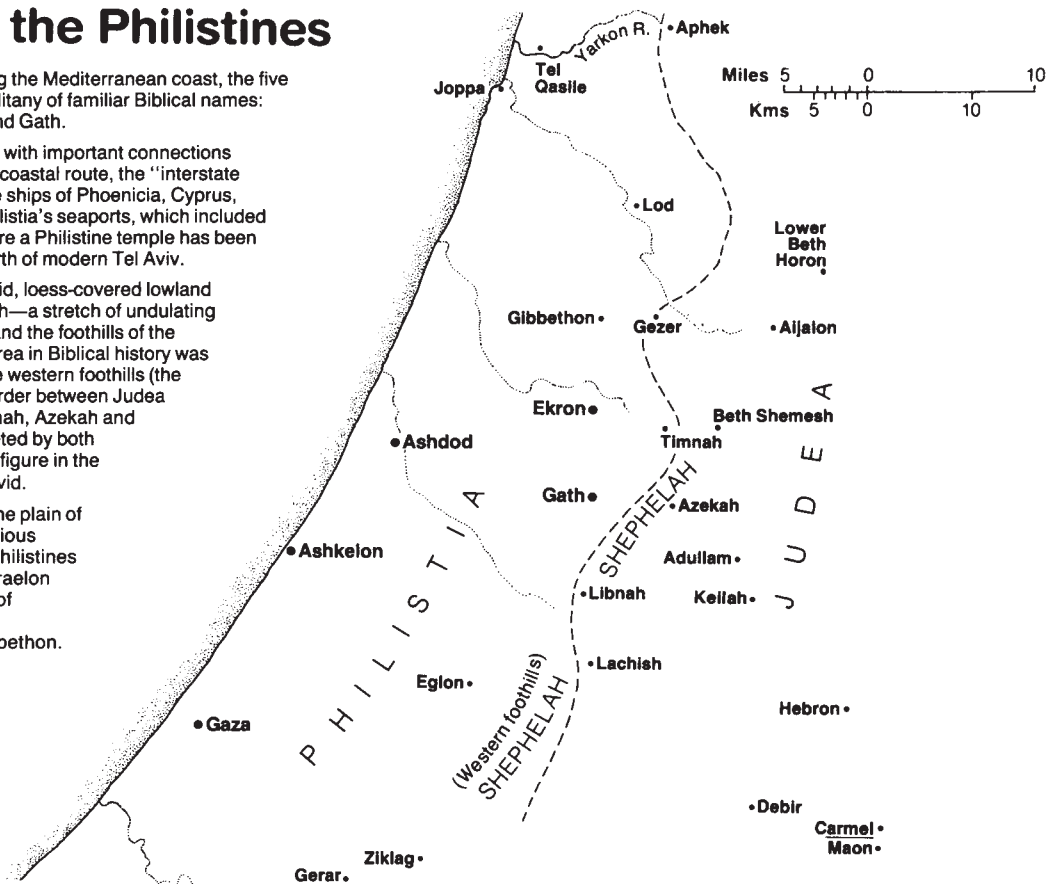
# Five Cities of the Philistines

Like a string of opulent pearls along the Mediterranean coast, the five cities of the Philistines comprise a litany of familiar Biblical names: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath.

Each was a commercial emporium with important connections reaching as far as Egypt along the coastal route, the "interstate highway" of the ancient world. The ships of Phoenicia, Cyprus, Crete and the Aegean called at Philistia's seaports, which included a site today called Tell Qasile, where a Philistine temple has been found, on the Yarkon River just north of modern Tel Aviv.

The Philistine plain itself was an arid, loess-covered lowland bordering on the desert to the south—a stretch of undulating sand dunes adjacent to the sea—and the foothills of the Judahite plateau on the east. No area in Biblical history was more frequently contested than the western foothills (the Shephelah region), lying on the border between Judaea and Philistia. Beth Shemesh, Timnah, Azekah and Ziklag were among the towns coveted by both Israelites and Philistines, and they figure in the stories of Samson, Goliath and David.

The area to the north of Philistia, the plain of Sharon, was also contested at various periods: During Saul's reign the Philistines even held Beth Shan and the Esdraelon valley. Later, from about the time of Baasha on, a long border war was conducted by the Israelites at Gibbethon. Originally a part of Judah's tribal allotment, the coastal area was never totally wrested away from the Philistines who may have begun their occupation as early as the time of Abraham.



