

# Sermon Outline

---

## THE VICTORIES OF THE PROPHET JOSHUA

*JOSHUA 12:7-24*

---

### I. Introduction

### II. Introduction to the Victories of Joshua's Israel (Joshua 12:7, 8)

- A. In the previous lesson, we reviewed the victories of the prophet Moses.
- B. Now, we come to the victories of the prophet Joshua.
- C. The Scripture starts this way: "And these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the people of Israel defeated on the west side of the Jordan..."  
—The phrase "west side of the Jordan" tells us that we are now looking at the victories won in the Promised Land itself.
- D. Verses 7 and 8 give us the boundaries of Israel's victories under Joshua:
  - 1. "from Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon"—the northern landmark
  - 2. "to Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir"—the southern landmark.
- E. "and Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments..."
- F. Verse 8 is an overview of the realms that have come under Israel's power: "in the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negeb, the land of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites)..."

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) Where, in relation to the Jordan, were the kings in vv 7-24 from? (2) What are the northern and southern boundaries of Israel's conquest? (3) According to v 8, what lands were taken by Israel?

### III. The Defeated Kings (Joshua 12:9-24)

- A. The list of the kings runs from verses 9 to 24.
- B. First: "the king of Jericho" (v 9).
  - 1. Jericho was the first city that Israel fought west of the Jordan.
  - 2. God brought down the walls of Jericho in a supernatural way.
  - 3. In so doing, God reaffirmed to his people that he was with them; that the sins of the past generation of Israelites has been forgiven.
- C. Second: "the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel" (v 9).
  - 1. Israel was defeated at Ai due to the sin of one man, Achan.
  - 2. But God helped Israel to overcome that sin, and Israel was eventually able to overcome Ai.
- D. Third-seventh: The next kings on the list, verses 10-12 specifically, are the five kings who banded together when they saw the Gibeonites aligning with Israel.
  - 1. The king of Jerusalem

2. The king of Hebron
3. The king of Jarmuth
4. The king of Lachish
5. The king of Eglon
- E. Eighth: “the king of Gezer.”
  1. This was the one who tried to help the king of Lachish in Joshua 10.
  2. But he too got struck down.
- F. Ninth: “the king of Debir” (v 13).
  1. Debir was the city that Israel struck after conquering the city of Eglon in 10:38.
- G. Tenth-twelfth: “the king of Geder,” “the king of Hormah” and “the king of Arad.”
  1. These names are new to us.
  2. Geder is only mentioned here in the Bible, even though there are cities with similar sounding name (Howard, *Joshua*, 281).
  3. Hormah was a city in the Negev, which eventually goes to the tribe of Judah (Josh 19:4).
  4. Arad’s king attacked Israel when Moses was still the leader back in Numbers 33:40-49.
  5. Arad was near Hormah.
- H. Thirteenth: “the king of Libnah” (v 15)
  1. This is another familiar name.
  2. Libnah was one of the southern cities, which we encountered in Joshua 10.
- I. Fourteenth: Adullam was another city that was not mentioned earlier.
- J. Fifteenth: “the king of Makkedah.”
  1. Makkedah was that region where the five Amorite kings hid themselves in the cave.
  2. Following their extraction, Israel struck Makkedah as well (10:28).
- K. Sixteenth-twentieth: “the king of Bethel” and four other cities in the central portion of the land, “Tappuah...Hepher...Aphek...Lasharon...” (vv 17, 18) (Howard, *Joshua*, 282).
  1. Tappuah is eventually allotted to the tribe of Ephraim (16:8; 17:8).
  2. We do not know much about Hepher, although the land eventually becomes one of King Solomon’s twelve administrative districts (1 Kgs 4:10).
  3. We do not know much about Aphek or Lasharon either.
- L. In verses 19-23, we come to the kings of the north.
  1. Twentieth-first to thirty-first:
    - a. The king of Madon
    - b. The king of Hazor
    - c. The king of Shimron-meron
    - d. The king of Achshaph
    - e. The king of Taanach
    - f. The king of Megiddo
    - g. The king of Kedesh
    - h. The king of Jokneam in Carmel
    - i. The king of Dor in Naphath-dor
    - j. The king of Goiim in Galilee.

