

# *Joshua*

## *Lesson #6*

### *Conquest & Settlement*

*(11: 1 – 22: 34)*

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# Review

In the wake of Joshua's victories, five Amorite tribal warlords gathered for a war council, and they joined forces to attack Joshua and the Israelites. Meanwhile, the Gibeonites, people from another large city in the central mountain range, saw the futility of resisting the Israelites, and resorted to a ruse, convincing the Israelites that they were from a very distant country, and thus they entered into a treaty with Joshua.

Immediately, the Amorite warlords attacked the Gibeonites for their treachery, and the Gibeonites called upon Joshua to rescue them. After a blistering all-night forced-march, Joshua attacked the five Amorite kings in the dead of night, in the midst of a furious storm.

Desperately needing more time to defeat the enemy, Joshua prayed to God, and we read: *"The sun halted halfway across the heavens; not for an entire day did it press on. Never before or since was there a day like this when the Lord obeyed the voice of a man."* (10: 13).

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# Review, cont.

Now, we know that the sun doesn't move across the sky; rather, the earth rotates, creating the appearance of the sun moving across the sky. And we know that the earth rotates at 1,100 mph at the equator, so if the earth suddenly stopped spinning, the earth's atmosphere and everything not attached to bedrock would suddenly be moving sideways at 1,100 mph!

Obviously, the earth did not stop spinning.

Lesson #5 explored what may really have happened!

# Preview

With the defeat and death of the five Amorite kings, the other tribal warlords from the north, the western foothills and the coastal plain—*“an army as numerous as the sand on the seashore, and with a multitude of horses and chariots”* (11: 4)—form a defensive coalition to fight the Israelites.

Joshua and the Israelites *“struck them all down, leaving no survivors”* (11: 8). *“All the cities of those kings, and the kings themselves, Joshua captured and put to the sword, carrying out the ban on them, as Moses, the servant of the Lord had commanded”* (11: 12). In all, Joshua killed 31 kings and put their cities under the ban, killing all their people—men, women and children—and destroying all their cities.

# Preview, cont.

**After getting a foothold in Canaan, Joshua distributes the land to the Israelites by tribe and clan, including 6 cities of refuge and 48 towns for the Levites.**

**Although it seems that the Israelites have conquered the land of Canaan, they have not, for there are still significant strongholds, especially among the Philistines on the coastal plain.**

**But they've gotten a good start.**

**It will take another 300 years or so, until the time of David (1010-970 B.C.), to fully conquer the land and subdue it, forging it into a united monarchy.**



