

# Joshua 21:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.

## Analysis

**And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.**

The priests received "**Hebron**" (Chevron, חֶבְרוֹן), whose name means "association" or "alliance"—fitting for a city fostering covenant community between God and His people. The phrase "**the city of Arba the father of Anak**" (Kiriath-Arba aviy haAnak, קִרְיַת־אַרְבַּע אָבִי הָאֵנָק) recalls Hebron's pre-conquest identity. Arba was the Anakim's ancestor (Joshua 14:15), and the Anakim were the giants who terrified the faithless spies (Numbers 13:28, 33). That this former stronghold of Israel's most fearsome enemies became a priestly city and refuge demonstrates God's complete victory—enemies' territory transformed into centers of worship and mercy.

**"In the hill country of Judah"** (behar Yehudah, בְּהַר יְהוּדָה) locates Hebron at 3,040 feet elevation in Judah's central highlands, 19 miles south of Jerusalem. This elevated positioning symbolizes spiritual prominence—the city housing Abraham's burial cave (Genesis 23:19) and David's first capital (2 Samuel 2:1-4) became a priestly city. The integration of patriarchal heritage, royal history, and priestly function in one location demonstrates God's unified redemptive plan.

The phrase "**with the suburbs thereof round about it**" (veet-migrashehah

sevivotehah, וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ סְבִיבֶיהָ) emphasizes comprehensive provision. The migrash (pasture lands) surrounded Hebron completely (sevivotehah, "round about"), ensuring priests had adequate livestock support. This shows God's provision for His servants is thorough, not minimal—He provides abundantly for those dedicated to His service.

## Historical Context

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Hebron's transformation from Anakim fortress to priestly city is one of Scripture's great redemptive reversals. Caleb conquered it (Joshua 14:12-15) then surrendered it for priestly use—personal victory yielded to kingdom priorities. The Cave of Machpelah in Hebron contains the patriarchs' tombs: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah (Genesis 49:29-32). Archaeological evidence confirms Hebron's antiquity and continuous occupation. Today the cave remains contested by Jews, Muslims, and Christians—all claiming Abrahamic heritage. Yet biblically, Hebron's greatest significance is as a city of refuge, prefiguring Christ our refuge from divine wrath (Hebrews 6:18).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does Hebron's transformation from giants' stronghold to priestly city encourage you that God can redeem your most fearsome struggles into centers of worship and ministry?
2. What does Caleb's willingness to surrender conquered Hebron for priestly use teach about sacrificing personal victory for kingdom priorities?
3. How does Hebron's role as city of refuge deepen your understanding of Christ as your refuge from judgment and the wrath to come?

## Interlinear Text

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וַתֵּן ו	אֶת לָהֶם	קִרְיַת	אַרְבַּע	אָבִי	הָעֵנָן וְאֶן	
And they gave	H1992	H853	them the city	of Arba	the father	of Anak
H5414			H7151	H704	H1	H6061
הָיָא	חֶבְרוֹן	בְּהִל	יְהוּדָה	וְאֶת	מִגְרָשָׁהּ	
H1931	which city is Hebron	in the hill	country of Judah	H854	with the suburbs	
	H2275	H2022	H3063		H4054	
סְבִיבֹתֶיהָ:						
thereof round about						
H5439						

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Chronicles 6:55** (Parallel theme): And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.

**Luke 1:39** (Parallel theme): And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;