

57 Valley of Ajalon

Names (also known as)

Ajalon, also spelled Aijalon or Ayalon; Hebrew: אִילוֹן Yalo also transliterated Yalu; Arabic: يَالُو,

Etymology

‘Place of the fallow deer’.

Location/Description

The valley of Ajalon is 22 km northwest of Jerusalem and 13 km southeast of Ramla in Israel (not to be confused with Ramallah in the West Bank). It is a wide valley leading from the coastal belt through the lowlands to the Judean hills (the Shephelah) at the foot of the Beth-Horon pass.



It is represented by the modern town of Yalo. There is another town called Ajalon (Aijalon) in the allotment of Zebulon where Elon the judge of Israel was buried (Jud. 12:12).

Scriptural references

Old Testament

- Josh. 10:12 – Joshua’s southern campaign
- Josh. 19:42 – named in initial allotment of Dan
- Josh. 21:24 – Levitical cities (Kohath)
- Jud. 1:35 – Amorite remnant
- 1 Sam. 14:31 – Jonathan’s campaigns
- 1 Chron. 6:69 – Levitical cities (Kohath)
- 1 Chron. 8:13 – Named later in allotment of Benjamin
- 2 Chron. 11:10 – defences of Rehoboam

2 Chron. 28:18 – taken by the Philistines

Isaiah alludes to the miracle in the greater victory soon to be won under Joshua’s namesake Jesus ...

The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. (Isa. 60:19)

New Testament

None

Famous characters

Adoni-zedek
Joshua
Jonathan
Rehoboam



The Valley of Ajalon seen from Gezer

Brief history

Five Amorite kings, under Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, mounted a vengeful attack on the Gibeonites for their surrender to Israel (Josh. 10:1-5).

In response to the Gibeonite appeal, Joshua makes a forced march of about 25 kms to launch a surprise attack from the east (v.6-9).

God aided Israel and killed more with hailstones than Israel slew with the sword (v.11). The Amorites fled and the valley echoed to the words of Joshua during the battle of Gibeon for the sun and moon to stand still to press home the advantage in an extended day (Josh. 10:12).

Nearby was the city of Aijalon (or Ajalon), a Levitical city (Josh. 21:24) for the Kohathites (Josh. 21:24; 1 Chron. 6:69). Aijalon was originally allotted to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:42) but they were unable to remove the Amorites (Jud. 1:35). Later, it was held by the

tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:13). Saul and Jonathan defeated the Philistines here (1 Sam. 14:31). Aijalon was later fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:10) but was subsequently captured by the Philistines (2 Chron. 28:18).



Being on the frontier of the two kingdoms of Israel, Aijalon is sometimes referred to as being in Ephraim (1 Chron. 6:66,69) and sometimes in Judah (2 Chron. 11:10; 1 Sam. 14:31).

With the division of the kingdom, the valley remained within the kingdom of Judah, in the territory of Benjamin, and Rehoboam fortified it as part of his defense system of Jerusalem (2 Chron. 11:10).

It is mentioned in the list of cities captured by Shishak, king of Egypt from Rehoboam in about 924 BC. The Philistines also captured it during the reign of Ahaz but held it only briefly (2 Chron. 28:18).

The valley was located on the route taken by Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, in his campaign against Jerusalem in 66 AD (Josephus, Wars, 2:513–6).

The Book of Jasher

An apocryphal book. The Hebrew title Sefer haYashar means Book of the Upright or The Upright/Correct record.

The words quoted are found in Chapter 88 verses 63-65...

And when they were smiting, the day was declining toward evening, and Joshua said in the sight of all the people, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon, until the nation shall have revenged itself upon its enemies.

And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Joshua, and the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens, and it stood still six and thirty moments, and the

moon also stood still and hastened not to go down a whole day.

And there was no day like that, before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel.

The significance of Ajalon

The twice repeated phrase “Yahweh fought for Israel” is key to understanding the significance of the sun ‘standing still’ in the valley of Ajalon. These words are referenced in Zech. 14:3 in relation to the events surrounding Armageddon and the following 40 years in which Babylon the Great is destroyed by Christ and the saints working through Israel returning to the Land under Elijah.

Joshua 10 is a grand type of that work and is part of the majestic types of the mission of Christ at his Second Advent set forth in the Book of Joshua as follows:

Josh. 3&4 – Israel crosses Jordan – Baptism of the Spirit – The saints immortalised in Christ.

Josh. 5 – Circumcision reinstated in Israel (Col. 2:11) – The saints enter into immortality – Manna (the Word in probation) not required – Joshua and captain of the host (“Michael your prince” = Christ – Dan. 12:1) identified.

Josh. 6 – Armageddon - Jericho overthrown by earthquake – 7 priests, 7 trumpets, 7 days, 7 times prefigure culmination of 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 vials, and 7 thunders of Apocalypse – but some Babylonian elements survive as they will beyond Armageddon.

Josh. 7 – The sin of Achan (Judah) revealed – Jews in the Land humbled by defeat in war – The house of Judah cleansed and caused to mourn.