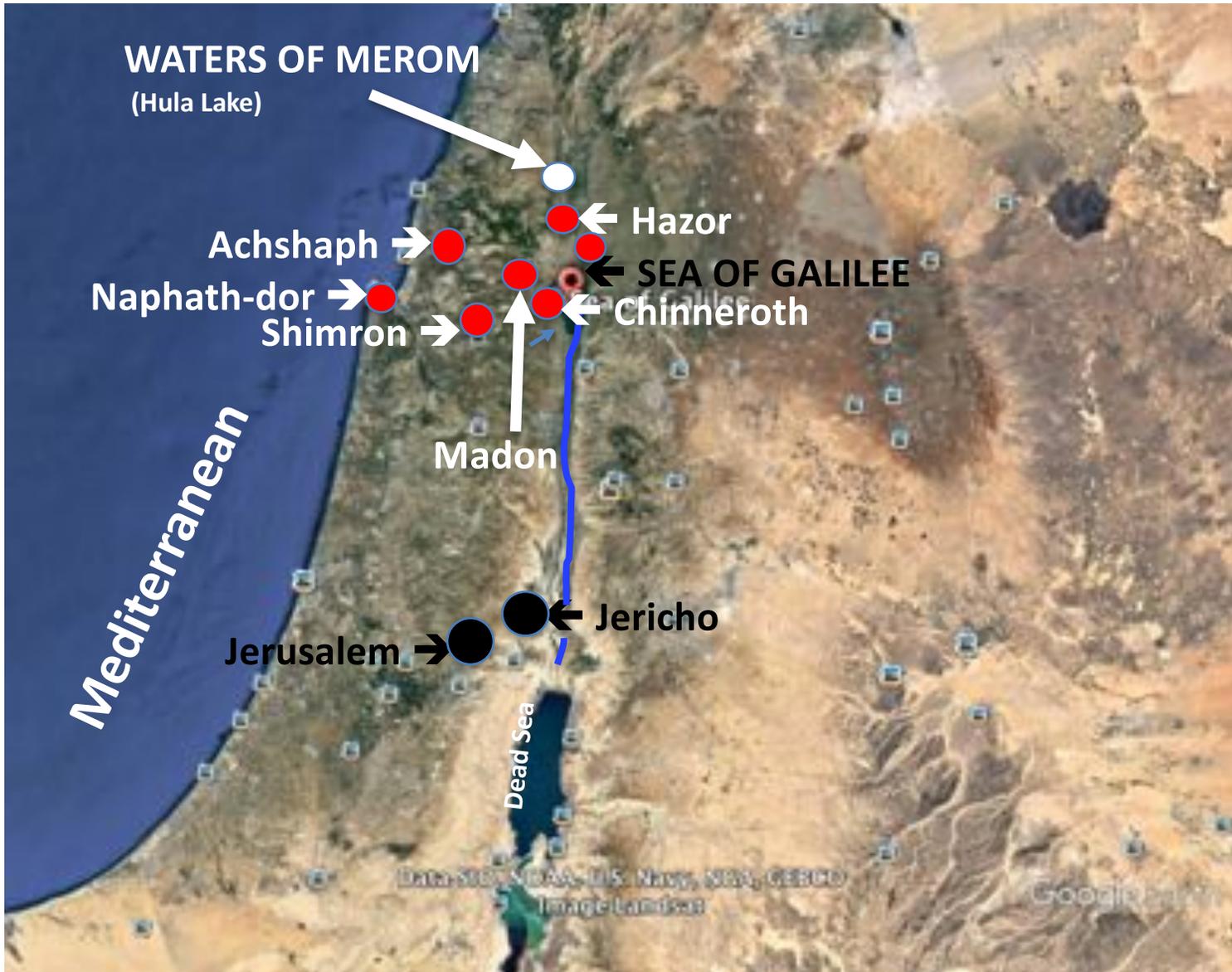
**Joshua and the Israelites have swept into the land of Canaan like a swarm of hornets, destroying everything in their path. With the exception of a brief bobble at Ai, they have conquered every enemy they have encountered, putting their kings and their people “under the ban,” killing every living soul: men, women, children and infants, just as God commanded.**

**Word of the Israelites’ genocidal invasion has spread like wildfire throughout the region, and the remaining tribal warlords scramble to defend their lands and their people.**

“When Jabin, king of Hazor, learned of this, he sent a message to Jobab, king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, and to the northern kings in the mountain regions and in the Arabah near Chinneroth, in the Shephelah, and in Naphath-dor to the west. These were Canaanites to the east and west, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the mountain regions, and Hivites at the foot of Hermon in the land of Mizpah. They came out with all their troops, an army numerous as the sands on the seashore, and with a multitude of horses and chariots. All these kings made a pact and together they marched to the waters of Merom, where they encamped to fight against Israel.”

(11: 1-5)

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miles  
km

100  
100

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Conquest & Settlement



**“Waters of Merom” (Hula Lake), now part of the Hula Valley Nature Reserve,  
19 miles north of the Sea of Galilee.**

*Photography by Sara Rivka*

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“The Lord said to Joshua, ‘Do not fear them, for by this time tomorrow I will present them slain to Israel. You must hamstring their horses and burn their chariots. Joshua with his whole army came upon them suddenly at the waters of Merom and fell upon them. The Lord delivered them into the power of the Israelites, who defeated them and pursued them to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth-maim, and eastward to the valley of Mizpeh. They struck them all down, leaving no survivors. Joshua did to them as the Lord had commanded: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.”

