

# Joshua

Partial Occupation of Canaan			
Conquered		Settled	
Chapters 1–12		Chapters 13–24	
Swords		Spoils	
Faith Demonstrated		Faith Rewarded	
Entering Canaan	Conquering Canaan	Dividing Canaan	
Preparation	Subjection	Possession	
Jordan River	Canaan	2 1/2 Eastern Tribes 9 1/2 Western Tribes	
ca. One Month	ca. 7 Years	ca. 18 Years	
Preparation (1–5)	Process (6–12)	Partitioning (13–21)	Principles (22–24)

**Key Word:** Occupation

**Key Verse:** “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful” (Joshua 1:8)

**Summary Statement:**

The way Israel conquered and settled most of Canaan was by courageous faith that God would fulfill his promise.

**Applications:**

Obedient faith based upon God's promises brings blessing.

Partial obedience results in difficulty.

# Joshua

## Introduction

- I. **Title** The Hebrew and English names for the book are the same. Joshua (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ *Y<sup>e</sup>hoshua*) means "Yahweh saves" or "Yahweh is salvation" (BDB 221c 1). His original name was *Hoshea*, meaning "salvation" (Num. 13:8). Still, Moses changed it to *Yehoshua*, which is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek name *Iesous*, meaning "Yahweh is salvation" (Num. 13:16), and ultimately the origin of the name Jesus. This is a fitting title, as Joshua appears as the main character and his mission as leader of Israel is to help the people understand that God, not he, saves them by conquering the Canaanites and apportioning their land to them.

## II. Authorship

- A. External Evidence: Jewish tradition ascribes the work to Joshua himself. The Talmud says that Joshua wrote all but the last five verses, which Phineas recorded.
- B. Internal Evidence: The text claims that Joshua wrote at least parts of the book (8:32; 24:26). Several lines of evidence point to a very early composition: (1) The author is an eyewitness to the events as "we" and "us" describe the participants (5:1, 6), (2) Rahab was still living (6:25), (3) The Jebusites still inhabited Jerusalem (15:63), and (4) Old names of the Canaanite cities are employed (e.g., Kiriath Arba for Hebron in 15:13).

However, although the unity of style and organization suggest a single author, three sections must have been written after Joshua's death: (1) Othniel's capture of Kiriath Sepher (15:13-19; cf. Judges 1:9-15), (2) The northern migration of the tribe of Dan (19:47; cf. Judges 18:27-29), and (3) Joshua's death and burial (24:29-33). Many evangelical scholars attribute these minor additions to Eleazar the priest and his son Phineas (24:33) during the time of the judges.

Joshua was born a slave in Egypt into the "half-tribe" of Ephraim. He was redeemed from slavery at 40 (Moses' "young aide"; cf. Exod. 33:11). He began leading Israel at 80 and led the nation for 30 years until his death at the age of 110 (24:29).

## III. Circumstances

- A. Date: The conquest date of Canaan hinges, of course, upon the date of the Exodus (see Exodus notes for support of the early date of ca. 1446 BC). Caleb was forty at Kadesh one year after the Exodus (14:7; 1445 BC) and eighty-five after the conquest (14:10). Since this 45-year difference included 38 years of wanderings, it leaves a seven-year conquest from 1405-1398 BC (the wanderings being from 1445-1405 BC). This places the entrance into Canaan at 1405 BC and the conclusion of the Book of Joshua seven years later in 1398 BC. Joshua died many years later at the age of 110 (23:1; 24:29). Some believe he died only eight years later (cf. *TTTB*, 53, and Schmidt's chronology chart "Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges"). Still, a more reasonable guess is ten to twenty years later (Campbell, *BKC*, 1:367). Therefore, apart from minor additions, the Book of Joshua was written after 1398 and perhaps as late as 1378 BC.
- B. Recipients: Joshua's first readers were Israelites in Canaan with him after the land conquest.
- C. Occasion: Moses had just died after leading Israel in forty years of wilderness wanderings. Then Joshua took the helm to lead the nation to take possession of the land God had promised. One teacher has noted that if the second book of the Bible is properly called *Exodus* ("the way out"), then this sixth book may be deemed *Eisodus* ("the way in")! In this book, the nation experiences the partial fulfillment of the promise of the land that stems back to Abraham nearly 600 years earlier (cf. Gen. 12:1, 7).

#### IV. Characteristics

- A. Joshua marks a new method of God's communication to his people. Up to this point (i.e., in the Pentateuch), Jehovah spoke through dreams, visions, or angels. However, beginning with Joshua, the Law of Moses becomes the voice of God in written form (1:8). The importance of the written word is emphasized in the examples and commands to obey it (1:7, 8c; 23:6-16), talk about it (1:8a), meditate upon it (1:8b), honor it (8:32-33), and read it (8:34-35).
- B. In the Hebrew canon, the Book of Joshua heads the grouping of books called the "Prophets." The reason for this is debated, but some suggest that Joshua held the office of a prophet. Others understand the placement as indicating that this book (among the "Former Prophets") illustrates the principles preached by the prophets (Campbell, *BKC*, 1:325).
- C. Joshua records the *incomplete* possession of the land. Although land ownership was unconditional (Gen. 12:7; 15:18-21; 17:8), possession was conditional (Deut. 29:9-30:20). While God promised the entire land of Canaan (1:4), the Israelites did not possess it all because they did not trust God for it all (13:1). Therefore, the Land Covenant that promises the land from the Wadi of Egypt to the Euphrates River (Gen. 15:18) was not fulfilled under Joshua. In fact, it still remains unfulfilled.
- D. Many common themes connect Deuteronomy and Joshua:

