

Joshua 19:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages.

Analysis

And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages—The final Naphtali cities include Migdal-el ('tower of God') and two 'Beth' compounds: Beth-anath ('house of [goddess] Anath') and Beth-shemesh ('house of the sun'). The pagan names reflect Canaanite origins, yet they became Israelite possessions.

God redeems pagan names and purposes. Cities dedicated to false gods now worship Yahweh. This foreshadows the Great Commission: all nations, including idol-worshipers, can become God's inheritance (Psalm 2:8). Conversion transforms purpose, not just individuals but places and cultures.

Historical Context

Beth-anath and Beth-shemesh reveal Canaanite polytheism—Anath was a war/fertility goddess, while sun worship was widespread. That Naphtali didn't rename these cities shows ancient Israel's inconsistent devotion, tolerating Canaanite influences that later corrupted their worship.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What pagan influences in culture can be redeemed for God's glory rather than merely rejected?
2. How does toleration of false worship practices eventually corrupt true faith?

Interlinear Text

וְבָיַת	עַתָּה	וְבֵית	חָרָם	אֵל	וּמִגְדָּל	וְיַרְאֹן	
And Iron	H0	and Migdalel		Horem	H0	and Bethanath	H0
H3375		H4027		H2765		H1043	

וְבָיַת	עַתָּה	וְבֵית	חָרָם	אֵל	וּמִגְדָּל	וְיַרְאֹן	
and Bethshemesh		cities		nineteen		עָשָׂר	הָעָשָׂר
H1053		H5892		H8672		H6240	

וְבָיַת	עַתָּה	וְבֵית	חָרָם	אֵל	וּמִגְדָּל	וְיַרְאֹן	
and Bethshemesh		cities		nineteen		עָשָׂר	הָעָשָׂר
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