

Joshua 21:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs; four cities.

Analysis

Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs; four cities (עֲנָתוֹת וְאֶת־עֲלְמוֹן אַרְבַּע עָרִים, Anatot ve'et-Almon arba arim)—Anathoth gains profound significance as the hometown of the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:1), himself a member of the Aaronic priesthood. That this Levitical city produced Israel's weeping prophet demonstrates how priestly cities served as seedbeds for prophetic ministry. Jeremiah's own relatives from Anathoth later plotted to kill him (Jeremiah 11:21-23), illustrating that familiarity with holy things does not guarantee faith. Abiathar the priest was banished to Anathoth by Solomon (1 Kings 2:26-27), fulfilling Eli's curse.

The summary **four cities** from Benjamin parallels the nine from Judah/Simeon, completing the thirteen Aaronic cities enumerated in verse 19. The number thirteen, while associated with rebellion elsewhere, here represents complete provision for the priestly tribe.

Historical Context

Anathoth (Ras el-Kharrubeh) lies 3 miles northeast of Jerusalem in Benjamin's territory. Archaeological surveys identify it with confidence due to the preservation of the name in the modern Arab village Anata. Its proximity to Jerusalem made it accessible for priests serving in the temple on rotation. Almon (probably identical with Alemeth in 1 Chronicles 6:60) is likely Khirbet Almit, northeast of Jerusalem. These Benjamite cities formed a priestly cluster near the future temple site.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jeremiah's emergence from the priestly city of Anathoth demonstrate that spiritual heritage must be personally appropriated?
2. What does the attempted murder of Jeremiah by his Anathoth relatives warn about religious privilege without genuine faith?
3. Why did God place multiple priestly cities so close to Jerusalem before the temple even existed?

Interlinear Text

אֶת	עֲנָתוֹת	וְאֶת	מִגְרָשָׁהּ	וְאֶת	עֵלְמֹן	וְאֶת
H853	Anathoth	H853	with her suburbs	H853	and Almon	H853
	H6068		H4054		H5960	
	מִגְרָשָׁהּ	עָרֵי	אַרְבָּע:			
	with her suburbs	cities	four			
	H4054	H5892	H702			

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org