

Joshua 15:1-19
Water in the Desert

NKJ Joshua 15:1 So this was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families: The border of Edom at the Wilderness of Zin southward was the extreme southern boundary.

2 And their southern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward.

3 Then it went out to the southern side of the Ascent of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin, ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea, passed along to Hezron, went up to Adar, and went around to Karkaa.

4 From there it passed toward Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your southern border.

5 The east border was the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. And the border on the northern quarter began at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan.

6 The border went up to Beth Hoglah and passed north of Beth Arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.

7 Then the border went up toward Debir from the Valley of Achor, and it turned northward toward Gilgal, which is before the Ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley. The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh and ended at En Rogel.

8 And the border went up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusite city (which is Jerusalem). The border went up to the top of the mountain that lies before the Valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the Valley of Rephaim northward.

9 Then the border went around from the top of the hill to the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and extended to the cities of Mount Ephron. And the border went around to Baalah (which is Kirjath Jearim).

10 Then the border turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (which is Chesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to Timnah.

11 And the border went out to the side of Ekron northward. Then the border went around to Shicron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel; and the border ended at the sea.

12 The west border was the coastline of the Great Sea. This is the boundary of the children of Judah all around according to their families.

13 Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak).

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

15 Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher).

16 And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife."

17 So Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife.

18 Now it was so, when she came to him, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?"

19 She answered, "Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water." So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

The great aim of all of these Chapters in Joshua is to show the fulfillment of what God had promised to the Patriarch Abraham and was now delivering on. This particular section can be divided easily into two parts, first we have the boundaries of the inheritance of Judah drawn for us in verses 1-12 and then

we have this story of Caleb's conquest of the cities of Hebron and Othniel's conquest of Debir, and the gift given by Caleb to his daughter in verses 13-19

I. Verses 1-12 The fulfillment of God's promises / Division of Land to Judah

Except for the special promises made to Caleb, division of the land is by lot, this was to allow God to be the one who gave the tribes their land

Lot first falls to Judah, and they are featured on the most prominent Ground to show their future importance amongst the tribes

Gen. 49:8 "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you.

9 Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?

10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

Now the extent of their lands if from the land of Edom to the beginning of the Desert of Sinai (Zin) from the Mediterranean Sea to the Salt Sea (sea to shining sea) and North to South from the Northernmost tip of the Dead Sea way down to Kadesh Barnea in the South (actually in the Sinai again)

All of the main Philistine cities on the coast including Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath fall into the allotment of Judah

II. Verses 13-19 Debir is right in the center of the allotment given to Judah, just Northeast of Beersheeba to the West of the Great Salt Sea, the name of Debir was previously Kiriath-Sepher, which means city of scribes or book town, probably meaning that the city had a great library in it.

Debir had been taken earlier, which probably means that control of these cities fluctuated, it would be wrong to think that the original inhabitants of Canaan had no desire to recapture these cities.

In the midst of this area was the town of Debir, now apparently this town was so heavily fortified that it was considered almost impossible to take it. So Caleb offers an additional incentive, who ever takes Debir shall also have his daughter Achsah as wife. Now here the interesting question is raised, does Caleb have a right to do that? To offer up his daughter as a prize?

“Although it is the office of parents to settle their daughters in life, they are not permitted to exercise tyrannical power and assign them to whatever husbands they think fit without consulting them. For while all contracts ought to be voluntary, freedom ought to prevail especially in marriage that no one may pledge his faith against his will. But Caleb was probably influenced by the belief that his daughter would willingly give her consent, as she could not modestly reject such honorable terms; f141 for the husband to be given her was no common man, but one who should excel all others in warlike prowess. It is quite possible, however, that Caleb in the heat of battle inconsiderately promised what it was not in his power to perform. It seems to me, however, that according to common law, the agreement implied the daughter's consent, and was only to take effect if it was obtained. f142 God certainly heard the prayer of Caleb, when he gave him a son-in-law exactly to his mind. For had the free choice been given him, there was none whom he would have preferred.” - Calvin

So Othniel (and there is an argument amongst scholars as to whether the text is telling us he was the brother of Caleb or his nephew), takes the city.

Following that we have the encounter between, Caleb and Achsah. Achsah has been given land in the south, in the Negev, the Negev is a desert. If she does not also have water, the land will be useless to her. So she goes to her father and begs for a water supply also, and obtains it by her entreaty.

1) The way the Lord fulfilled his promises not only to his people, but his great promise to bring forth SHILOH, the Messiah from the tribe of Judah

2) The value of faith and trust, there would have been no town that was “unconquerable” had more of the people had the faith of Caleb and Joshua, this is because the Lord was with them, only be strong and steadfast

Deut 7:22 "And the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you little by little; you will be unable to destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.

23 "But the LORD your God will deliver them over to you, and will inflict defeat upon them until they are destroyed.

24 "And He will deliver their kings into your hand, and you will destroy their name from under heaven; no one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them.

3) God has given us temporal blessings, but unless spiritual blessings are added to them they will be unprofitable to us. They will remain as but dust. As Achsah knew she needed water, your inheritance will be dry unless the Water of Life is added –

John 4:6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"

12 "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

God blesses the good and the bad with temporal blessings, but they shall be wood hay and stubble, dry and dead on the last day if we do not also obtain the water that truly quenches thirst.

Have you asked for that living water? Had Achsah not requested it she would not have obtained. Her father clearly desired to give her what she wanted. So your father desires to grant you this request as well.