

# Joshua 15 Commentary

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Paul J Bucknell - Biblical Foundations for Freedom

**LAND ALLOTMENTS**

(Joshua 13-21)

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<b>JOSHUA</b>				
<b>A BOOK ON SPIRITUAL WARFARE and REST</b>				
<b>HOW TO POSSESS YOUR POSSESSIONS</b>				
<b>CONQUEST OF THE PROMISED LAND</b>		<b>DIVISION OF THE PROMISED LAND</b>		<b>CLOSE OF JOSHUA'S LIFE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>ALLOCATION</b>		<b>APPEAL</b>
Josh 1:1-5:15	Josh 6:1-12:24	Joshua 13:1-21:45		Josh 22:1-24:33
<b>WARLORDS IN CANAAN</b>		<b>LANDLORDS IN CANAAN</b>		
<b>ENTERING CANAAN</b>	<b>CONQUERING CANAAN</b>	<b>DIVIDING CANAAN</b>		
<b>SECURING THE LAND</b>		<b>SETTLING THE LAND</b>		
<b>Preparation</b>	<b>Conquest</b>	<b>Possession</b>		<b>Consecration</b>
<b>ca. 1 Month</b>	<b>ca 7 Years</b>	<b>ca. 18 Years</b>		

[See also more detailed Chart by Charles R Swindoll](#)

**Joshua 15:1** Now the lot for the tribe of the sons of Judah according to their families reached the border of Edom, southward to the [wilderness of Zin](#) at the extreme south.

- A.M. 2561, B.C. 1443, An, Ex, Is, 48

- This then was the lot (KJV): The geography of the sacred writings presents many difficulties, occasioned by the changes which Canaan has undergone, especially for the last 2,000 years. Many of the ancient towns and villages have had their names so totally changed that their former appellations are no longer discernible; several lie buried under their own ruins, and others have been so long destroyed that not a vestige of them remains. On these accounts it is very difficult to ascertain the precise situation of many places mentioned in these chapters; but this cannot in any measure affect the truth of the narrative. Jos 14:2 Nu 26:55,56
- even to the: Nu 33:36,37 34:3-5 Eze 47:19
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Map to help you visualize the descriptions of boundaries of Judah

## BOUNDARIES OF JUDAH SOUTHERN BORDER

### Joshua 15 Outline

#### I. THE FOUR BOUNDARIES - Joshua 15:1-12

- A. The southern boundary - Joshua 15:1-4
- B. The eastern boundary - Joshua 15:5
- C. The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11
- D. The western boundary - Joshua 15:12

#### II. THE REST OF CALEB'S STORY - Joshua 15:13-19

### III. THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

A. The southern cities - Joshua 15:21-32

B. The western foothills cities - Joshua 15: 33-47

C. The hill country cities - Joshua 15:48-60

D. The desert cities - Joshua 15:61-62

### IV. THE SAD ENDING -Joshua 15:63

See also Jdg 1:8-18. As Nu 33:54 says bigger tribes (like Judah) would receive bigger allotments. As it turns out Joshua gave Judah too large an allotment for in Joshua 19:9 we read...

The inheritance of the sons of Simeon was taken from the portion of the sons of Judah, for **the share of the sons of Judah was too large for them**; so the sons of Simeon received an inheritance in the midst of Judah's inheritance ([see the map above](#) for Simeon's allotment).

**Davis** - One Old Testament scholar (Walter Kaiser) sees what he calls promise theology as the heart and soul of the Old Testament. By a somewhat loose analogy Joshua 15 could be viewed as promise geography. I will admit that there seems to be more than a little tedium in reading through Joshua 15. It deals with the inheritance of the tribe of Judah and lovingly traces the boundaries of Judah (vv. 1–12), reports Caleb's victories at Hebron and Debir (vv. 13–20), categorises and lists the various towns belonging to Judah (vv. 21–62), and includes a note of inability or failure (v. 63). Certainly, a text like 'Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Jutta' (v. 55) doesn't exactly stir sermonic juices or suggest warm devotional thoughts. Yet I remain convinced that the apostle was not joking when he said 'all scripture is profitable'; therefore, Joshua 15 must be profitable—and it must be so as it is, without spicing it up with any spiritualising additives (**Cf. Matthew Henry's comments in his preface to chapter 13:** 'And therefore we are not to skip over these chapters of hard names as useless and not to be regarded; where God has a mouth to speak and a hand to write we should find an ear to hear and an eye to read; and God give us a heart to profit!' (Commentary on the Whole Bible, 6 vols. [New York: Revell, n.d.] 2:71) ED: MY THOUGHT HOWEVER IS BE A BEREAN - Acts 17:11!). Its message may not seem as rich as that of Genesis 22 or 1 Kings 18, but it does have its own useful word. ([Joshua: No Falling Words](#))

**Matthew Henry** "We are not to skip over these chapters of hard names as useless and not to be regarded; for where God has a mouth to speak and a hand to write we should find an ear to hear and an eye to read; and God will give us a heart to profit."

**POSB** - Never before had the families of Judah been settled. They were only pilgrims and sojourners upon this earth, never possessing land or a permanent home. They had always been wanderers in a foreign land, never belonging nor ever possessing a permanent residence. They had always been pilgrims in a foreign land, but they always had hope—the hope for the promised land of God. And now, at long last, they were receiving their promised inheritance. They would be able to settle down and live forever in the promised land that flowed with milk and honey. ([Joshua \(The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible\)](#))

**William MacDonald** notes that "It is almost impossible to trace them with exactness at the present time. This may cause some to wonder why all these details are included in the Bible. The answer is, of course, that these details are important in the sight of God. They are inspired and profitable, full of rich spiritual lessons. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Kenneth Gangel** - these chapters are the kind we always dreaded in Sunday school, reading impossible-to-pronounce names. But Joshua 15 takes us right back to Genesis 15 where in verse 7 God says to Abraham, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it." So as the fifteenth chapter of Joshua unfolds, the fifteenth chapter of Genesis becomes a reality. Although we may pass over chapters like this lightly, surely the Israelites listened with keen interest to this listing of their own cities, areas, and boundaries. ([Holman Old Testament Commentary - Joshua](#))

**Mattoon** - Judah was to receive their inheritance first for it was the largest tribe and the royal tribe. Why? (1) Reuben committed adultery with Bilhah. (2) Simeon committed acts of cruelty at the massacre of Shechem. (3) Levi also made Jacob to stink in the land along with Simeon. (4) Judah was given the right to rule because he offered to take Benjamin's place in Egypt as a hostage. The first three men remind us again that our sin affects more than ourselves. It does affect other people as well....Judah's hand would be on the neck of his enemies (Genesis 49:8–12). The Moabites would be on their eastern border. The Edomites on the south side; the Amalekites on the southwest section; and the Philistines would be in the West. Judah would need strong rulers to survive. David was a very strong leader. Judah was the anchorman of the tribes. They would look to Judah for leadership. ([Treasures From Joshua](#))

**Stephen Grant** - The boundary description of Judah's inheritance is the most detailed of all the tribes. It is "painstaking and true to life in its presentation, describing, it seems, every twist and turn, every dip and rise, every right angle of the lines that marked off this tribe ... nine different verbs are used a total of thirty-five times to describe the movement of the southern and northern boundary lines, as they move from east to west, the word boundary occurs an astonishing twenty one times in these twelve verses, a remarkable proportion, since the word occurs a total of eighty-four times in the book" (The New American Commentary, David M.

Howard, Jrn.). The attention to geographical detail further emphasises the importance of this tribe, and its territorial integrity, within the nation. ([What the Bible Teaches - Joshua Judges Ruth](#))

**Woudstra** - The special significance of the chapter dealing with Judah is the fact that his lot is mentioned first. Under the superintending providence of God this is an indication of Judah's future prominence. From him was to come the "scepter" of which Gen. 49:10 had spoken. ([The Book of Joshua](#))

**Davis** - First of all, then, let us stress that chapter 15 deals with the details of God's promise. Joshua 15 is simply one of the buds on the tree of Genesis 12 and Genesis 15. The land promise had long ago been given to Abraham (Gen. 12:6–7; 15:7–21), was often reaffirmed, and was picked up in Joshua 1; here we see part of its concrete fulfilment. The reader must remember that both this chapter and following ones describe in detail God's gift of the land and that means that every town name and border point pulsates with excitement. No close-up description of God's gifts could ever be boring! Perhaps the contemporary Christian needs some analogy to get a handle on this. ([Joshua: No Falling Words](#))

Here is an outline of this long chapter which may help navigate this long chapter with many geographic names describing first the boundaries and then the cities that would be given to the tribe of Judah:

#### I. THE FOUR BOUNDARIES - Joshua 15:1-12

- A. The southern boundary - verses 1-4
- B. The eastern boundary - verse 5
- C. The northern boundary - verses 5-11 |
- D. The western boundary - verse 12

#### II THE REST OF CALEB'S STORY - Joshua 15:13-19

#### III. THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

- A. The southern cities - verses 21-32
- B. The western foothills cities - verses 33-47
- C. The hill country cities - verses 48-60
- D. The desert cities - verses 61-62

#### IV. THE SAD ENDING - Joshua 15:63

**Now the lot for the tribe of the sons of Judah according to their families reached the border of [Edom](#), southward to the [wilderness of Zin](#) at the extreme south** - See [map above](#) above (or this [map](#)) for the [wilderness of Zin](#), which is where **Kadesh-Barnea** was located. In [the map above](#) notice that [Edom](#) is located just south of the Dead Sea and borders Judah's southern (and slightly eastern) boundary. The location of Judah on the **extreme south** is also seen in [the map above](#).

**Madvig** points out that "The description of Judah's southern boundary is in close agreement with the southern boundary of Canaan as described in Numbers 34:3–5." ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Utley** points out that "The [tribe of Simeon](#) was incorporated very early into the tribe of Judah and lost all of its identity (cf. Josh 19:1–9)." ([Look at the map above](#) and notice the large area occupied by the tribe of Judah and in the middle of that area is the tribe of Simeon).

These detailed descriptions of the boundaries may look boring, but they are powerful reminders that God is faithful to keep His promises. He did to His Chosen People and he will you you His chosen disciple! It was because of God's faithfulness that His servant Joshua could confidently declare...

"Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed. (Joshua 23:14+)

**Irving Jensen** - Judah, the imperial tribe most blessed of Jacob's sons (cf. Gen. 49:8–12), was given a large and good land (15:1–12). Three prominent prophecies of Jacob's blessing were fulfilled in this land assignment: **(1) Exposure to the enemies** (Gen. 49:8–9). Bordering Judah were the Moabites to the east, Edomites to the south, Amalekites to the southwest, and Philistines to the west. The exposure demanded a strong Judah, and from his ranks emerged such mighty men as David. **(2) Land of the vineyard** (Gen. 49:11–12). Moses' spies made special note of the grape produce of the area (Num. 13:22–24). **(3) Land of the scepter** (Gen. 49:10). Jerusalem was allotted nominally to Benjamin, but it became identified with Judah. The throne of David was eventually set up there, and the messianic ("Shiloh") rule was associated with it. ([Joshua- Everyman's Bible Commentary: Rest-Land Won](#))

**Utley** - "**Edom**" This refers to the nation east of the Jordan which came from the descendants of Esau. The basic meaning is "red". The term "**south**" is **teman**, which is the same term as the name of one of Edom's major cities. **Wilderness of Zin** This should not be confused with the **Wilderness of Sin**, which is located in the southern part of the Sinai peninsula. This wilderness is in the northern part of the Sinai peninsula in which Kadesh-barnea is located (cf. Num. 34:2-5).

**South** (07097) (**teman** from **yamin** - right hand) is a feminine noun meaning south. It refers to the direction lying to the right of a person facing east (Ex. 26:18, 35; 27:9; 36:23; 38:9). It can refer to a southern area of land (Josh. 15:1). With **āh** on the end, it means toward the south, southward (Ex. 26:18). It is used with reference to the entire south country (Zech. 6:6). It stands for a south wind controlled by God (Ps; 78:26; Song 4:16). It is used figuratively of the south personified (Isa. 43:6; Ezek. 20:46). ([The Complete Word Study Old Testament](#))

**Strong** adds "1) south, southward, whatever is on the right (so the southern quarter), south wind 1a) south (of territory) 1b) southern quarter (of the sky) 1c) toward the south, southward (of direction) 1d) south wind."

**Gilbrant** - Used literally, it refers to a **person's right hand** (derived from **yamin** - right hand) as opposed to his left. As a person faces east, the south would be at his right hand. In its different applications, the substantive indicates "south," "south side," "south wind" and "south country."

**Tēmān** is used to denote an architectural design, the layout of a thing (a camp, an allotment of land), a geographic region and a poetic setting. As its corresponding side to the north, the tabernacle's south side was constructed with twenty supporting frames (Ex 26:18; 36:23). The lampstand's proper placement was at the south wall of the sanctuary's first room (Ex 26:35). The perimeter featured a linen hanging delineating the limits of the outer court. Southward, the fence had twenty pillars Ex (27:9; 38:9).

Reuben was the standard bearer of the three tribes camped to the south of the Tabernacle (Num. 2:10). Nearer the sanctuary on the south was the encampment of the Kohathites whose responsibility was the sanctuary's vessels and furniture (Nu 3:29). Those camps on the south set out at the second sounding of the trumpets (Nu 10:6).

Prior to his death, Moses viewed Canaan to the north and south from Mount Pisgah east of the Dead Sea (Deut. 3:27). East of the Jordan, the conquered territory extended south to the slopes of Pisgah (Josh. 12:3). West of that river, there remained land to be secured southward (Josh 13:4). Judah's allotment ended south at Edom's frontier (Josh 15:1). God will bring his people back to the land, including those regions to the south, possibly Egypt (Isa. 43:6).

In an allegory portending the coming Babylonian invasion, **tēmān** directs attention to the forests of the Negeb, a region to the south. An attack would come from the north, setting the trees ablaze, a prophetic allusion to Judah (Ezek. 20:46). Psalm 78 recalls Yahweh's marvelous intervention in the desert. He beckoned the south wind, and quail were provided (Ezek 20:26).

Habakkuk 3:3 contains a reference to the south country (parallel to Mount Paran, the northwest mountains of Sinai bordered by the wilderness with that name). "God came from Teman, the Holy One from mount Paran" brings to recollection what has been done in the past. He is still ready to help. In Zechariah's vision, the chariot pulled by dappled horses went in the direction of the south country (Zech. 6:6). "Whirlwinds of the south" (9:14) is possibly a reference to the Sinai experience. Others understand it to have been a demonstration of God's power—a storm in the south or over the southland.

Reminiscent of the beloved, a south breeze wafts the fragrance of the flower garden (Song 4:16). A hawk spreads its wings to ride the south wind, anticipating the coming storm (Job 39:26). Job affirmed God as Creator, the One Who placed the constellations of the south in the heavens (Job 9:9). ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

**Teman**- 22x in 21v - south(15), south side(2), south wind(1), south\*(3), southward(1). Exod. 26:18; Exod. 26:35; Exod. 27:9; Exod. 36:23; Exod. 38:9; Num. 2:10; Num. 3:29; Num. 10:6; Deut. 3:27; Jos. 12:3; Jos. 13:4; Jos. 15:1; Job 9:9; Job 39:26; Ps. 78:26; Cant. 4:16; Isa. 43:6; Ezek. 47:19; Ezek. 48:28; Hab 3:3, Zech. 6:6; Zech. 9:14

**Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary** - Verses 1-12. Joshua allotted to Judah, Ephraim, and the half of Manasseh, their inheritances before they left Gilgal. Afterwards removing to Shiloh, another survey was made, and the other tribes had their portion assigned. In due time all God's people are settled.

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## GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**1. This then was the lot, &c.** The account of the partition of the land which was commenced ch. 14:1-5, was interrupted by the mention of Caleb's application to Joshua for Hebron as his inheritance, and that being dispatched, the writer here returns from the digression, and resumes the thread of his narrative respecting the allotment of the tribes. The manner in which the designed partition should be made, had already been settled by Divine appointment, Num. 26:25, 'The land shall be divided by lot: according

to the names of their fathers shall they inherit.' In obedience to this command Joshua now proceeds. On this part of the history it may be remarked,

(1) That the business of casting lots on this occasion was undoubtedly conducted with great seriousness and solemnity, and with devout prayer to God, whose is the disposal of the lot, that he would overrule it all to his own glory and the accomplishment of his wise purposes.

(2) That although an exact survey of the land was not taken till some time after this, ch. 18:4, 5, yet some general view of it must have been obtained, and some rude draught have been spread before them, sufficient, at least, to have enabled them to divide the land into nine and a half portions, with more or less accuracy.

(3) That the respective lots did not, at this time, so peremptorily and unchangeably determine the bounds of each tribe, that they could not subsequently be either contracted or enlarged, or otherwise altered; for it is evident from what follows, ch. 19:9, that after Judah's lot was fixed, Simeon's was taken out of it. It would seem, in fact, that the first designation of the portions of the several tribes was quite vague and general, but that the limits of each were afterwards adjusted and settled by Joshua and the elders, with as much precision as the nature of the case would admit.

(4) As to the manner in which the casting of lots took place on this occasion, though we are not expressly informed, yet the probability is, that after the land was geographically divided into the requisite number of portions, these portions properly labelled, or otherwise distinguished, were put into one urn or pot, and the names of the several tribes into another; that then Joshua, for example, put his hand into the vessel containing the names of the tribes, and took out one slip, while Eleazar took out one from the other vessel, in which the names of the portions were put; whereupon the name drawn and the portion drawn being read, it was at once determined what portion was to be appropriated to such a tribe; and so of the rest. It is probable, however, that this plan was adopted, on the present occasion, only in respect to the two large and principal tribes of Judah and Joseph, as they were now at Gilgal, and the division certainly was not completed till after they arrived at Shilo, ch. 18:1, 2. In reference, therefore, to this mode of drawing out the lots from the bottom of the urns, the phraseology of a lot's 'coming up' or 'coming forth,' became established.

**The lot of the tribe of the children of Judah.** By the special disposition of providence the lot of Judah came up first, in token of the pre-eminence of that tribe over the rest. This distinction hereby received the Divine sanction.

**Even to the border of Edom.** The geography of the sacred writings presents many difficulties, occasioned by the many changes which the civil state of the promised land has undergone, especially for the last two thousand years. Many of the ancient towns and villages have had their names so totally changed, that their former appellations are no longer discernible; several lie buried under their own ruins; and others have been so long destroyed that not one vestige of them remains. On these accounts, it is very difficult to ascertain the situation of many of the places mentioned in this and the following chapters. Yet the ancient appellations of many of these localities may still be detected in modified forms under the modern names, and the sites of a greater number of them satisfactorily determined, than would at first seem practicable. This portion of the sacred story cannot of course be so interesting, or so profitable to the general reader as details of another character, and we shall not therefore enlarge upon it in our remarks, but as many of the places here mentioned are frequently alluded to in the subsequent history and the prophets, this enumeration is important, as enabling us oftentimes to determine their situation; and it need not to be observed that the geography of a country is of the utmost importance in illustrating its history. The quaint remark of Henry, therefore, on this subject, is deserving of attention, that 'we are not to skip over these chapters of hard names, as useless and not to be regarded; where God has a mouth to speak and a hand to write, we should find an ear to hear and an eye to read.' As it respects the lot of Judah, as here marked out, it was bounded on the south by the wilderness of Sin and the southern coast of the Salt Sea; on the east by that sea, reaching to the place at which it receives the waters of the Jordan; on the north, by a line drawn nearly parallel to Jerusalem, across from the northern extremity of the Salt Sea to the south boundary of the Philistines and to the Mediterranean Sea; which sea was its western boundary, as far as the river of Egypt. Joshua is particular in giving the limits of this tribe, as being the first, the most numerous, the most important, that which was to furnish the kings of Judea, that in which pure religion was to be preserved, and that from which the Messiah was to spring. As this portion, however, contained nearly half the southern part of Canaan, it was afterwards found too extensive, and the possessions of Simeon and Dan were taken out of it.

**Joshua 15:2 Their south border was from the lower end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that turns to the south.**

- **the salt sea:** Jos 3:16 Ge 14:3 Nu 34:3 Eze 47:8,18
- **bay:** Heb. tongue, Isa 11:15
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH

**Their south border was from the lower end of the Salt Sea (Dead Sea), from the bay that turns to the south- NET** = "Their southern border started at the southern tip of the Salt Sea." Hebrew = "Their southern border was from the end of the Salt Sea, from the tongue that faces to the south."

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**GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)**

**From the bay that looketh southward.** Heb. לשון ל' leshōn, the longue, i. e. a gulf, bay, or arm of the sea. The like phrase occurs Is. 11:15, 'The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian Sea.' The southern extremity of the Dead Sea, as laid down in the best maps, answers in its form to this description. The term among us is generally applied to a jutting promontory of land.

**Joshua 15:3 Then it proceeded southward to the ascent of Akrabbim and continued to Zin, then went up by the south of Kadesh-barnea and continued to Hezron, and went up to Addar and turned about to Karka.**

- **ascent of Akrabbim**, Nu 34:4 Jdg 1:36
- **Zin**: Ge 14:7 Nu 20:1 32:8
- **Adar**: Probably the same as Hazar-addar, Nu 34:4.
- **Karka**: Supposed to be the Coracea of Ptolemy, in Arabia Petrea Eusebius places a castle called Carcaria at the distance of a day's journey from Petra.
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

**Then it proceeded southward to the ascent of [Akrabbim](#) ('ascent of scorpions,) and continued to Zin, then went up by the south of Kadesh-Barnea and continued to [Hezron](#), and went up to [Addar](#) and turned about to [Karka](#)**

**Utley Akrabbim**" This is the name for "scorpions". The boundaries of the Promised Land are given in Numbers 34 (cf. Num. 34:4). This pass was part of the unconquered Amorite territory in Jdgs. 1:36.

**[Akrabbim - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#)** the going up to, or ascent of, Akrabbim. MAALEH-AKRABBIM; "the scorpion pass", between the S. of the Dead Sea and Zin: Judah's and Palestine's boundary on the S. (Numbers 34:4; Joshua 15:3). The boundary of the Amorites (Judges 1:36). The scene of Judas Maccabens' victory over Edom. Perhaps now the pass Es-Sufah, the last step from the desert to the level of Palestine. Wilton makes it Sufah.

**[Zin - ATS Dictionary](#)** A desert on the south border of Canaan, and the west of Edom, Numbers 34:1-4 . It formed part of the great wilderness of Paran, Numbers 13:26; and in its north-east corner was Kadesh-barnea, memorable for the death of Miriam, the mission of the twelve spies into Canaan, the murmuring of the Israelites, the rock flowing with water, and the unholy passion of Moses, Numbers 13:21 20:1-13 27:14 .

**[Kadesh-Barnea - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** ([Wikipedia](#)) (It was Israelite's invasion of the land of Canaan had they trusted in God Nu 13:26–33) Place name meaning "consecrated." The site where the Hebrews stayed for most of thirty-eight years after leaving Mount Sinai and before entering the Promised Land. The Old Testament locates it between the Wilderness of Paran and the Wilderness of Zin (Numbers 13:3-21 ,Numbers 13:3-21,13:26 ). Moses sent out the twelve spies into Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 13:3-21 ,Numbers 13:3-21,13:26 ) The Hebrews also attempted their abortive southern penetration into Canaan from there (Numbers 13:26; Numbers 14:40-45 ). Kadesh-Barnea is mentioned as a site where Abraham fought the Amalekites (Genesis 14:7 ) and as the southern border of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:3 ).

The actual site of Kadesh-Barnea has been much debated, but the two most frequently mentioned sites are Ein-Qedeis and Ein el-Qudeirat. Both of these sites are in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula, and both have a spring. Most scholars today accept Ein el-Qudeirat because of its abundance of water (the largest springs and oasis in northern Sinai). Ein el-Qudeirat is located on the crossroads of two major roads of antiquity—the road from Edom to Egypt and the road from the Red Sea to the Negev and southern Canaan, later southern Judah. The location on the road from Egypt to Edom would fit well the biblical context of Kadesh-Barnea as the oasis home for the Hebrews during the wilderness wandering period. Likewise, the location of Kadesh-Barnea along the north-south road may explain the rationale for attempting the invasion of Canaan at Arad, since Arad lay north of Kadesh-Barnea on that



road.