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Deuteronomy</u>	<u>Joshua</u>
Holy War	How to do it (instructed)	How it was done (implemented)
Possessing Canaan	Promised	Possessed
Joshua's Role	Appointed	Operated
Law of Moses	Stated	Restated (Josh. 23-24)

### Argument

The Book of Joshua divides easily into two parts. Both show the partial occupation of the Promised Land by Israel in fulfillment of God's promise. The first part (Joshua 1-12) records how the nation conquers most of the land of the Canaanites through a careful preparation (Joshua 1-5) and exploits through Joshua's faith in God (Joshua 6-12). The second part (Joshua 13-24) describes how Israel settles the conquered land by partitioning it into allotted areas for the respective tribes (Joshua 13-21) and how this land stays settled by obedience to the covenant (Joshua 22-24). The purpose of each of these sections is to instruct the nation that obedient faith based upon God's promises brings blessing.

### Synthesis

#### Partial Occupation of Canaan

#### Partial fulfillment of the land promise

<b>1-12</b>	<b>Land conquered</b>
1-5	Preparation
1	Charge
2	Spies
3	Jordan crossing
4	Memorial
5:1-12	People prepared: Ceremonies
5:13-15	Joshua prepared: Angel
6-12	Process
6-8	Central: Jericho, Ai
9-10	Southern: Gibeonites, Amorites
11:1-15	Northern: Coalition
11:16-12:24	Summary
<b>13-24</b>	<b>Land settled</b>
13-21	Partitioning
13:1-7	Philistia not allotted
13:8-33	Eastern (2 1/2)
14:1-19:48	Western (9 1/2)
14-15	Judah: Caleb, rest
16-17	Joseph

18:1–19:48	7 tribes
19:49–21:45	Joshua, manslayers, Levites
22–24	Principles
22	Civil war averted: unity
23:1–24:27	Covenant renewal: obedience
24:28–33	Burials: faith

## Outline

### **Summary Statement for the Book**

**The way Israel conquered and settled most of Canaan was by courageous faith that God would fulfill his promise.**

- I. **The way Israel conquered most of Canaan was by courageous faith that God would fulfill his promise (Joshua 1–12).**
  - A. Israel prepared to occupy Canaan through obeying Joshua's military and spiritual leadership as an example of trust in God and his leaders (Chs. 1–5).
    1. God told Joshua to courageously conquer the land in his strength, which was founded on God's Word (Ch. 1).
    2. Joshua gained courage through two spies who reported Rahab's faith (Ch. 2).
    3. Joshua trusted God by miraculously crossing the Jordan to teach Israel to trust God and his leaders (Ch. 3).
    4. Israel built a memorial of their miraculous Jordan crossing so they would not forget God's work on their behalf (Ch. 4).
    5. Joshua spiritually prepared Israel to separate the people as committed to trusting God's promises (5:1–12).
    6. The preincarnate Jesus prepared Joshua for conquest to show God as Israel's main leader (5:13–15).
  - B. Israel conquered each region of Canaan separately, trusting God's sovereign guidance to enjoy his promised blessing (Chs. 6–12).
    1. The conquest of central Canaan in Jericho and Ai showed how obedience leads to God's blessing (Chs. 6–8).
      - a) Israel miraculously and unusually defeated Jericho against tremendous odds to teach the nation to obey God's plan for victory (Ch. 6).
      - b) The initial defeat of Israel by Ai before Israel finally conquered the city points out how sin among the people prevents them from experiencing God's deliverance (Chs. 7–8).
    2. The conquest of southern Canaan shows the need to trust in God, not self, for victory (Chs. 9–10).
      - a) The foolish covenant to spare the deceptive Gibeonites shows the need to trust God instead of human wisdom (Ch. 9).
      - b) God's defense of the Gibeonites by hailstones and prolonged daylight defeated the Amorites and southern Canaan, showing that only obedient faith brings victory (Ch. 10).
    3. The conquest of northern Canaan's coalition of armies shows God's sovereign hand to fulfill his promise (11:1–15).
    4. A summary of the conquest shows that God fulfilled his promise for Israel to possess every place where they stepped (11:16–12:24; cf. 1:3).

