

# Joshua 12:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

## Analysis

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**The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one**—Hormah (Chormah, חֶרְמָה, from cherem, 'devoted to destruction') carries theological freight—it's where Israel first attempted unauthorized conquest and failed catastrophically (Numbers 14:45). The name means 'utter destruction/ban,' referring to herem warfare where everything is devoted to YHWH. Later conquest of Hormah (Judges 1:17) demonstrated that what faith accomplishes, presumption cannot.

Arad (Arad, אֶרָד) was a Canaanite stronghold in the Negev that initially defeated Israel (Numbers 21:1), then fell after Moses' vow of herem (Numbers 21:2-3). Both cities represent enemies that initially triumphed over Israel due to unbelief or disobedience, then fell when Israel operated in covenant obedience. Their inclusion in the victory catalog demonstrates grace—past defeats don't disqualify future victories when repentance occurs.

## Historical Context

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Arad (Tel Arad and Tel Malhata) controlled the southern approaches to Canaan. Archaeological evidence shows destruction layers consistent with Israelite conquest. The site's strategic location made it crucial for controlling trade routes from Arabia and Egypt. Hormah (Tel Masos or Khirbet el-Meshash) guarded the Beer-sheba valley approaches.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does Hormah's etymology (<em>cherem</em>, 'devoted to destruction') challenge the modern tendency to sanitize biblical language about judgment?
2. What does the transformation from defeat (Numbers 14:45) to victory at Hormah teach about God's willingness to redeem past failures through repentance and renewed obedience?
3. How should the principle that 'presumption fails where faith succeeds' inform your approach to ministry and spiritual warfare?

## Interlinear Text

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מֶלֶךְ	חֲרָמָה	אֶחָד:	מֶלֶךְ	עַרְד	אֶחָד:
<b>The king</b>	<b>of Hormah</b>	<b>one</b>	<b>The king</b>	<b>of Arad</b>	<b>one</b>
H4428	H2767	H259	H4428	H6166	H259

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 21:1** (Kingdom): And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners.