

The Book of Joshua

Preparing for the Conquest of Canaan

Background of the Canaanites

- I. The Nations Inhabiting Canaan
 - A. The **Amorites** inhabited the land west of the Euphrates River and were known as barbarians and uncivilized people (cf. Josh. 12:1-6).
 - B. The **Hittites** were polytheists and described their array of gods as “the thousand gods.”
 1. It is likely that they were responsible for leading Israel into pagan, idolatrous worship later in their history.
 2. It was from the Hittites that Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah as a burying place for his family (Gen. 23).
 3. Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, was a Hittite (2 Sam. 11:17).
 - C. The **Perizzites** inhabited the “forest country” in the territory of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Judah (Josh. 17:15; Jud. 1:4-5).
 1. Israel did not completely destroy the Perizzites from the land.
 2. Later, they intermarried with the Israelites (cf. Jud. 3:5-6; Ezra 9:1).
 - D. The **Hivites** lived near the cities of Tyre and Sidon (2 Sam. 24:7) and became servants of the Israelites (Josh. 9:27; 1 Kin. 9:20-21).
 - E. The **Canaanites** settled in the land before 2,000 BC and were a highly civilized people - worshippers of the god Baal.
 - F. The **Jebusites** were the original inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem - a city not captured fully until the time of David (Jud. 19:10-11; 1 Chr. 11:4-6).
- II. The Judgment of Canaan
 - A. The conquering of Canaan by Israel was meant as a judgment of God upon the persistent sins of the Canaanites.
 - B. They had numerous motives, opportunities, and ample time to repent of their sins (cf. Gen. 15:16).
 1. The priesthood of Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18ff)
 2. The presence of Abraham (Gen. 12:6; 13:7; etc.)
 3. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19)
 4. The influence of Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 26; 35)
 5. The punishment of Egypt (Exodus)
 6. The deliverance of Israel (Exodus)
 7. The defeat of neighboring tribes (Exo. 17; Deut. 2 - 3)
 - C. Furthermore, their sins were grievous - human sacrifice in their idolatrous worship.
 - D. Thus, the punishment was to be severe and thorough (Deut. 20:17).