(11: 6-9)

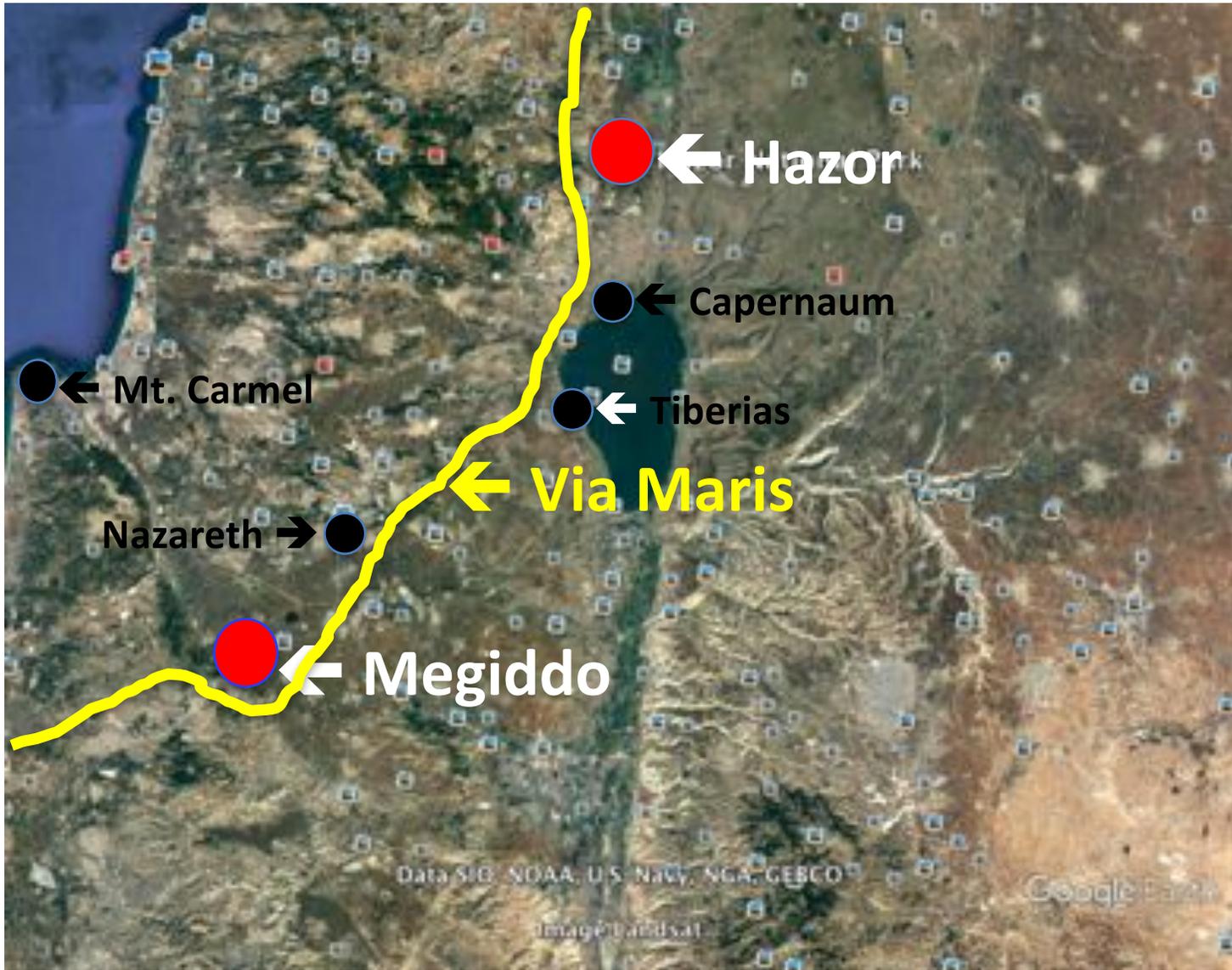


Once again, Joshua and the Israelites cut through the Galilean warlords like a hot knife through butter, leaving no survivors and hamstringing their horses.

Hamstringing horses involves severing the tendons of the horses legs, rendering them useless for warfare. The Hebrew word is *'aqar* [ah-care']. The KJV translation renders it "hough," from an old spelling of "hock."

Joshua then moves on to Hazor.

