

Pastor's Bible Study

Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study

Week Twenty - Joshua

Review

Literary Period Covered: 1404 B.C.E.

They have conquered Ai and are headed inland to take possession of the land.

Lecture Segment

Joshua 9 – 24

As we continue our journey through the Bible we are witness to the success and failures of the Israelites. Last week we since are with Joshua as he begins to take the land given to the Israelites. [The book of Joshua] is mainly a report of the military conquest and settling of Canaan, recounted with a great deal of skill. The dialogs and the farewell speech of Joshua add vividness and excitement. In the Hebrew Scriptures, this book is positioned as the first of the four “Former Prophets.” (The others are Judges, Samuel, and Kings.) Together these books describe the 800-year period from Israel’s entry into Canaan (about 1406 B.C.E.) through the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon (about 586 B.C.E.)¹

The Gibeonites’ Craft

How easily is man set aglow with self-confidence and empty vanity! The lesson of the defeat at Ai was soon forgotten by the Israelites.

- On the very next occasion when judgment was required, they again neglected their precious privilege of consultation with God, again assumed to judge and decide by their own wit.

Israel had returned to the encampment at Gilgal, and to it there came a party of men with tattered clothes, worn-out shoes and moldy provisions. They were come, they said, as ambassadors from the far-off land of Gibeon, wishing to make a friendly treaty with the Hebrews. In reality Gibeon was a city close at hand, and the crafty emissaries had dressed themselves on purpose to deceive; for they knew the



¹ Easley, K. H. (2002). [Holman QuickSource guide to understanding the Bible](#) (p. 46). Holman Bible Publishers.

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Hebrews were commanded by God to make no peace and have no intercourse with the people of Canaan.

When the deception was discovered, Joshua honored his oath - a covenant - and did not destroy the Gibeonites.

In Chapter 10 we see Joshua honor this treaty and protect the Gibeonites. Even though the treaty was made under deception. The Israelites honor God by honoring the treaty they made.

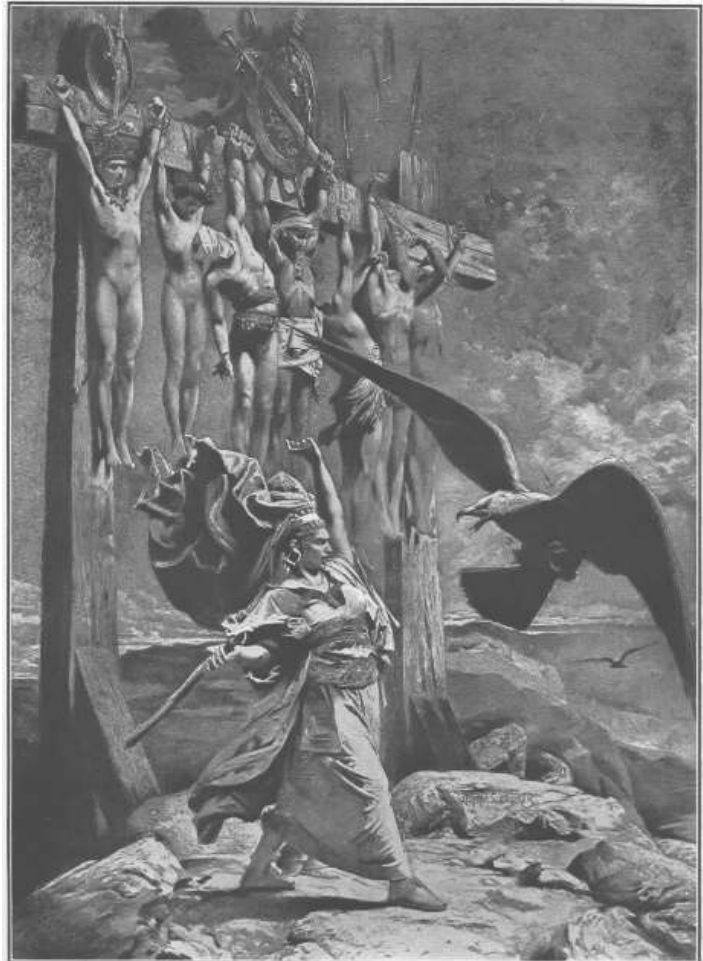
400 years later in 2 Samuel 21 we will learn the King Saul will make a very poor decision to kill the Gibeonites. In his mind he thought he was honoring God by destroying the Gibeonites.

The Books of Samuel tell the story of the Prophet Samuel and the anointing of Saul as the first King. His rise and fall along with the parallel story of the anointing of David as his successor. In 2nd Samuel we learn:

2nd Samuel

- About King David and why he was a great king. Unity the 12 tribes of Israel
- His wisdom in his rule
- We discern that he reigned from 1010-970 BCE
- King David's story concludes at Chapter 20
- Chapter 21 through 24 contain 6 vignettes or story's that take place earlier in David's reign

Chapter 21 opens with the first vignette telling the story of God's punishment with 3 years of famine. David sought the face of the Lord. The Lord said, "It is on account of Saul and his blood-stained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death."





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DISTRIBUTION OF THE LAND

The Book of Joshua recounts the division of the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel as they settled into the land. The descriptions of the tribal allotments contain two types of information: (1) boundary descriptions and (2) lists of cities. The boundary descriptions give points of reference between landmarks and/or cities that define the borders of a tribe. These boundary descriptions vary in the amount of detail supplied; some, like that of Judah, contain considerable detail with numerous points spaced closely together. Other descriptions are abbreviated, vague, or virtually nonexistent, for example, Issachar, East Manasseh, Gad, and Naphtali. These border descriptions were important to the life of early Israel, establishing tribal claims and settling disputes. A comparison of these allotments with the description of Canaan's borders given in Numbers 34:1–12 reveals that Judah's southern border and the southern border of Canaan were identical, while the western limits defined by the Mediterranean and the eastern border are the same. Only in the north do the two descriptions differ; neither Asher nor Naphtali claimed the more extensive lands to the north roughly defined by a line from Gebal (Byblos) through Lebo-hamath to Zedad on the desert edge north of Damascus.