Josh. 8 – Ai defeated – Purified Judah (Jews in the Land) victorious over surrounding nations – Finally “all Israel” enter into a ‘new’ covenant.

Josh. 9 – Deception of the Gibeonites – The Tarshish powers submit to Christ but feignedly out of fear (Ps. 66:3; 18:44) – The nations who willingly submit to Christ are preserved but compelled to labour in the Temple as servants to Israel.

Josh. 10 – Adoni-zedek forms a confederacy and attacks the “royal city” (a type of Britain – Tarshish who will have submitted to Christ after Armageddon) – Adoni-zedek means “Lord of righteousness” (a religious power). He probably claimed descent from Melchizedek (“king of righteousness”) the first

king of Jerusalem (Gen. 14:18). One of the titles of the Pope is “King of Jerusalem” adopted during the Crusades, and the Papacy claims to be a ‘descendant’ of Christ as his ‘Vicar on earth’. This confederacy includes 5 kings (5 is the number of Divine grace – it is a ‘religious’ confederacy). Gibeon is called a ‘royal city’ = Britain (Tarshish) a monarchy with ‘young lions’ (Ezekiel 38:13 – the lion a symbol of royalty) - Catholicism unites the nations against Christ citing the false ‘Antichrist’ doctrine (Ps. 2) and will doubtless threaten those nations who have submitted to Christ’s rule. But the confederacy is defeated over an extended "day" of judgement (40 years – Zech. 14:3 – a reference to this extended day in Josh. 10 – Zech. 12-14 is about an extended ‘day’ of Divine judgement) – The defeat is initially via hailstones which selectively kill only Canaanites – Prefigures the work of the saints as ‘hailstones’ of a talent (around 114 pounds – the weight of an immortal who has lost unnecessary ‘vital’ organs and blood at immortalization – Rev. 16:17-21). Like the 5 kings the papacy and its supporters will be cast into the ‘abyss’ (Rev. 18:21; 19:20) after the elders of Israel (the saints) place their feet on the necks of ‘Satan’ (Rom. 16:20; Rev. 20:1-3) – A list of 7 cities captured by Joshua and Israel concludes the chapter, but these are not strictly chronological with the events of Adoni-zedek’s overthrow. Prefigures the seven campaigns of Christ to subdue the nations (7 thunder judgements of Rev. 10:3-4) – There are 10 kings mentioned. Apart from the 5 kings of Adoni-zedek’s confederacy, the kings of Makkedah, Libnah, Gezer and Debir (4) are overthrown in the subsequent campaigns. To these can be added the king of Jericho (V.29) whose fate was representative of supporters of the Babylonian religion (Jericho was the centre of Baal worship, hence “a goodly Babylonish garment” (i.e. priestly garment) – Josh. 7:21). Hence, these 10 kings point forward to the 10 horns or kings who receive “power one hour with the beast” post-Armageddon (Rev. 17:3,12-14; Dan. 2:40-42; 7:7,24) – Joshua took all these at ‘one time’ – prefiguring the 40 years of conquest required to establish the Kingdom. Then a lull in fighting sees Joshua return to base camp (Josh. 10:43) - The Millennial period of rest from war is prefigured.

Josh. 11 – There is a period of rest between the events of Josh. 10 and 11 before the final conflict which leads to the capture of the

whole land (Josh. 12). This foreshadows in type the Millennial period of rest which ends with the last conflict between Yahweh and the serpent on earth. In Josh. 11:1 Joshua encounters “Jabin” whose name means “intelligent” or “wise” – the characteristic of the serpent – Gen. 3:1. Jabin is a dynastic name – there were two who ruled from Hazor (“village”) – in Josh. 11 and Jud. 4 Jabin is a type of the serpent in political manifestation (cp. Rev. 20 where much of the language is drawn from Josh. 11). Jabin was a “Canaanite” = “humiliated” – he represents king sin - monarch of humiliation – Phil. 3:21 (see Weymouth’s translation).

Jabin’s confederacy includes 4 named kings, plus 3 from north, south and west, and 6 nations in V.3 = total 13 = rebellion - a type of the final rebellion at the end of the Millennium.

Joshua only destroyed Hazor “the head of all those kingdoms”, the seat of Jabin’s power, just as Christ will crush the head of the serpent at the time of his final manifestation in the rebellion at the end of the Millennium.

Joshua completed the work of the destruction of Jabin and all Anakims (Jud. 1:10) as Christ will complete his mission to destroy the serpent. So the “land” (*eretz* – often rendered “earth”) rested from war (Josh. 11:23), as the whole earth will rest from warfare when the serpent, sin and death have been abolished from the earth and Gen. 3:15 is finally fulfilled in its entirety.

Josh. 12 – 31 kings subdued and their land given to Israel – Prefigures the destruction of all opposition to divine rule and the dissolution of all nations – only Israel remains. That is the subject matter of the promise made to Abraham (Gen. 12:2-3 – “a great nation), and is the subject of Rev. 21.

Sources:

Wikipedia

The Apocalypse in Joshua study series

(Compilers – John Tierney/Jim Cowie)

