

Joshua 15:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan,

Analysis

And Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan—Kedesh (קֹדֶשׁ, "holy place" or "sanctuary") was a common name in Israel; this southern Kedesh differs from the more famous Kedesh in Naphtali (a city of refuge). The name indicates a location set apart, possibly for worship or having sacred associations. **Hazor** (חֲצוֹר, "enclosure" or "village") also appears multiple times in Scripture; this Hazor in Judah's south differs from the great Canaanite city-state of Hazor conquered by Joshua in the north (Joshua 11:10). **Ithnan** (יִתְנָן) is unidentified but may derive from natan ("to give"), possibly meaning "given" or "hired."

The repetition of place names like Kedesh and Hazor across different tribal territories demonstrates how common certain settlement names were in ancient Israel. Modern readers must note geographical context to distinguish between namesakes. This also shows that sacred place names (Kedesh, "holy") weren't unique to singular locations—holiness could mark multiple communities where God was honored.

Historical Context

The southern Hazor mentioned here was a small village, vastly different from the massive northern Hazor that dominated Upper Galilee with a lower city of 175 acres—one of the largest ancient Near Eastern cities. The contrast illustrates the range of settlements in Israel's inheritance, from major urban centers to small hamlets. Each had distinct roles in the tribal economy and defense.

Names like Kedesh ("holy") appearing in multiple territories may indicate Levitical settlements or towns with local sanctuaries before worship centralized in Jerusalem. The distribution of sacred place names suggests that holiness and worship weren't concentrated in a single location but characterized communities throughout the land where Yahweh was honored.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How can you make your home, workplace, or community a 'Kedesh'—a holy place set apart for God's purposes and glory?
2. What does the contrast between the great northern Hazor and this small southern Hazor teach about God valuing faithful communities regardless of size or prominence?
3. How should knowing that God notices and records even small, forgotten settlements affect how you view your own significance in His kingdom purposes?

Interlinear Text

וְקֵדֶשׁ	וְחָצוֹר	וְיִתְנָן:
And Kedesh	and Hazor	and Ithnan
H6943	H2674	H3497

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