



## Appendix 1. Participant Handout Guides

If you are working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the following handouts at no additional charge. In order to save space in this book, I've given you a link to the handouts online. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 size pages, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

[www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/joshua-lesson-handouts.pdf](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/joshua-lesson-handouts.pdf)

### Discussion Questions

In addition to maps and background information, you'll typically find 4 to 5 questions for each lesson, depending on the topics in each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in a discussion of the key points of the passage. If you're running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions.

[www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/joshua-lesson-handouts.pdf](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/joshua-lesson-handouts.pdf)

A 1 to 3 page handout with maps are provided for each of the following. Distribute sheets from the appendices as needed, particularly with Lessons 3 to 4 to help with discussion.

#### Introduction to the Book of Joshua

1. Be Strong and Very Courageous (Joshua 1)
2. Rahab Hides the Spies (Joshua 2)
3. Entering the Promised Land (Joshua 3:1-5:12)
4. The Walls Fall Down (Joshua 5:13-6:27)
5. Sin in the Camp (Joshua 7-9)
6. Possessing the Land (Joshua 10-22)
7. Caleb: Give Me This Mountain (Joshua 14:6-15)
8. As for Me and My House (Joshua 23-24)

#### Appendix 2. The Peoples of Canaan

#### Appendix 3. Whose Land Is the Promised Land?

#### Appendix 4. Weapons in Joshua's Time

#### Appendix 5. Canaanite Religions and Baal Worship

#### Appendix 6. Why the Slaughter of Jericho? Devoted to Destruction (Herem)

## Introduction to the Book of Joshua

The Book of Joshua is the sixth book in the Bible and covers the period from the death of Moses to the Conquest of the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua.

**Joshua's name** means "the Lord is Salvation." Centuries later, Jesus was given the same name. Another form of the name is Hoshea, the name of one of the prophets whose prophecy is found in the book of Hosea.

**Purpose.** The Book of Joshua purposes to show the historical fulfillment of God's promises to the patriarchs and to Moses to give the land of Canaan to them as a possession (Joshua 1:2-3; 21:43, 45)

**Historical Background.** While scholars place the Exodus and the Conquest in the Late Bronze Age, they argue whether to accept the "early date" of the Conquest (about 1447 BC) vs. the "late date" (about 1250 BC, in the early reign of Ramesses II). The key questions for dating are one's interpretation of 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26.

**Authorship and Date.** No author is mentioned in the text. The book contains several references that indicate that it was written not too long after the events (4:9; 7:26; 8:28; 10:27), so perhaps these events were recorded within one or two hundred years of their occurrence, and perhaps sooner. Joshua probably took its major form prior to the monarchy, even if there may have been some minor editing later.

### Outline of Joshua

The book of Joshua falls into three main sections:

1. The Conquest (1:1-12:24)
2. The Israelite Tribal Allotments (13:1-21:45)
3. The Conclusion: Proper Worship of God (22:1-24:33)

# 1. Be Strong and Very Courageous (Joshua 1)

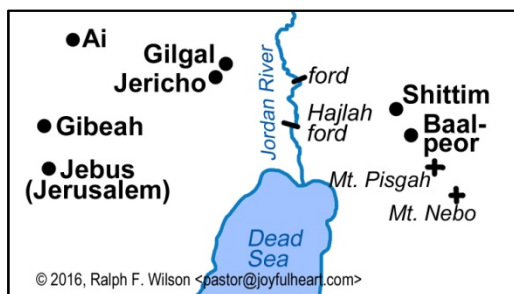
About two years into the Exodus, the Israelites camped in Kadesh-Barnea, where Moses dispatched 12 men to spy out the land of Canaan. Two of them figure in this book – Joshua and Caleb. The book of Joshua begins at the close of those forty years.

Prior to the book of Joshua, Israelite troops have conquered the Transjordan, that is, the lands east of the Jordan River, outlined in Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11.

Wherever You Set Your Foot (1:3-4)

(Deuteronomy 11:24; Joshua 14:9; Hebrews 6:12)

**Q1. (Joshua 1:3) In what way is God's promise to Joshua, "I will give you every place where you set your foot," a conditional promise? What's wrong with a faith that consists primarily of the philosophy: "If God wants me to have it he will give it to me"? What areas that God has promised you that you must press forward to receive?**



**Q2. (Joshua 1:5b) Why is God's promise to be always with Joshua so important to him? Why is this promise so important to you in your present situation? If God is with you, what limitations do you have?**

Be strong and very courageous (1:6). What is faith? (Romans 4:20-22; Joshua 1:5-6)

**Q3. (Joshua 1:6-8) What kinds of things might Joshua be tempted to fear if he were to allow himself to dwell on his anxieties? What does it mean to “be strong and very courageous”? What is the distinction between weakness and strength in Joshua’s situation? What is the relationship between fear and faith? Can you be courageous and still be fearful?**

Meditate on the Word (1:7-9; Psalm 119:97, 103, 105). To meditate means to think about, mull over, ponder, “thinking God’s thoughts after him” (Sir Isaac Newton), Romans 12:2; 10:17. (1) Faith Assurance (1:5), Faith Exhortation (1:6,9), Faith Food (1:8).

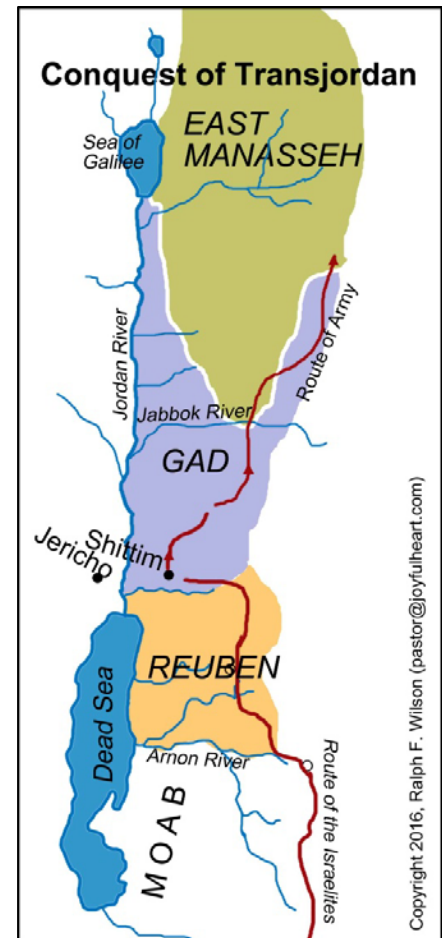
**Q4. (Joshua 1:8) What does it mean to meditate on the Word? What is the difference between Christian meditation and Eastern meditation? How does God work through his Word to renew our minds?**

God’s success formula (1:8b)

Proverbs 3:5-6; Philippians 4:8; John 8:31-32; Matthew 4:4 (quoting Deuteronomy 8:3); Matthew 6:24; 16:26; Deuteronomy 8:17-18.

