

Joshua 12:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

Analysis

The king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one—Shimron-meron (שִׁמְרוֹן מֶרֶוֹן, shimron-meron) combines two names: Shimron ('watch-height') and Meron ('high place'), possibly indicating a unified city-state or a dual settlement controlling the elevated terrain of upper Galilee. This king joined Jabin's northern coalition (11:1), contributing forces to the massive army assembled at the waters of Merom.

Achshaph (אֲחִשָּׁפַח, achshaph, 'fascination' or 'sorcery') appears in Egyptian records (Amarna letters) as Akšapa, confirming its significance as a Canaanite city-state. The name's association with enchantment hints at the spiritual dimensions of conquest—Israel not only defeated military powers but broke the grip of occult practices deeply embedded in Canaanite culture (Deuteronomy 18:9-14). Each defeated king represented both political sovereignty and religious system requiring elimination.

Historical Context

Shimron is identified with Tell Shimron (Khirbet Sammuniyeh) west of Nazareth, though the 'Meron' element may reference nearby Mount Meron or the waters of Merom where the northern coalition assembled (Joshua 11:5). Achshaph appears in the Amarna letters (14th century BC) as a Canaanite city-state that rebelled against Egyptian authority, confirming its political importance. Its location is debated but likely in the Acco plain near the coast.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Achshaph's association with 'fascination/sorcery' remind us that spiritual warfare accompanies territorial conquest?
2. What modern 'high places' (Shimron-meron) exercise influence in your culture that require spiritual confrontation?
3. How do you distinguish between defeating human opposition and confronting spiritual powers behind them?

Interlinear Text

מֶלֶךְ	שִׁמְרוֹן	מְרֹאֵן	אֶחָד:	מֶלֶךְ	אֶחָדֶשׁ	אֶחָד:
The king	of Shimronmeron	one	The king	of Achshaph	one	
H4428	H8112	H259	H4428	H407	H259	

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 11:1 (Kingdom): And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph,