

Joshua Chapter 15

Verses 1-63: As Israel's largest tribe, "Judah" is listed first and presented in the most detail. All the tribal listings follow a similar format: geographical boundaries and then a listing of cities by region.

Verses 1-12: "The lot ... Judah": The tribe's southern boundary (verse 1), ran from the lower tip of the Salt or Dead Sea in a sweep; through the desert over to the Wadi, the brook of Egypt (see note on 13:3), and along it to the Mediterranean. The eastern limit (verse 5), ran the length of the Salt Sea itself. On the north, it extended from the north end of the Salt Sea by various lines working to the Mediterranean (verses 5-11). The Mediterranean coastline served as the western border (verse 12).

Joshua 15:1 "[This] then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; [even] to the border of Edom the wilderness of Zin southward [was] the uttermost part of the south coast."

The inheritance of the tribe of Judah is described first by its general boundaries on all four sides (Joshua 15:1-12). Then reference is again made, for the sake of completeness, to the special inheritance of Caleb which lay within these boundaries (Joshua 15:13-20). And lastly a list of the towns is given (Joshua 15:21-63).

Joshua 15:2 "And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the bay that looketh southward:"

Sometimes called the dead sea, the sea of Sodom, and the lake Asphaltites, which, as Jarchi observes, was southeast of the land of Israel.

"From the bay that looketh southward": Or the "tongue", as the Hebrew. Which the Targum and Kimchi interpret of a rock or promontory, the point that ran out into the sea, looking to the southeast.

Joshua 15:3 "And it went out to the south side to Maaleh-acrabbim, and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa:"

"And passed along to Zin, and ascended upon the south side unto Kadesh-barnea": Which perfectly agrees with the southern border of the land as described in (Num. 34:4).

"And passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar": Which two places being near to one another. As is very likely, are put together, as if one place, and called Hazar-addar (Num. 34:4). And mention is made of Hezron, which is Hazor (Joshua 15:25); but not of Adar.

This is an account of the borders of the family of Judah. The wilderness of Zin was bordering on Edom. The shore of the Salt Sea indicates the furthest most coast of the sea. The literal meaning

of "Maaleh-acrabbim" is Scorpion Rise. Miriam died at Kadesh, and was buried near there. Kadesh-barnea was the place where the spies brought their report to Moses. "Fetched a compass" means they were deflected to another direction. In this case, to Karkaa.

Joshua 15:4 "[From thence] it passed toward Azmon, and went out unto the river of Egypt; and the goings out of that coast were at the sea: this shall be your south coast."

In like manner is this coast described (Num. 34:5). It is called by Jerom Asemona, and said to be a city in the desert, to the south of Judah, dividing Egypt, and the lot of the tribe of Judah, leading to the sea.

"And the outgoings of that coast were at the sea": The Mediterranean Sea. Or to the west, as the Targum. This was the utmost border of the tribe of Judah this way.

"This shall be your south coast": Of the lot that fell to the tribe of Judah.

Joshua 15:5 "And the east border [was] the salt sea, [even] unto the end of Jordan. And [their] border in the north quarter [was] from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan:"

To the place where Jordan fell into it; so that this border was the whole length of the salt sea, which Josephus says was five hundred eighty furlongs. And, according to Pliny, a hundred miles.

"And their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea, at the uttermost part of Jordan": This northern border began where the eastern ended, at the bay or creek of the sea, where Jordan fell into it.

Joshua 15:6 "And the border went up to Beth-hogla, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben:"

A place in the tribe of Benjamin, mentioned along with Jericho, and probably near it (Joshua 18:21). Jerom speaks of a place called Betagla, in his time, which was three miles from Jericho, and two from Jordan, and perhaps is this same place.

"And passed along by the north of Beth-arabah": Another city belonged to Benjamin (Joshua 18:22). And lay, as its name shows; in a plain, as the Targum.

"And the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben": By whom, or on whose account, it was placed, either as a sepulchral stone, he being buried there. Or in memory of some famous exploit done by him there, he being one of those of the tribe of Reuben, that came with Joshua to assist in the war against the Canaanites. Or it was set for a sign of the border, as Kimchi thinks, it being the boundary between Judah and Benjamin (Joshua 18:17).