“At that time Joshua, turning back, captured Hazor and struck down its king with the sword; for Hazor formerly was the chief of all those kingdoms. He also struck down with the sword every person there, carrying out the ban, till none was left alive. **Hazor itself he burned.** All the cities of those kings, and the kings themselves, Joshua captured and put to the sword, carrying out the ban on them, as Moses, the servant of the Lord, had commanded. However, Israel did not destroy by fire any of the cities built on their mounds, **except Hazor, which Joshua burned.** All the spoil and livestock of these cities the Israelites took as plunder; but the people they put to the sword, until they had destroyed the last of them, leaving none alive. As the Lord had commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua acted accordingly. He left nothing undone that the Lord had commanded Moses should be done.” **(11: 10-15)**



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To control the Via Maris—the main international trade route linking Europe, Asia and Africa—you must control the fortresses at Meggido and Hazor, both of which watch over topological choke points on the road.

From the Middle Bronze Age (around 1750 B.C.) through the Israelite period (around 1,000 B.C.), Hazor was the largest fortified city in the country and one of the most important in the entire ancient Near East.

Yigal Yadin, the most important of the early Israeli archaeologists, excavated Hazor in the 1950s. James Mitchener's *The Source* drew heavily upon Yadin's work at Hazor. The upper tel consists of 30 acres and the lower city of more than 175 acres.

Among Hazor's archaeological remains are numerous indications of the fortress having been burned around the time of Joshua.



**Aerial view of Tel Hazor with the Via Maris (as it is today) beneath it.**

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**Dr. C. and Logos students looking out at the Upper Galilee from the promontory at Hazor.**

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*  
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**The stairs lead down through multiple strata of archaeological remains.**

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*

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**Descending into the rock-hewn water tunnel at Hazor.**

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*

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## Hazor's "House of Pillars."

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*

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**Dr. C. teaches about Hazor on a cold and windy day beneath the trees.**

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*  
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“So Joshua took all this land: the mountain regions, the entire Negeb, all the land of Goshen, the Shephelah, the Arabah, as well as the mountain regions and Shephelah of Israel, from Mount Halak that rises toward Seir as far as Baal-gad in the Lebanon valley at the foot of Mount Hermon. All their kings he captured and put to death. Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time. With the exception of the Hivites who lived in Gibeon, no city made peace with the Israelites; all were taken in battle. For it was the Lord’s doing to make their hearts obstinate to meet Israel in battle, that they might be put under the ban without mercy, and be destroyed as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

(11: 16-20)

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“At that time Joshua penetrated the mountain regions and exterminated the Anakim in Hebron, Debir, Anab, the entire mountain region of Judah, and the entire mountain region of Israel. Joshua put them and their cities under the ban, so that no Anakim were left in the land of the Israelites. However, some survived in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod. Thus Joshua took the whole land, just as the Lord had said to Moses. Joshua gave it to Israel as their heritage, apportioning it among the tribes. And the land had rest from war.”

(11: 21-23)



It sure seems like Joshua got the job done! He even ridded the land of the Anakim, the race of “giants” descended from the Nephilim of the antediluvian age (Genesis 6: 4). Only a few remained in the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath and Ashdod.

Goliath seems to have been one of them, along with his four big, ugly sons that we read about in 2 Samuel 21: 15-22. David killed Goliath, and his men killed the others.

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## Joshua's conquest closes with a litany of the kings he killed:

The king of Jericho	one	The king of Tappuah	one
The king of Ai	one	The king of Jerusalem	one
The king of Hopher	one	The king of Apehek	one
The king of Hebron	one	The king of Lasharon	one
The king of Jarmuth	one	The king of Madon	one
The king of Lachish	one	The king of Hazor	one
The king of Eglon	one	The king of Shimron	one
The king of Gezer	one	The king of Achshaph	one
The king of Debir	one	The king of Taanach	one
The king of Geder	one	The king of Megiddo	one
The king of Hormah	one	The king of Kedesh	one
The king of Arad	one	The king of Jokneam	one
The king of Libnah	one	The king of Dor	one
The king of Adulam	one	The king of Goyim	one
The king of Makkedah	one	The king of Tirzah	one
The king of Bethel	one		

**Thirty-one kings in all.**

(12: 9-24)

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**Joshua is one  
tough dude!**