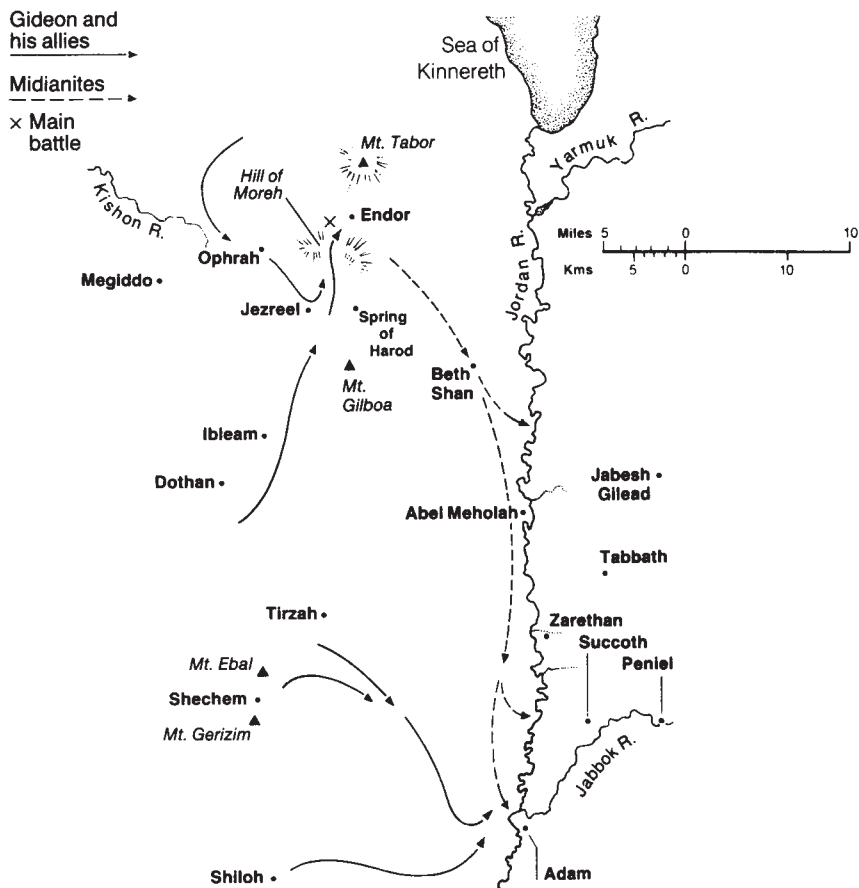
# Gideon's Battles

The story of Gideon begins with a graphic portrayal of one of the most striking facts of life in the Fertile Crescent: the periodic migration of nomadic people from the Aramean desert into the settled areas of Palestine. Each spring the tents of the *bedouin* herdsmen appear overnight almost as if by magic, scattered on the hills and fields of the farming districts. Conflict between these two ways of life (herdsmen and farmers) was inevitable.

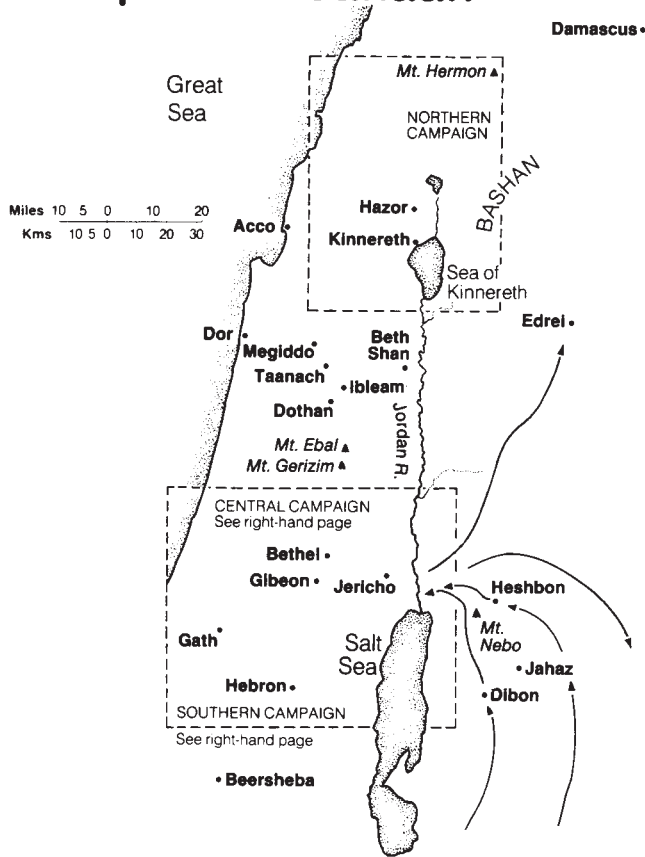
In the Biblical period, the vast numbers and warlike practice of the herdsmen reduced the village people to near vassalage. Gideon's answer was twofold: (1) religious reform, starting with his own family; and (2) military action, based on a coalition of northern Israelite tribes. The location of Gideon's hometown, "Ophrah of the Abiezrites," is not known with certainty, but probably was ancient Apher (modern Afula) in the Valley of Jezreel.

The battle at the spring of Harod is justly celebrated for its strategic brilliance. Denied the use of the only local water source, the Midianites camped in the valley and fell victim to the small band of Israelites, who attacked them from the heights of the hill of Moreh.

The main battle took place north of the hill near the village of Endor at the foot of Mount Tabor. Fleeing by way of the Jordan Valley, the Midianites were trapped when the Ephraimites seized the fords of the Jordan from below Beth Shan to Beth Barah near Adam.