Town lists provide additional information. Simeon, for example, is defined by a list of towns from within Judah. Most scholars think Simeon was soon absorbed by the stronger tribe of Judah, but others believe Simeon retained its identity into the Divided Monarchy (see 1 Chr. 4:24–41). The Transjordan tribes (Reuben, Gad, East Manasseh) are defined primarily by town lists (Josh. 13:8–33; cf. Num. 32:28–42). The town lists as we have them probably were updated periodically by royal scribes and thus reflect later administrative divisions.²

Division of land for everyone except the Levites

Joshua 13 NIV

¹⁴ But to the tribe of Levi he gave no inheritance, since the food offerings presented to the LORD, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, as he promised them.

Joshua 21 NIV

Towns for the Levites

21 Now the family heads of the Levites approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the other tribal families of Israel ² at Shiloh in Canaan and said to them, “The LORD commanded through Moses that you give us towns to live in, with pasturelands for our livestock.”

48 towns distributed throughout the land. 10% tithe for support.

² Brisco, T. V. (1998). [Holman Bible atlas](#) (p. 83). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

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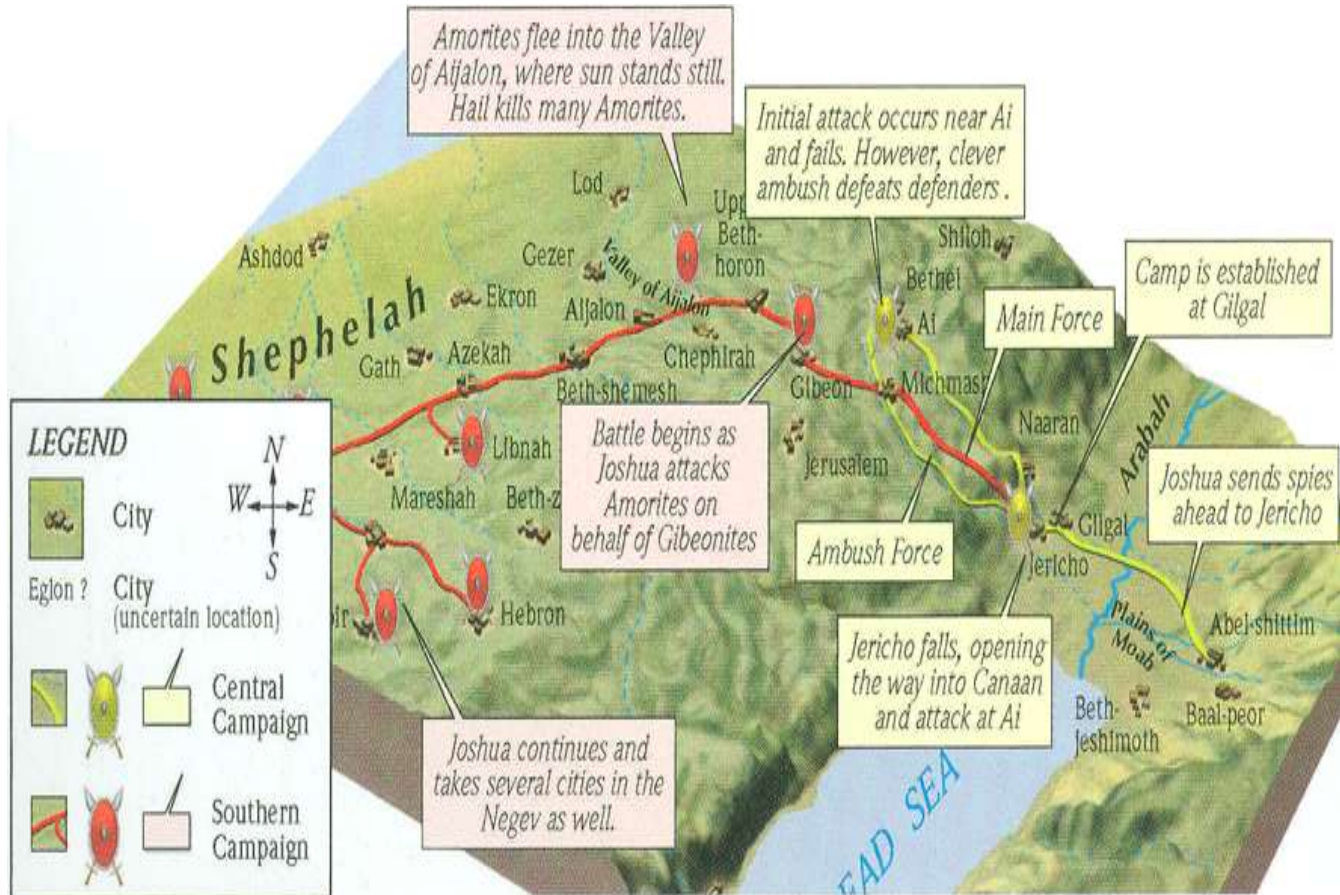
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Conclusion

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586 B.C.E.)³

The Levites are not to own land. But at the conclusion of Chapter 24 we see that "Eleazar son of Aaron died and was buried at Gibeah, which had been allotted to his son Phinehas in the hill country of Ephraim." Compromise has already entered the lives of the Israelites. Judges will bring challenges.

³ Easley, K. H. (2002). [Holman QuickSource guide to understanding the Bible](#) (p. 46). Holman Bible Publishers.

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