**He's nobody I'd  
want to tangle  
with!**

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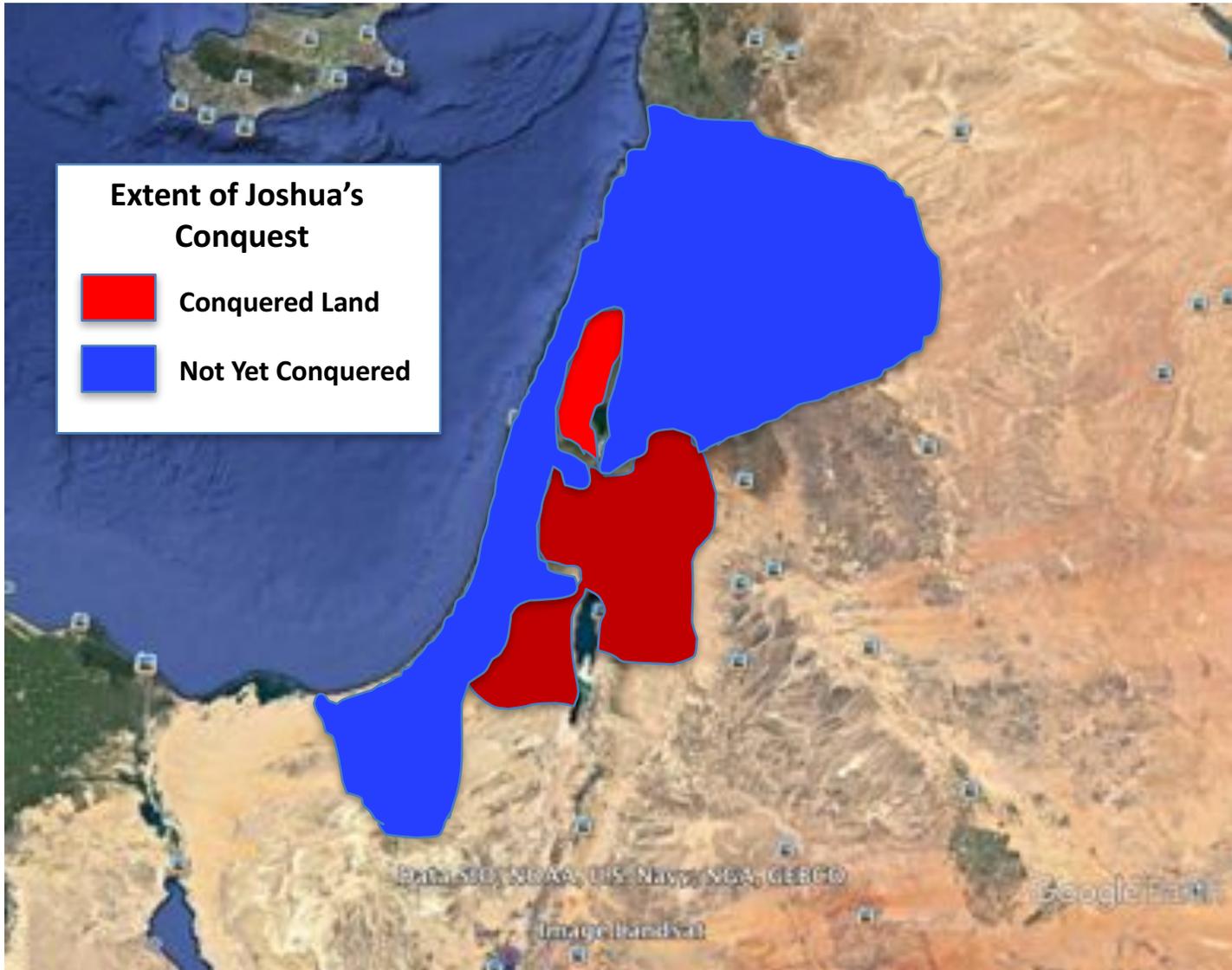


**With the land somewhat subdued, God now commands Joshua to distribute the land among Israel's twelve tribes, with the caveat that there is still much more land to conquer:**

“When Joshua was old and advanced in years, the Lord said to him: Though now you are old and advanced in years, a very large part of the land still remains to be possessed. This is the remaining land: all Geshur and all the districts of the Philistines (from the stream adjoining Egypt to the boundary of Ekron in the north is reckoned Canaanite territory, though held by the five lords of the Philistines in Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron); also where the Avvim are in the south; all the land of the Canaanites from Mearah of the Sidonians to Aphek, and the boundaries of the Amorites; and the Gebalite territory; and all the Lebanon on the east, from Baal-gad at the foot of Mount Hermon to Lebo-hamath . . .

