

The Gibeonite Deception (c. Summer 1406 BC)

Joshua 9

Summary Statement Concerning Southern and Northern Coalitions

1 Now when all the kings who *were* beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the Shephelah, and on all the coast of the great sea toward Lebanon—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—heard of *this*,
2 they gathered themselves together to fight with one accord against Joshua and Israel.

Gibeon Decides to Save Itself Through Deception

3 But the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai,
4 and they acted on their part with cunning: they went and prepared provisions, and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys and old wineskins *that were* torn and mended.
5 The sandals on their feet *were* patched and old, their clothes *were* old, and their food was dry and crumbled.
6 And they went to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a far land; so then make a covenant with us.”
7 And the men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you *are* living among us; how can we make a covenant with you?”
8 They said to Joshua, “We *are* your servants.” And Joshua said to them, “Who *are* you, and from where do you come?”
9 And they said to him, “Your servants have come from a very far land because of the name of Yahweh your God; we have heard of his reputation, of all that he did in Egypt,
10 and of all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* beyond the Jordan—to Sihon king of Heshbon and to Og king of Bashan, who *was* in Ashtaroth.
11 So our elders said to us and all the inhabitants of our land, ‘Take in your hand provisions for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, “We *are* your servants; so then make a covenant with us.”’
12 This *is* our bread; *it was* hot *when* we took it from our houses as provisions on the day we set out to come to you. But now, look, it is dry and crumbled.
13 These *are* the wineskins that we filled new, but look, they have burst; and these *are* our clothes and sandals that have worn out from the very long journey.”

Joshua Did Not Ask Counsel From Yahweh

14 So the leaders took from their provisions, but they did not ask direction from Yahweh.
15 And Joshua made peace with them, and he made a covenant with them to allow them to live happily, and the leaders of the congregation swore *an oath* to them.

Gibeon’s Deception Discovered

16 And it happened that at the end of three days, after they made a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and living among them.
17 And the Israelites set out and went to their cities on the third day (their cities *were* Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim).
18 But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by Yahweh the God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against their leaders.
19 But all the leaders of the congregation said, “We have sworn to them by Yahweh the God of Israel, and so we cannot touch them.
20 This we will do to them: *we will* let them live so that wrath will not be on us because of the oath we swore to them.”
21 And the leaders said to them, “Let them live.” So they became woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, just as the leaders had said to them.

Joshua Confronts the Gibeonites

22 And Joshua summoned them and said, “Why have you deceived us saying, ‘We *are* very far from you’ when you *are* living among us?
23 Therefore you *are* cursed; some of you will always be slaves as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”
24 And they answered Joshua and said, “Because it was told with certainty to your servants that Yahweh your God commanded Moses his servant to give to you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you, so we were very afraid for our lives because of you, and so we did this thing.
25 So then, look, we *are* in your hand; do with us whatever seems good and right in your eyes.”
26 So he did this to them: he saved them from the hand of the Israelites, and they did not kill them.
27 And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of Yahweh, to this day, in the place that he should choose.

The Southern Campaign (c. Fall 1406 – 1400 BC)

Joshua 10

Reprisal Against Gibeon by the Five Kings of the Southern Coalition

1 And it happened that when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua captured Ai and had utterly destroyed it (just as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he did to Ai and its king) and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them,

2 he became very afraid because Gibeon *was* a very large city, like one of the royal cities, and because it *was* larger than Ai, and all its men *were* mighty warriors.

3 So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent *word* to Hohman king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying,

4 “Come up and help me, and let us attack Gibeon, because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites.”

5 And the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered *together* and went up, they and all their forces, and they laid siege to Gibeon and made war against it.

6 And the men of Gibeon sent *word* to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, “Do not abandon your servant. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country have gathered against us.”

Joshua Comes to Gibeon’s Rescue

7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the fighting men with him, all the best warriors.

8 And Yahweh said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, for I have given them into your hand; no one will withstand you.

9 Joshua came upon them suddenly by marching up all night from Gilgal.

10 And Yahweh threw them into panic before Israel, who struck them *with* a great blow at Gibeon and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

The Pursuit

11 And as they were fleeing from Israel, *they were* on the slope of Beth-horon, and Yahweh threw huge stones from the heavens on them as far as Azekah; and more died by the hail stones than those whom the Israelites killed by the sword.

12 Then Joshua spoke to Yahweh, on the day Yahweh gave the Amorites over to the Israelites, and he said in the sight of Israel,

“Sun in Gibeon, stand still,
and moon, in the valley of Aijalon.”

13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped,
until *the* nation took vengeance *on* its enemies.

Is it not written in the scroll of Jashar? The sun stood still in the middle of the heaven and was not in haste to set for about a full day.