Excavations of Ein el-Qudeirat have shown major fortresses dating from the period of Solomon to the fall of the monarchy (tenth century B.C. to sixth century B.C.), but no remains from the period of the wilderness wandering have been found to date. This raises the question about the identity of the site of Kadesh-Barnea. The site has not been fully excavated, however, and as yet no better alternative site has come to light.

[Hezron - Jewish Encyclopedia](#) meaning, "camping place" or "reeds." . A place marking the southern limit of the territory assigned to Judah, between Kadesh-barnea and Adar (Joshua 15:3). In the parallel list of Numbers 34:4, Hezron and Addar seem to be described as one place, "Hazar-addar."

[Addar - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name and personal name meaning, "threshing floor." 1. City on southwest border of Judah (Joshua 15:3 ). Also called Hazar-addar (Numbers 34:4 ). 2 . Benjamin's grandson (1 Chronicles 8:3 ). Also called Ard (Genesis 46:21; Numbers 26:40 ).

[Karka - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "ground" or "floor." A city on the southern border of Judah (Joshua 15:3; KJV has Karkaa). Precise location unknown.

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## GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**Maaleh-acrabbim.** Or, Heb. 'the ascent of (the mount of) scorpions;' probably so called from the multitude of those animals found there. Com. Num. 34:4.

**Kadesh-Barnea.** Called En-mishpat, Gen. 14:7. It was on the edge of the wilderness of Paran, and about twenty-four miles from Hebron. Here Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, died; and here Moses and Aaron rebelled against the Lord; whence the place was called Meribah-Kadesh, or contention of Kadesh.

**Joshua 15:4** It continued to Azmon and proceeded to the brook ([nachal](#)) of Egypt, and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your south border.

- **Azmon:** The last city they possessed towards Egypt; east of the River of Egypt or Rhinocorura. Nu 34:5
- **brook:** Jos 13:3 Ex 23:31
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

**It continued to Azmon and proceeded to the brook ([nachal](#) - wadi) of Egypt, and the border ended at the sea**(Mediterranean Sea). **This shall be your south border** - These boundaries are God's boundaries and are very specific so that the 12 Tribes would have no excuse for not accepting and being content with God's "real estate" distribution to each tribe. They were gifts of God's grace.

**THOUGHT** - Every believer is given "*divine real estate*" (so to speak) because **every believer receives the Holy Spirit** the moment of regeneration (cf Ro 8:9+). In addition every believer is given **at least one spiritual gift**, and some more than one (1Co 12:7+ = "to **each one** is given"). Here's the point. First, do you know your "*divine real estate*," your spiritual gift? Second, and just as important, are you content with the Spirit's distribution of gifts, not only to yourself but to other believers you know (1Co 12:11+)? Or to ask it another way, do you ever find yourself jealous of the gifts of other believers? If so, with Whom are you really expressing dissatisfaction? That's essentially a rhetorical question, but in case you did not see it, clearly your dissatisfaction would be with the Holy Spirit. The boundary lines of the tribes were clearly laid out so that each tribe would be content and would not be jealous of the lands another tribe had received from Yahweh! And the same dynamic is at play in God's giving spiritual gifts to each member of His church! See also [Spiritual Gifts Chart](#) and [Spiritual Gifts](#).

**Utley - "the brook of Egypt"** The term "**brook**" is "**wadi**," which denotes a river bed or channel which is dry part of the year. Water (i.e., rivers, wadis, lakes, streams, oceans) were often used as boundaries. This one is the most southern boundary of the Promised Land and Egypt (here the southern boundary of Judah, cf. Num. 34:5). Other natural barriers or topological distinctives, like valleys, mountain ranges, plains, were also used as boundary markers.

**[Azmon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** Place name meaning, "bones." Place on southern border of Promised Land (Numbers 34:4 ). Joshua assigned it to Judah (Joshua 15:4 ). It is located near Ain el-Quseimeh, about 60 miles south of Gaza. Some would identify it with Ezem. ([See map for Ezem in region of Simeon](#)), ([Azmon - ISB Encyclopedia](#), [Azmon - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia](#))

**[Brook of Egypt - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** The southwestern limit of Canaanite territory given to Israel as a possession (Numbers 34:5 NAS). It is usually identified with the Wadi el-Arish, which flows from the middle of the Sinai Peninsula to the Mediterranean Sea. It empties into the Mediterranean about midway between the sites of Gaza and Pelusium. See Rivers and Waterways in the Bible . (See also [Brook of Egypt, the - ISB Encyclopedia](#))

**Joshua 15:5 The east border was the Salt Sea, as far as the mouth of the Jordan. And the border of the north side was from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan.**

- Nu 34:12
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### I. THE FOUR BOUNDARIES - Joshua 15:1-12

- A. The southern boundary - verses 1-4
- B. The eastern boundary - verse 5
- C. The northern boundary - verses 5-11 |
- D. The western boundary - verse 12

### EASTERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH BEGINNING OF NORTHERN BOUNDARY

**The east border was the Salt Sea (Dead Sea), as far as the mouth of the Jordan. And the border of the north side was from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan - NET** = "The eastern border was the Salt Sea to the mouth of the Jordan River. The northern border started north of the Salt Sea at the mouth of the Jordan." The "**mouth**" is the place where it discharges itself into the Dead Sea.

**Joshua 15:6 Then the border went up to Beth-hoglah, and continued on the north of Beth-arabah, and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.**

- **Beth hogla:** Probably the Bethagla mentioned by Jerome is the same as the "threshing-floor of Atad," (Ge 50:10,) situated three miles from Jericho, and two from Jordan; and belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, though serving as a frontier to the tribe of Judah. Jos 18:19,20
- the stone: Jos 18:17
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

**The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11**

**Then the border went up to Beth-hoglah, and continued on the north of Beth-arabah, and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of [Reuben](#)**

**[Beth-Hoglah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** (3x = Jos. 15:6; Jos. 18:19; Jos. 18:21) Place name meaning, "house of the partridge." Border city between tribes of Judah and Benjamin (Joshua 15:6; Joshua 18:19 ,Joshua 18:19,18:21 ). It is probably modern Ain Hajlah four miles southeast of Jericho.

**Strong's - Beth-hoglah** = "house of the partridge" or "place of partridge" 1) a place in Benjamin on the border with Judah

**[Beth-Arabah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** (3x = Jos. 15:6; Jos. 15:61; Jos. 18:22) Place name meaning, "house of the desert." A border town of tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:6 , Joshua 15:61 ) also claimed as a city of Benjamin (Joshua 18:22 ). It may be modern

Ain el-Gharbah southeast of Jericho.

**Strong's - Beth-arabah** = "house of the desert valley" or "place of the depression" 1) a place in Judah or in Benjamin, site unknown

**Bohan The Stone of - Smith's Bible Dictionary** A stone erected in honor of Bohan, on the boundary between Judah and Benjamin, in the valley of Achor, along the eastern side of the present Wady Dahr, running into the Dead Sea.

**Utley** adds ""**the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben**" We know nothing about this young man or why a memorial stone was raised for him. It is surely possible that this was a boundary marker and not a memorial (cf. 18:17).

**Bohan - Holman Bible Dictionary** Place name and personal name meaning, "thumb" or "big toe." A place on the northern border of the tribal allotment of Judah called the "stone of Bohan," "the son of Reuben" (Joshua 15:6 ). This was the southern border of the tribe of Benjamin (Joshua 18:17 ). Some Bible students see this as evidence that some part of the tribe of Reuben once lived west of the Jordan. Others see an otherwise unknown heroic deed of Bohan honored with a memorial boundary stone.

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## GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**6. Beth-arabah.** Heb. 'house of solitude; ' perhaps so called from the loneliness and dreariness of the place.

**The stone of Bohan.** A Reubenite, and probably a distinguished commander of the forces of that tribe which came over the Jordan. It is not unlikely that he died in the camp at Gilgal, and was buried not far off, under the stone here alluded to.

**Joshua 15:7** The border went up to Debir from the valley of Achor, and turned northward toward Gilgal which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south of the valley; and the border continued to the waters of En-shemesh and it ended at En-rogel.

- **Debir:** Jos 15:15 10:38,39
- **the valley:** Jos 7:26 Isa 65:10 Ho 2:5
- **Gilgal:** Jos 4:19 5:9,10 10:43
- **Adummim:** A town and mountain of Benjamin (Jos 18:17,) near Jericho, towards Jerusalem.
- **En-shemesh :** Situated east of Jerusalem, on the confines of Judah and Benjamin.
- **Enrogel:** Supposed to be the same as the fountain of Siloam, east of Jerusalem, at the foot of mount Zion. 2Sa 17:17 1Ki 1:9
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

**The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11**

**The border went up to [Debir](#) from the valley of Achor, and turned northward toward Gilgal which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south of the valley; and the border continued to the waters of En-shemesh and it ended at En-rogel - NET** = It then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, turning northward to Gilgal (which is opposite the Pass of Adummim south of the valley), crossed to the waters of En Shemesh and extended to En Rogel."

**Madvig** - Because of the orientation of our maps with north at the top, we customarily think that to "go up" means to go north and to "go down" means to go south. These expressions are used in the OT with reference to elevation. Here the border of Judah ascends from the Valley of Achor, which borders on the Dead Sea. "Debir" is not to be confused with the Debir in Joshua 15:15, 49, and Joshua 10:38. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Achor Valley of - Smith's Bible Dictionary** (valley of trouble). The spot at which Achan was stoned. Joshua 7:24; Joshua 7:26. On the northern boundary of Judah, Joshua 15:7, near Jericho.

**Strong's on Gilgal** = "a wheel, rolling" 1) the first site of an Israelite camp west of the Jordan, east of Jericho, here Samuel was judge, and Saul was made king; later used for illicit worship 2) dwelling place of prophets in northern Israel about four miles (7 km) from Shiloh and Bethel 3) a region conquered by Joshua, site unsure. **See also [Gilgal - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** 38x - Deut. 11:30; Jos. 4:19; Jos. 4:20; Jos. 5:9; Jos. 5:10; Jos. 9:6; Jos. 10:6; Jos. 10:7; Jos. 10:9; Jos. 10:15; Jos. 10:43; Jos. 12:23; Jos. 14:6; Jos. 15:7; Jdg. 2:1; Jdg. 3:19; 1 Sam. 7:16; 1 Sam. 10:8; 1 Sam. 11:14; 1 Sam. 11:15; 1 Sam. 13:4; 1 Sam. 13:7; 1 Sam. 13:8; 1 Sam. 13:12; 1 Sam. 13:15; 1 Sam. 15:12; 1 Sam. 15:21; 1 Sam. 15:33; 2 Sam. 19:15; 2 Sam. 19:40; 2 Ki. 2:1; 2 Ki. 4:38;

Hos. 4:15; Hos. 9:15; Hos. 12:11; Amos 4:4; Amos 5:5; Mic. 6:5

[Adummim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (2x - Jos. 15:7; Jos. 18:17) Place name meaning, "red ones." A rocky pass on the road descending from Jerusalem to Jericho located at modern Talcat ed-damm. It formed the border of Judah and Benjamin in the tribal allotments Joshua made (Joshua 15:7; Joshua 18:17 ). Today the Inn of the Good Samaritan is there because late traditions locate the Good Samaritan narrative there (Luke 10:30-37 ).

**Strong's - Adummim** = "ruddy one: quieted ones?" 1) pass or ridge of hills, west of Gilgal

[En-Shemesh - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (2x - Jos. 15:7; Jos. 18:17) Place name meaning, "spring of the sun." Town on border between tribal territories of Judah (Joshua 15:7 ) and Benjamin (Joshua 18:17 ). It is located at ain el-Hod, "the spring of the apostles," about two miles east of Jerusalem on the eastern edge of Bethany.

**Strong's En-shemesh** = "fountain of the sun" a spring on the boundary of Judah on the south and Benjamin on the north

[En-Rogel - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (4x - Jos. 15:7; Jos. 18:16; 2 Sam. 17:17; 1 Ki. 1:9) Place name meaning, "spring of the fuller" or "spring of the foot." A border town between the tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:7 ) and that of Benjamin (Joshua 18:16 ). Jonathan and Ahimaaz, the priests' sons, stayed at En-rogel as messengers to relay to David what the priests might learn from Absalom when he took over Jerusalem from his father (2 Samuel 17:17 ). Adonijah staged a party there to proclaim himself as David's successor as king of Judah (1 Kings 1:9 ). En-rogel lay near Jerusalem where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys met at modern Bir Ayyub.

**Strong's En-rogel** = "fount of the fuller" 1) a place near Jerusalem on the border between Judah and Benjamin and from which the permanent source of the pool of Siloam comes

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#### GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**En-shemesh.** Heb. 'fountain of the sun;' a place eastward of Jerusalem, on the confines of Judah and Benjamin. Some conjecture that it was a fountain dedicated by the Canaanites to the sun.

**En-rogel.** Heb. 'fountain of the fuller;' perhaps from its water having afforded special conveniences to those that exercised the craft of fullers. It is supposed by some to have been the same as the Pool of Siloam; by others placed further down the valley, near the south-east of Jerusalem, and not far from what is now called the Fountain of the Blessed Virgin.

**Joshua 15:8** Then the border went up the valley of Ben-hinnom to the slope of the Jebusite on the south (that is, Jerusalem); and the border went up to the top of the mountain which is before the valley of Hinnom to the west, which is at the end of the valley of Rephaim toward the north.

- **valley of the son:** A valley near to Jerusalem. Jos 18:16 2Ki 23:10 2Ch 28:3 Jer 7:31,32 19:2,6,14
- **the Jebusite:** Jos 15:63 18:28 Jdg 1:8,21 19:10
- **valley of the giants:** Situated apparently west of Jerusalem and mount Moriah. Jos 18:16 2Sa 5:18,22 Isa 17:5, the valley of Rephaim
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11

Then the border went up the valley of Ben-hinnom to the slope of the Jebusite on the south (that is, [Jerusalem](#)); and the border went up to the top of the mountain which is before the valley of Hinnom to the west, which is at the end of the valley of Rephaim ("valley of the giants") toward the north. Eventually, the border arrived at the city of Jerusalem, to the slope of the Jebusite on the south (that is, [Jerusalem](#)).

**Utley** - "the valley of Ben-hinnom ... the valley of Hinnom" This is the place where the fertility fire god, Molech, was worshiped. It was just outside the city of Jerusalem (Jebus, cf. Josh 15:63) to the south. This is the place which later the Jews turned into a garbage dump and which Jesus used as His metaphor to describe Hell (Gehenna).

[Ben-Hinnom - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (Hinnon - 11x Jos. 15:8; Jos. 18:16; 2 Ki. 23:10; 2 Chr. 28:3; 2 Chr. 33:6; Neh. 11:30; Jer.

7:31; Jer. 7:32; Jer. 19:2; Jer. 19:6; Jer. 32:35) Place name meaning, "son of Hinnom." A valley south of Jerusalem serving as northern border of tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:8) and southern boundary of tribe of Benjamin (Joshua 18:16). Pagan child sacrifices occurred here, some kings of Judah included (Ahaz, 2 Chronicles 28:3; Manasseh, 2 Chronicles 33:6). Jeremiah announced God's judgment on the valley because of such practices (Jeremiah 19:1-15). The valley would be renamed, "valley of slaughter" (Jeremiah 19:6). The sin of the valley gave God reason to bring the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem (Jeremiah 32:35). King Josiah defiled and did away with the altars there (2 Kings 23:10). The valley served as the northern boundary of the Judean villages where the returning exiles settled (Nehemiah 11:30).

**Strong's Hinnom** = "lamentation" 1) a valley (deep and narrow ravine) with steep, rocky sides located southwest of Jerusalem, separating Mount Zion to the north from the hill of evil counsel' and the sloping rocky plateau of the 'plain of Rephaim' to the south

**Strong's Jebusite** = "descendants of Jebus" 1) descendants of the 3rd son of Canaan who lived in or around the site of Jebus, the early name for Jerusalem ([See more notes on Jebusites below](#))

**Jebusite** - 39x - Gen. 10:16; Gen. 15:21; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 15:8; Jos. 15:63; Jos. 18:16; Jos. 18:28; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 3:5; Jdg. 19:11; 2 Sam. 5:6; 2 Sam. 5:8; 2 Sam. 24:16; 2 Sam. 24:18; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Chr. 1:14; 1 Chr. 11:4; 1 Chr. 11:6; 1 Chr. 21:15; 1 Chr. 21:18; 1 Chr. 21:28; 2 Chr. 3:1; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Zech. 9:7

[Rephaim, Valley of - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#) . 2 Samuel 5:17-18; 2 Samuel 5:22; 2 Samuel 23:13; 1 Chronicles 11:15; 1 Chronicles 14:9; Isaiah 17:5. In Joshua 15:8; Joshua 18:16, it is translated "the valley of the giants." The scene of David's twice routing the Philistines utterly and destroying their idols; so that it was named Perazim, God breaking forth there upon David's foes (for they came to seek him to avenge their old quarrel, on hearing of his accession); a type of God's future utter overthrow of the church's last foes (Isaiah 28:21-22).(See PERAZIM.) The Philistines came in harvest time to the valley, to carry off the ripe crops, in 2 Samuel 23:13; Isaiah 17:5.

**Utley on Rephaim** - "the Anakim" This was a very tall tribe which inhabited Hebron (Arba, cf. 15:13 or Kiriath-arba). There seem to be three names used in the OT to describe these very tall people: (1) Nephilim (cf. Gen. 6:4); (2) **Rephaim** (cf. Gen. 14:5; 15:20; Josh. 12:4; 13:12); and (3) Anakim (BDB 778, cf. Num. 13:22, 28; Deut. 1:28; 9:2; Jdgs. 1:20). Anak means "long necked".

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#### GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**The valley of the son of Hinnom.** A valley in the vicinity of Jerusalem, lying probably on the south of mount Zion, and consequently environing the ancient city on the south side. Who this Hinnom was, or why it was called his valley, is not known. This valley, or, more properly speaking, ravine, is only about one hundred and fifty feet in breadth, and is stated to have been in ancient times exceedingly verdant and shaded with trees. But from the inhuman practices of the Hebrews, in sacrificing their infants at a place in it called Tophet, the whole valley was denounced by Jehovah, and polluted by Josiah, by ordure and dead men's bones and every kind of filth from the city. After the captivity, the Jews regarded this spot with abhorrence, on account of the abominations which had been practised there, and following the example of Josiah, threw into it the carcasses of animals and the dead bodies of malefactors, and every species of refuse. To prevent the pestilence which such a mass would occasion, if left to putrify, constant fires were kept up in the valley, in order to consume what was thrown into it. It became therefore a striking type of Hell, or that part of Hades where they supposed the souls of wicked men were punished in eternal fire. Under this idea, it was often called Gehenna of fire; the name '**Gehenna**' (See word study on [geenna](#)) being formed from the Heb. גיא חנם Gē-hinnom, valley of Hinnom. See Barnes' Notes on Mt. 6:22.

**Valley of the giants.** Or, Heb. רפאים rephâim, of the Rephaim; on which word see on Gen. 6:4; Deut. 2:7, 11. This valley lay about three miles to the southwest of Jerusalem, and appears to have been so called from its ancient gigantic inhabitants. It was the theatre of several signal victories obtained by David over the Philistines, and was also famed for its fertility and its excellent crops of corn. Is. 17:5. The road from Jerusalem, says Maundrell, passes through this valley, and in it are pointed out to the traveller the ruined tower of Simeon, the Greek monastery of Elias, and the tomb of Rachel. The valley itself is now only partially cultivated, and even those parts which are sown with corn yield but a comparatively poor and scanty crop. 'He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.'

**Joshua 15:9** From the top of the mountain the border curved to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah and proceeded to the cities of Mount Ephron, then the border curved to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim).

- **Nephtoah:** Jos 18:15

- **Baalah:** A city near Bethshemesh, and, according to Eusebius, nine miles from Jerusalem, in going towards Diospolis. 2Sa 6:2 1Ch 13:6
- **Kirjathjearim:** Jos 9:17 Jdg 18:12
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

### The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11

From the top of the mountain the border curved to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah and proceeded to the cities of Mount Ephron, then the border curved to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim) From the high point, north of Jerusalem, the border followed a north-westerly and then westerly direction toward the sea, passing landmarks of cities, springs of water and mountains in vv 9-11.

[Nephtoah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (2x - Jos. 15:9; Jos. 18:15) Name meaning, "opening," found only in the phrase "Waters of Nephtoah." Boundary marker for Judah and Benjamin (Joshua 15:9; Joshua 18:15 ). The site was formerly identified with Atam south of Bethlehem. The most frequent identification is now Lifta about three miles northwest of Jerusalem.

**Stong's Nephtoah** = "opening" 1) a spring or source of water on the boundary of the territories of Judah and Benjamin; located northwest of Jerusalem

[Ephron Mount - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) The "cities of Mount Ephron" formed one of the landmarks, on the northern boundary of the tribe of Judah. Joshua 15:9.

[Baalah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (5x -Jos. 15:9; Jos. 15:10; Jos. 15:11; Jos. 15:29; 1 Chr. 13:6) Place name meaning, "wife, lady," or "residence of Baal." 1. City on northern border of tribe of Judah equated with Kirjath-jearim (Joshua 15:9-11 ). David kept the ark there before moving it to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 13:6 ). It is located at modern Deir el-Azar, eight miles west of Jerusalem. It is called Baale of Judah (2 Samuel 6:2 ) and may be the same as Kirjath-baal (Joshua 15:60 ). See Joshua 15:29 ) that may be same as Balah (Joshua 19:3 ) and as Bilhah (1 Chronicles 4:29 ). Tribe of Simeon occupied it. Its location is unknown. 3. A mountain on Judah's northern border between Jabneel and Ekron. It may be the same as Mount Jearim.

[Kiriath-Jearim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "city of forests." Kiriath-Jearim was located at modern Abu Gosh nine miles north of Jerusalem. It was on the border where Dan, Benjamin, and Judah joined before Dan began their migration northward (Joshua 15:9 ,Joshua 15:9,15:60; Joshua 18:14-15 ). Dan's army camped there in their search for new territory (Judges 18:12 ). After the Philistines returned the ark of the covenant, it was kept at Kiriath-Jearim for a time (1 Samuel 6:21-7:2 ). David attempted to move the ark to Jerusalem from there, but because he did so improperly, God struck down Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:1-8 ). Among Kiriath-Jearim's sons was Uriah, a faithful prophet and contemporary of Jeremiah. He was executed for prophesying against the king (Jeremiah 26:20-24 ). The Romans built a fort over the ancient ruins to guard the main route from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean Sea. A garrison from the Tenth Legion was stationed there. Kiriath-Jearim is identified with Deir al-Azhar near the modern village of Qaryet el-Inab or Abu Gosh.

**Joshua 15:10 The border turned about from Baalah westward to Mount Seir, and continued to the slope of Mount Jearim on the north (that is, Chesalon), and went down to Beth-shemesh and continued through Timnah.**

- **Beth shemesh:** 1Sa 6:12-21
- **Timnah:** Jos 15:57 Ge 38:13 Jdg 14:1,5
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

### The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11

The border turned about from [Baalah](#) ([See map](#)) westward to Mount Seir, and continued to the slope of Mount Jearim on the north (that is, Chesalon), and went down to Beth-shemesh ([See on map at northern aspect of Judah](#)) and continued through Timnah. ([See map for Timnah at northern border of Judah](#)) "Mount Seir" was on the west side of Jerusalem and must not be confused with Mount Seir in Edom, southwest of the Dead Sea.



