

Joshua 13:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in the valley, Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward.

Analysis

And in the valley, Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon— The Hebrew ba'emeq (בְּעֵמֶק, "in the valley") refers to the Jordan Valley portion of Gad's territory, contrasting with the highland cities previously mentioned. Beth-aram (בֵּית הָרָם) and Beth-nimrah (בֵּית נִמְרָה, "house of leopard") were fortified cities with good water sources. Succoth (סְכוּת, "booths") was where Jacob built shelters after returning from Paddan-aram (Genesis 33:17) and where Gideon later punished the men who refused to help him (Judges 8:5-16).

Zaphon (צָפוֹן, "north") served as a royal city in Sihon's kingdom. These valley cities provided agricultural richness and trade route control but required fortification against raids. The contrast between valley and highland holdings in Gad's inheritance mirrors Christian experience: we occupy both lowland places of productivity and fruitfulness, and highland places of vision and defense. Both require faithful stewardship, yet each presents unique challenges and opportunities.

Historical Context

The Jordan Valley cities were located in the ghor (rift valley) east of the Jordan River, benefiting from the Jabbok River and other water sources flowing from the

Gilead highlands. These settlements controlled fords across the Jordan and trade routes running north-south through the valley. The lower altitude and water access made them agricultural centers, though the same accessibility that brought prosperity also brought vulnerability to raiders.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Gad's possession of both valley (productivity) and highland (defense) territories illustrate the balanced Christian life?
2. What does Succoth's history (Jacob's peaceful dwelling, later Gideon's judgment) teach about how places can witness both blessing and judgment?
3. How might the need to fortify even prosperous valley cities speak to the reality that material blessing doesn't eliminate spiritual warfare?

Interlinear Text

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|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|----------|
| וּבַעַי מֶקֶל | בֵּית | בְּתָרָם | וּבֵית | נִמְרָה | וּסְכוֹת | |
| And in the valley | H0 | Betharam | H0 | and Bethnimrah | and Succoth | |
| H6010 | | H1027 | | H1039 | H5523 | |
| וּצָפֹן | וְהַרְעָה | מִמְלַכְתּוֹ | סִיחֹן | מֶלֶךְ | חֶשְׁבֹן | יַרְדֵּן |
| and Zaphon | the rest | of the kingdom | of Sihon | king | of Heshbon | Jordan |
| H6829 | H3499 | H4468 | H5511 | H4428 | H2809 | H3383 |
| וּגְבֻל | עַד | קֵצֵה | יָם | כְּנֶזֶת | עַל | |
| and his border | H5704 | even unto the edge | of the sea | of Chinnereth | on the other side | |
| H1366 | | H7097 | H3220 | H3672 | H5676 | |
| יַרְדֵּן | מִזְרָחָהּ: | | | | | |
| Jordan | eastward | | | | | |
| H3383 | H4217 | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 33:17 (Parallel theme): And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

Numbers 32:36 (Parallel theme): And Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran, fenced cities: and folds for sheep.

Numbers 34:11 (Parallel theme): And the coast shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward:

Deuteronomy 3:17 (Parallel theme): The plain also, and Jordan, and the coast thereof, from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, under Ashdoth-pisgah eastward.

Joshua 11:2 (Kingdom): And to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west,