### Lessons for Disciples

1. God wants us to develop a “pressing forward” faith that actively seeks God’s will, in keeping with “I will give you every place where you set your foot” (1:3)
2. God has promised to be with us in every circumstance – even when we’re afraid – “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (1:5)
3. God wants us to “be strong and very courageous” (1:6-8) in spite of our trepidations and fears.
4. Meditating on God’s Word helps us grow as disciples in faith and courage (1:7-8).



## 2. Rahab Hides the Spies (Joshua 2)

The story of Rahab the harlot is included to show: (1) Fear (2:11); (2) Grace; and (3) Faith

**Q1. (Joshua 2:1) What were the spies sent to learn? Why do you think they sought to lodge in a prostitute's house? Do you think God sent them there?**

Rahab probably isn't a shrine prostitute (since she seems to practice her trade in her own house, rather than at a temple). Prostitution and going to prostitutes is a sin according to the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 21:9). Rahab's Faith (2:9-11). Rahab sees that Yahweh has more power than the gods of Jericho, and she decides to side with Yahweh. Hiding the spies at the risk of her own life demonstrates her gutsy faith (2:11b). For Rahab, this is not a quiet conviction. It becomes the truth by which she reorders her life, and takes ultimate risks (James 2:18-19)

**Q2. (Joshua 2:2-11) What indicates that Rahab believes in Israel's God Yahweh? What does she believe about Yahweh? How deep is Rahab's faith? How deep a faith does someone need to have in order to be saved from the destruction of a city? From eternal punishment?**

Rahab is mentioned in the New Testament (Matt 1:5-6, Jesus' family tree; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25)

**Q3. (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:5; Matthew 1:5) Why is a prostitute honored by being mentioned three times in the New Testament? How does God look on prostitution? On prostitutes? How did Jesus treat prostitutes? What does this teach us about God's attitude toward sinners and sin?**

Rahab's Deceitfulness (2:3-7). (1) The Scripture is clear that lying is sinful. Falsehood is universally condemned. (2) God is known as a God of truth. He never lies. We are called to emulate him, and to be a people of truth. (3) Even though some men and women of God did tell untruths (Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, David, and Peter), there are *never* commended for it. (4) Some people have a right to know things; others don't. (5) Being truthful does not necessarily mean telling everything you know. (6) In a time of war, we consider it permissible to deceive enemies with feints and disinformation. We even seek to deceive burglars with lights on timers to make them think we're home when we're not. The Bible condemns lying under oath (Exodus 20:7, 16)

**Q4. (Joshua 2:4-6) Does God honor Rahab for lying to the king's men? Is her lying justified in this case? Is there ever a time it might be permissible to lie?**

Swearing by the LORD (2:12; Exodus 20:7). The Scarlet Cord (2:17-21) There have been many theories, including that it represents the blood of atonement. S.D. Walters has suggested that the scarlet rope may have been the mark of a prostitute, a "red rope" district if you will. Scarlet in the New Testament is associated with sensuality. The Great Prostitute in Revelation 17 sits on a scarlet beast, and was dressed in purple and scarlet (Revelation 17:4). But symbolism aside, a red rope hanging outside a window in the wall would be unique; it couldn't be missed or mistaken for something else.

### Lessons for Disciples

1. We shouldn't underestimate God. He can give spiritual insight and faith to anyone – even pagan prostitutes like Rahab. Her faith is mentioned three times in the New Testament.
2. Rahab showed her faith by her actions to hide the spies; faith without works is dead.

### 3. Entering the Promised Land (Joshua 3:1-5:12)

**Q1. (Joshua 3:1) Why do the Israelites have to break camp at Shittim *before* the day they cross Jordan? In what ways is your life settled into a routine that keeps you from fully following God's leading? What do you need to do to make yourself ready?**

Consecrate yourselves (3:5; Leviticus 15:18; 1 Samuel 21:4-5; Luke 9:23).

**Q2. (Joshua 3:5) Why did the Israelites need to consecrate themselves? What might this entail? In what ways do you personally need to reconsecrate yourself? What would this require of you? What would your congregation need to do to reconsecrate itself?**

The Ark Goes Before Them (3:3-4, 6-8)

The Water Stopped Flowing (3:14-17). The "early rains" ("former rains") fall in October, with most precipitation occurring from December through February. The "latter rain" occurs in April.

Standing in the Water (3:8, 15-17; Luke 17:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:7).

**Q3. (Joshua 3:13-17) How was Joshua able to announce the miracle of Jordan stopping its flow ahead of the event? What kind of faith did it require to do so? What did this do for his credibility as a leader?**

Twelve River Boulders (chapter 4; Genesis 28:16-17; 1 Samuel 7:12; Luke 22:19; Matthew 26:28; Numbers 21:4-9; 2 Kings 18:4; Judges 8:27).

**Q4. (Joshua 4) Why did Joshua have men from each tribe stack river boulders for a monument? What was the effect of this on future generations? What is the value of faith monuments in our day? What is the danger? Does your church building have more monuments to the past than indications of God's present working? Why?**

The LORD exalted Joshua (4:14; 3:7)

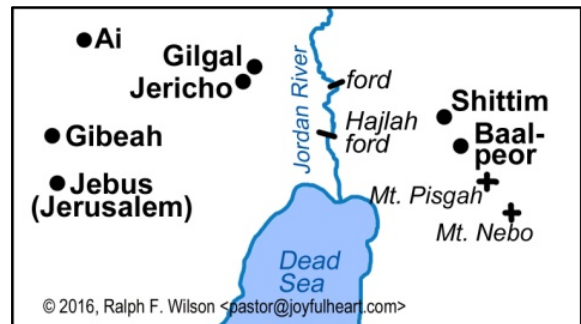
Circumcision and Passover (5:1-11; Genesis 17:10-11)

The Manna Ceased (5:12; Exodus 16:31; Numbers 11:4-6; 1 Kings 17:16; Genesis 3:19). 2 Corinthians 11:22-28; Philippians 4:13).