**[Seir, Mount - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#)** A landmark N. of Judah (Joshua 15:10), W. of Kirjath Jearim and E. of Bethshemesh; the ridge between wady Aly and wady Ghurab. Now Mihsir, N.W. of Kesla or Chesalon. The resemblance in ruggedness to the southern Mount Seir may have given the name.

**Utley - "Mount Seir"** This means "rough," "hairy," or "shaggy" (BDB 973). There are several different sites by this name. This does not refer to Mt. Seir in Edom, but a hill close to Jerusalem.

**[Jearim, Mount - ISB Encyclopedia](#)** A mountain by the side of which passed the border of Judah ( Joshua 15:10 ). It is mentioned here only, and is identical with CHESALON (which see).

**[Chesalon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** Place name meaning, "on the hip." Village on eastern border of territory of tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:10 ). It is equated with Mount Jearim and is modern Kesla, about ten miles west of Jerusalem. See Jearim .

**[Beth-Shemesh - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)** Place name meaning, "house of the sun." Beth-shemesh is a name applied to **four different cities in the Old Testament**. The name probably derives from a place where the Semitic god Shemesh (Shamash) was worshiped.

1. Beth-shemesh of Issachar was situated on the tribal border with Naphtali between Mt. Tabor and the Jordan River (Joshua 19:22 ). Present scholarship identifies the city with either el-Abeidiyeh, two miles south of Galilee, or khirbet Shemsin, east of Tabor.
2. Beth-shemesh of Naphtali was probably located in central upper Galilee because of its association with Beth-anath (Joshua 19:38; Judges 1:33 ). This Canaanite town remained independent and unconquered until the time of David. The site khirbet er-Ruweisi has been suggested as a possible location.
3. Beth-shemesh of Egypt is to be identified with Heliopolis (five miles northeast of Cairo) according to the Septuagint or early Greek translation (Jeremiah 43:13 ). Jeremiah told of the Lord's judgment upon the gods of Egypt by depicting the destruction of the worship centers.
4. Beth-shemesh of Dan is located on the south tribal border with Judah (Joshua 15:10; Joshua 19:41 ) overlooking the Sorek Valley about 24 miles west of Jerusalem. The ancient name was preserved in the Arab village of Ain Shems, and the "tell" is identified with tell er-Rumeilah. Beth-shemesh guarded the lush farmlands of the Sorek Valley at the point at which the Shephelah (foothills) borders the Judean hill country. It was also situated in the strategic "buffer zone" between the Philistines and the Israelites during the judges period.

The Danite tribe was unable to control the lands of its inheritance because of the Amorites (Judges 1:34-35 ) and/or the Philistines. Some were forced into the hills near Zorah and Eshtaol (as was Samson's family, Judges 13:1-2 ). Beth-shemesh was apparently controlled by Israel (ca. 1050 B.C.) when the ark of the covenant passed through the city upon returning from the Philistines (1 Samuel 6:13 ). Around 795 B.C., the city was the scene of a battle in which Jehoash of Israel was victorious over Amaziah of Judah, resulting in the pillaging of the Temple (2 Kings 14:11-14; 2 Chronicles 25:21-24 ). Beth-shemesh is last mentioned in Scripture during the decadent reign of Ahaz. The Philistines captured Beth-shemesh from Judah (ca. 734), seen as judgment from God (2 Chronicles 28:18-19 ).

Beth-shemesh was excavated by D. Mackenzie in 1911-1912 and Haverford College in 1928-31,1933. The city was first settled about 2200 B.C. by a relatively small group. The city achieved importance after being conquered and rebuilt by the Hyksos about 1720 B.C. A huge city wall, three defensive towers, and several tombs were uncovered. The Hyksos city was captured by the Egyptians of the Eighteenth Dynasty about 1550 B.C. Beth-shemesh flourished in the Late Bronze Age under Egyptian and Canaanite rule, evidenced by imported wares from Mycenae and Egypt, as well as quality Canaanite finds, including inscriptions. Iron Age I (Judges) finds show that Beth-shemesh was heavily influenced by the Philistines, but the city was in general decline. After David defeated the Philistines, the city was rebuilt. Excavations indicate the Israelite city had olive oil, wine, copper, fabric dyeing, and wheat production industries. After Beth-shemesh was destroyed by the Babylonians (588-587 B.C.) under Nebuchadnezzar, the city was largely unoccupied, except for remnants of the Roman/Byzantine city at Ain Shems (monastery on the corner of the tell).

**Beth-Shemesh** - 19v - Jos. 15:10; Jos. 19:22; Jos. 19:38; Jos. 21:16; Jdg. 1:33; 1 Sam. 6:9; 1 Sam. 6:12; 1 Sam. 6:13; 1 Sam. 6:15; 1 Sam. 6:19; 1 Sam. 6:20; 1 Ki. 4:9; 2 Ki. 14:11; 2 Ki. 14:13; 1 Chr. 6:59; 2 Chr. 25:21; 2 Chr. 25:23; 2 Chr. 28:18; Jer. 43:13

**[Timnah - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#)** A place which formed, one of the landmarks on the north boundary, of the allotment of Judah. Joshua 15:10. It is probably identical with the Thimnathah of Joshua 19:43, and that again with the Timnath, or, more accurately, Timnathah, of **Samson** Judges 14:1-2; Judges 14:5, and the Thamnatha of the Maccabees. The modern representative of all these various forms of the same name is, probably, Tibneh, a village about two miles west of Ain Shems, (Beth-shemesh). In



the later history of the Jews, Timnah must have been a conspicuous place. It was fortified by Bacchides as one of the most important military posts of Judea. 1 Maccabees 9:50.

**Joshua 15:11** The border proceeded to the side of Ekron northward. Then the border curved to Shikkeron and continued to Mount Baalah and proceeded to Jabneel, and the border ended at the sea.

- **Ekron:** Jos 15:45 19:43 1Sa 5:10 7:14 2Ki 1:2,3,6,16
- **mount Baalah:** Jos 19:44
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH CONTINUED

### The northern boundary - Joshua 15:5-11

The border proceeded to the side of **Ekron** northward ([See map for Ekron at northern border of Judah](#)). Then the border curved to Shikkeron and continued to Mount Baalah ([See map for Baalath at northern/western border of Judah](#)) and proceeded to Jabneel, and the border ended at the sea - Strong's on Shikkeron - "Shicron = "drunkenness" (from shakar = to be or become drunk) is a landmark on the northwestern boundary of Judah lying between Ekron and Jabneel"

**Utlej** on "Ekron" This was one of the five main Philistine walled cities (cf. 15:45–47). Apparently Judah never fully captured it or any of the main cities on the plain where chariot forces were used.

**Ekron - Holman Bible Dictionary** Ekron is the northernmost of the five major Philistine cities known as the pentapolis. The site of ancient Ekron has been much debated, but now is generally agreed to be modern tell Miqne, about 14 miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea and 10 miles from Ashdod. The site is one of the largest in Palestine, covering some 50 acres. Ekron lies on the road leading from Ashdod into the Judean hill country and up to Jerusalem through the Sorek Valley.

Ekron was assigned to both Judah (Joshua 15:11 ,Joshua 15:11,15:45-46 ) and Dan (Joshua 19:43 ) in the tribal allotments. It probably lay on the border between the tribes. Judges 1:18 reports that Judah captured Ekron along with other parts of the Philistine coast, but Ekron was certainly in Philistine hands at the time the ark was captured ( 1 Samuel 5:10 ). It was also the place to which the Philistines retreated after David slew Goliath (1 Samuel 17:52 ). Ahaziah, the son of King Ahab of Israel, called on the god of Ekron, Baal-zebul, when he was sick (2 Kings 1:2-16 ). That name (literally, "Lord of the flies") may have been slightly changed by the Hebrew writer to express antipathy toward the Philistine deity. The name of the deity may have been Baal-zebul ("Baal is exalted").

Excavations at tell Miqne have discovered much pottery that is typically Philistine. From the last period before tell Miqne was destroyed by the Babylonians, the excavators found an important industrial complex near the city gate. A hoard of iron agricultural tools was found. Hundreds of whole pottery vessels were present. Perhaps most importantly, a well-preserved olive press was discovered. This press is the largest and best preserved known in Israel. A horned altar was also found during the excavations.

**Shikkeron - ISB Encyclopedia** the King James Version Shicron ): A place mentioned in Joshua 15:11 (Only use in OT as being on the northern border of Judah, between Ekron and Baalah, Jabneel being beyond, toward the sea. The site is unknown, but Rev. C. Hauser ( PEFS , 1907, 289) suggests Tell es -Sellakeh , Northwest of 'Akir , remarking that if this were the site the boundary would follow a natural course over the mountain to Jabneel.

**Baalah - Holman Bible Dictionary** (Baalah from baal = owner, lord, husband)(5x - Jos. 15:9; Jos. 15:10; Jos. 15:11; Jos. 15:29; 1 Chr. 13:6) Place name meaning, "wife, lady," or "residence of Baal." 1. City on northern border of tribe of Judah equated with Kirjath-jearim (Joshua 15:9-11 ). David kept the ark there before moving it to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 13:6 ). It is located at modern Deir el-Azar, eight miles west of Jerusalem. It is called Baale of Judah (2 Samuel 6:2 ) and may be the same as Kirjath-baal (Joshua 15:60 ). See Joshua 15:29 ) that may be same as Balah (Joshua 19:3 ) and as Bilhah (1 Chronicles 4:29 ). Tribe of Simeon occupied it. Its location is unknown.

**Strong's - Baalah** = "mistress" 1) another name for Kirjath-jearim or Kirjath-baal; modern Kuriet el Enab 2) a town in the south of Judah, also called Balah and Bilhah

**Baalah - ISB Encyclopedia** Mount Baalah (Joshua 15:11 ), a mountain ridge between Shikkeron (Ekron) and Jabnoel unless, as seems probable, the suggestion of M. Clermont-Ganneau (Rev. Crit , 1897, 902) is correct that for הַר , har ( = "mount"), we should read נַהַר , nāhār ("river"). In this case the border in question would be the Nahr rubīn . Here there is an annual feast held - attended

by all classes and famous all over Syria - which appears to be a real survival of "Baal worship."

[Jabneel - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (2x in OT -Jos. 15:11; Jos. 19:33) Place name meaning, "God builds."1. Town marking northwestern boundary of tribal territory of Judah in land of Philistines (Joshua 15:11 ); modern Yibna. Uzziah took the town, called by the shortened Hebrew form Jabneh, from the Philistines (2 Chronicles 26:6 ). Later the city was called Jamnia and became a center of scribal activity for the Jews. See Joshua 19:33 ); modern tell en-Naam or khirbet Yemma, west-southwest of the Sea of Galilee and northeast of Mount Tabor.

**Strong's on Jabneel** - Jabneel = "God causes to build" = a town in Judah on the northern boundary near the sea. Also a town in Naphtali on the boundary in upper Galilee.

**Joshua 15:12 The west border was at the Great Sea, even its coastline. This is the border around the sons of Judah according to their families.**

- **the great sea:** Jos 15:47 Nu 34:6,7 De 11:24 Eze 47:20
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WESTERN BOUNDARY OF JUDAH

**The west border was at the Great Sea, even its coastline-** **The Great Sea** is the Mediterranean Sea, a phrase used 14x in OT - Gen. 1:21; Num. 34:6; Num. 34:7; Jos. 1:4; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 15:12; Jos. 15:47; Jos. 23:4; Ezek. 47:10; Ezek. 47:15; Ezek. 47:19; Ezek. 47:20; Ezek. 48:28; Dan. 7:2

**This is the border around the sons of Judah according to their families- NIV** = These are the boundaries around the people of Judah by their clans." This is a summary statement for the boundaries of Judah.

**Madvig** - Judah's allotment included Philistine and Geshurite territory that had not been conquered yet (cf. Joshua 13:1–3). This was in conformity with the Lord's command (Joshua 13:6) that the entire land of Palestine be allotted in the confidence that some day all would belong to Israel. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Joshua 15:13 Now he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the sons of Judah, according to the command of the LORD to Joshua, namely, Kiriath-arba, Arba being the father of Anak (that is, Hebron).**

- **Caleb:** Jos 14:6-15 Nu 13:30 14:23,24 De 1:34-36
- **the city of Arba: or, Kirjath-arba,** Jos 14:15
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Joshua 14:9 So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden will be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God fully.'

Numbers 14:24 "But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, **I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.**

## CALEB'S "GIANT" ALLOTMENT

### THE REST OF CALEB'S STORY -Joshua 15:13-19

Joshua 15:13-19 This describes the fall of Hebron to Caleb (cf. Joshua 11:21–22; 14:13–15; 15:13–19; Jdg 1:16–21).

I like **Dale Ralph Davis'** title for Joshua 15:13-19 = "**A Paradigm of Vigorous Faith**"-- We have already heard Caleb express his venturesome faith in 14:6–14; however, that passage did not tell us how Caleb fared when he accosted Hebron. (Joshua 15:13–19

is parallel to Judges 1:10–15. It is sometimes difficult to evaluate the various attacks on Hebron and Debir. The attacks in 10:36–39 were probably prior to Caleb's. However, it is possible that the achievement ascribed to Joshua in 11:21–22 was actually carried out by Caleb, summary statements, like 11:21–22, being general and not always precise.) This passage makes up that deficiency. Caleb not only talked faith but acted in faith, and Yahweh granted him success. This was no measly task—see my exposition of 11:21–22 on the Anakim. Caleb dispossessed these and nailed down Hebron for his clan. The fact that he offered Achsah, his daughter, in marriage to whomever took Debir (v. 16) may indicate that it seemed an insurmountable task. Special incentive for special difficulty. David would later offer an attractive incentive for the one who could reduce the 'impregnable' Jerusalem (1 Chron. 11:5–6) **Caleb's faith in action becomes a paradigm for Israel; here is the way the initial conquest is to be followed up.** Certainly it is a fearful assignment. What could be more formidable than combat with Sheshai, Ahiman, Talmai and their clans? After all, Anak and invincible were supposedly synonymous. But see how the God who promises a secure inheritance enables a clan to obtain it when they are willing to risk obedience to his promise (Exod. 23:30; Deut. 7:22–23). ([Joshua: No Falling Words](#))

**Jensen** (Joshua 15:13–19) Located in Judah's portion was Hebron and its environs, given to Caleb. The inclusion of this account, supplementing the story of chapter 14, provides specific examples of three situations confronting the tribes in their settling down in the land: The enemy was not easily destroyed. For whereas Joshua and his army had destroyed the Anakim (Joshua 11:21–23), now Caleb must drive out other sons of Anak (Joshua 15:14). The Israelites continually needed incentives to fight. Here, Caleb offers the prize of his daughter (Joshua 15:16–17). Water supply was a determinant in the assignment of land to individual families. Here, Caleb honors his daughter's request for water springs (Joshua 15:18–19). ([Joshua- Everyman's Bible Commentary: Rest-Land Won](#))

**Now** - This draws our attention to this specific aspect of the administration of the land to the tribe of Judah.

**He gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the sons of Judah, according to the command of the LORD to Joshua, namely, Kiriath-arba, Arba being the father of Anak (that is, Hebron)** - Joshua obediently dispensed the lot promised to Caleb by the LORD. As it turned out in the **providence of God**, the allotment promised to Caleb also fell within the borders of his own tribe Judah! This was not a "coincidence" or an accident!

**Kiriath-arba** - Gen. 23:2; Gen. 35:27; Jos. 14:15; Jos. 15:13; Jos. 15:54; Jos. 20:7; Jos. 21:11; Jdg. 1:10; Neh. 11:25

**Believer's Study Bible** - (vv. 13-19) This account of the capture of Hebron and Debir appears to be in conflict with that of Joshua 10:36-39 and Joshua 11:21, 22. It could be that the Anakim had re-established themselves there after the initial conquest under Joshua. It may also be that Caleb commanded the Israelites under Joshua who took these cities, and that Caleb's request in 14:6-12 had been made prior to the events described in 10:36-39.

**Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary** - Verses 13-19. Achsah obtained some land by Caleb's free grant. He gave her a south land (NEGEV). Land indeed, but a south land, dry and apt to be parched. She obtained more, on her request, and he gave the upper and the lower springs. Those who understand it but of one field (**ALBEIT HENRY SPIRITUALIZES THE TEXT**), watered both with the rain of heaven, and the springs that issued out of the earth, countenance the allusion commonly made to this, when we pray for spiritual and heavenly blessings which relate to our souls, as blessings of the upper springs, and those which relate to the body and the life that now is, as blessings of the nether springs. All the blessings, both of the upper and the lower springs, belong to the children of God. As related to Christ, they have them freely given of the Father, for the lot of their inheritance.

**Jephunneh - ISB Encyclopedia** Father of Caleb (Numbers 13:6; Numbers 14:6 , Numbers 14:30 , etc.). According to Numbers 13:6 , he was of the tribe of Judah; according to Numbers 32:12; Joshua 14:6 , a Kenizzite; the Kenizzites were incorporated in Judah (compare 1 Chronicles 4:13-15 ). (2) A son of Jether, an Asherite (1 Chronicles 7:38 ).

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**GEORGE BUSH** - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**And unto Caleb he gave.** Or Heb. 'had given.' The historian seems pleased with every occasion to make mention of Caleb, and to do him honor, because he honored the Lord by following him fully. Respecting this grant to Joshua, see notes on Josh 14:6–15.

**Joshua 15:14 Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai, the children of Anak.**

- Jos 10:36,37 11:21 Nu 13:22-23 Jdg 1:10,20
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**

Joshua 11:21-22 Then Joshua came at that time and **cut off the Anakim from the hill country**, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab and from all the hill country of Judah and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. 22 There were no **Anakim** left in the land of the sons of Israel; only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod some remained.

Joshua 14:10-15 "Now behold, the LORD has let me live, just as He spoke, these forty-five years, from the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, when Israel walked in the wilderness; and now behold, I am eighty-five years old today. 11 "I am still as strong today as I was in the day Moses sent me; as my strength was then, so my strength is now, for war and for going out and coming in. 12 "Now then, give me this hill country about which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day that **Anakim were there, with great fortified cities**; perhaps the LORD will be with me, and I will drive them out as the LORD has spoken."

13 So Joshua blessed him and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. 14 Therefore, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite until this day, because he followed the LORD God of Israel fully. 15 Now the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba; for Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. Then the land had rest from war.

Judges 1:9-10, 20 (NOTE JUDAH CREDITED WITH DEFEATING THE GIANTS BUT IT WAS CALEB WHO ACTUALLY DID IT IS VERSE 20) Afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country and in the Negev and in the lowland. 10 So Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba); and they struck Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi. (**Judges 1:20**) Then they gave Hebron to **Caleb**, as Moses had promised; and **he drove out from there the three sons of Anak**.

**MANSOUL** (Read Bunyan's [Holy War](#))

## **CALEB CONQUERED THE GIANTS**

It is notable that 45 YEARS EARLIER CALEB HAD SEEN THESE SAME GIANTS!

When they had gone up into the Negev, they came to Hebron where **Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi**, the descendants of Anak were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 Then they came to the valley of Eshcol and from there cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two men, with some of the pomegranates and the figs. (Numbers 13:22-23+)

**Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi, the children of Anak** - Yes Caleb drove them out, **BUT** he was empowered by the LORD to accomplish this task! Caleb believed the promise in Joshua 14:9 **"Surely the land on which your foot has trodden will be an inheritance to you and to your children forever"** and took action. He took action based on his belief in the fact that **"the LORD (is) helping me, (and) I will drive them out just as He said."** (Joshua 14:12NIV)

**THOUGHT** - The **ONLY** way to defeat the **GIANTS** in the territory God has given us is by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit and then us taking action and driving them out (see Ro 8:13+). Got some GIANTS that have been prowling around in the castle Bunyan in Holy War called **MANSOUL** (your heart)(Read John Bunyan's [Holy War](#))? Kill them! Drive them out! Take full possession of all your possessions in Christ! Take possession of **MANSOUL**! Don't delay! Don't procrastinate! Don't prevaricate! Just do it!

Note is that this was not the first time that **Hebron** had been conquered and the Anakim driven out, for in Joshua 11:21-22+ Joshua had accomplished their expulsion, but evidently they had returned into the area. [See discussion](#) of this same problem in the believer's life.

**Keil & Delitzsch** note that "For that (FIRST) expulsion did not preclude the possibility of the Anakites and Canaanites returning to their former abodes, and taking possession of their towns again, when the Israelitish army had withdrawn and was engaged in the war with the Canaanites of the north; so that when the different tribes were about to settle in the towns and districts allotted to them, they were obliged to proceed once more to drive out or exterminate the Anakites and Canaanites who had forced their way in again."

**Warren Wiersbe** - God had promised him the inheritance, and Caleb had faith that what God promised He was able to perform (see Rom. 4:20-21). Caleb was able to drive out the inhabitants of his inheritance (Josh. 15:13-14), the very "giants" that the ten unbelieving spies had feared (Num. 13:28, 33). Unbelief looks at the giants; faith looks to God. Unbelief depends on man's "common

sense"; faith rests wholly on the Word of God....What a difference it makes when believers "wholly follow the Lord" and exercise faith in the Word. Caleb's dedication and faith saved his life, gained him an inheritance, overcame the enemy, and enabled him to enrich his own family for years to come. The Lord certainly expects Christians today to be conquerors; in fact, Paul claims that we are "more than conquerors!" (Rom. 8:37) Joshua and Caleb conquered with physical weapons and claimed a material inheritance, but we conquer with spiritual weapons (2 Cor. 10:3-5) to claim our spiritual inheritance in Christ (Eph. 1:3). Christians are supposed to be overcomers through faith in Christ (1 John 5:4). We are to overcome the world (1 John 5:5), false doctrine (1 John 4:1-4), and the wicked one (1 John 2:13-14). Christ has already overcome Satan (Luke 11:21-22) and the world (John 16:33), so that we need only to claim His victory by faith. Note in the letters to the seven churches (Rev. 2-3) the many promises to those who overcome. "He who overcomes shall inherit all things!" promises Rev. 21:7 (NKJV). We overcome the enemy and claim the inheritance the same way as Caleb: (1) we must be wholly yielded to the Lord; (2) we must know His promises and believe them; (3) we must keep heart and mind fixed on the inheritance; (4) we must depend on God to give the victory. "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Cor. 15:57, NKJV) .([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#))

[Anak, Anakim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Personal and clan name meaning, "long-necked" or "strong-necked." The ancestor named Anak had three children: Ahiman, Sheshai, Talmai (Numbers 13:22 ). They lived in Hebron and the hill country (Joshua 11:21 ) before being destroyed by Joshua. Their remnants then lived among the Philistines (Joshua 11:22 ). These tall giants were part of the Nephilim (Genesis 6:4; Numbers 13:33 ). Arba was a hero of the Anakim (Judges 14:15 ). The spelling Anakims puts the English plural "s" on to the Hebrew plural "im."

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#### GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**Drove thence the sons of Anak.** This is doubtless mentioned here to show, that the confidence he had before expressed of success in this affair, through the presence of God with him, did not deceive him. The event answered all his expectations; and it is here put on record at once to the praise of Caleb, to the glory of God, **Who never disappoints those that trust in Him, and for the encouragement of believers in all ages.** On the sense of the phrase 'drove out,' see on Jdg. 1:10.

**Joshua 15:15** Then he went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir; now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher.

- Jos 10:3,38 Jdg 1:11-13
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### CALEB CONTINUES CONQUEST

**Then - Then** is an important conjunction usually marks progression in a narrative. Don't overlook it. Caleb was an old man, but he kept pressing on, leaving an example for all godly men and women of all ages to imitate!

**He went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir; now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-Sepher** ("city of writing") - Caleb went up against Debir but as we see in Joshua 15:17 it was Othniel who captured it. **Went up against** means he marched against, fought, and attacked the people of **Debir**. He had just defeated the GIANTS and could have [rested on his laurels](#), but chose to continue the Canaanite conquest.