14 There has not been a day like this before it or after, that Yahweh listened to the voice of *a* man; for Yahweh fought for Israel.

15 [*this verse has been moved to the end of the chapter and merged with v. 43*]

Southern Coalition Kings Defeated

16 But these five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah.

17 And it was told to Joshua, saying, “The five kings were found hidden in the cave at Makkedah.”

18 And Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men in front of it to guard them.

19 But do not stay *there*; pursue after your enemies and attack them from the rear. Do not allow them to go into their cities, for Yahweh your God has given them into your hand.”

20 When Joshua and the Israelites had finished striking them *with* a very great blow, until they perished, those of them who survived went into the fortified cities,

21 and all the people returned to the camp safely to Joshua *at* Makkedah. No one spoke against the Israelites.

22 And Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave, and bring to me those five kings from the cave.”

23 And they did so, and brought him these five kings from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

24 And when they brought these kings to Joshua, Joshua called all the men of Israel and said to the commanders of the fighting men who had gone with him, “Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.” So they came near and put their feet on their necks.

25 And Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or dismayed! Be strong and bold, for thus Yahweh will do to all your enemies whom you *are* about to fight.

26 And after this Joshua struck them down and killed them, and he hanged them on five trees. And they were hanging on the trees until the evening.

27 And it happened at the time of sunset, Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and they put large stones against the mouth of the cave, *which are there* to this very day.

Destruction of the Seven Southern Cities

28 Joshua captured Makkedah on that day, and he struck it and its king with the edge of the sword; he utterly destroyed it and everyone that was in it. He did not leave behind a survivor. So he did to the king of Makkedah just as he did to the king of Jericho.

29 And Joshua passed on, and all of Israel with him, from Makkedah to Libnah, and he fought against Libnah.

30 And Yahweh also gave it into the hand of Israel, and its king and all the people in it he struck with the edge of the sword. He left in it no survivor. He did to its king just as he did to the king of Jericho.

31 And Joshua passed on, and all of Israel with him, from Libnah to Lachish, and he laid siege to it and fought against it.

32 And Yahweh gave Lachish into the hand of Israel, and he captured it on the second day. He struck it with the edge of the sword, and everyone in it, just as he did to Libnah.

33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish, and Joshua struck him and his people until he left no survivor behind.

34 And Joshua passed on, and all of Israel with him, from Lachish to Eglon, and they laid siege to it and fought against it.

35 And they captured it on that day, and he struck it with the edge of the sword, and all the people that *were* in it on that day he utterly destroyed as he had done to Lachish.

36 And Joshua went up, and all Israel with him, from Eglon to Hebron, and they fought against it

37 and captured it, and they struck it with the edge of the sword, its king and all its cities, and all the people that *were* in it; he left behind no survivor, as he had done to Eglon, and he utterly destroyed it and all the people that *were* in it.

38 Then Joshua returned to Debir, and all of Israel with him, and they fought against it,

39 and he captured it and its king and all its cities, and they struck them with the edge of the sword, and they utterly destroyed all the people that *were* in it; he left behind no survivor, just as he had done to Hebron. Thus he did to Debir and its king what he had done to Libnah and its king.

Summary of Southern Campaign

40 So Joshua struck all the land—the hill country, the Negev, the Shephelah, and the slopes—and all their kings; he left behind no survivor, and all that breathed he utterly destroyed as Yahweh the God of Israel commanded.

41 Joshua struck them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza, and all the land of Goshen up to Gibeon;

42 all of these kings and their land Joshua captured at one time, because Yahweh the God of Israel fought for Israel.

43 [15] And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

The Northern Campaign (c. Fall 1406 – 1400 BC)

Joshua 11:1–15

King Jabin's Mighty Northern Coalition

1 And it happened, when Jabin king of Hazor heard *this*, he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Acshaph,

2 and to the kings who *were* in the north in the hill country, in the Arabah south of Kinnereth, in the Shephelah, and in Naphoth Dor in *the west*,

3 to the Canaanites in *the east and west*, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites at the foot of Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

4 They came out, they and all their armies with them, *as* a great army like the sand on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots.

5 And all these kings joined forces, and they came and camped together by the waters of Merom to fight with Israel.

The Battle of Merom

6 And Yahweh said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid because of their presence, for tomorrow at this time I *will* hand them over slain to Israel; you will hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.”

7 So Joshua, and all the fighting men with him, came against them suddenly at the waters of Merom, and they attacked them.

8 And Yahweh gave them into the hand of Israel, and they struck them and pursued them up to Great Sidon and Misrephoth Maim, and eastward up to the valley of Mizpeh. And they struck them until they left behind no survivor.

