

Ezekiel 48:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the great sea.

Analysis

And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the great sea. This verse defines the southern boundary of the restored land. Tamar (תָּמָר, "palm tree") likely refers to Hazazon-tamar near the Dead Sea (2 Chronicles 20:2), the southeastern anchor point. Mei Merivat Qadesh (מֵי מְרִיבַת קָדֵשׁ, "waters of strife [at] Kadesh") recalls Israel's rebellion in the wilderness where Moses struck the rock (Numbers 20:13, 27:14)—a place of judgment now redeemed as a boundary marker of blessing.

The river toward the great sea refers to the nachal (נַחַל, "brook/wadi") of Egypt, likely Wadi el-Arish, flowing to the Mediterranean (ha-yam ha-gadol, הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל). This southern boundary fulfills the Abrahamic land promise's extent (Genesis 15:18). Remarkably, Kadesh—where Israel's unbelief delayed entrance into Canaan for forty years—now marks the border of the inheritance. God's faithfulness supersedes human failure; the children enter what the parents forfeited through unbelief.

Historical Context

This boundary description echoes God's original promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:18) and the boundaries given in Numbers 34:3-5. Kadesh-barnea was the pivotal location where Israel's unbelief led to the forty-year wilderness wandering

(Numbers 13-14). The generation that died in the wilderness never entered the land, yet their children did. Ezekiel's audience—exiles who had lost the land through covenant unfaithfulness—would understand that God's promises transcend human failure. The southern border from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean encompasses territory rarely fully controlled even in Solomon's era.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Kadesh's transformation from a place of judgment to a border of blessing illustrate God's redemptive purposes?
2. What encouragement does this offer to those who feel their failures have disqualified them from God's promises?

Interlinear Text

וְעַל H5921	גֹּב וּל H1366	גַּד H1410	אֶל H413	פְּאֵת H6285	גֹּב H5045	תִּימָנָה H8486	וְהָהָה H1961
And by the border	of Gad	side	at the south	southward			
גֹּב וּל H1366	מִתְנַחֵם H8559	יָם H4325	מְרִיבָה H4808	קֶדֶשׁ H6946			
And by the border	shall be even from Tamar	unto the waters	of strife	in Kadesh			
וְנָחַל הָ H5158	עַל H5921	הַיָּם H3220	הַגָּדוֹל: H1419				
and to the river	sea	toward the great					

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 47:15 (Parallel theme): And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad;

2 Chronicles 20:2 (Parallel theme): Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi.

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