**Grant** comments on **Debir** - It was evidently a fortress of some renown and is thought to have been approximately 10 miles (16 kilometres) south of Hebron. Caleb made an offer to any man who could capture the city. ([What the Bible Teaches - Joshua Judges Ruth](#))

**Cyril Barber** - After conquering Hebron, Caleb proceeded on to Kiriath-sepher (the "city of books"—what we would refer to today as a "university town" that was probably a center devoted to the study of occultism). ([Joshua: A Devotional Exposition](#))

**Utley** speculates that "Apparently it was the location of a school which trained scribes in writing and recording within the Canaanite culture."

**MacDonald** has interesting note - Some cities, like Debir and Hebron, had to be taken more than once because of the guerrilla warfare of the Canaanites (see notes on chap. 10). It should also be noted that there was more than one city with the same name (e.g., Debir). ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - Got any "Canaanites" in your list of fleshly sins that you thought you had conquered, only to find

them rearing their ugly head again, sometimes (probably usually) even launching "surprise attacks"? I think most of us would probably answer "Yes." Beloved, we all get frustrated with failure and resurgence of old sins we thought had been eradicated, but we need to recall the exhortation of the writer of Hebrews - "**consider** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) Him (aka "fix your eyes on Jesus" - Heb 12:2) Who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that (HERE'S THE HOLY PURPOSE) you will not grow weary and lose heart. (REMEMBER) You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against ([antagonizomai](#)) sin;." (Heb 12:3-4+)

**Debir - Holman Bible Dictionary** (12x in OT - Jos. 10:3; Jos. 10:38; Jos. 10:39; Jos. 11:21; Jos. 12:13; Jos. 13:26; Jos. 15:7; Jos. 15:15; Jos. 15:49; Jos. 21:15; Jdg. 1:11; 1 Chr. 6:58) Personal and place name meaning, "back, behind." (Another source says it means "sanctuary") As a common noun, the Hebrew term refers to the back room of the Temple, the holy of holies. Important city in hill country of tribe of Judah whose exact location is debated by archaeologists and geographers. Joshua annihilated its residents (Joshua 10:38; compare Joshua 11:21; Joshua 12:13 ). Joshua 15:15 describes Caleb's challenge to Othniel to capture Debir, formerly called Kiriath Sepher. Compare Judges 1:11 . Joshua 15:49 gives yet another name, Kiriath Sannah, to Debir. It became a levitical city for the priests ( Joshua 21:15 ). Different scholars locate Debir at tell beit Mirsim, thirteen miles southwest of Hebron; khirbet Tarrameh, five miles southwest of Hebron; and khirbet Rabud, seven and a half miles west of Hebron. It may have been the most important town south of Hebron. (Strong's = 1) the king of Eglon, one of the five kings hanged by Joshua n pr loc 2) a town in the mountains of Judah west of Hebron and given to the priests and a city of refuge 3) a place on the northern boundary of Judah 4) a town in the territory of Gad )

**Kiriath-Sepher - Holman Bible Dictionary** (5x in OT - Jos. 15:15; Jos. 15:16; Jos. 15:49; Jdg. 1:11; Jdg. 1:12) (Kirjath-sepher or Kirjath-sannah = "city of the book" a town in the mountains of Judah to the west of Hebron ) Place name meaning, "city of book." Used in Joshua 15:15-16 as another name for **Debir**. Kiriath-Sannah is the same city ( Joshua 15:49 ).

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#### GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**Debir—Kirjath-sepher.** These names, the former signifying a word or oracle, the latter, the city of a book, have led some commentators to suppose that this city was a seat of learning, or a repository of the records of the ancient inhabitants. It is not indeed probable that writings and books, in our sense of the words, were very common among the Canaanites; but some method of recording events and a sort of learning was doubtless cultivated in those regions.

**Joshua 15:16** And Caleb said, "The one who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter as a wife."

- Jdg 1:6,12,13
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### CALEB OFFERS HIS DAUGHTER TO THE VICTOR

**And Caleb said, "The one who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter as a wife- [Kiriath-Sepher](#) is another name for [Debir](#) as noted in the previous passage.**

**Madvig** - It was not uncommon to offer special incentives for acts of bravery (cf. 1 Sam 17:25; 18:17, 25; 1 Chronicles 11:6). ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Believer's Study Bible** - Since victory was always dependent on the Lord, Caleb's challenge may have been a means to find a divinely blessed husband for his daughter (cf. 1 Sa 17:25).

**John Calvin** - And it appears, that when he held out this rare prize to his fellow-soldiers for taking the city, no small achievement was required. This confirms what formerly seemed to be the case, that it was a dangerous and difficult task which had been assigned him, when he obtained his conditional grant. Accordingly, with the view of urging the bravest to exert themselves, he promises his daughter in marriage as a reward to the valour of the man who should first scale the wall.

**Stephen Grant** - This is not the only occasion in Scripture where a father offered his daughter to the man who would accomplish some notable feat: King Saul offered his daughter to the man who could slay Goliath (1 Sam 17:25; 18:17). There was more to Caleb's offer than a desire to take the city of Debir. He had, after all, expressed his faith in the Lord and proved that he had the desire and courage to take the city himself. This was an opportunity for him to seek out a suitable husband for his daughter. The



nature of the task ensured that the man who would succeed would be a man who trusted in the Lord, as Caleb did, and prove himself to be a worthy husband. Unlike Laban, who reneged on his promise to give Rachel to Jacob after seven years of labour, Caleb kept his word: "And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife" (v. 17). The designation of Othniel has led to some debate as to whether he was Caleb's younger brother or nephew. The expression, "the son of Kenaz" is equivalent to "the Kenezite" (14:6). It is difficult to be certain as to the relationship between Caleb and Othniel since there are not many other Scriptures which give help on the subject.....Whether he was the nephew or brother does not change the significance of his actions in taking Debir and winning the hand of Achsah, Caleb's daughter. Marrying a niece or cousin was not forbidden by the Law and was perfectly acceptable. He proved himself a worthy husband for Achsah and continued to demonstrate that he was a man of spiritual worth. After the death of Joshua, he was the first man raised up by the Lord to deliver the children of Israel (Jdg 3:9–11), leading them to victory over Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia.

**THOUGHT** - Concern about a suitable match for his daughter was wise and in keeping with the Caleb's character. It resulted in the capture of Debir for the tribe of Judah and also demonstrated the fitness of Othniel to marry Achsah. In accordance with the customs of the time, Caleb set an example for any father to follow. Traditions surrounding marriage may vary from place to place. However, in accordance with the practices of the land in which he lives, and in keeping with biblical teaching, a father ought to have a desire that his daughter marry a suitable husband, someone with an interest in the Word of God and the work of God. The means of working this out may differ, but prayer plays an essential role, no matter what the customs of the land may be. (Grant - [What the Bible Teaches - Joshua Judges Ruth](#))

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### **OTHNIEL'S PRIZE. Joshua 15:16-19. - James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose**

"Anoint our eyes that we below  
The walk of faith, not sight, may know;  
Midst fiercest storms Hope's anchor cast,  
And still in love our Lord hold fast.

Faith! that clings unto the Cross;  
Hope! that looks beyond the sky;  
Love! that counts all things but loss,  
To win the bliss that is on high."

—Grosart.

Othniel's dare and doing to win the hand of Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, is a beautiful and unique little episode in the taking of the cities of Canaan. It would be perfectly absurd to imagine that an honourable God-following man like Caleb would offer his daughter to any man who might happen to be the first to scramble over the walls of Debir. A man that could smite this fortified city, and take it, could only be the man that could take command of an army and lead them to victory. That worthy man was Othniel, the brother of Caleb. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." So we are quite warranted to look for doctrine even here, "that the man of God may be furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16). We always accept this statement of the apostle as a divine license to seek spiritual teaching from historical events.

**I. The Hero Mentioned, or the Character of Christ.** The name of Othniel is significant, the "Lion of God," or the "Strength of God." This was no misnomer, for in after years when the children of Israel got into bondage, and cried unto the Lord, He raised up this same Othniel as a deliverer to them (Judges 3:9). Jesus Christ, like Othniel, is the "Strength of God," sent forth as a Deliverer for His people. The Lion of the tribe of Judah. If I speak of strength, lo, He is strong, He travels in the greatness of His strength, and is mighty to save.

**II. The Task Accomplished, or the Work of Christ** (vv. 16, 17). Othniel's mission was to smite and to take, and he finished the work on which he set his heart to do. The taking of Kirjath-sepher would doubtless cause him much effort and agony; but, like the Son of God, he set his face like a flint to go up. The work of Jesus Christ was also to smite and to take. He smote the devil with the weapon of the Word, and spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them (Luke 4:1-12; Col. 2:15), and took the helpless prey from the hand of the mighty, making them prisoners of grace (Luke 11:21, 22; 2 Cor. 1:9, 10). In capturing the citadel of the human heart He has still to smile with the spirit of conviction before He can take it as an habitation for Himself.

**III. The Reward Offered, or the Bride of Christ.** Caleb said, "He that smiteth and taketh it, to him will I give my daughter to wife" (v. 16). It was a battle for a bride. The work of conquering the land was a God-given work; the reward offered in Achsah was a reward of love, reverence, and service. What a suggestive picture of the Church, as the Lamb's wife, the reward given Him by God for His work, and passion, and victory! Purchased at the sacrifice of His own blood. "He loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself" (Eph. 5:25-27). Caleb's daughter was married to him who had fought and conquered for her. This is also



our privilege, as sons and daughters have we been given by God to Him, who lived, and loved, and died, and conquered for us (John 17:6). Are we acting the part of a true wife by giving Him the love of our hearts and the service of our lives? It is expected of the wife that "she reverence her husband" (Eph. 5:33).

**IV. The Dowry Given, or the Christian's Portion.** "And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs" (v. 19). She asked for springs of water, and she received them. A spring was a great inheritance in these days. To possess springs in the hills and springs in the valleys was to be the heir of an everlasting source of wealth. These springs are perennial emblems of the believer's portion in Christ. Since we have the honour of being part of the bride of Christ, let us, like Achsah, go in for the springs that are freely given us of God. Springs for the hills and springs for the valleys of our daily life. Every promise of God to us is an unfailing spring of refreshing and comfort. If thou knowest the gift of God, ask of Him, and He will give you a spring of living water that shall be in you, springing up everlastingly (John 4:10-14). It is the delight of the Lamb now to lead us unto these living fountains of water (Rev. 7:17). Every child of God may have his or her dowry of living springs. All is yours, for ye are Christ's. "Covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. 12:31). In the upper springs we have the promise of supply for all our spiritual need, in the nether springs the promise of supply for all our temporal need. "My God shall supply all your need." "All my springs are in Thee" (Ps. 87:7).

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#### GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**And Caleb said, He that smiteth, &c.** We cannot think so ill of Caleb, as to suppose that this proposition proceeded either from cowardice or sloth. He did not invite another to achieve a difficult and dangerous exploit because he shrunk from it himself. He had already evinced too much valor to allow of the supposition. But his generous spirit would not permit him to monopolise all the glory of these victories. He would give occasion to some of his younger brethren to signalise their prowess also; and to strengthen the inducement, he makes a proffer of his daughter in marriage to the successful combatant. Such an achievement would be presumptive evidence that the man was worthy of her, and one who was likely to deserve well of his country. So Saul, in like manner, promised his daughter in marriage to him who should kill Goliath, 1 Sam. 17:25. Fathers, in ancient times, appear to have had nearly an absolute power in the disposal of their daughters in marriage, as we learn from the case of Laban, and numerous other instances mentioned in the Scriptures. Caleb, however, could no doubt safely presume upon his daughter's preference coinciding with his, especially when such recommendations existed as were supposed in the very nature of the case. Deeds of valor have seldom failed, in any age of the world, to prove a powerful passport to the female heart, although it is to be hoped that the force of this attraction will diminish, as the influence of a religion of peace prevails in the world.

**Joshua 15:17 Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it; so he gave him Achsah his daughter as a wife.**

- **Othniel:** Jdg 1:12-13 3:9,11
- **Kenaz:** Jos 14:6 Nu 32:12
- **Achsah:** 1Ch 2:49
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### CALEB'S DAUGHTER'S FAITH AND BOLDNESS

#### Related Passages:

Judges 1:12-13 And Caleb said, "The one who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will even give him my daughter Achsah for a wife." 13 **Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother**, captured it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah for a wife.

**Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it; so he gave him Achsah his daughter as a wife**- Othniel is a son of Kenaz, who was Caleb's brother. Othniel means "lion of God," and Kenaz means "hunting" or "a receptacle of strength." Caleb was faithful to his promise, and so he gave his daughter Acsah to Othniel in marriage .

This recalls God's promise in Nu 14:24 "But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it." Here we see his descendant doing just as God had promised.

It is notable that Othniel Caleb's nephew later led the Israelites against Mesopotamian oppressors as the first of the judges (Jdg 3:8-11). Clearly the courage of Caleb and his steadfast faith in Jehovah impacted some of the men in the generation succeeding Caleb and Joshua.

**THOUGHT** - Caleb's example of a life of enduring faith and courage was a model to others. This begs the question dear follower of Christ, what about your life? Are you leaving an imprint in the hearts of those who come behind, that they might also fight the good fight of faith because of your example? Listen to Steve Green's poignant vocal [Find Us Faithful](#).

**Warren Wiersbe offers another insight** - Caleb's faith also touched his daughter, for she had the faith to ask her father for a field and then for springs of water to irrigate the land. Caleb's example of faith was more valuable to his family than the property he claimed for them. The older generation must provide for the next generation, not only materially but most of all spiritually. "**Senior saints**" must be examples of believers and encourage the younger generation to trust the Lord and wholly follow Him. ([Be Strong - Joshua: Putting God's Power to Work in Your Life](#))

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#### **GEORGE BUSH** - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**Othniel, the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it.** It was Kenaz, and not Othniel, who was the brother, and, as appears from Jdg. 1:13, the younger brother of Caleb; otherwise the marriage would have been unlawful, or at least of questionable propriety. It is not at all improbable, that Othniel previously entertained an affection for Achsah, so that he could not brook the thought that any one else should do more to win her favor, than he himself would. This prompted him unhesitatingly to take up the gage which Caleb had thrown down. The result proved that he was worthy both of the work and the wages; for he became afterwards a deliverer and a judge in Israel, the first single person who presided in their affairs, after the death of Joshua. 'It is good for those, who are setting out in the world, to begin betimes with that which is great and good; that, excelling in service when they are young, they may excel in honor when they are old.' Henry.

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#### **QUESTION** - [Who was Othniel?](#)

**ANSWER** - Othniel, the first judge, is first mentioned in Joshua 15:17 as "Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother." As a nephew of Caleb, Othniel took on the challenge of conquering the city of Debir (or Kiriath Sepher) and driving out the Canaanites there. As the victor, Othniel received the reward of Achsah, Caleb's daughter, as his wife. Othniel had two sons named Hathath and Meonothai and was from the tribe of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:13).

Othniel lived in Debir in the land of Judah after this time. Through his wife's influence, he obtained from his uncle Caleb the upper and lower springs in the land of the Negeb (Joshua 15:19).

Othniel is important in biblical history as the first judge listed in the [Book of Judges](#). After eight years of bondage to Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, the people cried out to God for help (Judges 3:9). In response, the LORD "raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who saved them. The Spirit of the Lord came on him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. The Lord gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him. So the land had peace for forty years, until Othniel son of Kenaz died" (Judges 3:9–11).

We find in this passage that 1) Othniel was raised up as a judge and leader in Israel, 2) he defeated the king of Mesopotamia, and 3) Othniel and the Israelites lived in peace following this time. Othniel's leadership spanned a long time, covering approximately 1350—1310 BC.

Othniel is the first of 12 judges listed in the Book of Judges. His judgeship covered a transitional period connecting the leaders of the past to the leaders of his time. He was related to Caleb, who had left Egypt as a freed slave and entered the [Promised Land](#) as a leader.

Important lessons learned from the life of Othniel include the influence of family, the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering a person's life, and the tremendous value of godly leadership in keeping peace among a community of people.

Interestingly, the tomb of "Othniel Ben Kenaz" is believed to be located in Hebron. Preceded by Joshua and followed by Ehud in Israel's history, Othniel's important legacy endures still today among the great leaders of Israel. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Joshua 15:18** It came about that when she came to him, she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she alighted from the donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?"

KJV Joshua 15:18 And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou?

NET Joshua 15:18 One time Acsah came and charmed her father so that she could ask him for some land. When she got down from her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What would you like?"

NLT Joshua 15:18 When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What's the matter?"

ESV Joshua 15:18 When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she got off her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?"

NIV Joshua 15:18 One day when she came to Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What can I do for you?"

- **she alighted from the donkey**; Ge 24:64 1Sa 25:23
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ACHSAH SEIZES THE MOMENT

**It came about that when she came to him** (? OTHNIEL- see technical note below), **she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she alighted from the donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?"** - Acsah has learned the lesson of letting her husband take the lead, and she urges him to ask her father for a field. She is the one, however, who gets the opportunity of talking to her dad about it. Caleb must have been, indeed, a very generous and gracious man because his heart concern is for his daughter's welfare and comfort. "What can I do for you?" I have two daughters when they come to me on a donkey, I know that they want something from me! Caleb also [knew the drill](#) for apparently before his daughter even says anything, he asks **"What do you want?"**.

**TECHNICAL NOTE** - NET NOTES - Heb "him." (**she came to him**) The referent of the pronoun could be Othniel, in which case the translation would be, "she incited him [Othniel] to ask her father for a field." This is problematic, however, for Acsah, not Othniel, makes the request in v. 19. The LXX has "he [Othniel] urged her to ask her father for a field." This appears to be an attempt to reconcile the apparent inconsistency and probably does not reflect the original text. If Caleb is understood as the referent of the pronoun, the problem disappears. For a fuller discussion of the issue, see P. G. Mosca, "Who Seduced Whom? A Note on Joshua 15:18//Judges 1:14," CBQ 46 (1984): 18-22. This incident is also recorded in Judg 1:14.

**Stephen Grant** - In this little cameo is seen the spirituality of Othniel's wife; they were perfectly matched. It is an excellent picture of a marriage of equals. How important it is for the husband and wife in a marriage to share spiritual ambition, to have the same desire to enjoy the inheritance they received when they were saved, and to be fruitful in the things of the Lord. Acsah was prepared to act in order to see her ambition realised. She did not wait for her husband to do for her what she could do for herself. ([What the Bible Teaches - Joshua Judges Ruth](#))

**Hess** notes that "Acsah's request for the springs is reminiscent of Rebekah's meeting with Isaac (Gn. 24:61-67) in which she also (1) approaches riding on an animal; (2) descends; (3) makes a request; and (4) receives the desired result from the person whom she approaches. Both accounts involve an inheritance of the blessing that God had promised to Abraham. This is probably the reason for the inclusion of this particular note." ([Joshua: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

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**GEORGE BUSH** - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**18. As she came unto him.** Or, Heb. 'in her going;' i. e. in going from her father's house to live with her husband.

**She moved him to ask.** Gr. 'she took counsel with him, saying, I will ask.' Being on the point of leaving the paternal roof, she seized the opportunity, when a parent's heart would naturally be tender and yielding, to persuade her husband to solicit an additional boon of her father. He readily consented to the request being made, but seems to have preferred that it should come from herself rather than him, as he would do nothing that would appear like taking advantage of Caleb's favorable disposition towards his son-in-law. Accordingly the petition was made by Acsah, who, in order to manifest more respect and reverence for her father, alighted off the animal on which she rode, and addressed him in the most suppliant posture. On this eastern mode of expressing respect, see 'Illustrations of Scripture,' p. 32, 282.

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**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - OTHNIEL'S PRIZE Joshua 15:16-19**

"Anoint our eyes that we below

The walk of faith, not sight, may know;  
Midst fiercest storms Hope's anchor cast,  
And still in love our Lord hold fast.

Faith! that clings unto the Cross;  
Hope! that looks beyond the sky;  
Love! that counts all things but loss,  
To win the bliss that is on high."—GROSART.

Othniel's dare and doing to win the hand of Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, is a beautiful and unique little episode in the taking of the cities of Canaan. It would be perfectly absurd to imagine that an honourable God-following man like Caleb would offer his daughter to any man who might happen to be the first to scramble over the walls of Debir. A man that could smite this fortified city, and take it, could only be the man that could take command of an army and lead them to victory. That worthy man was Othniel, the brother of Caleb. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." So we are quite warranted to look for doctrine even here, "that the man of God may be furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16). We always accept this statement of the apostle as a divine license to seek spiritual teaching from historical events.

I. The Hero Mentioned, OR THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST. The name of Othniel is significant, the "Lion of God," or the "Strength of God." This was no misnomer, for in after years when the children of Israel got into bondage, and cried unto the Lord, He raised up this same Othniel as a deliverer to them (Judges 3:9). Jesus Christ, like Othniel, is the "Strength of God," sent forth as a Deliverer for His people. The Lion of the tribe of Judah. If I speak of strength, lo, He is strong, He travels in the greatness of His strength, and is mighty to save.

II. The Task Accomplished, OR THE WORK OF CHRIST (vv. 16, 17). Othniel's mission was to smite and to take, and he finished the work on which he set his heart to do. The taking of Kirjath-sepher would doubtless cause him much effort and agony; but, like the Son of God, he set his face like a flint to go up. The work of Jesus Christ was also to smite and to take. He smote the devil with the weapon of the Word, and spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them (Luke 4:1-12; Col. 2:15), and took the helpless prey from the hand of the mighty, making them prisoners of grace (Luke 11:21, 22; 2 Cor. 1:9, 10). In capturing the citadel of the human heart He has still to smite with the spirit of conviction before He can take it as an habitation for Himself.

III. The Reward Offered, OR THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. Caleb said, "He that smiteth and taketh it, to him will I give my daughter to wife" (v. 16). It was a battle for a bride. The work of conquering the land was a God-given work; the reward offered in Achsah was a reward of love, reverence, and service. What a suggestive picture of the Church, as the Lamb's wife, the reward given Him by God for His work, and passion, and victory! Purchased at the sacrifice of His own blood. "He loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself" (Eph. 5:25-27). Caleb's daughter was married to him who had fought and conquered for her. This is also our privilege, as sons and daughters have we been given by God to Him, who lived, and loved, and died, and conquered for us (John 17:6). Are we acting the part of a true wife by giving Him the love of our hearts and the service of our lives? It is expected of the wife that "she reverence her husband" (Eph. 5:33).

IV. The Dowry Given, OR THE CHRISTIAN'S PORTION. "And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs" (v. 19). She asked for springs of water, and she received them. A spring was a great inheritance in these days. To possess springs in the hills and springs in the valleys was to be the heir of an everlasting source of wealth. These springs are perennial emblems of the believer's portion in Christ. Since we have the honour of being part of the bride of Christ, let us, like Achsah, go in for the springs that are freely given us of God. Springs for the hills and springs for the valleys of our daily life. Every promise of God to us is an unfailling spring of refreshing and comfort. If thou knowest the gift of God, ask of Him, and He will give you a spring of living water that shall be in you, springing up everlastingly (John 4:10-14). It is the delight of the Lamb now to lead us unto these living fountains of water (Rev. 7:17). Every child of God may have his or her dowry of living springs. All is yours, for ye are Christ's. "Covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. 12:31). In the upper springs we have the promise of supply for all our spiritual need, in the nether springs the promise of supply for all our temporal need. "My God shall supply all your need." "All my springs are in Thee" (Psa. 87:7).

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**Streams in the Desert** - THERE are both upper and nether springs. They are springs, not stagnant pools. There are joys and blessings that flow from above through the hottest summer and the most desert land of sorrow and trial. The lands of Achsah were "south lands," lying under a burning sun and often parched with burning heat. But from the hills came the unfailling springs, that cooled, refreshed and fertilized all the land.

There are springs that flow in the low places of life, in the hard places, in the desert places, in the lone places, in the common places, and no matter what may be our situation, we can always find these upper springs.

Abraham found them amid the hills of Canaan. Moses found them among the rocks of Midian. David found them among the ashes of Ziklag when his property was gone, his family captives and his people talked of stoning him, but "David encouraged himself in the

Lord.”