. . . All the inhabitants of the mountain regions between Lebanon and Misrephoth-maim, all Sidonians, I will drive out before the Israelites; at least include these areas in the division of the Israelite heritage, just as I have commanded you. Now, therefore, apportion among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh the land which is to be their heritage.”

(13: 1-7)



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**Nevertheless, Joshua apportions the land, leaving the individual tribes to wrest unconquered territory from its inhabitants.**

**It will be particularly difficult to conquer the Philistines on the coastal plain, with their five fortified cities of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron, five fortified cities that control the southern Via Maris.**





**With the land apportioned, Joshua then designates cities of refuge to which a person who accidentally kills another may flee to escape the avenger of blood, as God commanded Moses in Numbers 35: 9-28 and Deuteronomy 19: 1-13.**

“The Lord said to Joshua: Tell the Israelites: Designate for yourselves the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you through Moses, to which anyone guilty of inadvertent and unintentional homicide may flee for asylum from the avenger of blood. To one of these cities the killer shall flee, and standing at the entrance of the city gate, shall plead his case in the hearing of the elders of the city, who must receive him and assign him a place in which to live among them. Though the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver up to him the one who killed a neighbor unintentionally, when there had been no hatred previously. Once he has stood judgment before the community, he shall live on in that city until the death of the high priest who is in office at the time. Then the killer may return home to the city from where he originally fled.”

(20: 1-6)

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**Dr. C. fleeing to the horns of the altar, escaping the "avenger of blood!"**

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*

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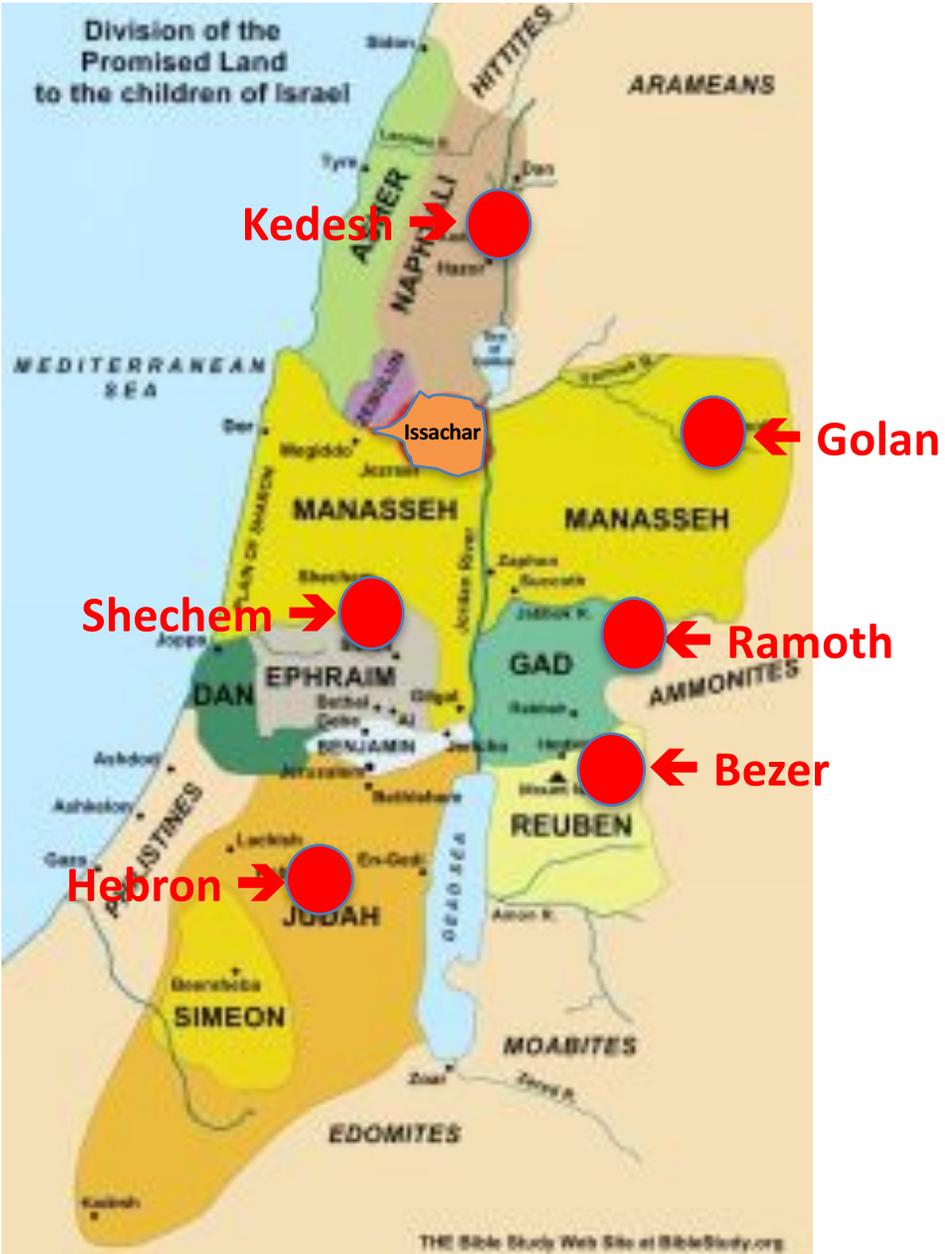
**It didn't work!**