**Q5. (Joshua 5:12) Why did the manna cease at this time? In our lives, why does God let us experience times of manna? Why does he sometimes let the manna cease? In your own life, are you in a stage of receiving manna or planting seeds for a future crop?**

#### Lessons for Disciples

1. God often has to break our established routines so that we're alert and ready to listen to him and obey (3:1).
2. Sometimes God calls us to consecrate ourselves afresh, to receive his cleansing so that we're ready to serve him in holiness (3:5).



3. The ark going before the people is symbolic of us needing to learn to follow the Lord, rather than run ahead. Discipleship is learning and following.
4. Sometimes God doesn't send his miracles until we, in faith, are fully committed and obedient (3:8, 15-17).
5. Godly leadership sometimes requires us to state in advance what God shows us he will do, and then lead our people personally into that future (3:13-17)
6. Having monuments to God's faithfulness that we can look back on can encourage our faith for the future (chapter 4).
7. God sometimes exalts his leaders so that they can effectively lead. So this won't turn into personal pride, we must be careful to continue in humility before him (4:14)
8. God is able to provide for his people (such as with manna for food). But his special provisions sometimes end when we move into new phases of discipleship and responsibility (5:12).

## 4. The Walls Fall Down (Joshua 5:13-6:27)

The Commander Has Now Come (5:13-15; Exodus 3:5).

**Q1. (Joshua 5:13-16) What is Joshua's challenge question to the Unknown Warrior with drawn sword? Who is He? Whose side is He on? Whose side are you on? Why does an encounter with Him require us to humble ourselves? Why is it so hard to submit ourselves to God?**

Yahweh the Warrior. The Hebrew word for "host" means "army." Genesis 32:1-2; 1 Kings 22:19; Luke 2:13; Psalm 24:7-10; Isaiah 13:4; 1 Samuel 17:45)

Yahweh's mere presence is enough to win the battle, for the "battle is the LORD'S" (1 Samuel 17:47; Exodus 14; Revelation 19:11-16; 2 Kings 6:15-17; Matthew 26:53; 1 Peter 3:18; John 1:29).

**Q2. (Joshua 5:14) What is the significance of the Commander of God's Armies being with you? If he will fight your battles for you, what does your job consist of?**

**The Jericho March (6:1-21; Numbers 4:5-6). According to archeologists, Jericho measured about 740 feet by 260 feet (225 meters by 80 meters), with a circumference of about 1,970 feet (600 meters), a little more than a third of a mile.**

Is there any archeological evidence of this catastrophic event? Apparently not. Even-handed archeologists can neither confirm nor deny this on the basis of what they've uncovered so far. This city, the oldest in the world, has apparently been settled since about 8,000 BC. The Late Bronze Age city was apparently built on top of the eroded ruins of the Middle Bronze town after a century and a half of abandonment, though what is left is so severely eroded that little can be discerned from it.

**Q3. (Joshua 6:1-23) What is the meaning of the seven days of marching with the ark? What does the ark represent? What mechanism do you think God used to make the walls fall down?**

Devoted to the Lord (Joshua 6:17-19). *Herem* is closely related to our word "harem" (from Arabic *harim*) which refers to a secluded area of a house allotted to women. In Arabic the word literally means "sanctuary," a "forbidden" area, since the women in a harem are exclusively the property of the husband and off-limits to all others. "Devoted" (NIV), "devoted to destruction" (NRSV, ESV), "accursed" (KJV) is the Hebrew word *herem* used in our passage to refer to "the exclusion an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God."

It may be useful in this lesson to look at brief treatments of issues in the appendices.

- Appendix 2. The Peoples of Canaan
- Appendix 3. Whose Land Is the Promised Land?  
[http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app3\\_promised\\_land.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app3_promised_land.htm)
- Appendix 5. Canaanite Religions and Baal Worship.  
[http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app5\\_baal.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app5_baal.htm)
- Appendix 6. Why the Slaughter of Jericho? Devoted to Destruction – *Herem*.  
[http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app6\\_herem.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app6_herem.htm)



Destruction of Sin (Genesis 15:16; Leviticus 18:24-25; Deuteronomy. 20:17-18; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Luke 9:23-24; Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20)

**Q4. (Joshua 6:27) The slaughter of all the people in Jericho is difficult for us to understand. Why do you think God ordered it? In what sense are you “devoted to the Lord” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Metaphorically, how does this relate to Jesus’ teaching to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow him, and Paul’s teaching on the crucified life? (Luke 9:23; Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20).**

A Curse on Jericho (6:26; 1 Kings 16:34). Ahab reigned about 874-853 BC, hundreds of years after the fall of Jericho.

### **Lessons for Disciples**

The story of the fall of Jericho gives us a number of lessons to ponder.

1. God is not on our side. Rather, he calls us to be on his side. If we will do that, he will fight our battles for us (5:13-16)
2. Since God is leading our battles, we must be careful to listen to his directions, and follow them carefully as we show up for battle, rather than try to do it ourselves.
3. Yahweh is depicted as a Warrior. We disciples should expect to “fight the good fight of faith,” rather than be spiritual pacifists.
4. We disciples must be “devoted to the Lord,” we are not our own, we are bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
5. Destruction of the Canaanites is a metaphor of sin being crucified in our lives (Luke 9:23; Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20).

## 5. Sin in the Camp (Joshua 7-9)

Achan Takes Plunder (7:1) City of Ai (pronounced “eye”).

Devoted Things (6:17a, 18, 19)

The Sins of the Fathers, solidarity (Daniel 9:4-19; 2 Chronicles 7:14; 12:18-20; Ephesians 5:28-32; 1 Corinthians 5; Revelation 2:12-29; 1 Timothy 5:22).

**Q1. (Joshua 7) How can the sin of one person affect a country? A congregation? How does your congregation deal with sin that affects the body? How can we take sin seriously without developing a judgmental, legalistic spirit in our churches? What is the importance of confessing sins on behalf a congregation, a denomination, or a nation?**

**Defeat at Ai (7:2-5)**

Identifying the Sinner (7:10-19) The guilty party is apparently found out by means of the Urim and Thummim, in some kind of sacred casting of lots to determine God’s will.

The Sin of Greed (Malachi 3:8-9; Luke 12:15)

**Q2. (Joshua 7:20-21; Malachi 3:8-9; Luke 12:15) How is it possible for both rich and poor to suffer from greed? How can our greed affect our giving to the church? To what degree do you believe Americans are captives of greed? How do we repent and free ourselves from greed?**

The Destruction of Ai (8:1-28). The Covenant Renewed (8:29-35). Gibeonite Deception (9:1-15)

Sanctity of the LORD’S Name (9:16-27; Exodus 20:7; Matthew 5:34, 37; cf. James 5:12).

**Q3. (Joshua 9:16-27; Exodus 20:7; Matthew 5:34, 37; James 5:12) What does it mean to “take the Lord’s name in vain”? How are we tempted to do that? Why do we tend to take our promises so lightly? How does this reflect on God’s character?**

Inquiring of the Lord (9:14; John 5:19)

**Q4. (Joshua 9:14; 7:1-5) How did Joshua’s failure to consult God before making decisions hurt Israel? How did Jesus model close communication with God before making major decisions? What does it take for us to hear God’s voice or to get confirmation from God for a course of action?**

### Lessons for Disciples

1. The sin of one in a family or a congregation can profoundly affect God’s blessings on the body.
2. Sin is not always immediately apparent, though it can still affect God’s blessing on our lives.
3. Both rich and poor are susceptible to the sin of greed. To be effective disciples of Christ, we must discern greed in our lives and refuse to let it control us (Joshua 7:20-21; Malachi 3:8-9; Luke 12:15).
4. We must fulfill what we have solemnly promised before the Lord (Joshua 9:16-27; Exodus 20:7; Matthew 5:34, 37; James 5:12).
5. When we fail to consult the Lord about important decisions of our lives, we can frustrate God’s best for us. Seeking and listening must be the foundation of our discipleship.

## 6. Possessing the Land (Joshua 10-22)

Every Place Where You Set Your Foot  
(Deuteronomy 11:24; Joshua 1:3; 14:9)

Battle at Gibeon with the Five Amorite Kings (10:1-28)

Five kings of the Amorites were: (1) **Jerusalem**, king Adoni-Zedek (which means “Lord King”), (2) **Hebron**, king Hoham; (3) **Jarmuth**, king Piram; (4) **Lachish**, king Japhia, and (5) **Eglon**, king Debir.

Three amazing miracles that are involved in Israel’s victory over the Five Kings.

1. **The night-march from Gilgal to Gibeon.** Distance of about 21 miles (35 km); climb from 840 feet (250 meters) *below* sea level to 2400 feet (730 meters) *above* sea level, a rise of more than 3,000 feet (915 meters)
2. **Large hailstones kill many of the fleeing troops** (10:12)
3. **The sun stands still for a full day** (10:12-14; 2 Kings 20-11; 2 Chronicles 32:24; Isaiah 38:7-8; Joshua 10:14b).

We as Christ’s followers are told to prepare ourselves to fight (1 Timothy 6:12; 1:18; 2 Corinthians 6:7; 10:4; Romans 13:12; Ephesians 6:10-18).

**Q1. (Joshua 10:1-28) In the Battle of the Five Kings, what fighting did God do? What fighting did the Israelites do? How did God fulfill his promise to Joshua that “no one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life” (Joshua 1:5)? Does God expect us to be prepared to fight in the battle with our enemy the devil? How?**

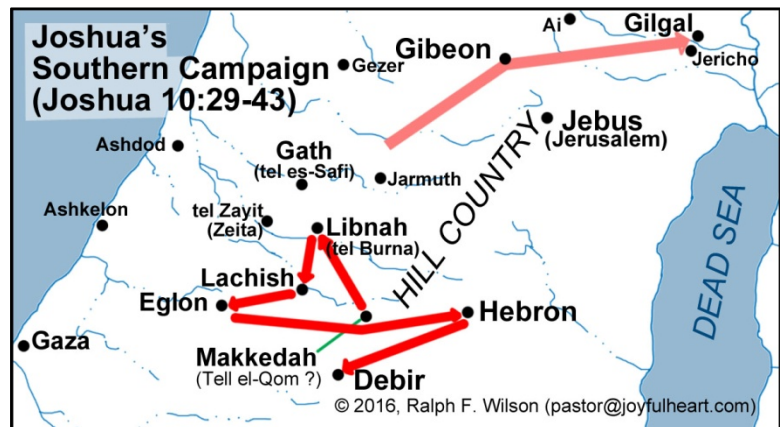
Southern Campaign (10:29-43)

Hebron and Debir are defeated in the Southern Campaign. This may be the same incident as when Caleb takes Hebron (also known as Kiriath-Arba; 12:10; 14:13; 15:13-14).

Northern Campaign (chapter 11)

(1) Take (11:16a, 23) “Took” is *lāqah*, “take (get, fetch)” as well as “lay hold of, seize.” (2) 13:6b-7; *hālaq*, “share, divide, allot, apportion, assign.” (11:18, 23). (3) Possess (13:1) “Be taken over” (NIV), “possessed” (NRSV, ESV, KJV) is *yārash*, “take possession of, inherit, dispossess... In military matters [*yārash*] means to gain control over a certain area by conquering and expelling the current inhabitants of that area. In such a light the word came to take on the meaning of ‘dispossess, drive out, cast out, seize.’”

Joshua 16:10; 17:12-13, 16-18; 19:47. See parallels in Judges 1:10-29.



Battle of the Five Kings	Southern Campaign
	Makkedah
	Libnah
Jerusalem	
Hebron	Hebron
Jarmuth	
Lachish	Lachish
Eglon	Eglon
	Debir

**Q2. (Joshua 16-19) Why did God tell the Israelites to drive out the Canaanites completely? What was the short-term result of failing to do this? (Joshua 17:12-13). What was the long-term result? (Judges 2:1-3).**

Distribution of the Tribal Lands (chapters 13-19)

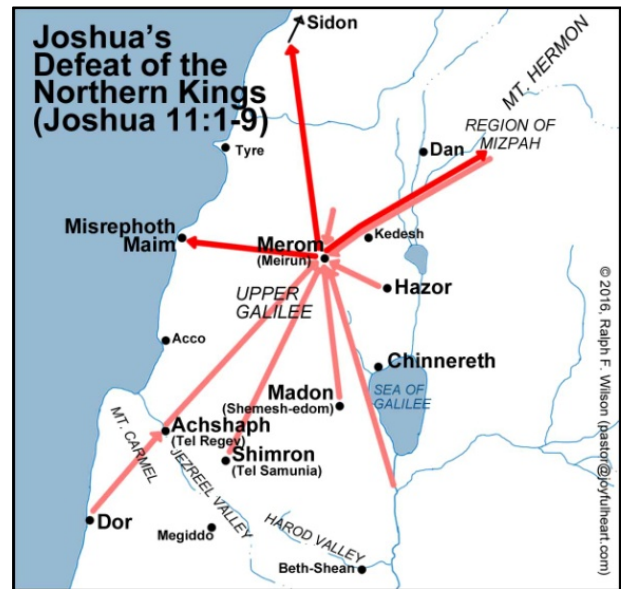
Cities of Refuge (chapter 20)

