

Joshua 15:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom the wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast.

Analysis

Judah's inheritance: 'This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom the wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast.' Judah, receiving the first territorial allocation (after Transjordan tribes), holds pride of place—the royal tribe from which Messiah would descend (Genesis 49:10). The southern boundary extended to Edom and Zin wilderness, reaching toward Egypt. The detailed geographic description (verses 1-12) establishes Judah's substantial inheritance. This prominence fulfills Jacob's blessing (Genesis 49:8-12) and prepares for David's monarchy and ultimately Christ's kingdom. The placement of Judah's allocation first in Canaan proper emphasizes its importance in Israel's history and redemptive purpose. From Judah would come kings and ultimately the King of Kings.

Historical Context

Judah's territory encompassed the southern highlands and Negev wilderness—rugged, defensible terrain producing hardy people. The southern boundary extended to Edom (descendants of Esau) and the Zin wilderness (where Israel wandered, Numbers 13:21, 20:1). This substantial allocation reflected Judah's large population (Numbers 1:27 shows Judah as Israel's largest tribe at exodus). Archaeological evidence confirms extensive settlement in Judah's hill country during Iron Age (period of judges and monarchy). Major cities included Hebron, Jerusalem (partially, verse 63), Bethlehem, Debir, and many others. Judah's

geography—central highlands with access to Shephelah (foothills) and some coastal plain—provided agricultural diversity and strategic depth. The tribe's military strength and geographic position made it natural leader. After Solomon's death, Judah and Benjamin formed the southern kingdom while northern tribes followed Jeroboam—Judah's lasting identity and faith preserved the Davidic line through exile and ultimately produced Jesus Christ.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Judah's prominent territorial allocation prefigure Christ's kingship emerging from this tribe?
2. What does Judah's substantial, strategic inheritance teach about God's purposes in apparently secular land distributions?
3. How do geographic and historical particulars (like Judah's terrain and location) shape spiritual destinies?

Interlinear Text

וַיְהִי י'	הַגּוֹכַ ל	לְמַטֵּ ה	בְּנֵי י'	יְהוּדָה ה	לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם
H1961	This then was the lot	of the tribe	of the children	of Judah	by their families
	H1486	H4294	H1121	H3063	H4940
אֶל	גֹּב וּל	אֶדּוֹם	מִדְבַּר	צִין	נָגְבָה
H413	even to the border	of Edom	the wilderness	of Zin	southward
	H1366	H123	H4057	H6790	H5045
מִקְצֵה ה	תִּימָן:				
was the uttermost part	of the south coast				
H7097	H8486				

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