**II. The result of Israel's courageous faith was that they settled Canaan (Chs. 13–24).**

- A. Israel's partitioning the occupied Promised Land for each tribe, Joshua, the manslayers, and the Levites teaches the joyful rewards of faith and obedience (Chs. 13–21).
1. The coastal regions were unallotted since Israel failed to conquer them, which shows that Israel possessed only land where they set foot, according to God's promise (13:1-7; cf. 1:3).
  2. Portions for the two and a half eastern tribes show that they kept the national unity as they fought for the other tribes, just as those tribes fought for them (13:8-33).
  3. Portions for the nine and one-half western tribes show Israel the joyful rewards of faith and obedience (14:1–19:48).
    - a) Land for Judah, Joseph, and half of Manasseh came by lot in Gilgal (Chs. 14–17).
      - (1) Judah got land across southern Canaan from the Dead Sea to Philistia (Chs. 14–15).
        - (a) Caleb occupies a portion in southeastern Judah (Ch. 14).
        - (b) The rest of Judah's boundaries stretch from the Dead Sea to Philistia in every area except the Jebusite city of Jerusalem (Ch. 15).
      - (2) Joseph got Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh's land in central Canaan from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea (Chs. 16–17).
    - b) Land for the other seven tribes was obtained by topographical survey and lot in Shiloh (18:1–19:48).
      - (1) The remaining tribes moved to Shiloh, where a topographical survey was added to the casting of lots to determine inheritances (18:1-10).
      - (2) Allotments for Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan finish the undesignated land portions (18:11–19:48).
  4. Land for Joshua, the manslayers, and the Levites shows obedient faith's joyful rewards (19:49–21:45).
    - a) Joshua gets the city of Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim (19:49-51).
    - b) Six cities of refuge among Levite towns protect manslayers of accidental deaths until standing trial and until the high priest's death (Ch. 20).
    - c) Forty-eight Levite towns spread the teachers throughout the land rather than giving them one geographical inheritance (Ch. 21).
- B. Israel's emphasis on unity, obedience, and faith motivates a covenant renewal for continued occupation of the Promised Land (Chs. 22–24).
1. The western tribes almost go to war against the eastern tribes, who build a memorial altar to encourage worship at the LORD's sanctuary, to stress the importance of unity in Israel (Ch. 22).
  2. Joshua's charge to covenant renewal before his death insists that covenant obedience is the basis for continued land occupancy (23:1–24:27).
  3. An appendix, probably by Phineas, records that Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar all once lived in Egypt yet were buried in Canaan by faith in God's faithfulness to keep his promises (24:28-33).

## Miraculous Crossings

Reed (Red) Sea	Jordan River
Exodus 14	Joshua 3
A Sea	A River
Moses	Joshua
Begins the Wanderings	Ends the Wanderings
Leaving Egypt	Leaving Moab
Entering Sinai	Entering Canaan
Egyptians Killed	No-One Killed
Song Memorial (Exod. 15)	Stone Memorial (Josh. 4)
Narrow Channel (Exod. 14:22)	30 Km Plain (Josh. 3:16)
Took All Night	Took a Few Hours
Pillar Led the Way	Priests Led the Way
Circumcision Preceded	Circumcision Followed
Passover Preceded	Passover Followed
Complaining Followed	Conquering Followed
Gave Freedom	Gave Rest*
Signifies Salvation	Signifies Glorification
Antitype is Christian Life	Antitype is Kingdom Life
2 Million People	2 Million People
10 <sup>th</sup> day of 1 <sup>st</sup> Month (Exod. 12:2-3)	10 <sup>th</sup> day of 1 <sup>st</sup> Month (Josh. 4:19, 23)
= 10 Nisan 1445 BC	= 10 Nisan 1405 BC

\* Josh. 1:13, 15; 22:23b; 14:15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1

## Battles of Joshua's Conquest

John H. Walton, *Chronological and Background Charts of the OT*, 2d ed., 38

SECURING THE CENTRAL CORRIDOR		
OPPONENT	BATTLE SITE	JOSHUA REFERENCE
Jericho	Jericho	6:12-27
Ai	Ai	7:2-6
Ai and Bethel	Ai	8:1-29
THE SOUTHERN COALITION		
Coalition of Amorites led by Adoni-Zedek of Jerusalem and including Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon	Initial encounter at Gibeon with pursuit through Beth-Horon and the Valley of Aijalon ending at Azekah	10:1-27
Follow-up sieges at Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir (10:28-39)		
THE NORTHERN COALITION		
Coalition led by Jabin of Hazor and including many cities of the north	Initial encounter by the Waters of Merom with pursuit west to Sidon and Misrephoth-main and the Mizpeh Valley to the NE	11:1-9
Follow-up sieges at Hazor and other royal cities unnamed (11:10-15)		

This false story is from a church newsletter in California (May 1998).  
See the next page for the truth of the story.



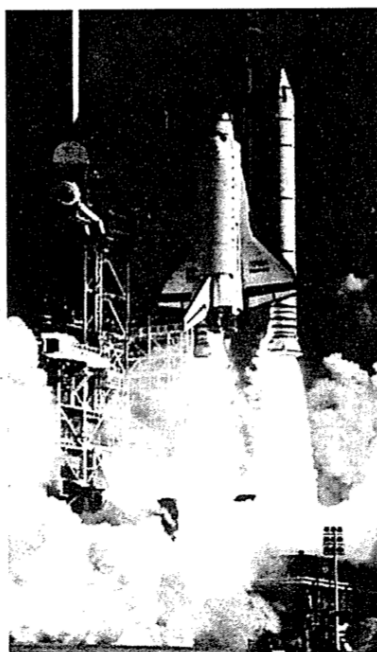
Did you know that the space program is busy proving that what has been called "myth" in the Bible is true? Mr Harold Hill, President of the Curtis Engine Company in Baltimore Maryland and a consultant in the space program, relates the following development.