Habakkuk found them when the fig tree was withered and the fields were brown, but as he drank from them he could sing: “Yet will I rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of my salvation.”

Isaiah found them in the awful days of Sennacherib’s invasion, when the mountains seemed hurled into the midst of the sea, but faith could sing: “There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved.”

The martyrs found them amid the flames, and reformers amid their foes and conflicts, and we can find them all the year if we have the Comforter in our hearts and have learned to say with David: “All my springs are in thee.”

How many and how precious these springs, and how much more there is to be possessed of God’s own fulness!

—A. B. Simpson.

I said: “The desert is so wide!”

I said: “The desert is so bare!

What springs to quench my thirst are there?

Whence shall I from the tempest hide?”

I said: “The desert is so lone!

Nor gentle voice, nor loving face

Will brighten any smallest space.”

I paused or ere my moan was done!

I heard a flow of hidden springs;

Before me palms rose green and fair;

The birds were singing; all the air

Did shine and stir with angels’ wings!

And One said mildly: “Why, indeed,

Take over-anxious thought for that

The morrow bringeth! See you not

The Father knoweth what you need?”

—Selected.

**Joshua 15:19** Then she said, “**Give** me a blessing (NET - “special present”); since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water.” So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

- **Give me:** Jdg 1:14,15
- **a blessing:** Ge 33:11 De 33:7 1Sa 25:27 2Co 9:5
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Judges 1:14-15 Then it came about when she came to him (OTHNIEL), that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. Then she alighted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?” 15 She said to him, “Give me a blessing, since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water.” So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

### ACHSAH ASKS CALEB FOR A BLESSING OF LAND AND WATER

Then she said, “**Give** me a blessing ([berakah](#); Lxx - [eulogia](#)); since you have given ([perfect tense](#)) me the land of the [Negev](#), give ([perfect tense](#)) me also springs of water.” So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs- NLT = “give me another gift.” Was she asking for a “wedding gift?” Perhaps. But she was also practical (she was a “Proverb 31:1-31 woman”) for she knew she needed water in the Negev region. [Negev](#) means something like dry or parched and was located in the southern region of Judah’s territory. The size of her marriage gift is uncertain for the region of the Negev is large, extending from the hills south of Hebron to the site of Kadesh-barnea in the south and all arid land. In such an environment it is no surprise Achsah also

asked for the **springs of water**, to which he acquiesced. Caleb was not just a faithful follower of God and a courageous warrior, but also a generous giver.

As an aside to see if you are observing the text carefully, what is the "keyword" in this verse? If you did not see it, go back and read the text again and you will see it! I am just trying to get you to hone your skills of [inductive Bible study](#).

**Cyril Barber** - From this incident the Irish theologian, Dr. Andrew R. Fausset, draws a picture of prayer. Achsah's request was based upon her relationship with her father. She knew him to be large-hearted and gracious. When she came to him she tzeanach, eagerly "leapt" from her donkey (which in itself was a token of reverence), and when her father asked what she wanted, her request was clear and direct. "You have given me the [dry] southland, give me also springs of water." And Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs. Everything that Caleb did was similar to what our heavenly Father has done and still does for us! ([Joshua: A Devotional Exposition](#))

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**Blessing** (01293) **berakah** from barak) is a feminine noun referring to something that brings prosperity and life. It designates the good favor bestowed on someone as by giving a gift (Ge 33:11, 1 Sa 25:27) or by giving words of blessing (Ge 27:36, 49:28), which were a verbal picture of tangible blessing. Berakah most often describes divine favor bestowed on the righteous (Ge 12:2, Mal 3:10).

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#### **GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)**

**19. Give me a blessing.** Do me an act of kindness, grant me a special favor, as a gift is sometimes called a blessing, Gen. 33:11; 2 Kings 5:15; 2 Cor. 9:5. Or, she calls this a blessing, because it would add much to the comfort of her settlement, and she was sure, since she married not only with her father's consent, but in obedience to his command, he would not deny her his blessing.

**Hast given me a south land.** Which by lying exposed to the burning rays of the sun, and to the sultry south winds, was comparatively ill-watered and barren.

**Give me also springs of water.** By which she meant not simply gushing springs of water, but the field or fields in which they were situated, v. 18. Chald. 'Give me a place moistened with water'. If the fields belonged to one, and the springs to another, she would of course be little benefited by the possession.

**He gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.** Both higher and lower ground; tracts of hill and dale well watered. An allusion of practical bearing is sometimes made to this, when we pray for spiritual and heavenly blessings, which relate to our souls as blessings of the upper springs, and those that relate to the body and the life that now is, as blessings of the nether springs. From this story we may learn, (1) That a moderate desire for the comforts and conveniences of this life is no breach of the commandment, 'Thou shalt not covet.' (2) That mutual consultation and joint agreement between husbands and wives, as touching the things they shall seek pertaining to the common good of themselves and their families, is the surest omen of success. (3) That parents should never think that lost which is bestowed upon their children, for their advantage. They forget themselves and their relations, who grudge their children what is convenient for them, when they can easily part with it.

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#### **F B Meyer - Joshua 15:19 He gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.**

Caleb had conquered his giants, and so he was able to give his daughter an inheritance of land and springs of water. It was when Jesus had overcome the sharpness of death that He opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers; it was as He trampled under his victorious feet the principalities and powers of darkness that He gave to his Church the upper and the nether springs.

There are two departments in our life, which are closely related and yet one. We occupy the one in our contact with men and our work in the world; the other, in our holy moments of meditation and prayer. Christ's sheep go out to their manifold activities, and come in to feed on the green pastures beside waters of rest. In each of these we stand in daily need of the springs that are fed from the River which proceeds from the Throne of God, and which is an emblem of the Holy Ghost.

On the Lord's Day, in the House of God, or in private prayer, we climb the hills and stand on the margin of the upper springs that rise there; in the solemn hush we hear the murmur of their waters. On Monday we descend into the valley amid the clang of the battle and the cries of human need; but, thank God! plentiful springs are there also. Upper springs from the Mount of Transfiguration; nether springs for the Valley of Humiliation. Upper springs for the days of health and abounding activity; nether springs for days of depression, and pain, and death. Upper springs in praise, adoration, and rapture; nether springs for taking the yoke, bearing the burden, and drinking of his cup. Let us partake freely of the refreshing water which flows from the River of God.

**Joshua 15:20 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Judah according to their families.**



- Ge 49:8-12 De 33:7
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

- A. The southern cities - verses 21-32
- B. The western foothills cities - verses 33-47
- C. The hill country cities - verses 48-60
- D. The desert cities - verses 61-62

### A SUMMARY STATEMENT INTRODUCING THE CITIES OF JUDAH

**Madvig** comments on Joshua 15:20-62 - A modern reader may question the value of a long list of names of towns like this, but for the Judahite it described the homeland that God had given to his tribe. It is another evidence of the historical, down-to-earth nature of God's redemptive program. The sending of the Savior was also very down to earth; remember: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**This is the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Judah according to their families-** This describes the cities within the boundaries just described in the preceding section and/or introduces the cities to now be described in great detail.

**Grant** - Joshua 15:20 refers to what has gone before and serves as a summary of the details of the land given to Judah. Similar wording occurs twelve times in Joshua, in relation to the inheritance of each tribe (Joshua 13:23, 28; 15:20; 16:8; 18:20, 28; 19:8, 16, 23, 31, 39, 48). ([What the Bible Teaches - Joshua Judges Ruth](#))

**John Currid** - This catalogue of cities simply gives 'concrete expression to the fulfilment of God's promises regarding the land'. In other words, it demonstrates that the accomplishment of God's word to Israel has indeed taken place in space and time; it is a historical fact that is tangible and concrete. There is a true earthiness to this inheritance. ([WCS Joshua: Strong and Courageous](#))

**Dale Ralph Davis** - Karl Gutbrod has made some helpful observations here. Our narrator is no secular history writer but writes as God's messenger with a word to the worshipping community of Israel. The puzzle is how such lists can proclaim the work and power of God to his people. How can this nurture them? Perhaps the solution lies in recognising what may be called biblical realism. God's word is seldom about some bare, purely spiritual, inner abstraction. The God of the Bible tends to be concrete, his gifts tangible and visible. The inheritance he bequeaths is not an idea but boundaries, not thoughts but towns: in a word, real estate. Yahweh has always been this way—and his infleshment is the great witness to the fact (John 1:1, 14). We western Christians probably need to get a hard grip on this; we need to rediscover the earthiness of God. We must realise that even enjoying the grand act of the kingdom of God will not mean floating as a beeping soul in some sort of spiritual ether but walking around with a resurrection body in new heavens and a new earth (cf. Isa. 65–66; Rev. 21–22). So perhaps we can say that Israel's concrete and tangible inheritance in Canaan is a foreshadowing of our own. Our full possession is in new heavens and a new earth, not in some earthless, fleshless void. Our full expectation ought not to be in dying and going to heaven, as the usual cliché has it. The New Testament language is that believers, when they die, are 'with the Lord' (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; Luke 23:43). But the New Testament always lifts our eyes and fixes our minds upon the fullness of our hope, the redemption of our bodies on resurrection day at the return of our Lord (Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:20–21; 1 Thess. 4:16–17; 1 Cor. 15). ([Joshua: No Falling Words](#))

**Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary** - Verses 20-63. Here is a list of the cities of Judah. But we do not here find Bethlehem, afterwards the city of David, and ennobled by the birth of our Lord Jesus in it. That city, which, at the best, was but little among the thousands of Judah, Micah 5:2, except that it was thus honoured, was now so little as not to be accounted one of the cities.

## GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**20. This is the inheritance, &c.** He now returns to the description of Judah's inheritance, from the digression made concerning Caleb and his family, in the preceding verses.

**Joshua 15:21** Now the cities at the extremity of the tribe of the sons of Judah toward the border of Edom in the south were [Kabzeel](#) and Eder and Jagur,

- [Kabzeel](#): Ne 11:25



- **Eder:** Ge 35:21
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

- A. The southern cities - verses 21-32
- B. The western foothills cities - verses 33-47
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## CITIES DISPERSED TO JUDAH BEGINNING WITH SOUTH

**Irving Jensen** - Judah's inheritance extended over four topographically different regions: the South's dry plains (NEGEV)(Joshua 15:21-32); the western foothill bordering the coastal plain ("lowland," [SHEPHELAH] Joshua 15:33-47); the central ridge of hill country (Joshua 15:48-60); and the sparsely populated desolate wilderness of the slopes leading down to the Dead Sea (Joshua 15:61-62). The large number of cities inherited (109) indicates the value of the land given Judah, for with cities were associated water supply, arable land, and defensible position. ([Joshua- Everyman's Bible Commentary: Rest-Land Won](#))

Joshua 15:21-62 can be summarized this part of Canaan which contained four distinct regions: the southern Negev, the lowland plain (Shephelah), the mountains (hill country), and the desert. The Negev (south land) formed a region between the more fertile parts of Judah to the north and the desert to the south.

**Now the cities at the extremity** (southern border) **of the tribe of the sons of Judah toward the border of Edom in the south were Kabzeel and Eder and Jagur** - This begins a list of over 100 cities that Judah took possession of with one exception being Jerusalem (Josh 15:63). In verses 21-32 there are 36 southern cities.

**Madvig** - "The southernmost towns" are mostly towns in the Negev (esp. those in Joshua 15:26–32) that are also ascribed to Simeon in Joshua 19:1–9. There it is stated that the territory given to Judah was "more than they needed" (Joshua 19:9). Consequently some of it was reassigned to Simeon. The distribution of the land was not all completed at once; rather it took place over an extended period of time (see Joshua 18:1–10). "Kabzeel" was the hometown of Benaiah, one of David's outstanding warriors (2 Sam 23:20; 1 Chronicles 11:22). ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Kabzeel - Fausset's Bible Dictionary** ("collected by God" "God gathers") (4x in OT -Jos. 15:21; 2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chr. 11:22; Neh. 11:25) Standing at the confluence of wady el Jeib and Fikreh and Kuseib; the farthest S. of Judah's cities (Joshua 15:21). At its mouth is its fountain, the only good water of the region, where the road from Jerusalem diverges E. by the Dead Sea to Moab and S. to Petra; a spot likely to be occupied, though remote, as a stronghold, the key of Palestine toward Moab and Edom, guarding the pass Ez Zuweirah, by which the Moabites under Sanballat, the Ammonites under Tobiah, and the Arabians under Geshem, might attack the Jews (Nehemiah 4:12). Hot as the summer is, snow falls deep at times in winter. Benaiah's "slaying two lion-like men of Moab" accords with the position of Kadesh toward Moab; also "the lion in a pit on a snowy day" accords with there being dense jungle, the haunt of wild beasts, in the neighbourhood.

**Eder - Holman Bible Dictionary** (Eder is from adar - to fail or be lacking) A town in the southern limits of the tribal territory of Judah near Edom (Joshua 15:21 ). Its location is not known.

**Jagur - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia** (Jagur from gur = to sojourn) a city on the south or Ildumean border of Judah, mentioned between Eder and Kinah (Joshua 15:21). "Its name might perhaps indicate that it was one of the fortified camping-grounds of the border Arabs" (Kitto). "The Jagur, quoted by Schwarz (Palest. p. 99) from the Talmud as one of the boundaries of the territory of Ashkelon, must have been further to the northwest" (Smith). The position of the town here considered can only be conjectured as not very far from the Dead Sea.

**Joshua 15:22 and Kinah and Dimonah and Adadah,**

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

and Kinah and Dimonah and Adadah,

[Kinah - ISB Encyclopedia](#) An unidentified town on the southern boundary of Judah, toward Edom ( Joshua 15:22 ). The word *kīnāh* means "elegy," "dirge," "lament for the dead." The name, however, may have been derived from the Kenites, קיני, who had settlements in the South (1 Samuel 27:10 , etc.).

[Kinah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (Only in Josh 15:22) Place name meaning, "lamentation." A city in the southeast of Judah near the boundary of Edom (Joshua 15:22 ). Perhaps a settlement of the Kenites. Usually identified with modern wadi el-Qeini, south of Hebron.

[Dimonah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (Dimonah = "river bed" or "silence" a town in the south Juda, only in Josh 15:22) Place name related to Hebrew word for blood. A town on southeast border of tribal allotment of Judah (Joshua 15:22 ). Some have suggested its location at tell ed-Dheib near Aroer. It may be the same as Dibon mentioned in Nehemiah 11:25 .

[Adadah - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia](#) (Adadah = "festival" or "boundary" one of the towns in the extreme south of Judah; only in Josh 15:22) (Heb. Adadah', אַדָּדָה, from the Syr., festival, or perhaps, by reduplication, boundary; Sept. δαδᾶ, v. r. που λ ), a town in the southern part of the tribe of Judah, mentioned between Dimonah and Kedesh (Joshua 15:22); probably situated in the portion afterward set off to Simeon (Joshua 19:1-9).

#### Joshua 15:23 and Kedesh and Hazor and Ithnan,

- **Kedesh:** Jos 12:22 Nu 33:37 De 1:19
- **Hazor:** The LXX. read [Hasorionain,] for Hazar-Ithnan, regarding these two as one city.
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

and Kedesh and Hazor and Ithnan - Some think this is same as Kadesh-Barnea but others do not agree.

[Kedesh - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (12x - Jos. 12:22; Jos. 15:23; Jos. 19:37; Jos. 20:7; Jos. 21:32; Jdg. 4:6; Jdg. 4:9; Jdg. 4:10; Jdg. 4:11; 2 Ki. 15:29; 1 Chr. 6:72; 1 Chr. 6:76) Place name meaning, "sacred place" or "sanctuary." **1. A city in the southern part of Judah** (Joshua 15:23 ). Probably the same as Kadesh-Barnea. See [Kadesh-Barnea](#) .2. A Canaanite town in eastern Galilee defeated by Joshua (Joshua 12:22 ). The town was allotted to Naphtali (Joshua 19:32 ,Joshua 19:32,19:37 ) and was called Kedesh in Naphtali (Judges 4:6 ). It was also called Kedesh in Galilee and given to the Gershonite Levites as one of their cities (Joshua 20:7; Joshua 21:32 ). See Judges 4:6 ) and the place where Deborah and Barak gathered their forces for battle (Judges 4:1-10 ). Heber the Kenite pitched his tent in the vicinity where Sisera met his death at the hands of Jael, Heber's wife (Judges 4:21; Judges 5:24-27 ). Kedesh in Naphtali was captured by Tiglath-pileser III during the reign of Pekah of Israel. The inhabitants were exiled to Assyria (2 Kings 15:29 ). Usually identified with modern khirbet Qedish, about two miles south of Tiberias. **3. A city in Issachar** allotted to the Gershomite Levites (1 Chronicles 6:72 ). The town is also called Kishon (Joshua 21:28 KJV; Kishion in other versions). It has been suggested that "Kedesh in Issachar" may have arisen from a misreading of "Kishon" for "Kedesh." The site is uncertain. Perhaps modern tell Abu Qudeis, about two miles southeast of Megiddo.

[Hazor - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) .(note there are up to 6 meanings of Hazor - click link). Town in tribal inheritance of Judah (Joshua 15:23 ), probably to be read with earliest Greek translation as Hazor-Ithnan. This may be modern el-Jebariyeh. (**NOTE:** This Hazor is not a chief city of northern Canaan, whose king Jabin, at the head of an allied host, was defeated by Joshua, Joshua 11:1-13 . Hazor revived, however, and for a time oppressed the Israelites; but was subdued by Barak, fortified by Solomon, and remained in the possession of Israel until the invasion of Tiglath pileser, Joshua 19:36; Judges 4:2; 1 Kings 9:15; 2 Kings 15:29 . It lay not far from Lake Merom.)

[Ithnan - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)(only mention in Scripture) Place name meaning, "flowing constantly." Town on southern border of tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:23 ). Its location is not known unless some Bible lands geographers are correct in combining Hazor-ithnan into one town, which may have been located at modern el-Jebariyeh on the wadi Umm Ethnan.

#### Joshua 15:24 Ziph and Telem and Bealoth,

- **Ziph:** Eusebius and Jerome say, that Ziph was a village in their time eight miles east from Hebron. 1Sa 23:14,19,24 Ps 54:1  
\*title
- **Telem:** 1Sa 15:4
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

### Ziph and Telem and Bealoth,

[Ziph - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place and personal name perhaps meaning, “flowing.” 3 . Town in the Judean hill country (Joshua 15:24 ), likely tell Zif about three miles southeast of Hebron. Mereshah likely founded the town (1 Chronicles 2:42 ). David hid from Saul in the surrounding wilderness (1 Samuel 23:14-15 ); 1 Samuel 26:2 ). Ziphites, residents of Ziph, twice revealed David's hideouts to Saul (1 Samuel 23:19; 1 Samuel 26:1 ). Rehoboam fortified the site (2 Chronicles 11:8 ).

[Telem - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia](#) (Heb. id. מְלֵם, oppression [Gesenius; but Fū rst, place of lambs]), the name of a town and also of a man. One of the cities which are described as "the uttermost of the tribe of Judah towards the coast of Edom southward" (Joshua 15:24, where it is mentioned between the southern Ziph and Bealoth).

[Bealoth - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “female Baals” or “ladies.” 1. Town on southern border of tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:24 ). This may be the same as Baalath-beer (Joshua 19:8 ).

### Joshua 15:25 and Hazor-hadattah and Kerioth-hezron (that is, Hazor),

- **Hazor:** Or, rather, Hazar-hadattah, or, as the LXX., Alexandrian, and Vulgate render [Hasor Le kaine,] {Asor nova,} "New Hazor," to distinguish it from the preceding (ver. 28,) and following Hazor. Eusebius and Jerome say it was a village in their time, on the eastern confines of Askelon.
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

Kerioth: Or, rather, Kerioth-Hezron: LXX. [hai poleis] (Alex. [polis]) [Haseron,] "the cities (city) of Hezron." Jos 15:25

### and Hazor-hadattah and Kerioth-hezron (that is, Hazor),

[Hadattah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “new.” Part of name Hazor-hadattah ([Joshua 15:25](#) ). The earliest Greek translations apparently read the Hebrew word for “their villages” that reappears in this section of Joshua instead of Hadattah.

[Kerioth-Hezron - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name representing one or perhaps two cities. KJV takes the Hebrew to refer to two cities in Joshua 15:25 —thus, Kerioth and Hezron. Some scholars still follow this. If this is a reference to two cities, Kerioth would be identified with the Kerioth of Jeremiah 48:24; Amos 2:2 See Kerioth . Hezron would be identified with the city of Hazor mentioned in Joshua 15:23 , a city in the south of Judah near Kadesh-barnea (Joshua 15:3 ). See Hazor . Many scholars, however, take Kerioth-Hezron to refer to a village of Judah in the Negev district of Beersheba and identify it with modern khirbet el-Qaryatein, about four miles south of Maon.

**Utley - Kerioth-hezron**” This village is often associated with Judas Iscariot (“man of Kerioth”), but this is only one of several other possible meanings of “Iscariot.”

### Joshua 15:26 Amam and Shema and Moladah,

- **Moladah:** Probably the same as Malatha, a city frequently mentioned by Eusebius; from whom it appears to have been situated in the southern border of Judah, about twenty miles from Hebron. 1Ch 4:28
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH

## CONTINUED

### Amam and Shema and Moladah,

[Amam - ISB Encyclopedia](#) An unidentified town in southern Palestine, which fell to Judah in the allotment of the land; occurs only in Joshua 15:26 .

**Shema** - "hear" 1) a town in Judah at the limits of the tribe toward Edom in the south

[Moladah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "generation." City near Beersheba in southern Judah assigned both to Judah (Joshua 15:26 ) and to Simeon (Joshua 19:2 ), perhaps reflecting the political realities of different times or the dependence of Simeon on Judah.

[Moladah - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#) A city in southern Judah, next Edom (Joshua 15:26), given to Simeon (Joshua 19:2; 1 Chronicles 4:28). It reverted to Judah after the captivity (Nehemiah 11:25-26). Now Khirbet el Milh, a ruin with two wells, one dry, the other with water at a depth of more than 40 ft. On the road from Petra to Hebron, ten miles E. of Beersheba.

### Joshua 15:27 and Hazar-gaddah and Heshmon and Beth-pelet,

- **Hazargaddah:** This is apparently the city which Eusebius calls [Aser;] which he says, was, in his time, a town situated between Askalon and Ashdod.
- **Bethpalet:** Ne 11:26
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

### and Hazar-gaddah and Heshmon and Beth-pelet,

[Hazar-Gaddah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "village of good luck." Town in tribal territory of Judah of unknown location near Beersheba (Joshua 15:27 ).

[Heshmon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "flat field." Town in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:27 ). Its location is not known.

[Beth-Pelet - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "house of deliverance." Southern town in tribal allotment of Judah (Joshua 15:27 ). After the return from Exile in Babylon, the Jews lived there (Nehemiah 11:26 ). KJV spellings are Beth-palet, Beth-pelet. The location is not known.

### Joshua 15:28 and Hazar-shual and Beersheba and Biziothiah,

- **Hazarshual:** Jos 19:3 1Ch 4:28
- **Beersheba:** Jos 19:2 Ge 21:14,31-33 26:33
- **Bizjothjah:** Instead of Bizjothjah, the LXX. read, "and their towns and villages."
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

**and Hazar-shual and Beersheba and Biziothiah** - [See map for Hazar-shual and Beersheba](#) - notice it is in the region of Simeon.

[Hazar-Shual - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "encampment of the foxes." Town near Beersheba in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:28 ) but allotted to tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:3; 1 Chronicles 4:28 ). Jews returning from Exile in Babylon lived there (Nehemiah 11:27 ). It may be modern khirbet el-Watan.

[Beer-Sheba - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Joshua gave Beer-sheba to the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:28 ), and then to the tribe of Simeon whose territory lay within Judah's boundaries (Joshua 19:1-2 ,Joshua 19:1-2,19:9 ). Samuel's sons Joel and Abiah were unfair judges in Beer-sheba right before the monarchy began with Saul (1 Samuel 8:1-3 ). [What is the significance of Beersheba in](#)

[Biziothiah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “scorns of Yahweh.” Southern town in tribal allotment of Judah (Joshua 15:28 ). The parallel list in Nehemiah 11:27 reads, benotheyha (“her villages”), which the Joshua text of the Septuagint or early Greek translation also read. If that is not the correct reading in Joshua 15:27 , then the location of Biziothiah is not known.

#### Joshua 15:29 Baalah and lim and Ezem,

- **Baalah:** Jos 15:9-11 19:3
- **Azem:** 1Ch 4:29
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

#### Baalah and lim and Ezem,

[Baalah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “wife, lady,” or “residence of Baal.” 1. City on northern border of tribe of Judah equated with Kirjath-jearim (Joshua 15:9-11 ). David kept the ark there before moving it to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 13:6 ). It is located at modern Deir el-Azar, eight miles west of Jerusalem. It is called Baale of Judah (2 Samuel 6:2 ) and may be the same as Kirjath-baal (Joshua 15:60 ). See Joshua 15:29 ) that may be same as Balah (Joshua 19:3 ) and as Bilhah (1 Chronicles 4:29 ). Tribe of Simeon occupied it. Its location is unknown. 3. A mountain on Judah’s northern border between Jabneel and Ekron. It may be the same as Mount Jearim.

[lim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning ruins. 1. Town on southern border of tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:29 ). Its location is not known, and it does not appear in parallel lists in Joshua 19:3; 1 Chronicles 4:29 . Many Bible students think a copyist copied parts of the following Ezem twice. 2. Used in Numbers 33:45 (KJV) as abbreviation for Iye-abarim. See Iye-abarim .

[Ezem - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “mighty” or “bone.” Town in Judah’s tribal territory but settled by tribe of Simeon (Joshua 15:29; Joshua 19:3; 1 Chronicles 4:29 ). KJV spells Azem in Joshua. Ezem is modern Umm el-Azam about fifteen miles south of Beersheba and southwest of Aroer. Archaeologists at tell esh-Sharia about thirteen miles northwest of Beersheba have found a broken piece of pottery with the name Ezem

#### Joshua 15:30 and Eltolad and Chesil and Hormah,

- **Hormah:** Jos 19:4 Nu 14:45 De 1:44 Jdg 1:17
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED

#### and Eltolad and Chesil and Hormah ([See map for Eltolad and Horman in region of Simeon](#)),

[Eltolad - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “plea for a child.” Village in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:30 ), given to tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:4 ). 1 Chronicles 4:29 apparently abbreviates it as Tolad. Its location is not known.

[Chesil - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “foolish.” A city of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:30 ). A similar list giving the boundary of Simeon in Joshua 19:4 spells the name Bethul ([See map for Bethul/Chesil in region of Simeon](#)), , a reading supported for Joshua 15:30 by the Septuagint, the earliest Greek translation. 1 Chronicles 4:30 also reads Bethuel. Chesil is thus identical with Bethuel, which can be spelled Bethuel. See Bethuel .

[Hormah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “split rock” or “cursed for destruction.” City marking the limit of the Canaanite rout of the Israelites after the failed Israelite attempt to invade Canaan that followed the report of the twelve spies (Numbers 14:45 ). Though the exact location of Hormah is not known, it was in the territory assigned to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:4 ). Some identify it with tell Masos about seven miles east of Beersheba. Excavations have shown settlement in about 1800 B.C. and again just before 1200 B.C. The latter settlement apparently lasted until the time of David (compare 1 Samuel 30:30 ). A small

fortress was built some time after 700 B.C. and destroyed shortly after 600 B.C. The site controlled the east-west road in the Beersheba Valley and the north-south road to Hebron. Israel gained brief victory there (Numbers 21:3 ) after their earlier defeat (Numbers 14:45; compare Deuteronomy 1:44 ). The list of kings Joshua defeated includes Hormah (Joshua 12:14 ); the battle description says Judah and Simeon combined to take Hormah after Joshua's death (Judges 1:1 ,Judges 1:1,1:17 ), the city earlier being called Zephath. See Zephath .

#### **Joshua 15:31 and Ziklag and Madmannah and Sansannah,**

- **Ziklag:** Jos 19:5 1Sa 27:6 30:1 1Ch 12:1
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED**

**and Ziklag and Madmannah and Sansannah -** ([See map for Ziklag in northern region of Simeon](#)),

[Ziklag - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) A village in the southern Judean plain; variously identified either as tell el-Khuweilfeh, 10 miles north northeast of Beersheba, tell esh-Shariah, 9 miles north northwest of Beersheba, or khirbet el-Mashash. City in tribal inheritance of Judah given to Simeon (Joshua 15:31; Joshua 19:5 ).

Ziklag appears to have belonged to the Philistines, taken during a period of rapid expansion in the time of Israel's judges (1 Samuel 27:6 ). The town was given to David by Achish, king of Gath, during David's "outlaw" period. The gift may have been a means of shortening Philistia's over-extended borders. Ziklag appears never to have been a part of Philistia proper.

David made the town his headquarters as he gathered his private army and made raids against the Amalekites. On returning to his base following Philistia's refusal to allow him to fight with them against Saul, David found the town had been raided and burned by the Amalekites and his family taken hostage. A daring night raid on the base of the enemy resulted in the rescue of his people and their return to Ziklag (1 Samuel 30:1 ). Jews returning from Babylonian Exile inhabited Ziklag (Nehemiah 11:28 ).

[Madmannah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "dung heap." City in the Negeb assigned to Judah (Joshua 15:31 ), possibly identical with Beth-marcaboth (Joshua 19:5 ). Suggested sites include the modern khirbet umm Demneh and khirbet Tatri, both in the vicinity of Dharhiriyah. The reference to Shaaph as the father of Madmannah (1 Chronicles 2:49 ) is open to various interpretations: (1) Shaaph (re)founded the city; (2) Shaaph's descendents settled in the city; or (3) Shaaph had a son named Madmannah.

[Sansannah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name perhaps meaning, "branch of the date palm." Town in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:31 ). Modern khirbet esh-Shamshaniyat nine miles northwest of Beersheba. Apparently the same as Hazar-susah (Joshua 19:5 ) and Hazar-susim (1 Chronicles 4:31 ), thus assigned to tribe of Simeon.

#### **Joshua 15:32 and Lebaoth and Shilhim and Ain and Rimmon; in all, twenty-nine cities with their villages.**

- **Ain:** Probably the [bethanin] of Eusebius, four miles from Hebron. Nu 34:11
- **Rimmon:** Ne 11:29
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE SOUTH CONTINUED**

**and Lebaoth and Shilhim and Ain and Rimmon; in all, twenty-nine cities with their villages.**

**Madvig** - There are thirty-six towns named in the NIV translation of vv.21–32. Even if some of the names are combined, such as Hazor Ithnan (v.23) and Ain Rimmon (v.32), or accounted for in other ways (e.g., Biziothiah; see comment on v.28), it would be impossible to reduce the list to "twenty-nine towns." Goslinga suggests that twenty-nine was a copyist's mistake or that "a few names of villages were added that should not be included among the twenty-nine towns" (p. 127). The solution to the problem is not clear. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

[Lebaoth - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) (lionesses). A town, which forms one of the last group of the cities of "the south", in the



enumeration of the possessions of Judah, [Joshua 15:32](#), probably, identical with Beth-lebaoth.

[Shilhim - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) One of the cities , in the southern portion of the tribe of Judah. Joshua 15:32.

[Ain - ATS Dictionary](#) Fountain, spelt EN in the English Sisle, in compound words, as En- rogel. It is the name of a city of Judah, afterwards assigned to Simeon, Joshua 15:32; 1 Chronicles 4:32 .

[Rimmon - Easton's Bible Dictionary](#) One of the "uttermost cities" of Judah, afterwards given to Simeon (Joshua 15:21,32; 19:7; 1 Chronicles 4:32 ). In Joshua 15:32 Ain and Rimmon are mentioned separately, but in 19:7 and 1 Chronicles 4:32 (Compare Nehemiah 11:29 ) the two words are probably to be combined, as forming together the name of one place, Ain-Rimmon=the spring of the pomegranate. It has been identified with Um er-Rumamin, about 13 miles south-west of Hebron.

**Believer's Study Bible** - There are 36 names listed in vv. 21-32. The number "twenty-nine" may be a copyist's error, or some of these names could be villages attached to a city and so not counted.

**Warren Wiersbe** - We're not sure why [verse 32](#) says twenty-nine cities when thirty-six are named, but perhaps the names of some of the "villages" outside the city walls are included in the list. At that time the Jews couldn't take Jerusalem (v. 63). ([Be Strong - Joshua: Putting God's Power to Work in Your Life](#))

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## GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)

**All the cities are twenty and nine.** But upon an exact computation there appears to be thirty-eight. The reason of the discrepancy doubtless is, either that nine of them were afterwards allotted to Simeon, or, as many of them are expressed by compound terms, translators may have combined what should be separated, and in one or two instances have formed the names of cities out of epithets.

### Joshua 15:33 In the lowland: Eshtaol and Zorah and Ashnah,

- **Eshtaol:** This town is placed by Eusebius ten mile from Eleutheropolis, towards Nicopolis: and it is supposed to be a wretched village, called Esdad, about 15 miles south of Yebna. Jos 19:41 Nu 13:23 Jdg 13:25 16:31
- **Zoreah:** A town near to Eshtaol, placed at ten miles' distance N. of Eleutheropolis by Eusebius.
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Note Eshtaol and Zorah at marker in the [shephelah](#) (lowlands) in the foothills of mountains just to the East  
CLICK TO ENLARGE

### THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

- A. The southern cities - verses 21-32
- B. The western foothills (lowlands) cities - verses 33-47
- C. The hill country cities - verses 48-60
- D. The desert cities - verses 61-62

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS

In the lowland ([shephelah](#) -- [see map](#)): **Eshtaol and Zorah and Ashnah** ([see map above](#) note Ashnah is not on map) - The **Shephelah (lowlands)** was the area between the Coastal Plain to the west and the hill country of Judah to the east [see map above with hill country just to right of marker for Zorah](#)). The Negev lay to its south.

[Eshtaol - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "asking (for an oracle)." Town in lowlands of Shephelah of Judah allotted to the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:33 ) but also to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:41 ). Near there, God's Spirit stirred Samson of the tribe of Dan (Judges 13:25 ). Samson was buried near Eshtaol (Judges 16:31 ). The tribe of Dan sent men from Eshtaol to seek a new homeland (Judges 18:2-11 ). Its citizens were kin to the clan of Caleb and to residents of Kiriath-jearim (1 Chronicles 2:53 ). It may be located at modern Irtuf, a mile south of Ishwa.

[Zorah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) (Highest point in the [Shephelah](#)) Place name meaning, "wasps" or "hornets." City of Dan (Joshua 19:41 ) about thirteen miles west of Jerusalem on the border with Judah (Joshua 15:33; "Zoreah," KJV). It was the home of Manoah, Samson's father (Judges 13:2 ). Rehoboam, king of Judah, strengthened Zorah in case of war (2 Chronicles 11:5-12 ).



**Zorah - People's Bible Dictionary** hornet's town, and Zareah (zâ're-ah), Nehemiah 11:29, a town in the low country of Judah—afterward assigned to Dan, Joshua 15:33; Joshua 19:41; the birthplace and burialplace of Samson. Judges 13:2; Judges 13:25; Judges 16:31. From Zorah the Danites sent spies to search the land for a place of inheritance. Judges 18:2. Zorah was fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chronicles 11:10, and inhabited after the return from captivity. Nehemiah 11:29. The place still exists as Surah, 13 miles west of Jerusalem.

**Ashnah - Holman Bible Dictionary** Place name, 1. A city in the valley of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:33 ), possibly modern Aslin. 2. A second city in the valley or shephelah of Judah (Joshua 15:43 ), possibly modern Idna, about eight miles northwest of Hebron.

**Lowland** (08219)(**shephelah** from **shaphel** = to be or become low, to be abased) is a feminine noun meaning a low country; a foothill; a valley. It refers to the lowland including not just a low-lying plain but also the low-lying foothills of western Palestine looking out over the Mediterranean (Deut. 1:7; Josh. 9:1; Jdg 1:9; 1Ki 10:27). It also describes the lowland near the seacoast north of Mount Carmel (Josh. 11:2). A proper noun **Shephelah** ([see map](#)). The name means lowlands (KJV, low plains), an area placed under the authority of Baal-Hanan the Gederite (1Chr. 27:28; Obad. 1:19). ([The Complete Word Study Old Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - Recent translations suggest that the term was a specific name for the range of hills between the coastal plain and the Judean hills that ran south for nearly thirty miles. Their heights range from 500 to 700 feet above sea level (compared to heights of 2000 to 3000 feet in the central highlands; TWOT, 2:951). Though intersected by several passes, these hills provided a natural barrier to the Hebrew peoples living inland. The Shephelah ([see map](#)) acted as a border between the Philistines and Israel in the times recorded in the Books of Judges and 1 and 2 Samuel. ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

**Shephelah - Holman Bible Dictionary** Transliteration of Hebrew geographical term meaning, "lowland." ([see map](#)) Region of low foothills between the Philistine coastal plain and the highlands of Judah farther inland. It served as a battleground for Israel and Philistia during the period of the judges and early monarchy. Joshua 15:33-41 lists about thirty villages and towns located in the region.

**Shephelah** - 20x in 19v - foothills(1), lowland(17), Shephelah(2) Deut. 1:7; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 10:40; Jos. 11:2; Jos. 11:16; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 15:33; Jdg. 1:9; 1 Ki. 10:27; 1 Chr. 27:28; 2 Chr. 1:15; 2 Chr. 9:27; 2 Chr. 26:10; 2 Chr. 28:18; Jer. 17:26; Jer. 32:44; Jer. 33:13; Obad. 1:19; Zech. 7:7

## Joshua 15:34 and Zanoah and En-gannim, Tappuah and Enam,

- **Tappuah:** Jos 15:53 12:17
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

and Zanoah and En-gannim, Tappuah and Enam ([see map above](#) note only location of **Zanoah** is identified on this map).

**Zanoah - ISB Encyclopedia** A town in the Judean Shephelah, grouped with Eshtaol, Zorah and Ashnah (Joshua 15:34 ). The Jews reoccupied the place after the exile (Nehemiah 11:30 ). Here it is named between Jarmuth and Adullam. The inhabitants assisted in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, repairing the valley gate (Nehemiah 3:13 ). Eusebius (in Onomasticon ) places it at Zanna, in the district of Eleutheropolis on the Jerusalem road. It is represented by the modern Zanu'a, about 10 miles North of Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis).

**En-Gannim - ISB Encyclopedia** A town in the territory of Judah, named with Zanoah and Eshtaol (Joshua 15:34 ). It is probably identical with the modern Umm Jina , South of Wady eş -Şarār , not far from Zanoah (Zanū'a ).

**Tappuah - Holman Bible Dictionary** Personal name meaning, "apple" or "quince." City in the Shephelah district of Judah (Joshua 15:34 ), possibly Beit Nettif about twelve miles west of Bethlehem.

**Enam - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia** the two springs; Sept. Hvǎïm v.r. Hvæïm and Μαίανι, Vulg. Enaim), a city in the lowlands of Judah, mentioned between Tappuah and Jarmuth (Joshua 15:34). From its mention with towns (Jarmuth and Eshtaol for instance) which are known to have been near Timnath, this is very probably the place in the "entrance" of which (perhaps at a fork of the road) Tamar sat to intercept her father-in-law on his way to Timnath (Genesis 38:14),

- **Jarmuth:** Jos 10:3,23 12:11 Ne 11:29
- **Adullam:** Jos 12:15 1Sa 22:1 Mic 1:15
- **Socoh:** Eusebius says, there were two cities of Socoh, an upper and lower, nine miles from Eleutheropolis, towards Jerusalem. Jos 15:48 1Sa 17:1 1Ch 4:18
- **Azekah:** Eusebius and Jerome say there was a town of this name in their time, between Jerusalem and Eleutheropolis. Jos 10:10 1Sa 17:1
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED**

**Jarmuth and Adullam, Socoh and Azekah** - [See map above](#) for the general location of all four of these cities.

[Jarmuth - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "height" or "swelling in the ground." 1. City whose king joined southern coalition against Joshua and Gibeon (Joshua 10:1 ). Joshua "stored" the king in the cave of Makkedah before shaming him and slaying him (compare Joshua 12:11 ). It lay in the western "lowlands," the "foothills" (NIV) or Shephelah (REB) of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:33 ,Joshua 15:33,15:35 ). It is identified with modern tell Jarmuth three miles southwest of Beth Shemesh and fifteen miles southwest of Jerusalem. An Amarna letter from tell el-Hesi mentions it. Brief excavations have shown Early Bronze and Stone Age remains but as yet nothing from the Late Bronze or Early Iron ages. In Nehemiah's time Jewish settlers lived there (Nehemiah 11:29 ). 2 . A city of the Levites in the tribal territory of Issachar (Joshua 21:29; compare Joshua 19:21; 1 Chronicles 6:58 , both spelled differently and differing from 1. above; thus spelling of Remeth, Ramoth). This city may be located at modern Kaukab el-Hawa.

[Adullam - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) (justice of the people). Apocrypha. Odollam, a city of Judah in the lowland of the Shefelah, Joshua 15:35, the seat of a Canaanite king, Joshua 12:15, and evidently a place of great antiquity. Genesis 38:1; Genesis 38:12; Genesis 38:20. Fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chronicles 11:7, it was one of the towns reoccupied by the Jews after their return from Babylon, Nehemiah 11:30, and still a city in the time of the Macabees. 2 Maccabees 12:38. Adullam was probably near Deir Dubban, five or six miles north of Eleutheropolis. The limestone cliffs of the whole of that locality are pierced with extensive excavations, some one of which is doubtless the "cave of Adullam," the refuge of David. 1 Samuel 22:1; 2 Samuel 23:13; 1 Chronicles 11:15.

[Socoh, Soco, Shocho - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "thorns." 1. Town in southern Judah hill country used as a fortification against people approaching from the south (Joshua 15:35 ). It is modern Khirbet Abbad. Philistines gathered to battle Saul there (1 Samuel 17:1 ). Rehoboam fortified it (2 Chronicles 11:7 )

[Azekah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "cultivated ground." 1. City where Joshua defeated southern coalition of kings led by Adonizedek of Jerusalem (Joshua 10:10 ), as God cast hailstones from heaven on the fleeing armies. In the battle Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still (Joshua 10:12 ). Joshua allotted it to Judah (Joshua 15:35 ). Near it, the Philistines lined up their forces for battle against Saul (1 Samuel 17:1 ), resulting in the David and Goliath confrontation. Rehoboam, king of Judah, (931-913 B.C.), built up its fortifications (2 Chronicles 11:9 ). The tribe of Judah occupied it in Nehemiah's day (Nehemiah 11:30 ), after it had been one of the last cities to fall to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 588 B.C. (Jeremiah 34:7 ). One of the letters found at Lachish tells of searching for signal lights from Azekah but not being able to see them. This can be dated to 588 B.C. An earlier Assyrian inscription, perhaps from 712 B.C. speaks of Azekah's location on a mountain ridge, being inaccessible like an eagle's nest, too strong for siege ramps and battering rams.

**Joshua 15:36 and Shaaraim and Adithaim and Gederah and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages.**

- **Sharaim:** 1Sa 17:52
- **Adithaim:** Eusebius mentions two cities, called Adatha, one towards Gaza, and the other east of Lydda.
- **and Gederothaim:** or, or, fourteen cities, There are fifteen in all; but the two last seem to be only two names of the same city.
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED**

and Shaaraim and Adithaim and Gederah and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages. [See map above](#) for the general location but note there is only one city identified on this map, **Gederah**.

[Shaaraim - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#) A city in the Shephelah or "lowland" of Judah mentioned (Joshua 15:36 ) in close association with Socoh and Azekah; the vanquished army of the Philistines passed a Shaaraim in their flight from Socoh toward Gath and Ekron (1 Samuel 17:52 ). It is possible that in this latter reference the "two gates" may refer - as Septuagint implies - to the two Philistine strongholds themselves. Shaaraim has been identified with Tell Zaka'riya (see however AZEKAH ) and with Kh . Sa'ireh (PEF , III, 124, Sh XVII ), an old site West of Beit 'Atāb . Both proposals are hazardous.

[Adithaim - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) (double ornament). A town belonging to Judah, lying in the low country, and named, between Sharaim and hag-Gederah, in Joshua 15:36 only.

[Gederah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "sheepfold" or "stone wall." A village in the Shephalah or valley of Judah (Joshua 15:36 ). It is located at modern tell el-Judeireh north of Maraeshah and ten miles southeast of Lod. Villagers were noted for skill in making pottery, much of which was made for the king (1 Chronicles 4:23 ). The home of one of David's soldiers (1 Chronicles 12:4 ) apparently belongs in Benjamin (1 Chronicles 12:2 ), but he may have been living in Judah before joining David at Ziklag. Otherwise, this is a different Gederah located at Jedireh near Gibeon. See Geder .

[Gederothaim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "two walls" or common noun referring to sheepfolds (compare REB translation, namely both parts of Gederah). A town in the valley or Shephelah of Judah allotted to Judah (Joshua 15:36 ). The list contains fourteen cities without Gederothaim, causing several commentators to identify Gederothaim as a part of Gederah or as a copyist's duplication. See Gederah .

#### Joshua 15:37 Zenan and Hadashah and Migdal-gad,

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**Zenan** (some identify it with Shaphir [map](#)) and **Hadashah** ([map](#)) and **Migdal-gad** ([possible location](#)),

[Zenan - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "flocks." Village in the Shephelah (wilderness) district of Judah (Joshua 15:37 ), likely identified with Araq el-Kharba. Zenan is perhaps identical to Zaanān (Micah 1:11 ).

[Hadashah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Town name meaning, "new." Town in tribal territory of Judah situated in vicinity of Lachish (Joshua 15:37 ).

[Migdal-Gad - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "Tower of Gad." Village near Lachish in the Shephelah district of Judah (Joshua 15:37 ). The site is perhaps that of khirbet el-Mejdeleh five miles south of Beit Jibrin.

#### Joshua 15:38 and Dilean and Mizpeh and Joktheel,

- **Mizpeh**: Ge 31:48,49 Jdg 20:1 21:5 1Sa 7:5,6,16 10:17
- **Joktheel**: 2Ki 14:7
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

and **Dilean** and **Mizpeh** and **Joktheel**,

[Dilean - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "protrusion" or "ledge." Village in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:38 ). Tell en-Najileh southwest of tell el-Hesi has been suggested as a possible modern site.

[Mizpah, Mizpeh - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name or common noun meaning, "watchtower" or "lookout." A name commonly used in Palestine to refer to places used to provide security. The name appears in two different forms, Mizpah and Mizpeh, with the

same basic meaning. At least two sites and one region west of the Jordan were named Mizpah. The account of Joshua's encounter with Jabin, king of Hazor (Joshua 11:1 ) refers to "the land of Mizpah" (Joshua 11:3 ) and "the valley of Mizpeh" (Joshua 11:8 ), a region in north Palestine, the location of which is unknown. A second Mizpeh west of the Jordan was located in the tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:38 ). While the exact location is unknown, this Mizpeh may have been near Lachish.

[Joktheel - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "God nourishes" or "destroys." 1. Town in Shephelah or valley of tribal allotment of Judah (Joshua 15:38 ). 2 . King Amaziah captured Selah from Edom and renamed it Joktheel (2 Kings 14:7 ). It may be modern es-Sela northwest of Bozrah. See Selah .

#### Joshua 15:39 Lachish and Bozkath and Eglon,

- **Lachish:** Jos 10:3,31,32 12:11 2Ki 18:14,17 19:8
- **Bozkath:** 2Ki 22:1
- **Eglon:** Jos 10:3 12:12
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**Lachish** ([see map](#)) and **Bozkath and Eglon**, ([See map for Eglon just above the name "JUDAH"](#)),

[Lachish - Holman Bible Dictionary \(see longer discussion of its history\)](#) Place name meaning "obstinate." An important Old Testament city located in the Shephelah ("lowlands") southwest of Jerusalem. It has usually been identified in modern times with the archaeological site called tell ed-Duweir. The same site has more recently come to be called tel Lachish. Lachish is also mentioned in ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian records. The earliest reference to Lachish is in the Amarna letters (about 1400 B.C). It was evidently one of the important Canaanite cities of the time. The Hebrew army under Joshua's command defeated the king of Lachish, killed him and conquered his city (Joshua 10:5 , Joshua 10:23 ,Joshua 10:23,10:32-33 ). Later, Lachish was apportioned to the Tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:39 ). The next Biblical reference to Lachish comes in 2 Chronicles 11:9 , from the reign of Rehoboam who "fortified the city." Lachish was also the city of refuge for Amaziah who fled there from Jerusalem to escape a conspiracy against him (2 Kings 14:19; 2 Chronicles 25:27 ).

[Bozkath - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "swelling." Town near Lachish and Eglon in tribal allotment of Judah (Joshua 15:39 ). It was the home town of Adaiah, King Josiah's maternal grandmother (1 Kings 22:1 ). Its precise location is not known.

[Eglon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) A Canaanite city whose king entered an alliance with four other Canaanite rulers against Gibeon (Joshua 10:3 ). The Gibeonites had made a treaty with Israel (Joshua 9:1 ). Subsequently, Eglon was captured by the Israelite army under Joshua. It became a part of the territory of the tribe of Judah. Most scholars long held that the modern site of tell el-Hesi was the location of ancient Eglon. More recently, however, some have contended for tell Eton. Both places are to the southwest of Lachish.

#### Joshua 15:40 and Cabbon and Lahmas and Chitlish,

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

and **Cabbon and Lahmas and Chitlish**,

[Cabbon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name of uncertain meaning. Town in tribal allotment of Judah (Joshua 15:40 ). Its location is uncertain.

[Lahmas - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name perhaps meaning "violence." Reading of basic Hebrew manuscript (Joshua 15:40 ) adopted by REB, NIV, NAS. Possibly, early scribes confused final letter with similar appearing final "m" in Hebrew. See Lahmam .

[Chitlish - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name of foreign origin. It was a city of the tribe of Judah near Lachish (Joshua 15:40 ). KJV

reads Kithlish; NIV, Kitlish.

## Joshua 15:41 and Gederoth, Beth-dagon and Naamah and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages.

- **Makkedah:** Jos 10:21,28 12:16
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**and Gederoth, Beth-dagon and Naamah and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their village** - Beth-Dagon is not Not the the Beth Dagon in Asher (Joshua 19:27).

[Gederoth - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia](#) fortresses or sheep-cotes (See GEDER); in Chron. with the art.; Sept. Γαδερ θ v.r. in Chron. Γαληρ , etc.; Vulg. Gideroth, Gederoth), a town in the "valley" of Judah (Joshua 15:41, where it is mentioned between Kithlish and Bethdagon); one of those captured by the Philistines from Ahaz (1 Chronicles 28:18).

[Beth-Dagon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "house of Dagon." Apparently the name indicates a worship place of Philistine god Dagon. 1. Town in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:41 ). It is probably modern khirbet Dajun on the road connecting Ramallah and Joppa. 2. Town in Asher (Joshua 19:27 ) without certain present location.

[Naamah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Village in the Shephelah district of Judah (Joshua 15:41 ), likely khirbet Farad about twenty-two miles west of Jerusalem between Timnah and Eltekeh.

[Makkedah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Name meaning, "Place of shepherds," of a Canaanite city, the site of Joshua's rout of the combined forces of five Canaanite kings (Joshua 10:10 ). The kings sought refuge in nearby caves but were trapped there (Joshua 10:16 ). Joshua captured the city, killing all its population (Joshua 10:28 ). Later, Makkedah was assigned to the Shephelah (lowland) district of Judah (Joshua 15:4-1 ). Suggested locations include: Eusebius' suggestion of a site eight and a half miles from Eleutheropolis (Beit Jibrin); tell es-Safi south of Hulda (Libnah); el-Muqhar ("the Caves") southwest of Ekron; and a site between Lachish and Hebron.

## Joshua 15:42 Libnah and Ether and Ashan,

- **Libnah:** Jos 10:29 12:15 2Ki 8:22
- **Ether:** Jos 19:7
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**Libnah and Ether and Ashan** - See [map of possible location of Libnah](#). See [map for Ashan \(in region of Simeon\)](#)

[Libnah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning "white" or "storax tree." Joshua allotted it to the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:42 ) and separated it as a city for the Levites (Joshua 21:13 ). It illustrated western border rebellion against King Joram of Judah (853-841 B.C.) just as Edom represented rebellion in the east (2 Kings 8:22 ). It lay on the invasion route to Jerusalem followed by Sennacherib about 701 B.C. (2 Kings 19:8 ). The mother of Kings Jehoahaz (609 B.C.) and Zedekiah (597-586 B.C.) came from Libnah (2 Kings 23:31; 2 Kings 24:18 ).

[Ether - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "smoke of incense." 1. Town in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:42 ).

[Ether - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#) A city in the shephelah or low country of Judah; allotted to Simeon (Joshua 15:42; Joshua 19:7). JOCHEN in 1 Chronicles 4:32. In the wilderness country below Hebron, E. of Beersheba. Tel Athar now, according to Van de Velde.

[Ashan - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "smoke." City in western hills of tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:42 ) given to tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:7 ). The Aaronic priests claimed Ashan as one of their cities (1 Chronicles 6:59; called Ain in Joshua 21:16 ). See Bor-asan. Ashan was located at modern Khirbet Asan just northwest of Beersheba.

## Joshua 15:43 and Iphtah and Ashnah and Nezib,

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

#### and Iphtah and Ashnah and Nezib,

[Iphtah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "he opened." Town in tribal territory of Judah in the Shephelah (Joshua 15:43 ). It may be located at modern Terqumiyeh, halfway between Hebron and Beit Jibrin.

[Ashnah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) 1. A city in the valley of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:33 ), possibly modern Aslin. 2. A second city in the valley or shephelah of Judah (Joshua 15:43 ), possibly modern Idna, about eight miles northwest of Hebron.

[Nezib - Easton's Bible Dictionary](#) - A town in the "plain" of Judah. It has been identified with Beit Nuzib, about 14 miles south-west of Jerusalem, in the Wady Sur (Joshua 15:43 ).

## Joshua 15:44 and Keilah and Achzib and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages.

- **Keilah:** 1Sa 23:1-14
- **Achzib:** Ge 38:5 Mic 1:14
- **Mareshah:** Mic 1:15
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

#### and Keilah and Achzib and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages

[Keilah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Personal and place name perhaps meaning, "fortress." A fortified city in the lowland plain (Shephelah) of the territory of Judah identified with modern khirbet Qila, about eight miles northwest of Hebron and eighteen miles southwest of Jerusalem. David rescued the city from a Philistine attack but later withdrew fearing the populace would hand him over to Saul (1 Samuel 23:1-13 ). The city was rebuilt by the returning exiles (Nehemiah 3:17-18 ). One of the traditional sites of the burial place of Habakkuk.

[Achzib - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) ACZIB (NIV) Place name meaning, "deceitful." 1. Town in southern Judah, perhaps modern Tel el-Beida near Lachish (Joshua 15:44 ). Micah 1:14 makes a wordplay using Achzib, literally the houses of deceitfulness will be deceitful.

[Mareshah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Personal and place name meaning, "place at the top" A Canaanite city incorporated into the Shephelah district of Judah (Joshua 15:44 ). The city was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chronicles 11:8 ). Mareshah was near the site of the battle between the forces of King Asa and the Ethiopian (Egyptian?) commander Zerah (2 Chronicles 14:9-14 ). Mareshah was home to the prophet Eliezar (2 Chronicles 20:37 ). Micah foretold the destruction of the city (Micah 1:15 ). The site has been identified with tell Sandahannah one mile southeast of Beit Jibrin.

## Joshua 15:45 Ekron, with its towns and its villages;

- **Ekron:** Jos 13:3 1Sa 5:10 6:17 Am 1:8 Zep 2:4 Zec 9:5-7
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**Ekron, with its towns and its villages** - In Joshua 15:45-47 we find the list of three of the five major Philistine cities (see Josh



13:3), which were assigned to Judah but were not possessed until many years later.

[Ekron - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Ekron is the northernmost of the five major Philistine cities known as the pentapolis. The site of ancient Ekron has been much debated, but now is generally agreed to be modern tell Miqne, about 14 miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea and 10 miles from Ashdod. The site is one of the largest in Palestine, covering some 50 acres. Ekron lies on the road leading from Ashdod into the Judean hill country and up to Jerusalem through the Sorek Valley.

Ekron was assigned to both Judah (Joshua 15:11 ,Joshua 15:11,15:45-46 ) and Dan (Joshua 19:43 ) in the tribal allotments. It probably lay on the border between the tribes. Judges 1:18 reports that Judah captured Ekron along with other parts of the Philistine coast, but Ekron was certainly in Philistine hands at the time the ark was captured ( 1 Samuel 5:10 ). It was also the place to which the Philistines retreated after David slew Goliath (1 Samuel 17:52 ). Ahaziah, the son of King Ahab of Israel, called on the god of Ekron, Baal-zebub, when he was sick (2 Kings 1:2-16 ). That name (literally, "Lord of the flies") may have been slightly changed by the Hebrew writer to express antipathy toward the Philistine deity. The name of the deity may have been Baal-zebul ("Baal is exalted").

Excavations at tell Miqne have discovered much pottery that is typically Philistine. From the last period before tell Miqne was destroyed by the Babylonians, the excavators found an important industrial complex near the city gate. A hoard of iron agricultural tools was found. Hundreds of whole pottery vessels were present. Perhaps most importantly, a well-preserved olive press was discovered. This press is the largest and best preserved known in Israel. A horned altar was also found during the excavations.

**Joshua 15:46 from Ekron even to the sea, all that were by the side of Ashdod, with their villages.**

- **near:** Heb. by the place of, 1Sa 5:1,6 2Ch 26:6 Ne 13:23,24 Isa 20:1 Am 1:8
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**from Ekron even to the sea, all that were by the side of [Ashdod](#), with their villages** - **Madvig** notes that "The style of these three verses differs markedly from all the others in this list of towns assigned to Judah, both in the inclusion of the phrase "its surrounding settlements and villages" and in the omission of the concluding statement that gives the total number of cities. Ashdod and Ekron were nearly straight west of Jerusalem, Ekron near the foothills and Ashdod near the coast. Gaza was near the coast also but far south in the coastal plain." ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Joshua 15:47 Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza, its towns and its villages; as far as the brook of Egypt and the Great Sea, even its coastline.**

- **Gaza:** Jdg 16:1-21 Jer 47:1,5 Am 1:6,7 Zep 2:4 Ac 8:26
- **the river:** Jos 15:4 13:3 Ex 23:31 Nu 34:5,6
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JUDAH'S CITIES IN THE WESTERN FOOTHILLS CONTINUED

**Ashdod, its towns and its villages; [Gaza](#), its towns and its villages; as far as the brook of Egypt and the Great Sea, even its coastline.**

[Great Sea - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Mediterranean Sea (Numbers 34:6-7; Joshua 15:12 ).

**Joshua 15:48 In the hill country: Shamir and Jattir and Socoh,**

- **Jattir:** Jos 21:14
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

- A. The southern cities - verses 21-32
- B. The western foothills cities - verses 33-47
- C. The hill country cities - verses 48-60
- D. The desert cities - verses 61-62

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY

**In the hill country: Shamir and Jattir and Socoh** This areas is (1) north of the Negev/Negeb, (2) east of the Shephelah, (3) west of the wilderness of Judah and (4) south of Jerusalem ([Look at this map](#) where you will find each of the aforementioned sites - the "hill country" is in the midst of these 4 sites). This area became home to a large number of Judahites

[Shamir - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Personal and place name meaning, "thorn" or "diamond." Town in hill country of Judah assigned to tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:48 ). Located either at modern el-Bireh near khirbet Somera northeast of en-Rimmon or khirbet es-Sumara about twelve miles west-southwest of Hebron.

[Jattir - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "the remainder." Town in the hills of the tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:48 ). David gave some of war booty from victory over Amalekites to Jattir (1 Samuel 30:27 ). Joshua reserved it for the Levites (Joshua 20:14 ). It was located near modern khirbet Attir about thirteen miles south southwest of Hebron and fourteen miles northeast of Beersheba.

[Socoh - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) 1. In the district of the Shefelah. Joshua 15:35; 1 Samuel 17:1; 2 Chronicles 8:18; 2 Chronicles 11:7. In the time of Eusebius, it bore the name of Socchoth, and lay between eight and nine Roman miles from Eleutheropolis, on the road to Jerusalem. It may be identified with esh-Shuweikeh, in the western part of the mountains of Judah. From this village, probably, came Antigonus of Soco, who lived about the commencement of the third century B.C. 2. Also a town of Judah, but in the mountain district. Joshua 15:48. It has been discovered about 10 miles southwest of Hebron; bearing, like the other Socoh, the name of esh-Shuweikeh.

#### Joshua 15:49 and Dannah and Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir),

- **Kirjathsannah:** Jos 15:15 Jdg 1:11
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

#### and Dannah and Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir),

[Dannah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "fortress." Town assigned tribe of Judah in the hill country (Joshua 15:49 ). Its location is uncertain.

[Kiriath-Sannah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name perhaps meaning, "city of bronze." Another name for the city of Debir, also known as Kiriath-Sepher (Joshua 15:15-16 ,Joshua 15:15-16,15:49 )

[Debir - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Personal and place name meaning, "back, behind." As a common noun, the Hebrew term refers to the back room of the Temple, the holy of holies. Important city in hill country of tribe of Judah whose exact location is debated by archaeologists and geographers. Joshua annihilated its residents (Joshua 10:38; compare Joshua 11:21; Joshua 12:13 ). Joshua 15:15 describes Caleb's challenge to Othniel to capture Debir, formerly called Kiriath Sepher. Compare Judges 1:11 . Joshua 15:49 gives yet another name, Kiriath Sannah, to Debir. It became a levitical city for the priests ( Joshua 21:15 ). Different scholars locate Debir at tell beit Mirsim, thirteen miles southwest of Hebron; khirbet Tarrameh, five miles southwest of Hebron; and khirbet Rabud, seven and a half miles west of Hebron. It may have been the most important town south of Hebron.

#### Joshua 15:50 and Anab and Eshtemoh and Anim,

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

### and Anab and Eshtemoh and Anim,

[Anab - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “grape.” Joshua eliminated the Anakim from southern Judah including Hebron, Debir, and Anab (Joshua 11:21 ). Joshua allotted the mountain city to Judah (Joshua 15:50 ). Located at modern Khirbet Anab about fifteen miles southwest of Hebron.

[Eshtemoh - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Variant Hebrew spelling of Eshtemoa (Joshua 15:50 ). See Eshtemoa .

[Anim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “springs.” City given tribe of Judah ([Joshua 15:50](#) ). Located at modern Khirbet Ghuwein at-Tahta, eleven miles south of Hebron.

### Joshua 15:51 and Goshen and Holon and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages.

- **Goshen:** Jos 10:41 11:16
- **Giloh:** 2Sa 15:12
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

### and Goshen and Holon and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages.

[Goshen - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) The “land of Goshen” may have been named after the city of Goshen located in the district of Debir (Joshua 15:51 ). Goshen may have been the chief city of the region at one time. The ancient city was either located at Tell el Dhahiriyyeh, twelve miles southwest of Hebron or at a location further east.

[Holon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “sandy spot.” 1. Town in the hill country of Judah allotted to tribe of Judah and given as city for Levites (Joshua 15:51; Joshua 21:15 ). It may be modern khirbet Illin near Beth-zur. The parallel passage (1 Chronicles 6:58 ) has Hilez or Hilan in different manuscripts.

[Giloh - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “uncovered” or “revealed.” Town in tribal allotment of Judah in Judean hills (Joshua 15:51 ). David's counselor Ahithophel came from Giloh (2 Samuel 15:12 ). Some scholars locate it at khirbet Jala in the suburbs of Jerusalem, but most think Giloh was actually further south.

### Joshua 15:52 Arab and Dumah and Eshan,

- **Dumah:** Isa 21:11
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

### Arab and Dumah and Eshan

[Arab - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) (ambush). A city of Judah in the mountainous district, probably in the neighborhood of Hebron; mentioned only in Joshua 15:62.

[Dumah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “silence” or “permanent settlement.” A city of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:52 ). It is probably modern khirbet ed-Dome about nine miles southwest of Hebron. It may be mentioned in the Amarna letters.

[Eshan - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “I lean on.” Town in the hill country of Judah assigned to tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:52 ). KJV spells Eshean. A text tradition in the earliest Greek translation reads, “Soma,” instead of Eshan, possibly

pointing to a location at modern khirbet hallat Sama. Otherwise, the location is not known.

#### Joshua 15:53 and Janum and Beth-tappuah and Aphekah,

- **Janum:** or, Janus, Jos 15:53
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

and Janum and Beth-tappuah and Aphekah,

[Janum - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name of uncertain meaning, perhaps “slumbering.” Town in tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:53 ) near Hebron. The location is not known. KJV, NAS spelling follows vocalization by early Hebrew scribes. See Janim .

[Beth-Tappuah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “house of apples.” Town assigned tribe of Judah in Judean hills (Joshua 15:53 ). It is modern Taffah, about four miles west of Hebron.

[Aphekah - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia](#)

#### Joshua 15:54 and Humtah and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior; nine cities with their villages.

- **Kirjatharba:** Jos 15:13 14:15 Ge 23:2
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

and Humtah and Kiriath-arba (that is, [Hebron](#) ([See map for Hebron](#))), and Zior; nine cities with their villages.

[Humtah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “lizards.” Town in hill country of Judah in tribal territory of Judah ([Joshua 15:54](#) ). Its exact location is not known.

[Kiriath-Arba - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “city of Arba” or “city of four.” The ancient name for the city of Hebron (Joshua 15:54 ). It was the chief city in the hill country of Judah (Joshua 15:54 ) and was both a Levitical city (Joshua 21:11 ) and a city of refuge (Joshua 20:7 ). Caleb captured the city for Israel (Joshua 15:13-14 ). Bible students dispute the origin of the name. According to some, Kiriath-Arba was originally named after Arba the Anakite hero (Joshua 14:15; see Joshua 15:13 ). Others point to the nearby cave of Machpelah where, according to Jewish tradition, Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried—thus, “city of four.” See Levitical Cities; Cities of Refuge; Hebron

[Zior - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “smallness.” Village allotted to Judah, located in the hill country near Hebron (Joshua 15:54 ). Archaeological research indicates that the frequently suggested site Si'ir about five miles north northeast of Hebron was uninhabited before A.D. 400.

#### Joshua 15:55 Maon, Carmel and Ziph and Juttah,

- **Maon:** 1Sa 23:25 25:2,7 2Ch 26:10 Isa 35:2
- **Carmel:** 1Ki 18:42
- **Ziph:** Jos 15:24 1Sa 23:14,15 26:1,2
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

Maon, Carmel and Ziph and Juttah, ([See map for Juttah south of Hebron](#))

[Maon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Name meaning "Dwelling." 1. Descendant of Caleb who founded Beth-zur (1 Chronicles 2:45 ). 2 . Village in the hill country of Judah (Joshua 15:55 ). The site of Maon has been identified with tell Ma'in about eight miles south of Hebron in the vicinity of Carmel of Judah (compare 1 Samuel 25:2 ) and with khirbet el-Ma'in twenty-five miles northwest of Beersheba. Pottery finds at tell Ma'in demonstrate occupation from the time of David. David took refuge from Saul in the wilderness to the east of Maon (1 Samuel 23:24-25 ). Nabal, who foolishly refused hospitality to David, was a resident of Maon (1 Samuel 25:2 ).

[Carmel - ISB Encyclopedia](#) A city of Judah, in the uplands near Hebron, named with Maon and Ziph (Joshua 15:55 ). Here Saul for some reason not stated set up a monument or trophy (1 Samuel 15:12; literally "hand"). It was the home of Nabal the churlish and drunken flockmaster, whose widow Abigail David married (1 Sam 25); and also of Hezro, one of David's mighty men (2 Samuel 23:35; 1 Chronicles 11:37 ). It is represented by the modern el -Karmil , about 10 miles to the Southeast of Hebron. Karmil is the pronunciation given me by several natives this spring. There are considerable ruins, the most outstanding feature being square tower dating from the 12th century, now going swiftly to ruin. There are also caves, tombs and a large reservoir.

[Ziph - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place and personal name perhaps meaning, "flowing." Town in the Judean hill country (Joshua 15:24 ), likely tell Zif about three miles southeast of Hebron. Mereshah likely founded the town (1 Chronicles 2:42 ). David hid from Saul in the surrounding wilderness (1 Samuel 23:14-15 ); 1 Samuel 26:2 ). Ziphites, residents of Ziph, twice revealed David's hideouts to Saul (1 Samuel 23:19; 1 Samuel 26:1 ). Rehoboam fortified the site (2 Chronicles 11:8 ). 4 . Town in the Negeb (Joshua 15:24 ), likely khirbet ez-Zeifeh southwest of Kurnub.

[Juttah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "spread out." Town in hill country of tribal territory of Judah (Joshua 15:55 ) given to the Levites (Joshua 21:16 ). It may be located at modern Yatta, six miles southwest of Hebron.

#### Joshua 15:56 and Jezreel and Jokdeam and Zanoah,

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

**and Jezreel and Jokdeam and Zanoah** - **Jezreel** is the name of two villages, the tribal allocation of Judah (Josh. 15:56) and the tribal allocation of Issachar (Josh. 19:18).

[Jezreel - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) meaning "God sows", refers to a major valley, a northern city (in valley of Esdraelon), a southern city (Joshua 15:57), and the son of Hosea 1:1 .

[Jezreel - Jewish Encyclopedia](#) A town in the hill country of Judah not far from the Judean Carmel (Joshua 15:56). Ahinoam one of David's first two wives, was a native of this town (1 Samuel 25:43).

[Jokdeam - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "the people burned." City in tribal territory of Judah, possibly modern khirbet Raqqa near Ziph (Joshua 15:56 ).

[Zanoah - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) A town of Judah in the Shefelah or plain, Joshua 15:34; Nehemiah 3:13; Nehemiah 11:30, possibly identical with Zanu'a.

#### Joshua 15:57 Kain, Gibeah and Timnah; ten cities with their villages.

- **Timnah:** Jos 15:10 Ge 38:12 Jer 14:1
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

**Kain, Gibeah and Timnah; ten cities with their villages.**

[Kain - Hasting's Bible Dictionary](#) . A city in the uplands of Judah ( Joshua 15:57 ), probably to be identified with the modern Khirbet

YakA@n , on a hill S.W. of Hebron, with tombs, cisterns, and other traces of an ancient town. A neighbouring sanctuary is pointed out as the tomb of Cain.

[Gibeah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "a hill," closely related to names of Geba and Gibeon. Gibeah or Gibeath was the name of four different places in the Old Testament.

[Gibeah - ATS Dictionary](#) A town of Judah, Joshua 15:57 , which lay about ten miles southwest of Jerusalem. The prophet Habakkuk is said to have been buried here.

[Timnah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Village in the hill country of Judah (Joshua 15:57 ). This Timnah was the likely scene of Judah's encounter with Tamar (Genesis 38:12-14 ). The probable site lies south of Hebron about four miles east of Beit Nettif.

#### Joshua 15:58 Halhul, Beth-zur and Gedor,

- **Gedor:** 1Ch 4:39
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

**Halhul, Beth-zur and Gedor** ([See map for Beth-zur in small mountains north of Hebron](#))

[Halhul - ISB Encyclopedia](#) A city in the hill country of Judah ( Joshua 15:58 ), "Halhul, Beth-zur and Gedor." It is without doubt the modern Ḥalhūl , a village on a hill, surrounded by fine fields and vineyards, some 4 miles North of Hebron and less than a mile to the East of the modern carriage road. It is conspicuous from a considerable distance on account of its ancient mosque, Wely Nebi Yūnas , the "shrine of the Prophet Jonah" - a tradition going back at least to the 14th century. The mosque, which has a minaret or tower, is built upon a rock platform artificially leveled. In the 14th century it was stated by Isaac Chilo (a Jewish pilgrim) that the tomb of Gad the Seer (1 Samuel 22:5; 2 Samuel 24:11 f) was situated in this town. Beth-zur ( Beit Sûr ) and Gedor (Jedûr ) are both near. In Josephus (BJ , IV, ix, 6) we read of an Alurus (where the Idumeans assembled), and in Jerome (OS 119 7) of a village Alula near Hebron, which both probably refer to the same place (PEF , III, 305; Sh XXI ).

[Beth-Zur - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "house of the rock." A city allotted to tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:58 ). Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor as king of Judah (931-913 B.C.), built it up as a defense city (2 Chronicles 11:7 ) in view of the threat of Shishak of Egypt (2 Chronicles 12:2 ). A city official of Beth-zur helped Nehemiah repair Jerusalem and its wall (Nehemiah 3:16 ). It played a significant role in the wars of the Maccabees in the period between the Testaments. It is located at khirbet et-Tubeiqeh, eighteen miles southwest of Jerusalem and four miles north of Hebron on a major highway intersection. This is one of the highest sites above sea level in Palestine.

[Gedor - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "wall." 1. Town in hill country of Judah allotted to tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:58 ). It is located at khirbet Judur three miles north of Hebron and Beth-zur and west of Tekoa. The genealogy of Judah in 1 Chronicles 4:1 includes city names among the list of "sons." In 1 Chronicles 4:4 , Penuel is the father or perhaps founder of the city.

#### Joshua 15:59 and Maarath and Beth-anoth and Eltekon; six cities with their villages.

- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

**and Maarath and Beth-anoth and Eltekon; six cities with their villages** - Madvig notes that "At this point the LXX supplies the names of eleven additional towns and in this way makes up the full twelve administrative districts from Judah alone" ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**Utley** has an interesting note that "The Septuagint has an additional list of eleven cities not found in the Masoretic Text. It is uncertain whether this reflects a manuscript error in the Masoretic Text or extraneous material added by the translators of the Septuagint."



[Maarath - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning “barren field.” Name of a village in Judah's hill country (Joshua 15:59 ), possibly identical with Maroth (Micah 1:12 ). The site is possibly modern khirbet Qufin two miles north of Beth-zur.

[Beth-anoth - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) house of echo). A town in the mountainous district of Judah, named with Halhul, Beth-zur and others in Joshua 15:58 only.

[Eltekon - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “securing advice.” Village in tribal territory of Judah in southern hill country (Joshua 15:59 ). Its location is unknown, though some have suggested khirbet ed-Deir west of Bethlehem.

#### Joshua 15:60 Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), and Rabbah; two cities with their villages.

- **Kirjathbaal:** Jos 18:14 1Sa 7:1
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE HILL COUNTRY CONTINUED

**Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim)** ([See map northwest of Jerusalem](#)), and **Rabbah; two cities with their villages - Kiriath-baal** = city of Baal

[Kiriath-Baal - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “city of Baal.” Another name for Kiriath-Jearim in Joshua 15:60; Joshua 18:14 .

[Kiriath-Jearim - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “city of forests.” Kiriath-Jearim was located at modern Abu Gosh nine miles north of Jerusalem. It was on the border where Dan, Benjamin, and Judah joined before Dan began their migration northward (Joshua 15:9 ,Joshua 15:9,15:60; Joshua 18:14-15 ). Dan's army camped there in their search for new territory (Judges 18:12 ). After the Philistines returned the ark of the covenant, it was kept at Kiriath-Jearim for a time (1 Samuel 6:21-7:2 ). David attempted to move the ark to Jerusalem from there, but because he did so improperly, God struck down Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:1-8 ). Among Kiriath-Jearim's sons was Uriah, a faithful prophet and contemporary of Jeremiah. He was executed for prophesying against the king (Jeremiah 26:20-24 ). The Romans built a fort over the ancient ruins to guard the main route from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean Sea. A garrison from the Tenth Legion was stationed there. Kiriath-Jearim is identified with Deir al-Azhar near the modern village of Qaryet el-Inab or Abu Gosh.

[Rabbah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “greatness.” 1. Village near Jerusalem (Joshua 15:60 ) assigned to tribe of Judah but apparently in territory of Benjamin. Its location is uncertain.

#### Joshua 15:61 In the wilderness: Beth-arabah, Middin and Secacah,

- **Betharabah:** Jos 15:6 18:18
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### THE CITIES OF THE INHERITANCE - Joshua 15:20-62

- A. The southern cities - verses 21-32
- B. The western foothills cities - verses 33-47
- C. The hill country cities - verses 48-60
- D. The desert cities - verses 61-62

### THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE WILDERNESS

**In the wilderness: Beth-arabah, Middin and Secacah** - This is the inhospitable eastern Wilderness of Judea, sloping down to the Dead Sea. The last division is the wilderness of Judah, the northeastern part of Judah's inheritance. It bordered the hill country to the west, the Dead Sea to the east, and the Negev to the south. Six cities occupied this area.

[Beth-Arabah - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, “house of the desert.” A border town of tribe of Judah (Joshua

15:6 , Joshua 15:61 ) also claimed as a city of Benjamin (Joshua 18:22 ). It may be modern Ain el-Gharbah southeast of Jericho.

[Middin - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "judgment." Village in the wilderness district of Judah (Joshua 15:61 ). The LXX identified Middin with Madon. Recently, khirbet Abu Tabaq in the Achor Valley has been suggested as a possible site.

[Secacah - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) (thicket). One of the six cities of Judah, which were situated in the Midbar, ("wilderness"), that is, the tract bordering on the Dead Sea. [Joshua 15:61](#). Its position is not known.

#### **Joshua 15:62 and Nibshan and the City of Salt and Engedi; six cities with their villages.**

- **the city of:** This city was situated somewhere in the vicinity, west of the lake Asphaltites; and supposed by some to be the same as Zoar.
- **Engedi:** En-gedi, or Hazazon-Tamar, was situated, according to Eusebius, in the desert west of the Dead Sea. Josephus says it was 300 stadia from Jerusalem, and not far from the lake Asphaltites; and consequently it could not have been far from Jericho and the mouth of the Jordan. It was celebrated for the abundance of its palm-trees. 1Sa 23:29 2Ch 20:2
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **THE CITIES OF JUDAH IN THE WILDERNESS**

#### **and Nibshan and the City of Salt and Engedi; six cities with their villages.**

[Nibshan - Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) (soft soil). One of the six cities of Judah, Joshua 15:62, which were in the district of the Midbar. (Authorized Version, "wilderness").

[City of Salt - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) A city allotted to the tribe of Judah "in the desert" (Joshua 15:62 ). Its precise location is not known. Archaeological finds do not support an identification with Qumran that some have tried to make.

[Engedi - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) Place name meaning, "place of the young goat." A major oasis along the western side of the Dead Sea about 35 miles southeast of Jerusalem. The springs of Engedi are full, and the vegetation is semitropical. Both biblical and extra-biblical sources describe Engedi as a source of fine dates, aromatic plants used in perfumes, and medicinal plants (Song of Song of Solomon 1:14 ). It was a chief source of balsam, an important plant used for perfumes, and a major source of income for the area. Engedi apparently lay on a caravan route that led from the east shore of the Dead Sea around to its south, then up the west side to Engedi. From there the road went up to Tekoa and then to Jerusalem. Engedi, also called Hazazon-tamar (2 Chronicles 20:2 ), was inhabited by Amorites in the time of Abraham and was subjugated by Chedorlaomer (Genesis 14:7 ). In the tribal allotments, it was given to Judah and was in the district of Judah known as the wilderness district (Joshua 15:62 ). When David was fleeing from Saul, he hid in the area of Engedi (1 Samuel 23:29 ). Saul was in a cave near Engedi when David cut off a piece of his robe but spared his life (1 Samuel 24:1 ). During the reign of Jehoshaphat, Moabites, Ammonites, and others gathered at Engedi to attack Judah (2 Chronicles 20:1-2 ).

#### **Joshua 15:63 Now as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah could not drive them out; so the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day.**

- Jdg 1:8,21 2Sa 5:6-9 1Ch 11:4-8 Ro 7:14-21
- [Joshua 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Judges 1:18-19 And Judah took Gaza with its territory and Ashkelon with its territory and Ekron with its territory. 19 Now the LORD was with Judah, and they took possession of the hill country; but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley **because they had iron chariots.**

Joshua 17:11-13 In Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh had Beth-shean and its towns and Ibleam and its towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns, the third is Napheth. 12 But the sons of Manasseh could not take possession of these cities, **because the Canaanites persisted in living in that land.** 13 It came about when the sons of Israel became strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, **but**

**they did not drive them out completely.**

2 Samuel 5:6-9 Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the **Jebusites**, the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away"; thinking, "David cannot enter here." (**BAD MOVE!**) 7 Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David. 8 David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the **Jebusites**, let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul, through the water tunnel." Therefore they say, "The blind or the lame shall not come into the house." 9 So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward.

Joshua 15:63+ Now as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah **could not drive them out**; so the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day.

Joshua 16:10+ But **they did not drive out** the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites live in the midst of Ephraim to this day, and they became forced laborers.

Exodus 23:29-33+ (**THIS DECLARATION WAS TO THE FIRST GENERATION**) "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. 30 "I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land. 31 "I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River Euphrates; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you. 32 You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. 33 "**They shall not live in your land, because they will make you sin against Me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.**"

Numbers 33:51-56+ (**THIS DECLARATION WAS TO THE SECOND GENERATION**) "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52 then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their figured stones, and destroy all their molten images and demolish all their high places; 53 and you shall take possession of the land and live in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it. 54 'You shall inherit the land by lot according to your families; to the larger you shall give more inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give less inheritance. Wherever the lot falls to anyone, that shall be his. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers. 55 '**But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come about that those whom you let remain of them will become as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides, and they will trouble you in the land in which you live.** 56 'And as I plan to do to them, so I will do to you.'"

Judges 1:27-28+ But Manasseh did not take possession of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; so the Canaanites persisted in living in that land. 28 It came about when Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out completely.

Romans 6:12-14+ Therefore **do not let sin reign** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and **do not go on presenting** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but **present** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) = "**JUST DO IT!**") yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

## **THE JEBUSITES RESIST ERADICATION**

**Now as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah could not drive them out**; Joshua had defeated "the king of Jerusalem" (Joshua 12:7, 10), but apparently did not destroy the Jebusites. Jerusalem was in the territory assigned to the tribe of Benjamin (Judah southernmost tribe, Benjamin just north), however, it was close to Judah's border. Eventually David, of the tribe of Judah, was able to drive out the Jebusites (2Sa 5:6-9), and then make it his capital.

**Campbell** - Was it that the men of Judah "could not" or that they "would not"? Was the failure because of lack of strength or a lack of faith? The account of Judah's inheritance ends on an ominous and foreboding note. ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament](#))

**Irving Jensen on could not drive them out** - This is one of the sobering aspects of Judah's occupation, a problem which the other tribes also faced. In Joshua's campaign against the five kings (chap. 10) he slew the king of Jerusalem and his army, but did not take the city at that time. Now Judah was suffering from that mistake or loss, for a strong contingent of the Jebusites had redeveloped in the meantime, and would not be driven from the city. After Joshua's death Judah smote and burned the unwallled residential area of Jerusalem's southwestern hill (Judges 1:8), but, like the Benjaminites (Judges 1:21), was never able to drive out the Jebusites from the area. What was worse, children of Judah dwelt there with the Jebusites for many years to come (2 Sam. 5:6–7), a fellowship which could not nurture a true worship of God. The city destined to be the holy city was one place of Israel's inheritance which failed of God's blessings because she harbored idolaters! ([Joshua- Everyman's Bible Commentary: Rest-Land Won](#))

**Madvig** - The admission that Judah was unable to dislodge the Jebusites is even more strange in a book that exalts the supernatural power of God, which gives the victory to his people over all their enemies. In Joshua there is a remarkable mixture of miracle and human effort, a combination of divinely aided victory and failure that results from Israel's disobedience and unbelief. Thus God is revealed as sovereign. He responds to the needs of his covenant people but is not subject to their whims. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 3](#))

**So** - An unfortunate term of conclusion.

**The Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day** - Pagans remained among God's people until the day of the writing of this text.

This is clear disobedience - "When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, 2 and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. **You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them** (Deut 7:1-2)

**NET NOTE** adds "The statement to **this very day** reflects the perspective of the author, who must have written prior to David's conquest of the Jebusites (see 2Sa 5:6–7). "

**Warren Wiersbe** - They held (JERUSALEM) temporarily later on (Jdg 1:8), and then David captured it permanently and made it the capital city (2 Sam. 5:6-10) (**ED: ABOUT 400 YEARS LATER**) ([Be Strong - Joshua: Putting God's Power to Work in Your Life](#))

**Rod Mattoon** - As we look at the inheritance, we find over 100 villages and cities were conquered and inherited by Judah. All were conquered but one. They could not drive out the Jebusites at Jerusalem (vs. 63). The problem was not that they "could not" do it, they "would not" do it. The question of the hour was not "Can we defeat them?" but "Can God defeat them?" They said, "NO!" They chose not to defeat them. A lack of courage, strength, resolve, and faith led to their eventual failure. It will lead to our failure too. God promised victory wherever their feet would tread. They did not claim His promises. Victory was eventually won 400 years later by David who had the faith and resolve to win (2 Samuel 5:6–8). The Jebusites were a constant thorn in Judah's side until David totally defeated them. They were very arrogant, confident people. The city was difficult to take for it had steep valleys on three of its sides. They had a constant water supply from the Spring Gihon. They were eventually defeated by an attack up the water shaft. **We will note an important lesson at this point.** A person can be 99% victorious, but defeats in 1% of the areas of our life can become a constant problem and reproach. It is the little areas of disobedience and sinful habits that can rob you of your spiritual power, effectiveness, blessing, and victory. When we purchase items, we pay close attention to flaws, rips, and cracks. People do the same thing when they look at our life. Those inconsistencies hurt our testimony for Jesus Christ. Let me ask, "Is there one area of your life that is hurting you spiritually?" By the grace of God conquer it. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. We are more than conquerors through Him ([Treasures From Joshua](#))

**Henry Morris** - Joshua had defeated "the king of Jerusalem" (Joshua 12:7,10), but apparently did not destroy the Jebusites. The Jebusites later returned to reoccupy their city. It was not until David's time that they were finally expelled permanently from Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:5-9).

**ESV Study Bible** note says **the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day** is disconcerting in at least two respects. **First**, it recalls Moses' repeated warnings against allowing Canaanites to survive and live among the Israelites (see Joshua 6:17,18+). **Second, it raises a theological question: how is it that the people of Judah "could not" drive out their foes?** Surely the god of the Jebusites is not stronger than the God of Judah! This is not the first instance of failure to occupy (Joshua 13:13), and it will not be the last. In Joshua 17:12 the Manassites are unable to occupy certain towns because "the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land." In Joshua 17:16 the Ephraimites cite Canaanite possession of "chariots of iron" as preventing them from taking the plains. These statements seem to be in tension with the dominant theological conviction of the book of Joshua that **'the hand of the Lord is mighty'** (Joshua 4:24) and with the divine promise to the leader Joshua that **'No man shall**

**be able to stand before you all the days of your life.... You shall cause this people to inherit the land"** (Joshua 1:5-6). Joshua himself seems to agree with this assessment, insisting in Joshua 17:18 that **"you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong."** Perhaps statements of what Israel **"could not"** do are to be read as early evidence of spiritual slippage—of failure to follow the Lord "wholly" (see Joshua 14:8)—which will become increasingly evident in the book of Judges. **(ED: I AGREE -- THEY "COULD NOT" BECAUSE THEY "WOULD NOT!")** ([ESV Study Bible](#))

**Kenneth Gangel** - Did they just get tired? Or perhaps lazy? Or just weary of constant warfare? We don't know the reason, but we do know they didn't finish the conquest. It's like walking the last part of a hill. Sometimes we just get tired of trying to serve God and live for him and grow spiritually and we just give up before the race is over. We condescend just to "live with" negative issues in our lives. This is the first "conquest motif" describing a tribe's failure to drive out the pagan peoples of Canaan from their territory. But this verse throws us off stride because the city of Jerusalem lay in Benjaminite territory not in Judah. As Howard explains: "Judges 1:21 is an almost verbatim repetition of this verse, except stating that **Benjamin** (not Judah) did not drive out the Jebusites. The reason for this dual assignment of the city undoubtedly is that Jerusalem sat astride the boundary between Benjamin and Judah, and it was not strongly identified with either tribe. On the one hand, Jerusalem was a Benjaminite city: in the Benjaminite tribal allotment, the boundary line runs "down the Hinnom Valley along the southern slope of the Jebusite city and so to En Rogel" (Josh. 18:16) and "the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem)" appears in the Benjaminite city list (18:28). On the other hand, Jerusalem also appears in the Judahite boundary list: the description in Joshua 15:8 uses almost the same language as is found in the Benjaminite list.... The solution to this difference in perspective lies in understanding that Judah's success [in driving out the Jebusites] may have been limited and temporary, while Benjamin's failure was total. In either case Jebusites and Israelites lived intermingled, according to Josh. 15:64 and Jdg. 1:21, and the city was not taken decisively by Israelites until the time of David, ca. 1003 b.c. (2Sa 5:5-10) (Howard, 343-44). ([Holman Old Testament Commentary - Joshua](#))

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## **GEORGE BUSH - [Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Joshua - Chapter 15](#)**

**63. The Jebusites—the children of Judah could not drive them out.** Joshua had before taken the king of Jerusalem, but not the city. The part from which the Jebusites could not be dislodged was more particularly the stronghold of Zion, falling within the lot of Benjamin, which was not finally reduced till the time of David, 2 Sam. 5:6–10. As precisely the same thing is said of the children of Benjamin, Judg. 1:21, which is here said of the children of Judah, the inference is inevitable that part of Jerusalem was in the lot of Judah, and part in the lot of Benjamin. The inability of Judah to expel these Jebusites was owing solely to their own remissness and unbelief. If they had attempted it with vigor and resolution, if they had all had the undaunted spirit of Caleb, there is no reason to doubt that God would have been present with them to crown their efforts with success.

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### **QUESTION - [Who were the Jebusites?](#)**

**ANSWER** - When God promised to give Abraham a land for his descendants, it was described as being inhabited by many tribes, including the Jebusites (Genesis 15:18–21). Who were these people, and where did they come from?

According to the [Table of Nations](#) in Genesis 10, the Jebusites were descended from Noah's son Ham, through his son Canaan. They were one of the Amorite tribes who were placed under judgment by God for their wickedness (Genesis 15:16). God described their pagan worship as abominable practices (Deuteronomy 20:18), which may have included child sacrifice. As a result of that judgment, God told the Israelites to exterminate all of the Amorite tribes when they came into the land. The Israelites were also forbidden to intermarry with them, so the Jebusites would not pass on their pagan practices.

The Jebusites dwelt in the hill country, with Jerusalem as one of their key cities (Numbers 13:29; Judges 19:10–11). The Jebusites' name for "Jerusalem" was "Jebus," and it retained that name until the time of King David (1 Chronicles 11:4–5). During the time of Joshua, the Jebusite king Adoni-zedek joined with four other Amorite kings to attack the Israelites at Gibeon (Joshua 10:5), but he was defeated and put to death. Later, the Jebusites joined with Jabin, king of Hazor, in a pitched battle against the Israelites, but they were also defeated by Joshua's army (Joshua 11:3). Despite these defeats, the Jebusites continued to live in the hill country around Jerusalem for many generations. During the time of the judges, some Israelites began to intermarry with the Jebusites, causing God to bring judgment on the nation (Judges 3:5).

When David became king of Israel, he attacked the Jebusites of Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6) and conquered the city, which then became known as the City of David. Apparently, David granted terms of peace with the remaining Jebusites, because he made a friendly deal with [Araunah the Jebusite](#) to purchase land for building the temple (2 Samuel 24:18–25). The Jebusites remained subjugated to Israel and were part of the forced labor Solomon later used for his building projects.

Though they were allowed to live among the Israelites, the Jebusites and other Amorite tribes maintained their distinctive ways and thus became a continuing snare to the people of Israel. When [Ezra the priest](#) led a revival among the Jews who returned from the Babylonian captivity, he had to deal with the issue of intermarriage with Jebusites and others (Ezra 9:1). Ezra commanded the men

of Israel to confess their sins and put away their pagan wives so that God would take away His wrath.

After this, the Jebusites disappear from history; likely, they were absorbed into the other Gentile peoples who lived in the land of Israel. An extra-biblical reference to the Jebusites may be contained in one of the tablets discovered at Mari, in modern-day Syria. One cuneiform tablet mentions a people called the "Yabusiim," which could very well be a reference to the Jebusites. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Jebusites** - 39x - Gen. 10:16; Gen. 15:21; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 15:8; Jos. 15:63; Jos. 18:16; Jos. 18:28; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 3:5; Jdg. 19:11; 2 Sam. 5:6; 2 Sam. 5:8; 2 Sam. 24:16; 2 Sam. 24:18; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Chr. 1:14; 1 Chr. 11:4; 1 Chr. 11:6; 1 Chr. 21:15; 1 Chr. 21:18; 1 Chr. 21:28; 2 Chr. 3:1; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Zech. 9:7

**Jebusites - Holman Bible Dictionary** Clan who originally controlled Jerusalem before David conquered the city. In the list of the descendants of Noah (Genesis 10:1 ) the Jebusites are traced through the line of Ham and Canaan and are listed alongside other clans such as the Amorites and Girgashites.

In Joshua 10:1 , the king of Jerusalem, Adonizedek, is considered one of the five Amorite kings who fought against Joshua.

In the time of the Judges, Jerusalem was attacked and burned by the men of Judah (Judges 1:8 ), but the Jebusites were not expelled. Centuries later David captured the city and made it his capital. David purchased a stone threshing-floor from a Jebusite named Araunah (2 Samuel 24:16-24 ), and this later became the site of Solomon's Temple. The remnants of the Jebusites became bondservants during Solomon's reign (1 Kings 9:20-21 ). Jebusite names appear to be Hurrian rather than Semitic. See Jerusalem .

### Cities Not Conquered by the Israelites

TRIBES	JOSHUA	JUDGES	PEOPLE	CITIES
Israelites General	Josh 13:13			
Judah	Josh 15:63		Jebusites	Jerusalem
Benjamin		Jdg 1:21	Jebusites	Jerusalem
W. Manasseh	Josh 17:11-12	Jdg 1:27-28	Canaanites	Beth Shan, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo, Endor,* Naphoth*
Ephraim	Josh 16:10	Jdg 1:29	Canaanites	Gezer
Zebulun		Jdg 1:30	Canaanites	Kitron, Nahalol
Asher		Jdg 1:31-32	Canaanites	Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Aczib, Helbah, Aphek, Rehob
Naphtali		Jdg 1:33	Canaanites	Beth Shemesh, Beth Anath
Dan	Josh 19:47	Jdg 1:34-35	Amorites	Leshem

**Note** - This is a list of the so-called "Conquest Lacunae," consisting primarily of cities the Israelites did not conquer (see Kallai, Historical Geography, 102–11). It differs from the list of "Remaining Lands," which are listed together in Josh 13:2–6 and consist of territories the Israelites did not conquer (in addition to Kallai, see Na'aman, Borders and Districts, 39–73). (Source: David Howard - [Joshua: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture Volume 5 The New American Commentary](#))