Towns for the Levites (chapter 21)

The Trans-Jordan Tribes Return Home (chapter 22)

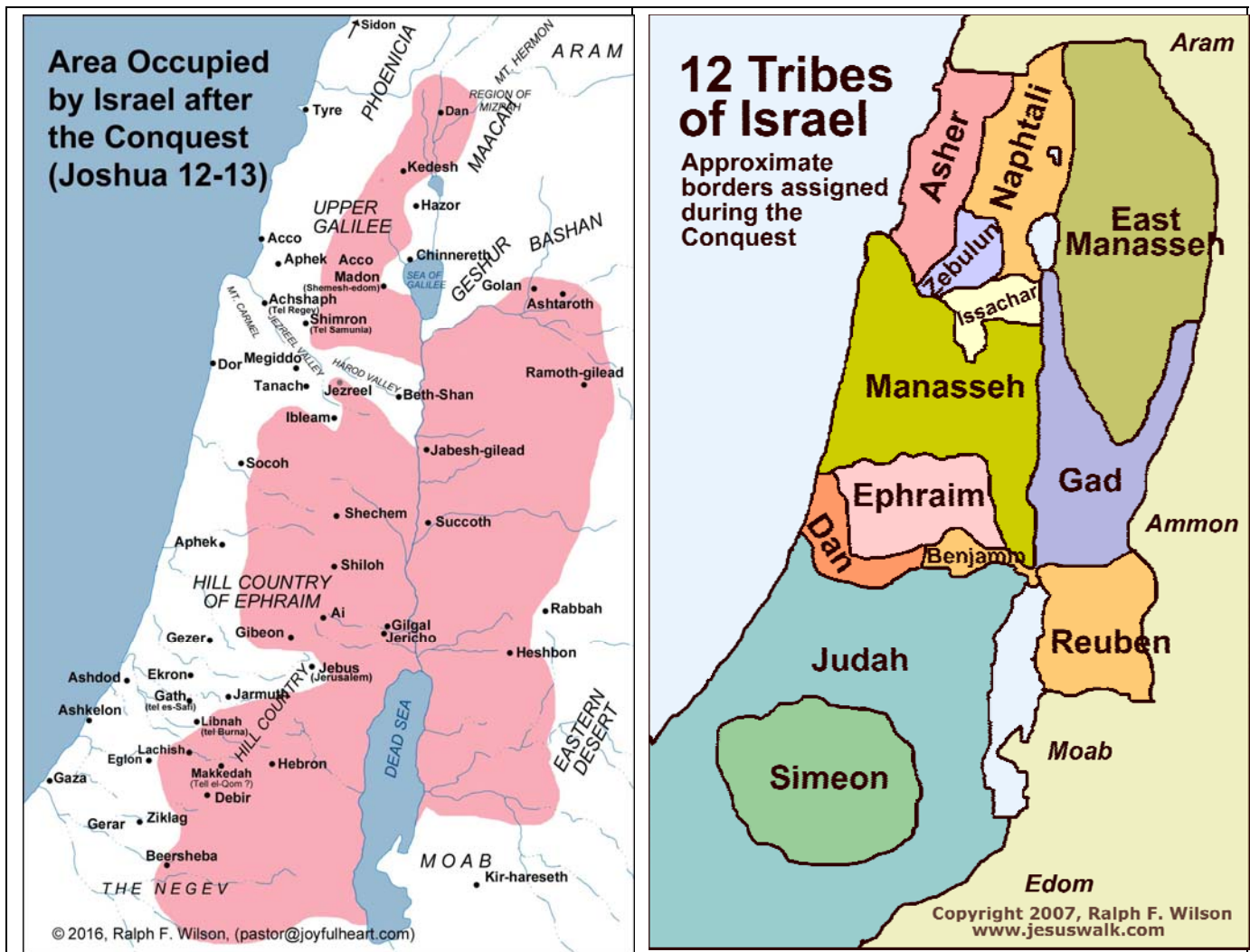
**Q3. In what way does failing to drive out the Canaanites correspond to compromising with sin in our lives? What is the consequence of this compromise? What must we do to end the compromise?**

**Q4. How does Bob Munger's "My Heart, Christ's Home" explain the process of surrender to Christ. When we surrender to Christ, what happens to the ugly things in our lives that displease God? What is the effect on us?**



### Lessons for Disciples

1. When we obey God and trust him to fight for us, we sometimes see him do miraculous acts of deliverance (chapter 10).
2. When we fail to obey God completely, we can expect only incomplete victory in our lives and ministries (chapters 16-19; 17:12-13; 2:1-3).
3. The incomplete Conquest is a teaching metaphor for our spiritual lives. We must (1) take the land initially through spiritual warfare, and then (2) take possession of it personally to live in it, or the "Canaanites" will creep back into our lives to trouble us. Complete obedience is required for complete victory.





## 7. Caleb: Give Me This Mountain (Joshua 14:6-15)

One of the 12 Original Spies (Numbers 13-14)  
 Caleb's Faith (Numbers 13:30; 14:7-9; Psalm 95:7b-11; Numbers 14:24; Deuteronomy 1:36)

**Q1. (Numbers 14:24; Joshua 14:8) What does it mean to follow the Lord “wholly” or “wholeheartedly”? How did Caleb and Joshua differ from the other spies? How does fear in leaders keep God's people from doing his will? Why was God angry with Israel for their unwillingness to enter the Promised Land?**

Was Hebron Reconquered by Caleb? (Joshua 14)

**1. Detailed account.** According to this view, the account of the taking of Hebron and Debir in Joshua 11:22-23 “is anticipated and summarized as part of the conquest of the southern coalition.” Joshua is given credit, though his lieutenants fought the actual battles.