*Photography by Ana Maria Vargas*

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“So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the mountain region of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountain region of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the mountain region of Judah. And beyond the Jordan east of Jericho they designated Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland in the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead in the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan in the tribe of Manasseh. These are the designated cities to which any Israelite or alien residing among them who had killed a person unintentionally might flee to escape death at the hand of the avenger of blood, until the killer could appear before the community.”

(20: 7-9)





**With the cities of refuge established, Joshua then addresses the Levitical cities:**

“The heads of the Levite families approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua, son of Nun, and the heads of families of the other tribes of the Israelites at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, and said to them, ‘The Lord commanded, through Moses, that cities be given us to dwell in, with pasture lands for our livestock.’ Out of their own heritage, according to the command of the Lord, the Israelites gave the Levites the following cities with their pasture lands. When the first lot among the Levites fell to the clans of the Kohathites, the descendants of Aaron the priest obtained by lot from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, thirteen cities. From the clans of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, the rest of the Kohathites obtained by lot ten cities . . .

. . . From the clans of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, the Gershonites obtained by lot thirteen cities. From the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun, the clans of the Merarites obtained twelve cities. These cities with their pasture lands the Israelites gave by lot to the Levites, as the Lord had commanded through Moses.”

(21: 1-8)



## The 48 Levitical Cities

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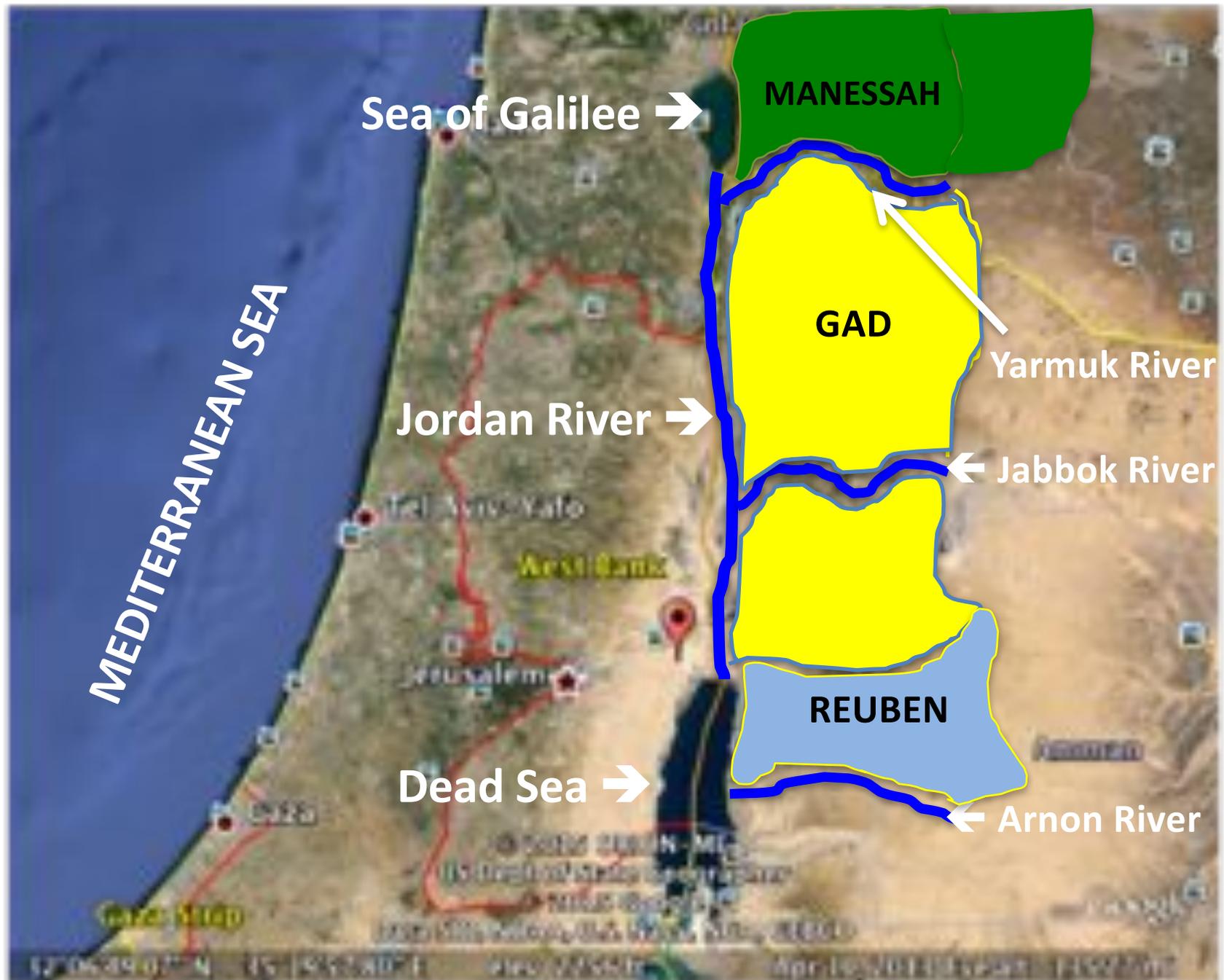


