

1 Chronicles 4:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And at Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at Tolad,

Analysis

And at Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at Tolad—these Simeonite towns in southern Judah's Negev reflect tribal settlement patterns. בִּלְהָה (Bilhah) shares the name of Rachel's handmaid (Genesis 29:29), עֶצֶם (Etzem) means 'bone' or 'strength,' and תּוֹלַד (Tolad) means 'generations' or 'birth.' The list continues from verse 28, enumerating Simeon's allotted cities within Judah's territory (Joshua 19:2-8).

Simeon's absorption into Judah fulfilled Jacob's prophecy: 'I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel' (Genesis 49:7). Though receiving inheritance, Simeon lacked distinct tribal territory, eventually merging with Judah. This demonstrates God's prophetic words accomplish their purpose across centuries. What seemed like curse (scattering) ensured Simeon's preservation through Judah, the tribe producing Messiah.

Historical Context

Simeon's territory, theoretically within Judah's borders, never achieved full independence. By David's census (2 Samuel 24), Simeon had largely merged with Judah. The Chronicler's listing preserves Simeon's identity even as tribal distinctiveness faded, showing God remembers every tribe despite historical absorption.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Simeon's absorption into Judah demonstrate that God's discipline can become the means of preservation and blessing?
2. What does it mean that even 'scattered' tribes remained in God's covenant memory and received inheritance?

Interlinear Text

וּבִבְלָהָה	וּבְעֶזֶם	וּבְתוֹלַד:
And at Bilhah	and at Ezem	and at Tolad
H1090	H6107	H8434

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