**2. Reconquest.** However, it is also possible to see the southern campaign in Joshua 11 as the initial campaign to defeat the kings of these cities. Hebron was conquered by Joshua's army initially, but the inhabitants returned when the armies left, and they needed to be dislodged again by Caleb when he was ready to take possession. Similar pattern for Jerusalem (Jebus). Joshua 11:22-26; 15:63; Judges 1:21; 2 Samuel 5:6; 2 Samuel 24:18-25).

Caleb's Bold Claim (14:6-15)

Hebron. Joshua gives Caleb Hebron as his inheritance. Apparently, the grant involves the whole hill country surrounding Hebron, including the city of Debir (15:13-19), also known as Kiriath-Sepher (15:15; Judges 1:11) and Kiriath Sannah (15:49), see Genesis 13:18; 23:17).

Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai (15:14; Numbers 13:22; Judges 1:10).

Ambition and Faith. Numbers 12:1-3; Jeremiah 9:24

**Q2. (Joshua 14:6-14) Why is Caleb boastful in verse 12? Is this a character flaw or a trait to be emulated? Why do you think he claimed the hill country of Hebron for his inheritance? How can a strong leader be truly humble? Why are strong leaders often tempted towards pride?**

A Faith-Filled Son-in-Law (15:15-17; Judges 1:11-13)

**Q3. (Joshua 15:15-17; Judges 3:9-11) What can we deduce about Othniel's character from Joshua 15:15-17? Why does Caleb offer his daughter in marriage? How does this narrow the selection of a son-in-law? What is the power behind Othniel's judgeship according to Judges 3:10?**

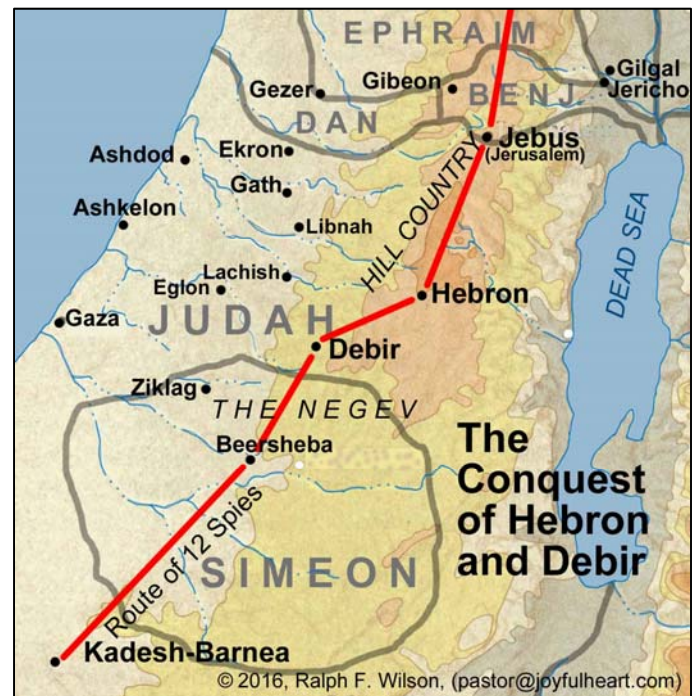
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### A Faith-Filled Daughter (15:17-19)

Acsah asks for the "upper springs" and "lower springs." These must refer to water sources outside the natural territorial limits of Debir, but close enough to be transferred to its jurisdiction. The word translated "springs" is *gullōt*, literally "basin(s)," defined by W. F. Albright as "subterranean pockets and basins of water under some of the wadis," to which access was gained by cutting a well shaft through the rock in the dry creek beds.

Examples of similar strong women in the New Testament: The woman with the flow of blood (Luke 8:43-48; Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:24-34); the Syro-Phoenician woman (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30); a sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50); Mary of Bethany; John 12:1-8; Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; Luke 18:1-5).



**Q4. (Joshua 15:17-19) What do we learn about Acsah's character from this passage? Name some examples of strong women of faith in the Bible. Name some strong women of faith you have known personally.**

A Faith-Filled Heritage (Hebrews 12:1-2a)

### Lessons for Disciples

1. God honors those who follow wholly or wholeheartedly. Disciples must not only see the realities of our world, but fearlessly obey the Lord, even though the obstacles are great (Numbers 14:24; 14:8).
2. We need to have a long-term view of waiting on God to fulfill his promises. Then, when the time is right, move boldly forward.
3. Disciples boast in the Lord, though they must be careful to be humble before the Lord.
4. One way of discerning leadership in others is to place before them a challenge and see who rises to the challenge (Joshua 15:15-17; Judges 3:9-11).
5. There is a long tradition of strong women of God (and men) who are not content to let life happen to them, but who press in to receive God's promise (Joshua 15:17-19). We should seek to follow in their steps.

## 8. As for Me and My House (Joshua 23-24)

The LORD Will Fight for You (23:1-5; 24:12; 23:10; Leviticus 26:7-8) “Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you” (St. Augustine, sometimes to St. Ignatius Loyola)

I Sent the Hornet (24:12; Exodus 23:28, Deuteronomy 7:20). The most common hornet species there is the Oriental Hornet (*Vespa orientalis*), a large yellow or reddish-brown insect that builds its nest underground and will sting anyone who molests it.

**Q1. (Joshua 23-24) Why are we tempted to think that we have accomplished so much by our own strength? Why are we tempted to do nothing and expect God to do all the work? What is the balance? Which side of the balance have you been on personally? How about your church?**

Take Possession of the Land (23:3-5; Colossians 2:13-15; Romans 7:21-25; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 3:3, 5)

Holiness before the Lord (23:11-13; Exodus 19:5-6; quoted in 1 Peter 2:9-10)

“Holy” means that Israel is special, God’s special possession and a chosen people. The word translated “love” (23:11) is Hebrew *’ahab*, “to have affection for.” (Deuteronomy 6:5; quoted by Jesus in Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). What is holiness? To be holy means (negatively) to be separated from all that is unclean, and (positively) to be completely and utterly God’s.

The Necessity of Grace (Isaiah 64:6; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1).

**Q2. (Joshua 23:11-13) How would you define “holiness”? What makes us holy? How should our holiness affect our lifestyles?**

Throw Away Your Foreign Gods (24:23; Matthew 6:21, 24)

**Q3. (Joshua 24:23) Why did the Israelites have to throw out their foreign gods? What was the effect of keeping these images in their houses? What “foreign gods” contaminate our homes, our lives? What would be involved in “throwing them out”?**

Do Not Associate and Intermarry with Them (23:7-13)

Loving Sinners (Matthew 11:19), but refusing to conform (Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:14). Command not to marry unbelievers (Joshua 23:12; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 7:39, 12-16).

