

Joshua 12

Written by K B Napier

Tuesday, 20 February 2018 12:21

I know that many Christians avoid this kind of chapter, thinking it is just 'dry bones'. But, they are wrong, for the details given prove the accuracy and authenticity of the Old Testament accounts. They are details only eye-witnesses could give. Some might argue that as the book of Joshua covers about 500 years, how is it possible for the writer to be an eye witness? Two reasons can be given – either God gave the facts direct to the writer, or, the writer relied on the pin-point accuracy of actual eye witnesses who lived in each era. Those who know God understand this.

This chapter lists all the pagan kings who died in their attempt to stand against God/Jehovah. They were anathema to Him and He hated them for their evil doings. God does not change and He hates the same things today. Not just the things done, but those who do them.

Verses 1-6

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:

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;

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 Ashdothpispah:

4.

And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,

5.

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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.

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.

Many kings met their end at the hand of the Israelite army, and forfeited their land to the new nation of God. As we have already seen, the whole of the land east of the Jordan was now Israel's, both mountains and plains. King Sihon, an Amorite, was beaten by Moses. From the sea of Chinneroth west to the Mediterranean, and the Dead Sea ('Sea of Salt'). All came under the rule of Joshua.

Then there was the land of king Og, north east of Gilead and Jericho, whose inhabitants were also giants, now forced back to a narrow strip of land to the south west of Gilead, on the coast. Please note that the list and description is detailed, a fact that proves its authenticity and genuineness.

These lands were taken by Moses in battle, and given to the tribe of Reuben, Gad and, half the tribe of Manasseh (see article on Manasseh).

Verses 7&8

1.

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;

2.

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

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Hivites, and the Jebusites:

(Really, the whole chapter is but one account, so my dividing of the verses is almost arbitrary in this case, made for ease of reading rather than any other reason).

Then we come to the kings defeated by Joshua after entering Canaan, whose land was divided up and given to the tribes of Israel. The Canaanite tribes were vanquished and their lands given away... though not all Canaanites were killed (probably human error but proving to be troublesome).

Verses 9-24

1.

The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one;

2.

The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

3.

The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

4.

The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one;

5.

The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

6.

The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

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7.

The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

8.

The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one;

9.

The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one;

10.

The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;

11.

The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

12.

The king of Shimronmeron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

13.

The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

14.

The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one;

15.

The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one;

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16.

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

We now have a list of all the pagan kings destroyed by the Israelites, along with their people, forts and lands. In total 31 kings were put to death for their gross wickedness and offence to the Lord God. In our own day we can expect God to similarly destroy the leaders of evil movements and countries that act against God and His people.

If you read Revelation you will see what will happen to those who defy the Lord. Theirs is a just judgment, and their deaths will not be the last of their sins. After their deaths will come their judgment by God before they are cast into hell.

The list of dead kings is a grim reminder of the final end of all who defy the Lord, but also a joyous truth, that God's children will see their enemies subdued and got rid of. Even so, we should continue to pray imprecatory prayers against these enemies, that God will remove them from power or from this earth.

The list appears to be written in actual succession, beginning with the king of Jericho and lists all the ones who came against Israel thereafter. It is worth noting that almost all of the kings attacked Israel first, out of fear for their own lives, or out of pagan anger. Either way they would have been removed by God anyway, for their blasphemous lives and beliefs.

In Samuel 15:2, 3 we find God commanding Israel to destroy the Amalekites because they "waylaid" Israel who merely wished to travel through the land. Then Canaanites were against godliness and that was sufficient for God to have them removed. Unlike us, He is not squeamish about their destruction, for they worshipped false gods, even though they knew all about the one true God, Jehovah. No doubt we would not wish to destroy an entire nation, but God's ways are not ours, and if His command is to do so, there is no choice in the matter.

And if Saul had completed the destruction of the Amalekites, as commanded by God, Israel would not have been attacked by the remainder (400 escaped). As I have said before, no army

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wishing complete success allows any of the enemy to live, not even as prisoners. We see this in modern day prisoners who are Islamic – they intimidate non-Muslims with violence and threats, demanding they become Muslims. And when those Islamics are released they continue to be terroristic. The answer is very simple – but no western government has the courage to defend its own people. The chapter, then, is educative in the ways of God... what we think is irrelevant.

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