

Joshua 21:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jattir with her suburbs, and Eshtemoa with her suburbs,

Analysis

Jattir with her suburbs, and Eshtemoa with her suburbs (יָתֵר וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ, Yattir ve'et-migrashehah ve'et-Eshtemoa ve'et-migrashehah)—These Judahite hill country cities continued the allocation to Aaron's descendants. Jattir appears in David's list of cities receiving spoils from Amalekite raids (1 Samuel 30:27), suggesting ongoing priestly presence there centuries later. The repetition of ve'et-migrashehah ("with her suburbs") after each city name emphasizes the careful fulfillment of Numbers 35:2-5, which specified exact measurements for pastureland: 1,000 cubits from the city wall in each direction, with additional 2,000-cubit extensions for farming and grazing.

The geographical clustering of these priestly cities in Judah's southern highlands created a spiritual center where Torah teaching and sacrificial knowledge could be concentrated and preserved.

Historical Context

Jattir (Khirbet Attir) lies 13 miles southwest of Hebron in the Judean hill country at 2,000 feet elevation. Excavations reveal Iron Age occupation consistent with Israelite settlement. Eshtemoa (es-Semu') sits 9 miles south of Hebron. Its synagogue ruins from the Byzantine period suggest continued Jewish/Levitical presence long after Joshua's era. Both cities figured in David's network of southern support during his fugitive years.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Why did God strategically place priestly cities throughout Israel rather than concentrating them in one location?
2. How does the preservation of these city names in Scripture demonstrate God's attention to historical detail?
3. What can modern churches learn from the geographic distribution of spiritual leadership in ancient Israel?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶת־	יַתֵּר־	וְאֶת־	מְגִרָּשָׁה׃	וְאֶת־	אֶשְׁתֵּמוֹא־	וְאֶת־
H853	And Jattir	H853	with her suburbs	H853	and Eshtemoa	H853
	H3492		H4054		H851	

מְגִרָּשָׁה׃
with her suburbs
H4054

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 15:48 (Parallel theme): And in the mountains, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh,

Joshua 15:50 (Parallel theme): And Anab, and Eshtemoh, and Anim,