**Q4. (Joshua 23:7) What was Jesus’ example of “associating” with sinners? Who were the “buddies” with whom he spent most of his time? How can we balance our lives so we can enjoy friendship with non-Christians while not becoming like them? What is the strategic effect of having no friendship with non-Christians?**

Reciting and Remembering Our History (24:1-14; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:26).

Choose This Day Whom You Will Serve (24:15)

The Decision’s Consequences (24:31; Romans 10:9-10).

**Q5. (Joshua 24:15-27) What was Joshua’s challenge to the Israelites? How God seem to challenge you? What is He saying to you? What do you plan to do about it?**

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Joshua, the Servant of the LORD (24:29; Luke 22:25-28)

### Lessons for Disciples

1. We must find the balance between trusting God to fight our battles, and being willing to do everything in our power to fight alongside him in the battle.
2. Our sanctification requires taking and keeping possession of the victories that God desires for us. God works in us, but we must participate in the process (Philippians 2:12-13).
3. We must find the balance between relying on grace and seeking holiness (23:11-13).
4. We must be willing to throw out the things in our lives and households that obstruct our walk with God and become an end in themselves (24:23).
5. We must find the balance between loving sinners as Jesus did, and associating with them to such a degree that our lives and goals become corrupted by the association (23:7-13; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:14).
6. Disciples must deliberately choose to follow Christ each day, rather than move passively through their lives (24:15-27).
7. We must find joy and pride in being “servants” rather than something in ourselves (24:29; John 13:4-5; Luke 22:24-28).

## Appendix 2. The Peoples of Canaan (Joshua 3:10)

Full article: [http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app2\\_peoples.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app2_peoples.htm)

Sometimes the terms “Amorite” and “Canaanite” were with reference to a particular race; other times they are used more generally to refer to several related peoples.

**Canaanites.** The Canaanites lived along the coast and the Jordan during Joshua’s time. The term Canaanite is often used collectively of all the inhabitants of Canaan regardless of racial origin (Joshua 5:1; Numbers 13:29; Joshua 11:3; Genesis 36:2f)

**Hittites.** The Hittites developed a powerful empire in east central Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) from 2000 BC on. By 1600 BC, Hattusilis I extended his sphere of influence into north Syria, one or two hundred years prior to Joshua’s Conquest of Canaan. By 1560 BC, the Hittites were strong enough to raid Babylon. Some members of this group lived in the hill country (Joshua 13:11; 2 Samuel 11:3-24; 23:39).

**Hivites**, a people living west of the Jordan. Hivites are mentioned in Gibeon (Joshua 9:7; LXX Horite; 11:19), in Shechem (Genesis 4:2, LXX Horite), and in the North (Joshua 11; Judges 3:3).

**Perizzites** had lived in Canaan since the Patriarchs. Mentioned along with other Canaanite groups who lived in the hill country of northern Canaan (Joshua 11:3; 17:15; Genesis 13:3, 7)

**Girgashites** are mentioned only five times in the Old Testament and only in lists with other inhabitants of Canaan. The tribe may be related to the Phoenicians who lived on the coast of Lebanon.

**Amorites** (not to be confused with the Ammonites) lived primarily east of the Jordan River. Sihon, king of the Amorites in Heshbon, was one of Israel’s early conquests (Numbers 21:21-31). Og, king of Bashan was also mentioned as an Amorite king (Deuteronomy 4:47; Joshua 2:10; also Deuteronomy 1:44). Ai, conquered after Jericho, was an Amorite city (Joshua 7:7). Other Amorite populations attacked Israel’s vassal, Gibeon (Joshua 10:5; 13:4). They are part of a great nomadic people that had appeared in Mesopotamia at the time of Sargon I (ca. 2360 to 2305).

**Jebusites** were a group living in the uplands of Canaan near Jerusalem (Joshua 15:8, 63; 10:5; 18:28; 15:63; Judges 1:21; 2 Samuel 5:6-8; 24:16-18).

**Philistines** (Heb *peleset*, “Philistia”) is also the origin of our word Palestine. The Philistines who occupied Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron were probably part of a migration from the Aegean (Greek) area shortly after 1200 BC. The Philistines settled along the coast, perhaps from Crete, in a similar time frame as when the Israelites were conquering the Jordan valley and the hill country.

## Appendix 3. Whose Land Is the Promised Land?

Full article: [http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app3\\_promised\\_land.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app3_promised_land.htm)

“I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites – a land flowing with milk and honey.” (Exodus 3:17; 4:29)

### 1. Right by Promise (Genesis 15:13-14, 16)

### 2. Right by Might

By what right do peoples lay claim to any land? Not legally, but in practice?

1. We were here first. We won't leave, and we are strong enough to resist.
2. We were here before you. We took this land from its former inhabitants. We are stronger militarily.
3. We purchased this land from its former inhabitants. We have the greater economic strength and thus are displacing them.

Under Joshua and “the commander of the army of the LORD” (Joshua 5:14), Israel had become a mighty nation. They were weak when they trusted in their own strength (Joshua chapters 7 and 9), but strong when they went out at the direction of the LORD.

### 3. Right by Law

What was the Israelite's “legal” claim? Their God claimed that the land was first of all *his land* (Numbers 35:34; Psalm 24:1). That he created it, as well as all the peoples of the earth. Moreover, it was his right to judge the peoples of the earth. He promised the land to Abraham, but did not give it to him at that time “for *the sin of the Amorites* has not yet reached its full measure...” (Genesis 15:16). Does not the Owner of the land have a right to judge who shall live in it? (Genesis 18:25; Isaiah 10:5-6).

Thus, when we come to the question of Israel displacing the Amorites and other idol-worshippers from the Promised Land, we need to consider God's ownership, God's righteous judgment, and God's strength.

## Appendix 4. Weapons in Joshua's Time

Full article: [http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app4\\_weapons.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app4_weapons.htm)

**Club.** Often made from a single piece of wood, usually larger at the striking end. It could break bones and shatter skulls.

**Battle Axe.** Probably in this period they would have a bronze or copper blade attached to a wooden handle.

**Spear.** A sharp blade was attached to the end of a stick, a hand-held stabbing weapon. (Numbers 25:7-8; Judges 5:8)

**Sword.** Used chiefly as a stabbing instrument. This was the most important weapon in Canaan, mentioned 400 times in the Old Testament. The sword probably developed along with the advance of metallurgy.