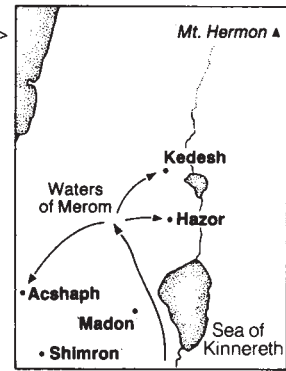


# Conquest of Canaan



## 4. THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN

Late Bronze Age Hazor was burned by Joshua (Jos 11:13). Excavations have revealed three clearly datable destruction layers, one of which may provide the strongest evidence yet for a historically verifiable date for the conquest. The excavator thought Joshua burned the latest level (c. 1230 B.C.), but others argue that it must actually have been the earliest of the three levels, c. 1400 B.C.



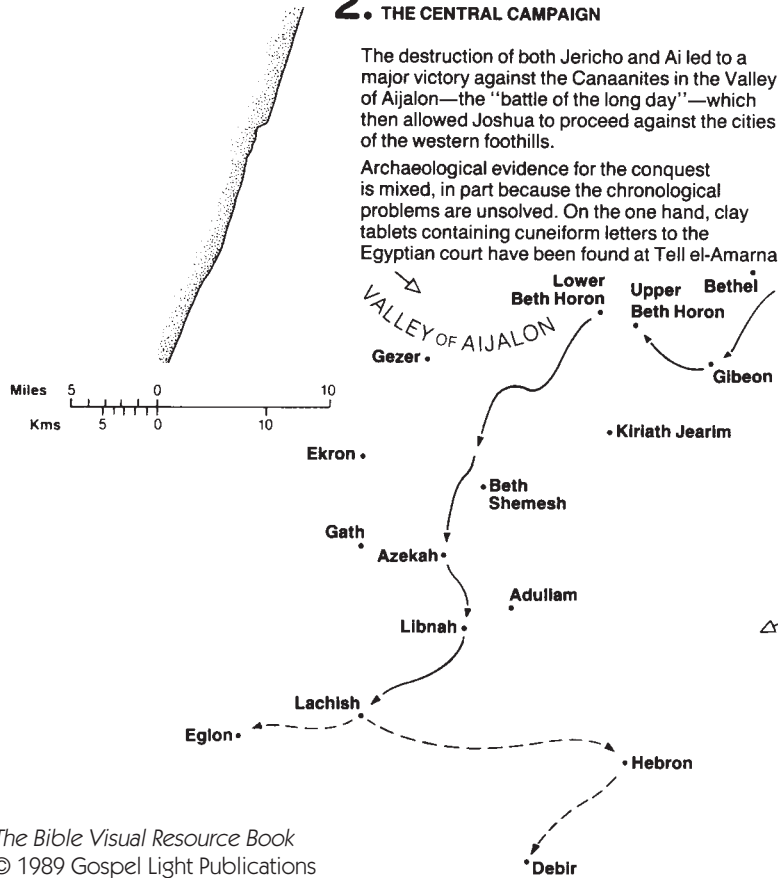
## 1. ENTRY INTO CANAAN

When the Israelite tribes approached Canaan after four decades of desert existence, they had to overcome the two Amorite kingdoms on the Medeba plateau and in Bashan. Under Moses' leadership, they also subdued the Midianites in order to consolidate their control over the Transjordanian region. The conquest of Canaan followed a course that in retrospect appears as though it had been planned by a brilliant strategist. Taking Jericho gave Israel control of its strategic plains, fords and roads as a base of operations. When Israel next gained control of the Bethel, Gibeon and the Upper Beth Horon region, she dominated the center of the north-south Palestinian ridge. Subsequently, she was able to break the power of the allied urban centers in separate campaigns south and north.

## 2. THE CENTRAL CAMPAIGN

The destruction of both Jericho and Ai led to a major victory against the Canaanites in the Valley of Aijalon—the "battle of the long day"—which then allowed Joshua to proceed against the cities of the western foothills. Archaeological evidence for the conquest is mixed, in part because the chronological problems are unsolved. On the one hand, clay tablets containing cuneiform letters to the Egyptian court have been found at Tell el-Amarna

in Egypt from c. 1375 B.C. These mention bands of *Habiru* who threaten many of the cities of Palestine and create fear among the Canaanite inhabitants. On the other hand, numerous towns were destroyed c. 1230 B.C. by unknown assailants, presumably the "Sea Peoples," but possibly including the Israelites as well. The Biblical chronology based on 1Ki 6:1 seems to demand an even earlier dating, near the end of the 15th century (see Introduction to Joshua: Historical Setting).



## 3. THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

Lachish, Debir, Libnah, Eglon and Makkedah (a town near Beth Shemesh and Azekah, whose exact location is unknown) were all captured by Joshua in his attack on the lowland foothills controlling the approaches to the Judahite plateau. Several of these towns, most notably Lachish, contain destruction evidence that might possibly be correlated with the Israelite conquest, but with Jericho and Ai, the historical implications are not clear.



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