I think one of the most amazing things that God has for us today happened recently to our astronauts and space scientists at Green Belt, Maryland. They were checking the position of the sun, moon and planets out in space; where they would be 100 years and 1000 years from now. We have to know this so we won't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be so the whole thing will not bog down.

They ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt. The computer stopped and put up a red signal, which meant that there was something wrong either with the information fed into it or with the results as compared to the standards. They called in the service department to check it out and they said "What's wrong?" Well they found there is a day missing in space in elapsed time. They scratched their heads and tore their hair. There was no answer.

Finally, a Christian man on the team said, "You know, one time I was in Sunday School and they talked about the sun standing still."

While they didn't believe him, they didn't have an answer either, so they said, "Show us". He got a Bible and went back to the book of Joshua where they found a pretty ridiculous statement for any one with "common sense." There they found the Lord saying to Joshua, "Fear them not, I have delivered them into thy hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee." Joshua was concerned because he was surrounded by the enemy and



if darkness fell they would overpower them. So Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun stand still! That's right--"The sun stood still and the moon stayed---and hasted not to go down *about* a whole day!"

The astronauts and scientists said, "There is the missing day!" They checked the computers going back into the time it was written

and found it was close but not close enough. The elapsed time that was missing back in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes--not a whole day. They read the Bible and there it was "*about* (approximately) a day" These little words in the Bible are important, but they were still in trouble because if you cannot account for 40 minutes you'll still be in trouble 1,000 years from now. Forty minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits.

As the Christian employee thought about it, he remembered somewhere in the Bible where it said the sun went BACKWARDS. The scientists told him he was out of his mind, but they got out the Book and read these words in 2 Kings: Hezekiah, on his deathbed, was visited by the prophet Isaiah who told him that he was not going to die. Hezekiah asked for a sign as proof. Isaiah said "Do you want the sun to go ahead 10 degrees?" Hezekiah said "It is nothing for the sun to go ahead 10 degrees, but let the shadow return *backward* 10 degrees.." Isaiah spoke to the Lord and the Lord brought the shadow ten degrees BACKWARD! Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes! Twenty three hours and 20 minutes in Joshua, plus 40 minutes in Second Kings make the missing day in the universe! Isn't it amazing? Our God is rubbing their noses in His Truth! Check this out for yourself!

References  
Joshua 10:8 and 10:12-13  
2 Kings 20:9-11

Editor's Note: This article was received by e-mail and checked for publication.



## The Harold Hill Myth

From: KBertsche@aol.com  
Subject: Harold Hill Myth  
Date: Sun, 7 Jun 1998 19:46:26 EDT

I have received four e-mails repeating the "Harold Hill Myth" in the past month, so thought it warranted a detailed response. Please forward this message to anyone who sends the story to you, anyone you have sent it to, or anyone you think may be influenced by it. The "Harold Hill Myth" is a Christian "urban legend" which has been circulating for some 30 years now in its present form. It is based on a book published more than 100 years ago, in 1890. It has recently started making its way around the Internet.

The story by Harold Hill tells about NASA scientists who were back-calculating the positions of celestial bodies, and their computers balked at inconsistencies in the calculations until a Christian in the crowd persuaded them to insert the missing day of Joshua [Josh. 10:8, 12-13] and the missing 40 minutes of Hezekiah [2 Kings 20:9-11], which made the computers happy and verified these biblical miracles [see previous page for the full story].

Firstly, this is complete, utter nonsense! In calculating to find the motion of heavenly bodies, there is no way of telling whether days, hours, or months were missing in the past. The equations will happily run forwards or backwards, ignorant of these things. Without an external reference to compare the calculations to no one will know that they are calculating incorrect positions when the equations are run backwards.

Secondly, the source of the story is highly dubious. The account is denied by NASA. While there is indeed a Harold Hill who recounts this story, he had only a VERY peripheral contact with NASA. Believers who have investigated the story have uncovered his dubious connection to NASA, and an older, very similar story by Rimmer in 1936 (long before NASA), claiming to be based on Totten's book in 1890 (more than 100 years ago!), which was apparently not based on any celestial calculations. It seems that this is an old story which has been embellished over the years, and that the celestial mechanics and NASA connection has absolutely no basis in fact.

It is very disappointing to me that in our modern, sophisticated, scientific society, people can still be duped by such nonsense. I don't know if this indicates the poor state of science education in this country or the reluctance of Christians to think critically (probably some of each). We need to be "as wise as serpents" (Mt. 10:16), and skeptical of such accounts. We do not want or need to resort to lies to support the truth of the Scriptures! As James Kiefer says of this myth, "MORAL: When you encounter stories that appear to confirm the truth of the Christian faith, and you cannot trace them back to a reliable source, or when there are unanswered questions like 'How do we know this?', it is best, in evaluating them, to err on the side of too much skepticism rather than too little."