Joshua 15:7 "And the border went up toward Debir from the valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that [is] before the going up to Adummim, which [is] on

the south side of the river: and the border passed toward the waters of En-shemesh, and the goings out thereof were at En-rogel:"

This was neither the Debir in the tribe of Gad, on the other side Jordan (Joshua 13:26). Nor that in the tribe of Judah near Hebron (Joshua 15:15); but a third city of that name, and was not far from Jericho.

"From the valley of Achor": Where Achan was put to death, and had its name from thence. Which, according to Jarchi, lay between the stone of Bohan and Debir.

"And so northward, looking towards Gilgal": Not the place where Israel was encamped when this lot was made, but it seems to be the same that is called Geliloth (Joshua 18:17).

"And the goings out thereof were at En-rogel": Which signifies "the fountain of the fuller"; so the Targum renders it, and probably was a fountain where fullers cleansed their clothes. And was called Rogel, as Jarchi and Kimchi say. Because they used to tread them with their feet when they washed them. This was a place near Jerusalem, as appears from (1 Kings 1:9). Near to which perhaps was the fuller's monument, at the corner tower of Jerusalem. Josephus speaks of, as there was also a place not far from it called the fuller's field (Isa. 7:3). According to Bunting, it had its name from travelers washing their feet here.

Joshua 15:8 "And the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the south side of the Jebusite; the same [is] Jerusalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain that [lieth] before the valley of Hinnom westward, which [is] at the end of the valley of the giants northward:"

This was near Jerusalem, placed by Jerom to the east of it. It was infamous for the sacrifices of children to Moloch in it, by burning them, or causing them to pass through the fire (Matt. 5:22; Luke 12:5).

"Unto the south side of the Jebusite": Of the place the Jebusite inhabited.

"The same is Jerusalem; which was formerly called Jebus.

"And the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward": Which is supposed to be the mount Moriah.

"Which is at the end of the valley of the giants, northward": The valley of Rephaim, as it is called (2 Sam. 5:18). and here Mount Moriah, as it was to the west of the valley of Hinnom, it was to the north of the valley of Rephaim; which valley, as Josephus says, was not far from Jerusalem.

"Which is at the end of the valley of the giants, northward": The valley of Rephaim, as it is called (2 Samuel 5:18), and here Mount Moriah.

The "Sea of Egypt" means westward as far as Egypt. The boundary land of Judah ran even to the sea. The land of Judah and Benjamin will be later separated out from the other ten tribes of

Israel, so it is important to realize where they are. The northern border began where the Jordan River entered the Dead Sea. Jerusalem was to be in the land of Judah.

Joshua 15:9 "And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to Baalah, which [is] Kirjath-jearim:"

Mount Moriah, and went round in a circuit, so Jarchi and Kimchi.

"Unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah": Which lay at the bottom of it.

"And went out to the cities of Mount Ephron": Jerom speaks of an Ephron in the tribe of Judah, which was a very large village in his time, and went by the name of Ephraea, and was twenty miles from Aelia or Jerusalem to the north.

"And the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-jearim": Called Kirjath-baal, or the city of Baal (Joshua 15:60). It was one of the cities of the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:17).

Joshua 15:10 "And the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, which [is] Chesalon, on the north side, and went down to Beth-shemesh, and passed on to Timnah:"

Not that in Idumea, so famous for its being the seat of Esau, which lay remote from hence, but a third of that name near Kirjath-jearim. And which Andrichomius places on the borders of Azotus and Ashkelon.

"And passed along unto the side of the mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, on the north side": That is, on the north side of the mount, which went by both those names. And which Jerom places on the borders of Aelia or Jerusalem.

"Beth-shemesh": There were different cities of this name. This in Judah here, another in (Joshua 21:16; 2 Kings 14:11), another in Issachar. And a third in Naphtali (Joshua 19:22, 38).

"And passed on to Timnah": Which, in Jerom's time, was a large village on the borders of Lydda, as you go to Jerusalem, in the tribe of Judah. Though to be afterwards given to Dan. Here Judah sheared his sheep (see Gen. 38:12).

Joshua 15:11 "And the order went out unto the side of Ekron northward: and the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel; and the goings out of the border were at the sea."

Which was one of the principalities of the Philistines. And which, though it fell to the lot of Judah, (Joshua 15:45), was not possessed by them.

"And the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to Mount Baalah": Of which places we have no account elsewhere.

"And went unto Jabneel": Which Strabo says was distant from Azotus and Ashkelon about two hundred furlongs, or twenty-five miles.

