

Joshua 9

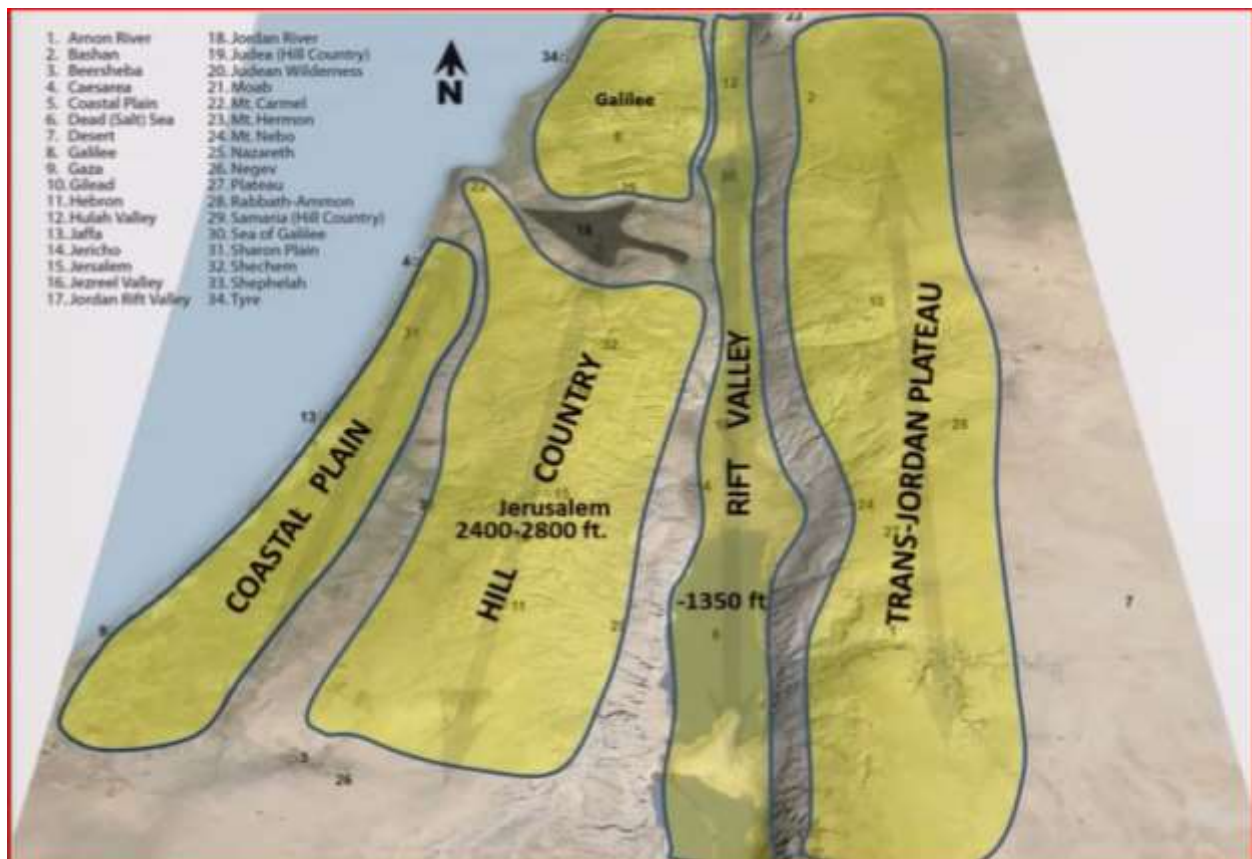
Verses 1 – 2

Now it came about when all the kings who were beyond the Jordan, in the hill country, the lowland, and on all the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard about it, ² that they met together with one purpose, to fight with Joshua and with Israel.

Now it came about when all the kings who were beyond the Jordan, in the hill country, the lowland, and on all the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon

These were the three geographical divisions of Palestine

See map 905



So this meant all of Canaan.

The coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon

See map 908



The Great Sea here is the Mediterranean.

Phoenicia has been controlled by 30 different nations from the time of Joshua till now.

It became known as Lebanon in 1920.

They met together with one purpose, to fight with Joshua and with Israel.

Israel had defeated Jericho, Ai, Bethel and Shechem.

That was enough to unite the many kings of Canaan.