Kirk Bertsche, PhD

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Note: Dr. Bertsche has a PhD in Physics and was studying at Western Seminary, San Jose, CA, when he wrote this email in 1998. For more information, he gives these links (updated on 2 April 2012 from his email):

<http://www.snopes.com/religion/lostday.asp>

<http://www.57piano.com/scispks.htm#Mark11>

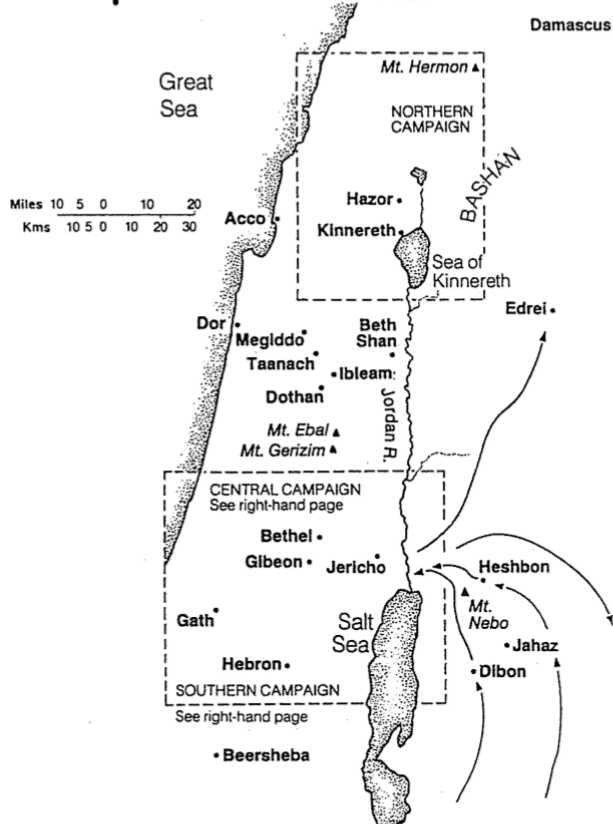
[http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ask\\_astro/answers/970325g.html](http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ask_astro/answers/970325g.html) (Note: this last reference has good science, but betrays a low and overly restrictive view of biblical truth.)

## Conquest of Canaan

The Bible Visual Resource Book, 45

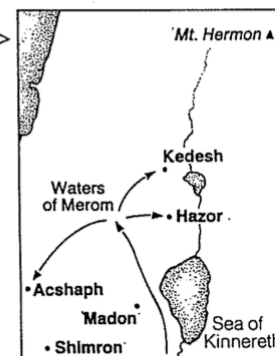
Joshua

### 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.

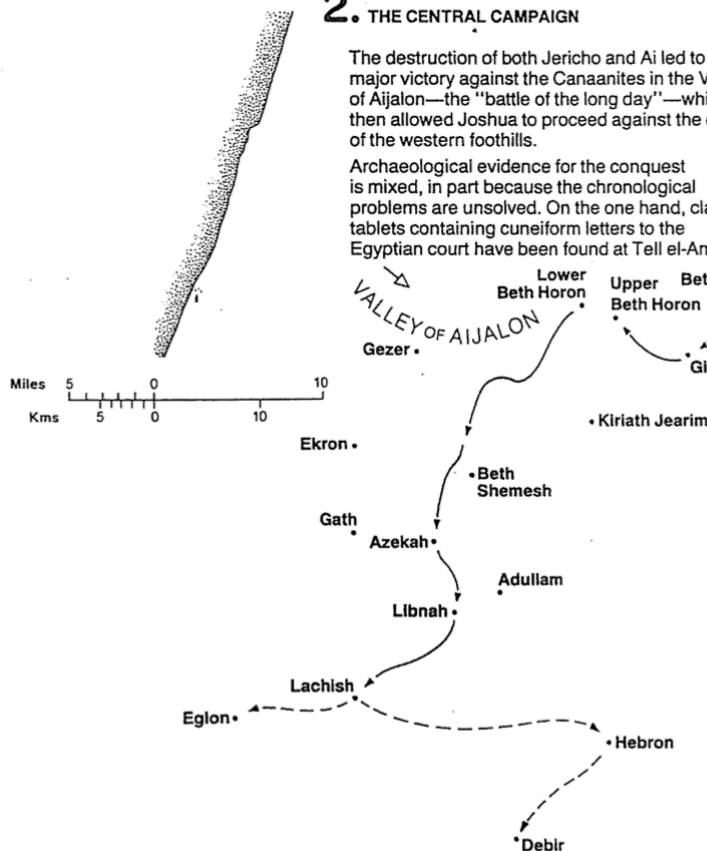
#### 2. THE CENTRAL CAMPAIGN

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).



