

Joshua 12:1 ¶ Now these *are* the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, from the river Arnon unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east:

This chapter will summarize a list of the kings that were conquered and killed by the troops of Israel as recorded in previous chapters. Commentators note that the fight to take possession of the land took seven years or more.

Joshua begins with the kings that were conquered on the east side of the Jordan River. The land involved extended from the Arnon River in the south to Mount Hermon in the north.

Joshua 12:2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, *and* ruled from Aroer, which *is* upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon;

Joshua 12:3 And from the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea on the east, the way to Bethjeshimoth; and from the south, under Ashdothpishgah:

The first king identified is Sihon, king of the Amorites.

Joshua 12:4 And the coast of Og king of Bashan, *which was* of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,

Joshua 12:5 And reigned in mount Hermon, and in Salcah, and in all Bashan, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

The second king mentioned is Og, king of Bashan, whose kingdom included descendants of the giants.

Coffman provides a good summary of the lands of these two kings.

“As for the scope of the territories that belonged to Sihon and Og, they may be described thus: between them, they controlled all of the Trans-Jordan eastward from the Jordan Valley, with the Jabbok river lying between their territories. Og controlled the northern area as far as mount Hermon, and Sihon controlled the southern sector south of the Jabbok. The mention of ‘half of Gilead,’ indicates that the rather indefinite area called ‘Gilead’ was divided about equally between Sihon and Og.”

Joshua 12:6 Them did Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel smite: and Moses the servant of the LORD gave it *for* a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

It is pointed out that Moses was still the leader of the people of Israel when they conquered these kings and their kingdoms. According to the LORD’s command, Moses gave this land as an inheritance to the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half

tribe of Manasseh.

Joshua 12:7 ¶ And these *are* the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel *for* a possession according to their divisions;

Joshua 12:8 In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

Following is a list of the kings and kingdoms conquered under the leadership of Joshua on the west side of the Jordan River. Though not all of these kings were mentioned in the previous chapters, they must have been included in the enemy coalition armies.

The New Bible Commentary makes an interesting observation: “The land Joshua conquered is roughly the size of the state of Vermont in the USA or Wales in Great Britain.”

Joshua 12:9 The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which *is* beside Bethel, one;

Joshua 12:10 The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

Joshua 12:11 The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

Joshua 12:12 The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one;

Joshua 12:13 The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

Joshua 12:14 The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

Joshua 12:15 The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

Joshua 12:16 The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one;

Joshua 12:17 The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one;

Joshua 12:18 The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;

Joshua 12:19 The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

Joshua 12:20 The king of Shimronmeron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

Joshua 12:21 The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

Joshua 12:22 The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one;

Joshua 12:23 The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one;

Joshua 12:24 The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

This completes the listing of the 31 kings and kingdoms that were conquered by the people of Israel as they took possession of the land of promise.

I liked David Guzik’s observation: “These descriptions are also important because they make it clear that these things happened in real time, and in real space. These are not fairy tales that begin with “once upon a time,” this is history that begins with specific places and people and rulers.”