9 And Joshua did to them as Yahweh commanded him; he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

Defeat of the Northern Coalition

10 Then Joshua turned back at that time, and he captured Hazor and struck its king with the sword, because Hazor formerly *was* the head of all these kingdoms.

11 He struck all the people that *were* in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them. There was no one left who breathed, and he burned Hazor with fire.

12 And Joshua captured all the cities of these kings, and all their kings, and he utterly destroyed them with the edge of the sword, as Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded.

13 Israel did not burn the cities standing on their mounds, except Hazor alone, *which* Joshua burned.

14 And all the spoil and livestock of these cities the Israelites took as booty; they struck the people with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them—they left behind no one who breathed.

15 Just as Yahweh commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did; he left nothing undone that Yahweh had commanded Moses.

Canaan Is Conquered (c. Fall 1406 – 1400 BC)

Joshua 11:16–12:24

Summary of the Conquest

11:16 So Joshua took all this land: the hill country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the Shephelah, the Arabah, and the hill country of Israel and its Shephelah,

17 from Mount Halak *that* rises to Seir and to Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon at the foot of Mount Hermon; he captured all their kings, struck them, and killed them.

18 For many days Joshua made war with all these kings. [cf. [Exod 23:29](#)]

19 There was not a city that made peace with the Israelites besides the Hivites and the inhabitants of Gibeon—all were taken in battle.

20 For it was Yahweh that hardened their hearts, to meet Israel in war in order to utterly destroy them without mercy, that they would destroy them just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

21 At that time Joshua came and exterminated the Anakites from the hill country, from Hebron, Debir, Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities.

22 None of the Anakites were left in the land of the Israelites; some remained only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

23 Joshua took all the land according to all that Yahweh had spoken to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel, according to their tribal divisions, and the land rested from war.

Defeated Kings and Territories East of the Jordan

12:1 These *are* the kings of the land whom the Israelites defeated, and of whose land they took possession beyond the Jordan to the east, from the wadi of Arnon up to Mount Hermon, and all the Arabah to the east:

2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which *is* on the edge of the wadi of Arnon, *from* the middle of the valley and half of Gilead, up to the Jabbok River, *which marks* the border of the Ammonites;

3 and the Arabah up to the Kinnereth Sea to the east, and as far as the sea of Arabah, the Salt Sea to the east, in the direction of Beth Jeshimoth, and to *the area* southward, at the foot of the slopes of Pisgah;

4 the territory of Og king of Bashan, one of the last of the Rephaites, who lived at Ashtaroth and Edrei

5 and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and over all Bashan up to the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and half of Gilead, as far as the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

6 Moses Yahweh's servant and the Israelites defeated them; and Moses Yahweh's servant gave it *as* a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Defeated Kings and Cities West of the Jordan

7 These *are* the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated beyond to the Jordan to the west, from Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon, and up to Mount Halak, *which* rises to Seir. And Joshua gave it *as* a possession to the tribes of Israel according to their allotments,

8 in the hill country, the Shephelah, the Arabah, on the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negev; the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17 the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hepher, one;

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

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

20 the king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Acshaph, one;

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

22 the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one;

23 the king of Dor in Naphath Dor, one; the king of Goiim for Gilgal, one;

24 the king of Tirzah, one; all the kings, thirty-one.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) Joshua 10:15 is out of place chronologically. It is scarcely possible or logical that Joshua would have interrupted the completion of the battle's business near Gibeon and the other cities (including Makkedah: v. 10) and marched the entire congregation many miles back to their base camp at Gilgal, only to return to Makkedah and conclude the business of dealing with the Amorite coalition (vv. 16–27). The anomaly of v. 15's position is magnified when we realize that the words of this verse are found—intact and verbatim—in v. 43, where they make much more sense. Four solutions present themselves. First, those who see the *Book of Jashar* quote extending through v. 15 have little problem here, since this verse was thus part of that source, incorporated wholesale into the Book of Joshua. These scholars see v. 15 functioning proleptically, anticipating the end of the matter that comes in v. 43. In the *Book of Jashar*, the account would have omitted the details of the city-by-city conquests of vv. 16–42 and just concluded with the statement of v. 15/v. 43, which occurred just once in that book. Second, both verses could have been included intentionally, each closing off a section of the narrative. Third, other scholars see v. 15 as a scribal duplication (i.e., a transmission error), since the ends of vv. 14 and 42 are similar in Hebrew. Thus, only v. 43 should be seen as original. Fourth, the Old Greek omits both vv. 15 and 43, which may indicate that neither verse was present in the original text. Of these four possibilities, the second or third appears to be the most plausible.¹

¹ David M. Howard, Jr., "Joshua," *NAC*, 251.