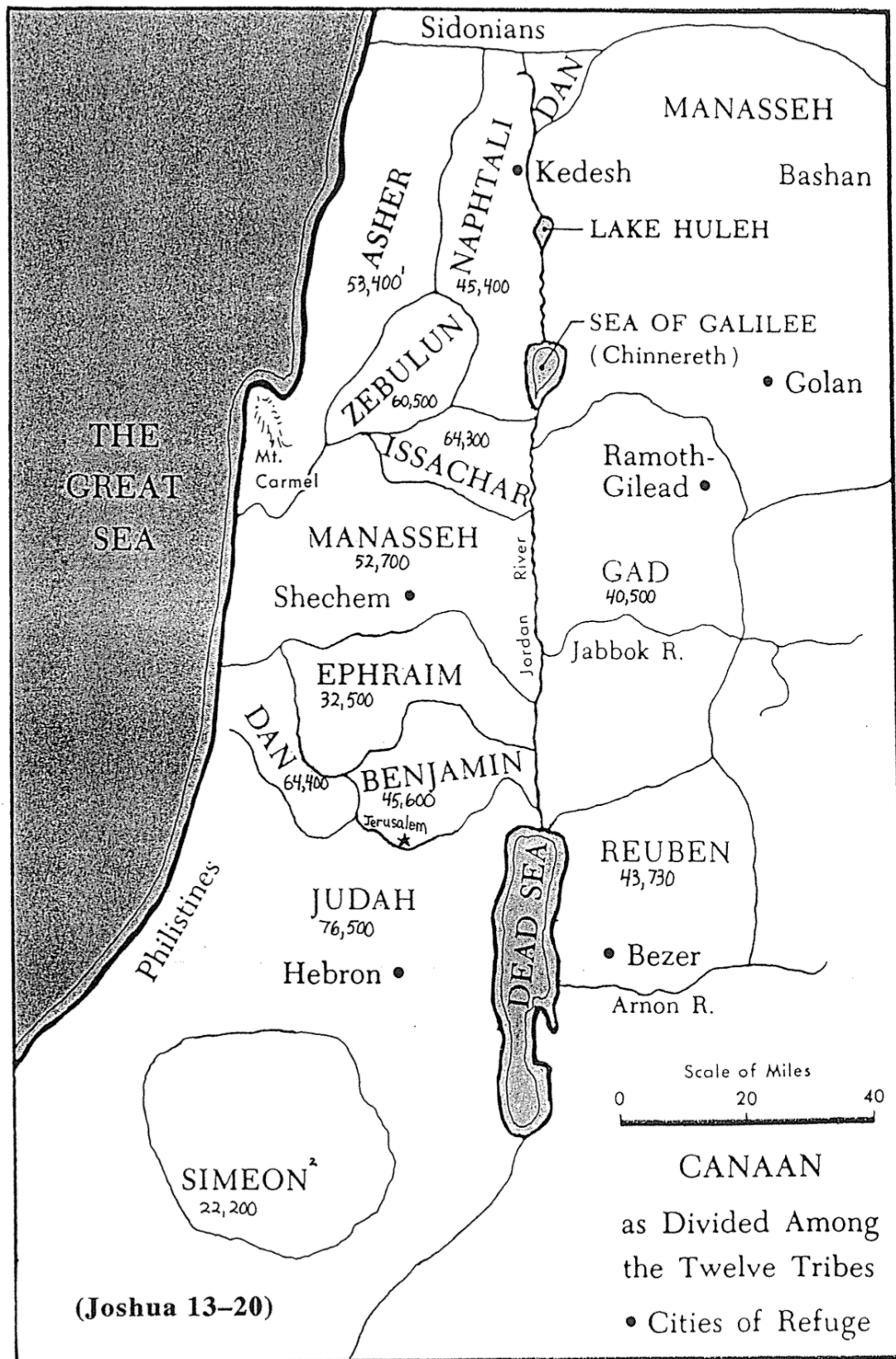
#### 3. THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

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.

## Division of Canaan

Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen's Survey of the OT*, 140 (adapted based on Barry Beitzel, *Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*, 100)