- k. The king of Tirzah
- M. And with that, the list ends with the note: “in all, thirty-one kings.”
- N. An interesting feature is the use of the formula, “The king of City X, one.”
  - 1. The repeated use of this formula underscores the decisiveness of Israel’s victory.
  - 2. Richard D. Nelson: “The incessant repetition of ‘king of’ nails down the total defeat of the system of Canaanite city-states.” (cited in Hubbard, Jr. *Joshua*, 362).
  - 3. Israel is a mighty warrior, dispatching their enemies with swiftness and ferocity.
- O. Yet, all things considered, we must always remember that Israel is *God’s* soldier. —Israel is the priestly warrior of God, purifying the land from evil.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) How many kings were overcome by Joshua and Israel? (2) What is the possible impact of the repeated formula, “King of City X, one”?

#### IV. His Love Endures Forever (Joshua 12:2, 3)

- A. What are some things we learn from this list?
- B. Remember that Joshua is Scripture, not just a military history. —Aside from informing Israel about who the kings were that their forefathers defeated, the list was given to teach Israel something about God.
- C. First: The list teaches Israel concerning *the supremacy of the Lord God*. —The Lord God of Israel is the unquestioned king over the nations of the land (Hubbard, Jr., *Joshua*, 366).
- D. Second: *The Lord God is a God who keeps his promises to his people*.
  - 1. Psalm 135:8-14:

<sup>8</sup> He it was who struck down the firstborn of Egypt,  
both of man and of beast;

<sup>9</sup> who in your midst, O Egypt,  
sent signs and wonders  
against Pharaoh and all his servants;

<sup>10</sup> who struck down many nations  
and killed mighty kings,

<sup>11</sup> Sihon, king of the Amorites,  
and Og, king of Bashan,  
and *all the kingdoms of Canaan*,

<sup>12</sup> and gave their land as a heritage,  
a heritage to his people Israel.

<sup>13</sup> Your name, O LORD, endures forever,  
your renown, O LORD, throughout all ages.

<sup>14</sup> For the LORD will vindicate his people  
and have compassion on his servants.

- a. The Psalmist uses the Lord's past dealings with his people to teach about his future dealings with his people.
  - b. Just as the Lord fought for his people in the past—vindicated them and had compassion on them—so he will do the same for future generations of the Church.
2. Psalm 136:17-22:
- <sup>17</sup> to him who struck down great kings,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
  - <sup>18</sup> and killed mighty kings,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
  - <sup>19</sup> Sihon, king of the Amorites,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
  - <sup>20</sup> and Og, king of Bashan,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
  - <sup>21</sup> and gave their land as a heritage,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
  - <sup>22</sup> a heritage to Israel his servant,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- a. From these historical episodes involving Moses and Joshua, the Psalmist is actually teaching us, by example, how to appropriate these historical events for ourselves.
  - b. God wants us to use these historical records *to reassure ourselves that he is for us.*
- E. This is great comfort!
- 1. *Fear* is one of the great powers under which we live.
  - 2. Fear can be helpful when immediate dangers are present.
  - 3. But when fear becomes an all-consuming worldview, it becomes counterproductive and destructive.
  - 4. Because of fear, we can make compromises with sin:
    - Closing our hearts to others
    - Excessive self-absorption
    - Dishonesty, theft, oppression to ensure our success
    - Idolatry
  - 5. But what Scripture teaches us again and again is that we really do *not* have to fear—*you and I are not obligated to live in fear.*
    - a. While we may live in a fallen universe that has many evil things to threaten us, the most basic reality of the universe is not fear at all.
    - b. The foundational reality is not evil but good—the steadfast love of God our Father.
    - c. God loved us while we were sinners—and sent his Son to die for our sins (Rom 5:8).
    - d. By raising Jesus from the dead, God makes sure that all of us who believe in Jesus will rise from the dead and live eternally as well.
    - e. Thus, fear does not have to be the ruling power of our lives.

- f. Fear can be replaced by love.
- g. Out of God's love in Christ, we can gain the courage and freedom to love our neighbors generously.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) What do Psalms 135 and 136 teach us about God's purposes for the historical records in Joshua? (2) How much does fear control you? When was the last time you made a poor decision because you were too anxious to trust in God?

## V. His Steadfast Love Will Replace Evil Kings

If the defeated kings testify to the steadfast love of God and hint at what God will do for his beloved people in the future, we can take to heart that this world along with the bullies who rule it will be clearly and decisively defeated. God will replace them by the good King of God's own choosing. Like Israel, let us strive alongside God to replace the false kings in our lives and communities with the holy, loving rule of our Lord Jesus Christ. We strive knowing that God will accomplish all his will ultimately. The Kingdom of God will come in all its fullness.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) What must we do, knowing that God will come through for us? (2) How can you strive with God to replace your false kings in your life? Where in your life do you need to replace fear with the love of God? (3) Is there anyone you know who could benefit from a reminder of God's acts of steadfast love?