

Joshua 19:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-methoar to Neah;

Analysis

And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-methoar to Neah.

The boundary continues eastward, passing through **Gittah-hepher** (גִּתְּהֶחֶפֶר), which means "winepress of digging" or "winepress of the well." This city gained lasting significance as the hometown of the prophet Jonah (2 Kings 14:25). The inclusion of Jonah's birthplace within Zebulun's borders demonstrates that even this lesser-known tribe contributed to Israel's prophetic ministry. Jonah's reluctant mission to Nineveh and God's mercy toward repentant Gentiles prefigures the gospel's universal scope—fitting that such a prophet arose from Galilee, later called "Galilee of the Gentiles."

Ittah-kazin (עֵתָה קָצִין) and **Remmon-methoar** (רִמּוֹן מֶתְעָר) are less clearly identified sites. Remmon means "pomegranate," a fruit symbolizing abundance and fruitfulness in Scripture. The proliferation of place names in these boundary descriptions reflects the detailed care God exercised in distributing the land. No tribe received vague, undefined territories but rather precisely delineated inheritances with specific landmarks.

Neah (נֶעַח) possibly means "settlement" or "pasture." The cumulative effect of these verses—listing city after city, boundary after boundary—testifies to God's meticulous faithfulness in fulfilling His covenant promises. The God who numbers

the hairs on our heads (Matthew 10:30) and knows the stars by name (Psalm 147:4) operates with precision and care in every aspect of His redemptive plan, including geographical details that would later host Messiah's ministry.

Historical Context

Gittah-hepher's identification as Jonah's hometown (2 Kings 14:25) places the prophet within Zebulun's territory. Jonah prophesied during the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BCE), when the northern kingdom expanded its borders and enjoyed economic success. Yet this prosperity masked spiritual decline, and Jonah's ministry—both to Israel (announcing territorial expansion) and to Nineveh (calling for repentance)—occurred during this tumultuous period.

Jonah's book emphasizes God's concern for all nations, not just Israel. That such a prophet arose from Galilee, a region with mixed Jewish-Gentile population, seems providentially appropriate. Centuries later, religious leaders would mockingly claim "out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (John 7:52), either ignorant of or deliberately ignoring Jonah's Galilean origin. This ironic error illustrates how religious pride can blind people to scriptural truth.

Archaeological identification of these sites remains tentative for some locations, but the cumulative evidence supports the general geographical framework. The boundary descriptions follow logical geographical patterns, moving along recognizable topographical features. Ancient Israelite scribes preserved these detailed lists not as creative fiction but as legal documentation of tribal territories—records that defined property rights and tribal identities for generations. The preservation of such mundane geographical details testifies to Scripture's historical rootedness.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jonah's birth in Zebulun's territory challenge assumptions about which people or places God will use for significant ministry?
2. What does the meticulous detail of boundary descriptions teach about God's character—His precision, faithfulness, and attention to seemingly mundane matters?
3. How might the religious leaders' ignorance about Jonah being from Galilee (John 7:52) warn us against dismissing people or places based on prejudice rather than scriptural truth?

Interlinear Text

וּמִשָּׁם H8033	עָבַר H5674	קַדְמָה H6924	מִזְרָחָה H4217	גִּתָּה H0
	And from thence passeth on along		on the east	
יִגְדָּה H1662	עִתָּה H0	קִצִּין H6278	וְיֵצֵא H3318	רֵמֶמֶן מֶתְחָר H7417
to Gittahhepher		to Ittahkazin	and goeth out	to Remmonmethoar
רֵמֶמֶן מֶתְחָר H7417	נִינְעָה: H5269			
to Remmonmethoar	to Neah			

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