
JOSHUA 12:1 Now these are the kings of the land, whom the children of Israel struck, and possessed their land beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise, from the valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon, and all the Arabah eastward:

A list of the kings on the east of Jordan, which were conquered by Moses, with their territories, Jos 12:1-6. A list of those on the west side of Jordan, conquered by Joshua, in number thirty-one, vv. 7-24.

Verse 1

From the river Arnon unto Mount Hermon - Arnon was the boundary of all the southern coast of the land occupied by the Israelites beyond Jordan; and the mountains of Hermon were the boundaries on the north. Arnon takes its rise in the mountains of Gilead, and having run a long way from north to south falls into the Dead Sea, near the same place into which Jordan discharges itself.

And all the plain on the east - All the land from the plains of Moab to Mount Hermon.

JOSHUA 12:2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the middle of the valley, and half Gilead, even to the river Jabbok, the border of the children of Ammon;

Verse 2

From Aroer - Aroer was situated on the western side of the river Arnon, in the middle of the valley through which this river takes its course. The kingdom of Sihon extended from the river Arnon and the city of Aroer on the south to the river Jabbok on the north.

And from half Gilead - The mountains of Gilead extended from north to south from Mount Hermon towards the source of the river Arnon, which was about the midst of the extent of the kingdom of Sihon: thus Sihon is said to have possessed the half of Gilead, that is, the half of the mountains and of the country which bore the name of Gilead on the east of his territories.

River Jabbok - This river has its source in the mountains of Gilead; and, running from east to west, falls into Jordan. It bounds the territories of Sihon on the north, and those of the Ammonites on the south.

JOSHUA 12:3 and the Arabah to the sea of Chinneroth, eastward, and to the sea of the Arabah, even the Salt Sea, eastward, the way to Beth Jeshimoth; and on the south, under the slopes of Pisgah:

Verse 3

The sea of Chinneroth - Or Gennesareth, the same as the lake or sea of Tiberias.

The Salt Sea on the east - ים המלח yam hammelach, which is here translated the Salt Sea, is understood by others to mean the sea of the city Melach. Where can we find any thing that can be called a salt sea on the east of the lake of Gennesareth? Some think that the lake Asphaltites, called also the Dead Sea, Sea of the Desert, Sea of Sodom, and Salt Sea, is here intended.

Beth-jeshimoth - A city near the Dead Sea in the plains of Moab.

Ashdoth-pisgah - Supposed to be a city at the foot of Mount Pisgah.

JOSHUA 12:4 and the border of Og king of Bashan, of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,

Verse 4

Coast of Og king of Bashan - Concerning this person see the notes on Deu 3:11, and on Num 21:35, etc.

The remnant or the giants - Or, Rephaim. See the notes on Gen 6:4; Gen 14:5, and Deu 2:7, Deu 2:11.

JOSHUA 12:5 and ruled in Mount Hermon, and in Salecah, and in all Bashan, to the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

Verse 5

The border of the Geshurites - The country of Bashan, in the days of Moses and Joshua, extended from the river Jabbok on the south to the frontiers of the Geshurites and Maachathites on the north, to the foot of the mountains of Hermon.

JOSHUA 12:6 Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel struck them. Moses the servant of the LORD gave it for a possession to the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

JOSHUA 12:7 These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the children of Israel struck beyond the Jordan westward, from Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon even to Mount Halak, that goes up to Seir. Joshua gave it to the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions;

Verse 7

From Baal-gad - A repetition of what is mentioned Jos 11:17.

JOSHUA 12:8 in the hill country, and in the lowland, and in the Arabah, and in the slopes, and in the wilderness, and in the South; the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:

JOSHUA 12:9 the king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one;

Verse 9

The king of Jericho, etc. - On this and the following verses see the notes on Jos 10:1-3 (note).

JOSHUA 12:10 the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

JOSHUA 12:11 the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

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

JOSHUA 12:13 the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

Verse 13

The king of Geder - Probably the same with Gedor, Jos 15:58; it was situated in the tribe of Judah.

JOSHUA 12:14 the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

Verse 14

The king of Hormah - Supposed to be the place where the Israelites were defeated by the Canaanites see Num 14:45; and which probably was called Hormah, הרמה chormah, or destruction, from this circumstance.

JOSHUA 12:15 the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

Verse 15

Adullam - A city belonging to the tribe of Judah, Jos 15:35. In a cave at this place David often secreted himself during his persecution by Saul; 1Sam 22:1.