**With the distribution of the 48 Levitical cities, Joshua then dismisses the eastern tribes, the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh:**

**“At that time Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh and said to them: ‘You have observed all that Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you, and have listened to my voice in everything I commanded you. For many years now, even until today, you have not abandoned your allies, but have taken care to observe the commands of the Lord, your God. Now that the Lord, your God, has settled your allies as he promised them, you may return to your tents, to your own land, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave you, across the Jordan. But be very careful to observe the commandment and the law which Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you: love the Lord, your God, follow him in all his ways, keep his commandments, hold fast to him, and serve him with your whole heart and your whole self” . . .**

. . . Joshua then blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents. (For, to half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had assigned land in Bashan; and to the other half Joshua had given a portion along with their allies west of the Jordan.) When Joshua sent them away to their tents and blessed them, he said, 'Now that you are returning to your own tents with great wealth, with abundant livestock, with silver, gold, bronze and iron, and with a very large supply of clothing, divide these spoils of your enemies with your allies there.' So the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh left the other Israelites at Shiloh in the land of Canaan and returned to the land of Gilead, their own land, which they had received according to the Lord's command through Moses."

(22: 1-9)





**After a brief misunderstanding between the eastern and western tribes, they both settle into their tribal inheritance, and the initial stage of Israel's conquest draws to a close.**

**We only await Joshua's final words to God's people.**

# Questions for discussion and thought

1. The northern confederacy of tribal warlords understandably form an alliance to fight the Israelites. Joshua defeats them handily. Why?
2. Why does Joshua focus his next attack on Hazor, and what is the consequence?
3. Once Joshua defeats Hazor he allocates the land by tribe and clan. What criteria determine the tribal boundaries?
4. What function does the litany of defeated kings serve in our story?
5. When the eastern tribes return to their territory east of the Jordan, what indication do we have that trouble will follow?

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