

### A Summary of the Kings Conquered by Israel on Both Sides of the Jordan

#### Joshua 12

Joshua 12 - *“These are the kings of the land whom the children of Israel defeated, and whose land they possessed on the other side of the Jordan toward the rising of the sun, from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon, and all the eastern Jordan plain: <sup>2</sup> One king was Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon and ruled half of Gilead, from Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, from the middle of that river, even as far as the River Jabbok, which is the border of the Ammonites, <sup>3</sup> and the eastern Jordan plain from the Sea of Chinneroth as far as the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), the road to Beth Jeshimoth, and southward below the slopes of Pisgah. <sup>4</sup> The other king was Og king of Bashan and his territory, who was of the remnant of the giants, who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, <sup>5</sup> and reigned over Mount Hermon, over Salcah, over all Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and over half of Gilead to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.*

<sup>6</sup> *These Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel had conquered; and Moses the servant of the LORD had given it as a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh. <sup>7</sup> And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan, on the west, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their divisions, <sup>8</sup> in the mountain country, in the lowlands, in the Jordan plain, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the South—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: <sup>9</sup> the king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; <sup>10</sup> the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; <sup>11</sup> the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; <sup>12</sup> the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; <sup>13</sup> the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; <sup>14</sup> the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; <sup>15</sup> the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; <sup>16</sup> the king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; <sup>17</sup> the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one; <sup>18</sup> the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; <sup>19</sup> the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; <sup>20</sup> the king of Shimron Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; <sup>21</sup> the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; <sup>22</sup> the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; <sup>23</sup> the king of Dor in the heights of Dor, one; the king of the people of Gilgal, one; <sup>24</sup> the king of Tirzah, one—all the kings, thirty-one.”*

#### Background notes

The book of Joshua is clearly divided into two halves: chapters 1 through 12 could be entitled the *Conquering of the Land*, and chapters 13 through 24 could be entitled the *Settling of the Land*. So Joshua 12 is the last chapter of the first half of the book of Joshua, and it's a summary of all the kings who were conquered on both sides of the Jordan River.

Verses 1-6 tells us about Sihon, king of Heshbon in the south and Og, king of Bashan in the north. Both of these conquered kings were kings of the Amorites, and both of their kingdoms were on the east side of the Jordan River. Now don't confuse the Amorites with the Ammonites. The Ammonites also lived on the east side of the Jordan River and they were descendents of Lot. The Amorites were one of the enemy nations that possessed the land of Canaan. Most of them lived on the west side of the Jordan, but some of them lived on the east side of the Jordan in the kingdoms of Sihon and Og. So verses 1-6 summarize the defeat of these two Amorite kings who were on the east side of the Jordan River.

Verses 7-24 summarize all the kings on the west side of the Jordan River – 31 kings in all, 16 in the south and 15 in the north. Why so many kings in an area of land that is only about the size of the state of New Jersey? The answer is that these are kings of city-states. The Canaanites were not united as a nation. They were fractured up into many city-states with a ruling king for each city. Archaeologists have discovered the mounds, or tels, that mark the locations of many of these ancient cities mentioned here.

Many of these cities are also mentioned in the Amarna Letters. The Amarna Letters are ancient clay tablets uncovered in Egypt. They were communications between Egypt and the political leaders in Canaan around the time of the conquest, so a number of the cities that are mentioned here in Joshua 12 are also named in the Amarna Letters. Once again, archaeology supports the accuracy of Scripture!

## Doctrinal / Teaching Points

### 1. God keeps a record of the believers' enemies in the land.

Seriously speaking now, or honestly speaking, how many of you would have skipped this chapter in your devotional reading through the book of Joshua? What possible spiritual lessons or practical application can we get from a chapter that's a summary of the kings conquered in the land of Canaan? You've probably never heard Joshua 12 preached on before, right?

Well, here's one lesson: God keeps a record of the believers' enemies in the land. Remember that the physical land of Canaan with all of its blessings and battles represents or pictures the spiritual land of spiritual blessing the Lord has given us, and the spiritual battles that the Lord has wants us to win. The Lord wants us to enjoy the spiritual blessings and be victorious in the spiritual battles. In this spiritual picture, all of these kings represent satanic forces that are at work, trying to keep us defeated as believers, and trying to prevent us from enjoying our spiritual blessings in Christ. Ephesians 6:12: *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."*

Do you think God knows all about these enemy forces? Of course He does! Just as God kept a detailed record here of all the enemy kings in the land of Canaan, so God knows and keeps a record of all the enemy forces that we face. God

knows everything that Satan is doing! He knows every single principality and power, and He knows every single fallen angel and demon that exists. After all, God created them before their fall. God knows every form of spiritual opposition that these enemy forces are using as they try and defeat us and try to prevent us from enjoying our spiritual blessings in Christ.

Now that gives me encouragement --how about you? To know that God knows all the problems and temptations and forms of spiritual opposition that we face should be an encouragement to us. David said in Psalm 69:19 *“You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries are all before You.”* God knew all David’s enemies, and God knows each and every enemy force that we face. God keeps a record of the believers’ enemies in the land.

## **2. God keeps a record of the believers’ victories in the land.**

God knows every satanic agent and every evil force that we face in spiritual warfare, and He also enables us to defeat these enemy forces. Listen to the promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13: *“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”* The word that’s used there can be translated either as “temptation” (solicitation to evil), or “test” (test of our faith). So God promises that there’s no temptation to sin or test of our faith that we can’t overcome! God expects us to be victorious, and He keeps a record of the victories so that He can reward us.

In 2 Timothy 4:7-8 the apostle Paul said, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”* What is the “crown of righteousness”? The crown of righteousness is not the reward of becoming righteous, because we already are righteous if we’re believers. That’s our position in Christ.

The crown of righteousness is the reward for righteous living, and righteous living includes victory over spiritual opposition. The Lord enables us to be victorious in spiritual warfare, and He also keeps a record of the victories. He remembers them, and He will reward us for those victories. Just as God kept a record of all of Israel’s victories in the land of Canaan, so God keeps a record of all our victories in spiritual warfare.

Now this truth can be applied collectively as well as individually. The Lord knows every form of spiritual opposition your church has faced, and He keeps a record of your church’s faithfulness and victories. He knows how you have resisted any attempt of the enemy to penetrate your fellowship with false doctrine over the years. He knows how you have kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace when dissension has raised its ugly head. He knows how you have disciplined sin, in line with the word of God. The Lord keeps a record of these victories and He will reward you. God keeps a record of the believers’ victories in the land.

## **Practical Application**

**“Count your many battles - name them one by one!”**

We could write the title of the hymn, “Great is Thy Faithfulness” across this chapter! God had promised the land to Israel, it was part of the Abrahamic covenant and God was faithful to His promise. God had promised victory over every enemy that Israel faced and God was faithful to His promise, and now these battles are recounted in Joshua 12.

The lesson for us from this chapter could be a slight variation on another hymn: “Count your many **battles** - name them one by one”! Have you remembered to thank the Lord for giving you victory in your battle over certain temptations? Have you remembered to thank the Lord for giving you victory over that jealous spiritual you had concerning that brother or sister of yours in Christ? Have you remembered to thank the Lord for giving you the ability to control your temper? Have you remembered to thank the Lord for giving you the capacity to stop lying?

Just thanking the Lord for these victories gives us strength for further victories – sometime in the same areas. We should never rest on our laurels! We should always remember to count our many battles, and name them one by one before the Lord as we thank Him for giving us strength and encouragement, and for enabling us to be victorious over temptations!