JOSHUA 12:16 the king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one;

JOSHUA 12:17 the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hepher, one;

Verse 17

Tapuah - There were two places of this name: one in the tribe of Judah, Jos 15:34, and another in the tribe of Ephraim on the borders of Manasseh; but which of the two is meant here cannot be ascertained. See the note on Jos 15:53.

Hepher - The same, according to Calmet, as Ophrah in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos 18:23.

JOSHUA 12:18 the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lass Sharon, one;

Verse 18

Aphek - There were several cities of this name: one in the tribe of Asher, Jos 19:30, another in the tribe of Judah, 1Sam 4:1; 1Sam 29:1; and a third in Syria, 1Kgs 20:26, and 2Kgs 13:17. Which of the two former is here intended cannot be ascertained.

Lasharon - There is no city of this name known. Some consider the ל lamed in the word לשרון lashsharon to be the sign of the genitive case, and in this sense it appears to have been understood by the Vulgate, which translates rex Saron, the king of Sharon. This was rather a district than a city, and is celebrated in the Scriptures for its fertility; Isa 33:9; Isa 35:2. Some suppose it was the same with Saron, near Lydda, mentioned Act 9:35.

JOSHUA 12:19 the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

JOSHUA 12:20 the king of Shimron Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

Verse 20

Shimron-meron - See on Jos 11:1 (note).

JOSHUA 12:21 the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

Verse 21

Taanach - A city in the half tribe of Manasseh, to the west of Jordan, not far from the frontiers of Zebulun, Jos 17:11. This city was assigned to the Levites, Jos 21:25.

JOSHUA 12:22 the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one;

Verse 22

Kedesh - There was a city of this name in the tribe of Naphtali, Jos 19:37. It was given to the Levites, and was one of the cities of refuge, Jos 20:7.

Jokneam of Carmel - This city is said to have been at the foot of Mount Carmel, near the river Belus, in the tribe of Zebulun, Jos 19:11. It was given to the Levites, Jos 21:34.

JOSHUA 12:23 the king of Dor in the height of Dor, one; the king of Goiim in Gilgal, one;

Verse 23

The king of Dor - The city of this name fell to the lot of the children of Manasseh, Jos 17:11. Bochart observes that it was one of the oldest royal cities in Phoenicia. The Canaanites held it, Jdg 1:27. Antiochus Sydetes besieged it in aftertimes, but could not make himself master of it. See Bochart, Canaan, lib. i., c. 28, and Dodd.

The king of the nations of Gilgal - This is supposed to mean the higher Galilee, surnamed Galilee of the Gentiles or, nations, as the Hebrew word גוֹיִם *goyim* means. On this ground it should be read king of Galilee of the nations. Others suppose it is the same country with that of which Tidal was king, see Gen 14:1. The place is very uncertain, and commentators have rendered it more so by their conjectures.

JOSHUA 12:24 the king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty-one.

Verse 24

King of Tirzah - This city appears to have been for a long time the capital of the kingdom of Israel, and the residence of its kings. See 1Kgs 14:17; 1Kgs 15:21, 1Kgs 15:33. Its situation cannot be exactly ascertained; but it is supposed to have been situated on a mountain about three leagues south of Samaria.

All the kings thirty and one - The Septuagint say *εικοσι εννεα*, twenty-nine, and yet set down but twenty-eight, as they confound or omit the kings of Beth-el, Lasharon, and Madon.

So many kings in so small a territory, shows that their kingdoms must have been very small indeed. The kings of Beth-el and Ai had but about 12,000 subjects in the whole; but in ancient times all kings had very small territories. Every village or town had its chief; and this chief was independent of his neighbors, and exercised regal power in his own district. In reading all ancient histories, as well as the Bible, this circumstance must be kept constantly in view; for we ought to consider that in those times both kings and kingdoms were but a faint resemblance of those now.

Great Britain, in ancient times, was divided into many kingdoms: in the time of the Saxons it was divided into seven, hence called the Saxon heptarchy. But when Julius Caesar first entered this island, he found four kings in Kent alone; Cingetorix, Carnilius, Taximagulus, and Segonax. Hence we need not wonder at the numbers we read of in the land of Canaan. Ancient Gaul was thus divided; and the great number of sovereign princes, secular bishops, landgraves, dukes, etc., etc., in Germany, are the modern remains of those ancient divisions.