Verses 3 - 8

The inhabitants of Gibeon also heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai,⁴ but they on their part acted craftily and went and took provisions for a journey, and took worn-out sacks on their donkeys, and wineskins *that were* worn out, split open, and patched,⁵ and worn-out and patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry *and* had become crumbled.⁶ And they went to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a far country; now then, make a covenant with us.”⁷ But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you are living within our land; how then are we to make a covenant with you?”⁸ So they said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” Then Joshua said to them, “Who are you and where do you come from?”

The inhabitants of Gibeon also heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai,⁴ but they on their part acted craftily.

Israel was very close to the city of Gibeon when they defeated Ai

See map 915



And they went to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a far country; now then, make a covenant with us.

Israel left Shechem and camped in Gilgal

See map 920



When Israel first crossed the Jordan River they camped near Jericho and called the campsite Gilgal.

They did the same thing after leaving Shechem.

We have come from a far country; now then, make a covenant with us.”⁷ But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you are living within our land; how then are we to make a covenant with you?”

Joshua knew that God wanted all of the people in Canaan to be killed. So if he made a covenant with any Canaanites, it would be in direct conflict with the will of God.

So Joshua approached this offer with some suspicion.

The tribe of Israel had a number of family stories about deception.

1. Abraham passed his wife off as his sister
2. Isaac did the same
3. Jacob deceived his father to receive Esau's blessing
4. Jacob's sons deceived him concerning Joseph

Do we need to continue?

⁸ So they said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” Then Joshua said to them, “Who are you and where do you come from?”

If an offer sounds too good to be true, maybe we should kick those tires and look under the hood one more time.

Verses 9 – 15

They said to him, “Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the Lord your God; for we have heard the report about Him and all that He did in Egypt, ¹⁰ and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon and to Og king of Bashan who was in Ashtaroth. ¹¹ So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, ‘Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, “We are your servants; now then, make a covenant with us.”’ ¹² This bread of ours *was* hot *when* we took it for our provisions from our houses on the day that we left to come to you; but now behold, it is dry and has become crumbled. ¹³ And these wineskins which we filled were new, and behold, they are split open; and these clothes of ours and our sandals are worn out from the very long journey.” ¹⁴ So the men *of Israel* took some of their provisions, and did not ask for the counsel of the Lord. ¹⁵ And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore *an oath* to them.

They said to him, “Your servants have come from a very distant country

This should have set some alarm bells off because if they were really from such a long distance way why would they be concerned about Israel?

So the men of Israel took some of their provisions, and did not ask for the counsel of the Lord. ¹⁵ And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore *an oath* to them.

Why was Joshua so quick to make a decision about this matter?

It's easy to make a quick decision but the consequences of a hastily made decision can linger for a long time.

Joshua showed negligence by not seeking the council of God before he decided.

Verses 16 - 21

However, it came about at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were neighbors and that they were living within their land. ¹⁷ Then the sons of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁸ But the sons of Israel did not attack them because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. And the whole congregation grumbled against the leaders. ¹⁹ But all the leaders said to the whole congregation, "We have sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel, and now we cannot touch them. ²⁰ This we will do to them, even let them live, so that wrath will not be on us because of the oath which we swore to them." ²¹ So the leaders said to them, "Let them live." And they became gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the whole congregation, just as the leaders had spoken to them.

However, it came about at the end of three days that they heard that they were neighbors and that they were living within their land.