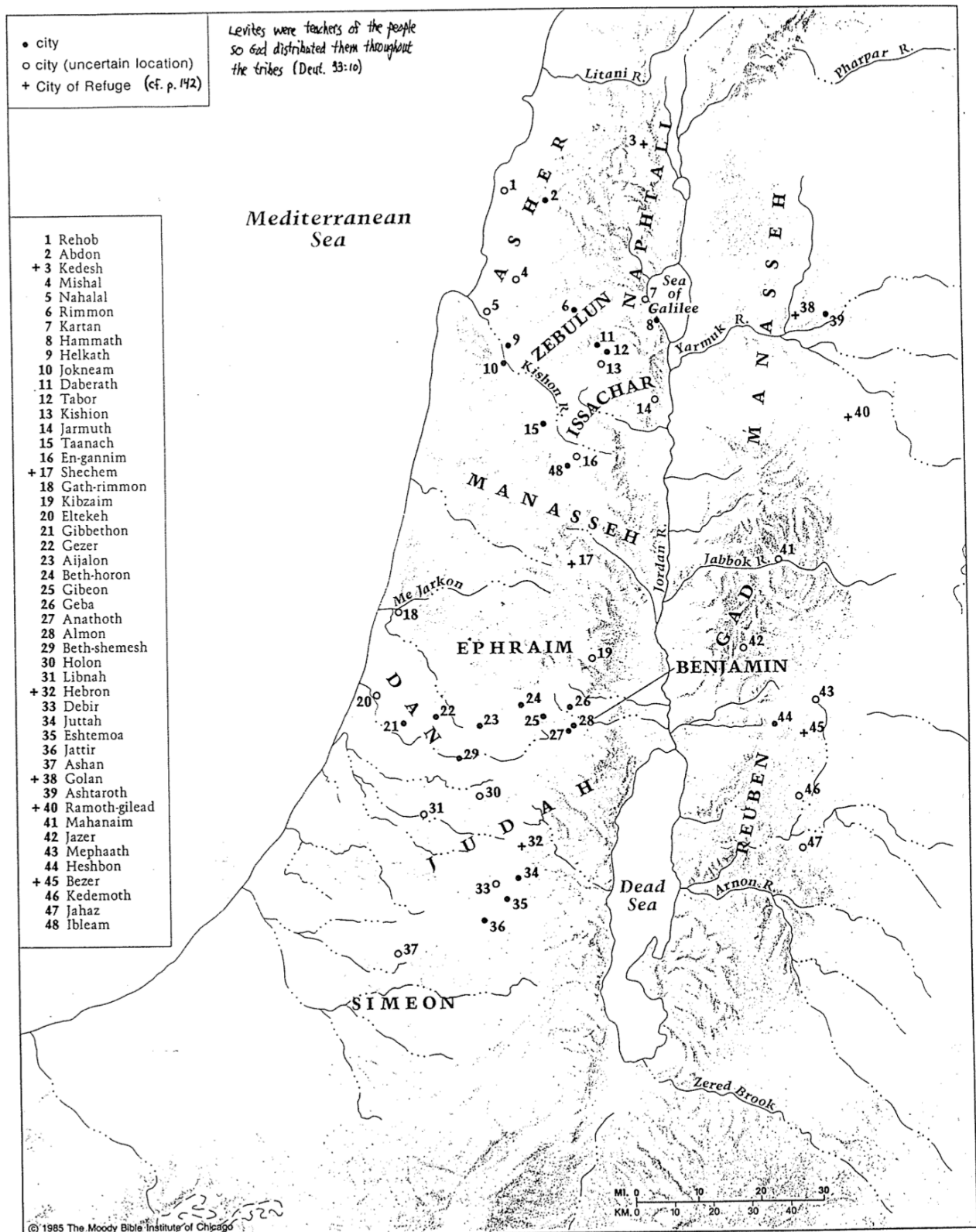


<sup>1</sup>Numbers for each tribe indicate the population of soldiers just before the conquest of Canaan (Num. 26).

<sup>2</sup>Simeon's inheritance lay within the land of Judah (Josh. 19:1-9) due to his violence at Shechem (Gen. 34:25-31). Levi also received no inheritance except cities within other tribes (cf. p. 171a) due to the same sin (Gen. 49:5-7).

## Levitical Cities and Cities of Refuge

Barry Beitzel, *Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*, 101



## Issues about Jericho

### 1. Is Jericho the Oldest City in the World?

Most archaeologists believe Jericho is the world's oldest city (8000 BC), even before pottery. However, the actual oldest city more probably would be Babylon in Iraq, where the tower of Babel was built (Gen. 11). The genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 at face value (no gaps) lead to creation at 4143 BC anyway (p. 84). A date no later than 4000 BC for settlements on the site (not a full-fledged city) is supported by the excavations of British professor and archaeologist John Garstang. He unearthed five layers of cities at Jericho from 1930-1936 and published a definitive work in *The Story of Jericho* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1940; rev. ed., 1948). However, either proposed date (8000 or 4000 BC) would precede the flood at about 2500 BC (p. 90).

### 2. What made Jericho so Significant?

Jericho's strategic location guards the pass to the hills of Judah and across the Jordan River, as well as the north-south route of the Jordan Valley. Due to this location, some believe Jericho has been built and destroyed 23 times! It is also called City of Palms (Deut. 34:3; "Jericho" means "fragrant place"), as it lies in the fertile Jordan oasis rich in fruits and vegetation (not watered by rain). The OT site of Joshua 6 is Tell es-Sultan, a 400-meter mound rising 15 meters above the bedrock. Immediately to the east is the spring of Ain es-Sultan that waters the oasis. This is likely the fountain of Elisha (2 Kings 2:19-22). Behind Jericho is Jebel Kuruntul or Mount of Temptation, where tradition records Christ's temptation by Satan for 40 days (Matt. 4; Luke 4).

### 3. Did God Bless Rahab's Lie?

Rahab lied in several ways. She said she didn't know where the men had come from, she said they had left, and she said she didn't know where they went (Josh. 2:4-5). Does the end (saving the lives of the spies) justify the means (lying)?

Several items can be said in response:

1. God never said that he approved of her lying. He only approved of her faith (Heb. 11:31).
2. God could have still saved the lives of the spies and Rahab even if she told the truth.
3. "At most, God allowed his purposes to be fulfilled in this unusual manner because his grace can operate in spite of the sinful maneuverings of man" (Kaiser, *Hard Sayings of the OT*, 97).



