

• *Conquered kings*

1. The kingdom of God defeats the kingdoms of man

• *God – the King of all humanity*

• *A nation ruled by God*

2. The kingdom of God makes progress through God's people

• *Kings defeated by the people of Israel on the east of Jordan under Moses*

3. Progress through the cooperation of different generations

The climax of the account of the conquering of Canaan comes in the lists of conquered kings. *'Now these are the kings of the land, whom the people of Israel defeated...'* ^{□1}.

1. The kingdom of God defeats the kingdoms of man. If there is one dominant note throughout Scripture it is that of the royalty and sovereignty of God. From the very earliest pages of the biblical story God is seen in loving dominion and gracious power. Man was created to be a 'junior' king under God. He was king of the earth, under God the king of all kings.

When the human race fell into sin, God's sovereignty continued. Before the fall of the human race it was sovereignty over perfect but vulnerable humanity; now it became sovereignty over sinful and entangled humanity – but there was no change in the sovereignty of God.

God was king over the human race in the days before the flood. He was king in the days of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. He was the sovereign during the days of Israel's redemption by the blood of the lamb. He was king during the days of wilderness wanderings.

Now He is about to set up a theocracy – a nation ruled by God. The first stage is to put down the pagan kings of His land. God's kingdom begins by putting down man-made kingdoms.

2. The kingdom of God makes progress through God's people. Joshua 12:1 says *'These are the kings ... whom the people... defeated'*. One might expect it to say 'These are the kings God defeated'. Both statements would be equally true. It was God, not any man, who shook down the walls of Jericho. It was God, not any man, who stopped the sun in the sky and rained down massive hailstones upon His enemies. Yet this is characteristic of the ways of God. He likes to use His people. His is the power; theirs is the activity. He supplies marvels, yet they are the ones who seem to do everything that needs to be done. God will put all enemies beneath His feet, but He does it through His people. 'God ... will soon crush Satan under **your** feet', said Paul to the Romans ^{□1}.

So the Book of Joshua goes on to celebrate the fact that so many kings had been conquered by the people of Israel. It begins with the kings conquered on the east side of the Jordan ^{□1}. On the east side the southern border was the river Arnon which flows into the Dead Sea half-way down the Dead Sea on its eastern side.¹ The northern border was Mount Hermon in the far north^{□2}. Between these borders the Amorites^{□3} and the people of Og^{□4} had been defeated.

3. The kingdom of God makes progress through the cooperation of different generations of God's people. The book of Joshua often emphasises the unity and cooperation between Moses and Joshua – as it does here in Joshua chapter 13. What Moses started^{□1}, Joshua completed ^{□2}. Joshua had the bigger task but he could have done nothing if it had not been for Moses.

Christian leaders have to learn to build on previous generations. Admittedly, there is something to be said for always living as if we were the second generation of the church, building on the first-

^{□1} 12:1

^{□1} Romans 16:20

^{□1} 12:1–6
^{□2} 12:1
^{□3} 12:2–3
^{□4} 12:4–6

^{□1} 12:1–6
^{□2} 12:7–31

of God's people

• *Building on the achievements of the previous generation*

4. The kingdom of God brings every realm under its authority

• *Conquests on the west side of Jordan*

• *The Book of Joshua paints both similarities and contrasts*

• *God's kingdom of grace – not violent militarism*

generation apostles of New Testament times. This is true, but it is also true that we would be wise to take what was good in previous generations and incorporate their wisdom into our wisdom. It is the principle of Joel 1:3 'Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children must tell another generation'. Joshua rose to great heights of success – but he could not have done much without Moses' earlier work.

4. The kingdom of God brings every realm under its authority. The story proceeds to tell of the kings who were defeated west of the Jordan. Baal-Gad was in the far north, between Mount Hermon and the city of Tyre. Mount Halak ^{map 1} was in the far south. In between these limits six well-known kingdoms had been defeated (Hitties, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites – Joshua 12:8). In addition thirty- one kings and their little kingdoms had been annihilated. They are listed in Joshua 12:9–24. There are kingdoms mentioned there which have not been mentioned before. This lets us know that Joshua chapters 1–11 has only been a selective account. There were other minor victories which have not been mentioned in any detail.

God's kingdom reigns over every other kingdom. The church of Jesus reigns over every realm. We do not get this kind of victory by violence or by political manipulation. In this respect the Book of Joshua is a **contrast** to what we must expect in the church of Jesus. Joshua **pictures** the progress of the gospel, but the Old Testament 'types' always have an element of contrast as well as an element of similarity. One does not understand 'typology' unless one looks for contrasts as well as parallels. Yet in our own way we too shall write a list of the 'kingdoms' that Jesus has conquered. It will include the kingdom of music and art, the kingdom of scholarship and study, the kingdom of government and civic administration. Every realm must submit to Jesus. Jesus must go on reigning until all enemies have been put beneath his feet. But it is not a kingdom of violent militarism; it is a kingdom of powerful grace.

Note

1. The most helpful Bible atlas I know in reviewing these places is the Macmillan Bible Atlas (Macmillan, 1968); see map 8 for an overview of the mountains and streams of Israel; and see map 69.

map 1 12:7b

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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