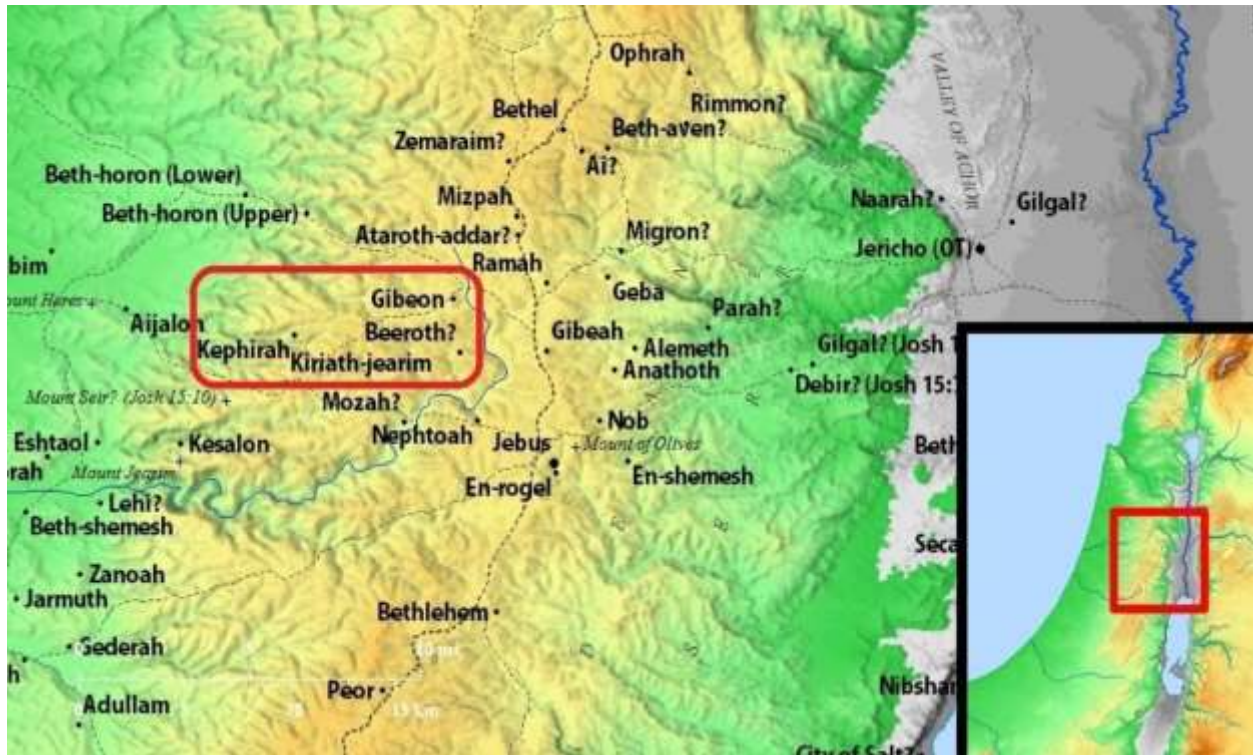
Sometimes circumstances demand a quick decision but this was not one of those times.

Being patient is a godly attribute and would have served the leaders of Israel well.

Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.

It turns out that Gibeon was the leader of 3 other cities.

See map 925



And the whole congregation grumbled against the leaders.

At this point it makes one wonder why the people were upset. Yes, the leaders had made a bad decision but the people wouldn't suffer any loss.

Verses 22 - 27

Then Joshua called for them and spoke to them, saying, “Why have you deceived us, saying, ‘We are very far from you,’ when you are living within our land? ²³ Now therefore, you are cursed, and you will never cease to be slaves, both gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the house of my God.” ²⁴ So they answered Joshua and said, “Since your servants were fully informed that the Lord your God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you, we feared greatly for our lives because of you, and did this thing. ²⁵ And now behold, we are in your hands; do to us as it seems good and right in your sight to do.” ²⁶ This he did to them, and saved them from the hands of the sons of Israel, and they did not kill them. ²⁷ But on that day Joshua made them gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, to this day, in the place which He would choose.

Then Joshua called for them and spoke to them, saying, “Why have you deceived us, saying, ‘We are very far from you,’ when you are living within our land?

²³ Now therefore, you are cursed, and you will never cease to be slaves, both gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the house of my God.

Apparently they considered slavery in Canaan a better option than moving to another area. Since this was the case what does that say about Syria and Egypt at the time.

²⁴ So they answered Joshua and said, “Since your servants were fully informed that the Lord your God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you, we feared greatly for our lives because of you, and did this thing.

The Gibeonites gave a straightforward and truthful answer. They feared for their lives.

²⁷ But on that day Joshua made them gatherers of firewood and labor to draw water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, to this day, in the place which He would choose.

For the first 10 years the Tabernacle was located in Gilgal (the campsite of Israel).

Then the Tabernacle was set up in Shiloh and remained there for over 300 years.

See chart 930

Location of the Tabernacle after the Israelites crossed the Jordan River?