Frontispiece

*An Artist's Impression of the Fourth City of Jericho in the Time of Joshua (1400 BC)*

This is how Israel saw the city from the east. Note the spring in front of the city as well as remains of the third city. Houses rose on the west side behind imposing walls with the king's palace in the middle and temple southwest.

#### 4. Is There Evidence that Jericho's Wall Collapsed?

John Garstang (see earlier) surveyed the evidence for the destruction of the fourth city (Layer D) and concluded Joshua destroyed Jericho between 1426 and 1385 BC. He notes that about 100 years earlier, Jericho had two walls constructed: a 12-foot thick inner wall of mud-brick, plus a 6-foot thick outer wall (pp. 135-36). The walls were so strong that overcrowding in the city motivated people to build homes bridging the two walls (Josh. 2:15). A field report shows evidence of burning (Josh. 6:24) in "reddened masses of brick, cracked stones, charred timbers and ashes" (p. 136). Ancient walls typically crumbled on themselves or towards a city from battering rams; yet note below in Garstang's cross-sectioned drawing how both walls fell away from the city:

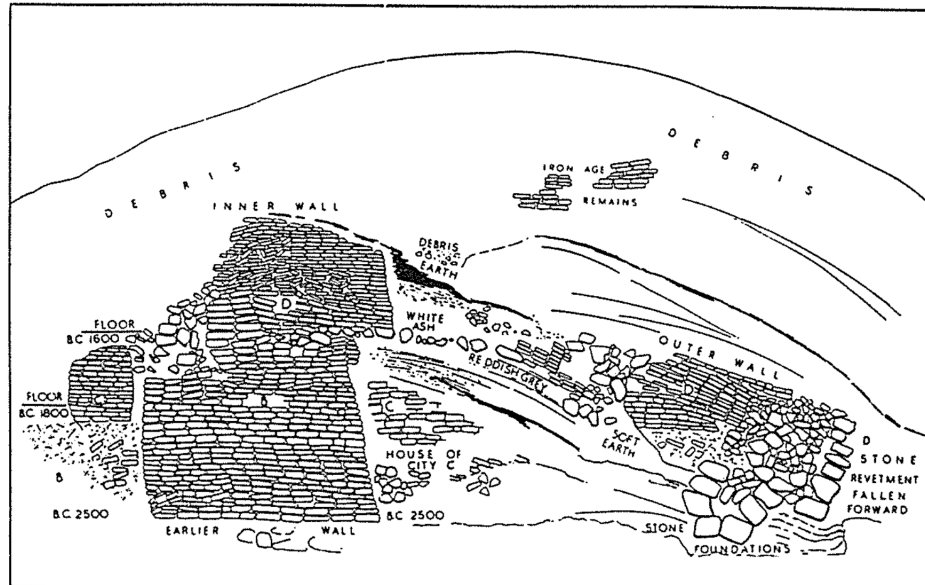


PLATE XVIII

THE FALLEN WALLS OF CITY IV (FROM A MEASURED DRAWING)

B. Brick wall of the Second City on the western scarp. DD. Walls of the Fourth City

"What then could account for so stupendous a catastrophe?" Garstang writes. He dismisses trampling of feet, a loud shout, trumpets, and tunneling—then concludes (p. 138):

One conclusion indeed seems certain: the power that could dislodge hundreds of tons of masonry in the way described must have been superhuman. Earthquake is the one and only known agent capable of the demonstration of force indicated by the facts; and there is reason to believe that in this lies the real answer to our question.

Garstang then cites a dozen earthquakes in this area from ancient to modern times.

These findings, of course, have found opponents in advocates of a late date exodus (1280 BC) such as G. E. Wright and W. F. Albright. Kathleen Kenyon (*Digging Up Jericho*, 1957) later advocated that the wall fell and the city was burnt at various times in its history (see J. A. Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology*, 2d. ed., [Eerdmans, 1973], 60-61). Yet Garstang had noted that burning normally did accompany destruction, but the City D level was unusually large (p. 142), as would be expected when the city was not plundered first (Josh. 6:24). Finds include huge supplies of food.

#### 5. How Could a Loving God Command the Killing of Canaanites?

God told Israel to conquer Jericho and the Canaanite cities by not leaving anything alive that breathes (Deut. 20:16-17), so they killed men, women, babies, and animals (Josh. 6:21; 8:26; 10:28; 11:11). Yet in the NT, we find God as a loving God. Jesus even said to turn the other cheek towards violence (Matt. 5:39). How can we reconcile these seemingly contradictory commands?

1. God is always the same God. He is a God of love in the OT as seen in his many acts of grace; He is also a God of wrath in the NT (Rom. 1:18). He even waited 400 years until the sin of the Amorites (Canaanites) "reached its full measure" (Gen. 15:16)—that is, they bore their sin.
2. God showed love to the world by protecting Israel and the world from Canaanite influences (Deut. 20:16-18), including their child sacrifice, homosexuality, bestiality, etc. (Benware, 276).
3. Only radical surgery can save the body from cancer. Is such surgery inhumane (Gen. 6:5)?
4. We have resources against corruption that Israel lacked (Rom. 6:13; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 10:4-5).