**Sickle Sword.** The curved shape and sharp cutting edge were used for striking or hacking a foe rather than for stabbing, functioning somewhat like a battle axe but easier to handle (Joshua 10:28, 30, 32, 37).

**Bow and Arrow.** This was a second widely used weapon in Joshua's army (Joshua 24:12).

The self-bow was made of a single piece of wood. The composite bow was more powerful, and was made of laminated wood, horn, and sinew. The composite bow had an effective range of 500 to 550 feet (160-175 meters). Arrows were made of feather fletching, a shaft of a reed or some sort of wood, and flint, copper, bronze, and, later, iron tips.

**Sling and Stone.** The sling could be made of woven materials, such as wool or palm fiber rope, or of leather. Excavations in Israel reveal hundreds of sling stones. Stones were often worked to make them as round as possible, and they range from 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7.5 cm.) in diameter. Stones could be flung by a warrior at 100 to 150 miles per hour (160 to 240 km/hr).

**Shield.** There were two types of shields. The small round or rectangular shield used in hand-to-hand combat, and a long, full-length shield used by besiegers as they approached a city wall, so archers could fire arrows and still be protected. Shields were probably made of leather stretched over a wood frame, and maintained by oiling (2 Samuel 1:21).

**Armor** was probably not used by the Israelites during the Conquest, but high-ranking leaders had body armor by the time of Saul (1 Samuel 17:8).

**Helmet.** A helmet to protect the head was probably of leather or bronze, not mentioned in Joshua.

**Chariot.** The Israelites did not have chariots in Joshua's day. The Canaanites (Philistines) along the flat coastal plain used iron chariots (Joshua 11:6, 9; Judges 1:19) that were a formidable obstacle to the complete conquest of the land.



A complete Bronze Age sword (top) with hilt and leaf-shaped blade (c.1100BC), and a large bronze spearhead (bottom) from 700BC.



Bronze Age socketed axes were used as domestic tools and close-quarter combat weapons.



Sickle sword, 1307–1275BC, from the Middle Assyrian period (the reign of Adad-nirari I).

## Appendix 5. Canaanite Religions and Baal Worship

Full article: [http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app5\\_baal.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app5_baal.htm)

The chief Canaanite fertility gods were Baal and Ashtoreth.

- **Baal** (the son of El) was revered as the god with power over rain, wind, clouds, and therefore over fertility.
- **Ashtoreth** was a Semite goddess derived from the Babylonian god Ishtar. As worshipped locally in Canaan, she was the consort of Baal, and supposedly brought fertility to the people who worshipped her.

Canaanite worship often took place in open-air sites at the tops of hills, referred to in the Bible as “high places.” Usually, there was a *masseba* or stone pillar erected as a symbol of the male deity and an *asherah* representing the female counterpart, some sort of wooden pole or image of the goddess. In front of these was a sacrificial altar.

**Cult Prostitution.** Canaanite fertility ritual is the associated of male and female cult prostitutes with temples and shrines of the fertility deities. By joining in the activities of cultic sexuality, common people could participate in ‘stockpiling’ fertility energy, which ensured the continuing stability of agricultural as well as human and animal productivity.

**Monotheism.** The Israelites lived in a culture in Egypt and Canaan where many gods were worshipped. First Commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). The Shema: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Mark 12:29)

**Idolatry.** Yahweh is invisible (1 Timothy 1:17; John 1:18; Exodus 34:29; John 1:14). “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth” (Exodus 20:4; KJV). Israel’s neighbors all had household idols and the statues of their gods at their high places.

**Detestable.** The very survival of the people of Israel depended upon them being intolerant of the religions around them. The Bible refers to these false gods as detestable, defiling (Deuteronomy. 20:17-18; Leviticus 18:24-28)

**Summary.** If these religions were allowed to continue side by side with the worship of Yahweh, they would corrupt the true faith through syncretism, which is “the combination of different forms of belief or practice.” Unfortunately, the Israelites *did* tolerate the religion of the Canaanites, allowed it to continue, and it *did* prove deadly to the true faith of Israel.

“Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:14-15)



The “Baal of Lightning”  
Stela (1900-1750 BC)  
from Ras Shamra

## Appendix 6. Why the Slaughter of Jericho? Devoted to Destruction (*Herem*)

Full article: [http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app6\\_herem.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/joshua/app6_herem.htm)

**A Culture of Violence.** When you move from a stable society of law and order to one where armed might determines people's destinies, you move immediately into the mindset of the Late Bronze Age.

**Genocide.** We've seen genocide, the attempt to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group often in history. More recently: Armenia (1915-1916); Jewish Holocaust (1939-1945), Cambodia (1975-1979), Rwanda (1994), Balkans "ethnic cleansing." The Israelite destruction of the peoples of Jericho and Canaan fits the United Nations' definition of genocide. How do we square this with what we know of a loving God?

**1. Punishment for Sin.** "Then the LORD said to [Abraham], 'Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.... In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure....'" (Genesis 15:13-14, 16; see Leviticus 18:24-28)

**2. Danger of Syncretism.** "Completely destroy them – the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites – as the LORD your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God." (Deuteronomy 20:17-18; See also Genesis 15:16; 2 Kings 21:11; Ezra 9:1; 1 Kings 11:5-7; 1 Kings 14:24; 2 Kings 16:3; 2 Kings 23:13; 2 Chronicles 36:14; Ezra 9:11; Judges 10:6).

**3. Herem – Devoted to Destruction** (Joshua 6:17-19). The word *herem* denotes the fact of 'separating' something, of taking it out of profane use and reserving it for a sacred use; alternatively, it may stand for the thing which is 'separated' in this way, forbidden to man and consecrated to God." The word is closely related to our word "harem" (from Arabic *harim*) which refers to a secluded area of a house allotted to women. The Hebrew word *herem* used in our passage refers to "the exclusion of an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God," who is King (Joshua 7; Leviticus 1; 6:8-13; Joshua 6:24; 1 Samuel 15).

**4. Standards of the Time.** We get in trouble when we try to impose a modern century ethic in a Bronze Age situation.

**5. Death the Ultimate Punishment?** Sometimes we look at death as the ultimate punishment. It is rather the second death we should fear (Revelation 20:14; see also Romans 2:12-16; 1 Timothy 4:10).

**Judging God.** One of the dangers we face when reading the Bible is setting ourselves up as judges of God himself.