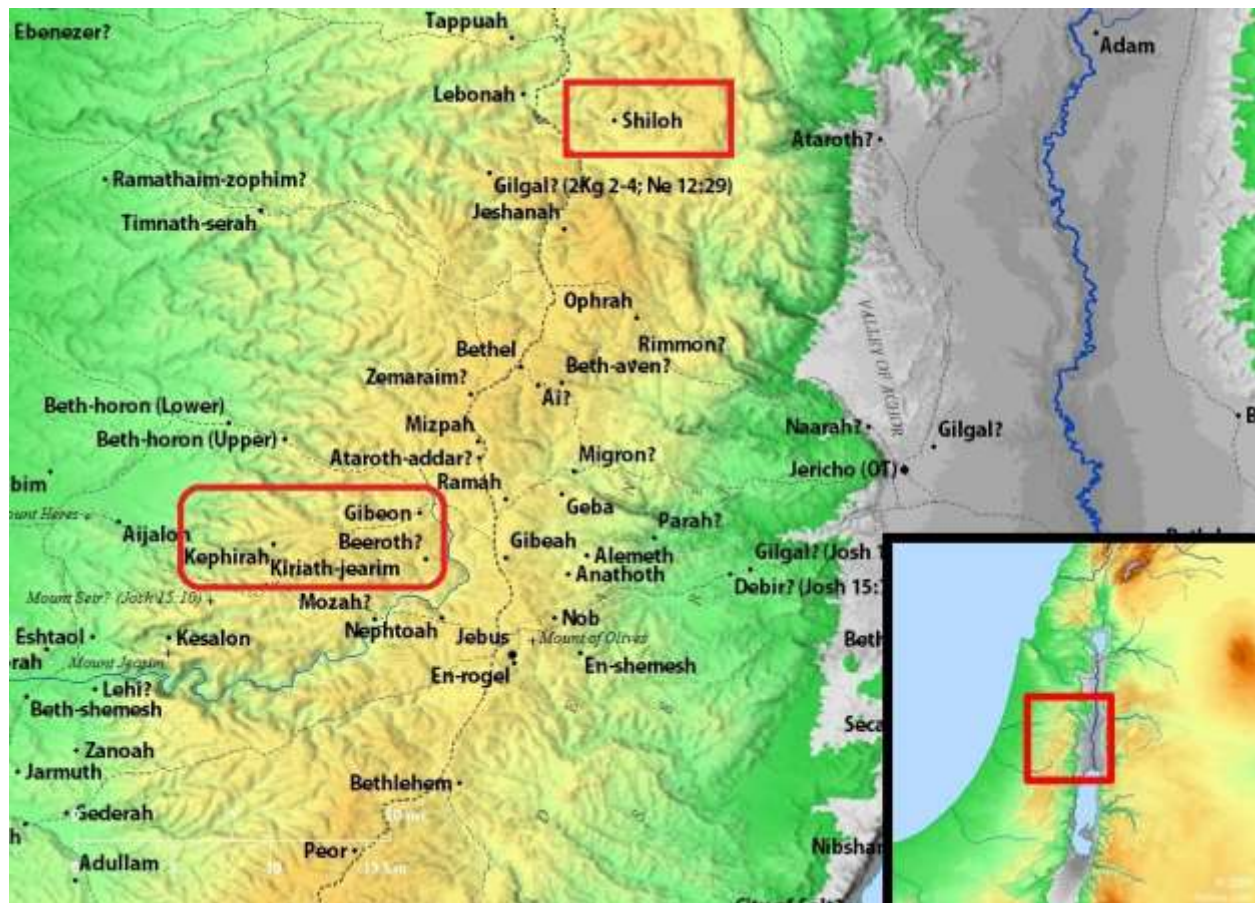
Scripture	Place	Began	Ended	Years
Joshua 5:10	Gilgal	1406	1396	10
Joshua 18:1	Shiloh	1396	1070	326
Jeremiah 7:14	Shiloh destroyed	1070		
	Not sure	1070	1020	50
I Sam 21	Nob	1020	1000	20
I Chron. 16:39-40	Gibeon	1000	959	43
I Kings 8:3-4	Temple	959		

The Levites had to be glad that the people of these 4 towns were used as slaves to gather fire wood and water, making their job less labor intensive.

The Tabernacle would have required a lot of wood for the altar and the priests and Levites that worked at the Tabernacle on a rotational basis would have required a lot of water.

It's interesting that the Tabernacle ended up so close to Gibeon and the other 3 towns.

See map 935



It is only a distance of about 15 miles.