

# Joshua 13:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley,

## Analysis

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### **And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley**

—Kirjathaim (קִרְיָתָיִם, "double city") was originally Moabite (Genesis 14:5) and later appears on the Moabite Stone, indicating contested territory between Israel and Moab throughout history. Sibmah (שִׁבְמָה) was famous for its vineyards; Isaiah 16:8-9 and Jeremiah 48:32 lament its destruction, suggesting economic significance. Zareth-shahar (צָרֵת הַשָּׁחָר, "splendor of the dawn") sat on a mountain ridge, perhaps catching first morning light.

The poetic name Zareth-shahar contrasts with the harsh military reality of conquest. God gave Israel not just defensive positions but places of beauty and agricultural productivity. The mention of Sibmah's vineyards reminds us that the Promised Land flowed with milk, wine, and honey—material blessings accompanying spiritual covenant. Yet these same cities later fell to Moab (Isaiah 15-16, Jeremiah 48), fulfilling warnings that disobedience results in losing what God has given.

## Historical Context

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These cities lay on the Moabite plateau east of the Dead Sea. The region's altitude (2,000-3,000 feet) and fertile soil made it ideal for viticulture, explaining Sibmah's fame for wine production. The Moabite Stone (circa 840 BC) records King Mesha's reconquest of several cities mentioned in Joshua 13, confirming ongoing territorial disputes and validating the biblical geographical framework.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How do the agricultural blessings of places like Sibmah demonstrate that God cares about both spiritual and material wellbeing?
2. What warning does Israel's later loss of these territories provide about the conditional nature of maintaining God's blessings?
3. How might the name 'Splendor of the Dawn' reflect God's desire to give His people not just survival but beauty and joy?

## Interlinear Text

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וְעַמְקָם: בְּנֵי רֹאשׁ הַשְׁבָטִים אֶת־קְרִימָתָם  
And Kirjathaim and Sibmah and Zarethshahar in the mount of the valley

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