"And the goings out of the border were at the sea": The Mediterranean Sea. Here the northern border ended.

Joshua 15:12 "And the west border [was] to the great sea, and the coast [thereof]. This [is] the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families."

The western border of the tribe of Judah went along by the Mediterranean Sea, which lay west to the land of Canaan. And this border reached from Jabneel to the river of Egypt, where the southern border ended (Joshua 15:4).

"This is the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families": But being too large, some part of it was afterwards given to Simeon. And some particular cities of it were given to Dan and Benjamin. It was bounded on the west by the tribes of Simeon and Dan towards the Mediterranean Sea. And by the tribe of Benjamin on the north, and by the wilderness of Paran on the south, and by the dead sea and Jordan on the east.

It appears from this that the boundary from the mountain top was speaking of an aqueduct that brought water to Jerusalem. The word "compassed" here means deflected. It is a "change of direction". The "great sea" is speaking of the Mediterranean Sea. A very easy way to speak of Judah's land, would be to say it surrounded Jerusalem.

Joshua 15:13 "And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, [even] the city of Arba the father of Anak, which [city is] Hebron."

That is, Joshua gave it to him. This account is inserted before the cities in the lot of the tribe of Judah were enumerated, to show what was to be excepted from them, and which had been given to Caleb previous to the lot.

"According to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua": For as he had declared this to Moses (Deut. 1:36). So it seems he also gave the same order to Joshua, who, it is not improbable, might consult the Lord about it when Caleb made his request (Joshua 14:12).

"Even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron" (see Joshua 14:15).

We saw in a previous lesson, where Caleb had requested Hebron as his inheritance. This explains further, that it was given to him even though it was in the land of Judah. We see that Arba and Hebron are the same city.

Joshua 15:14 "And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak."

Some think this was after the death of Joshua, and is here inserted by some other person divinely inspired. And thoroughly acquainted with this fact, that the gift and the possession of this place might appear in one view.

"Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak": The very same giants Caleb saw at Hebron, when he was sent as a spy into the land (Num. 13:22). From whence Caleb, with the help of his tribe, expelled them, conquered, and slew them (Judges 1:10).

These three were probably chiefs of the Anakims. Children in this sense, means descendants.

Joshua 15:15 "And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before [was] Kirjath-sepher."

Having conquered Hebron, and got possession of that, Caleb marched to Debir, a city not many miles from Hebron. And seems to have been in the country, and part of the land, which was given him. Of which (see Joshua 10:38).

"And the name of Debir before was Kirjath-sepher": Or "the city of books". Either a place of literature, a sort of an academy, or where was a public library. Or the city of the archives, in which were laid up the public records of the Canaanites.

Verses 16-19: For more about "Othniel" (see Judges 1:13; 3:9-11). He was the first judge after Joshua's death, and he reformed Israel by chasing away an enemy army and restoring peace to the land.

Joshua 15:16 "And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife."

Which he ordered to be proclaimed through the army that was under his command. And which was done not so much on the account of the difficulty of taking the place. Through the number of the inhabitants of it, and its fortifications, which it seems had fallen again into the hands of the Canaanites, since it was taken by Joshua. And being under a divine impulse, he ordered this declaration to be made, whereby his brother Othniel, who was to be a judge in Israel, might appear a great man, and fit for such an office. And as an encouragement, he promises as follows.

"To him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife": And to be married into the family of the chief prince of the tribe of Judah was a very great honor, as well as no doubt a very large dowry might be expected, and was given with her. And very probably the city of Debir was promised that should be taken. This Achsah seems to be a daughter of Caleb by a concubine (1 Chron. 2:48).

We see from this, that Kirjath-sepher was a strong enemy. This is the first mention of Caleb's daughter. The father chose the husband for his daughter at the time this was written.

Joshua 15:17 "And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife."

"Othniel": A conqueror like Caleb, who was his father-in-law, he would later be a judge in Israel (Judges 3:9-11).

Caleb had been a brave man, so it is likely his brother would be as well. This Othniel could have been Caleb's brother's son. This is the most likely. Othniel won the battle and Caleb kept his word and gave his daughter, Achsah, to him to wife.

Verses 18-19: Caleb's daughter sought blessing and exercised real faith for it, like father, like daughter.

Joshua 15:18 "And it came to pass, as she came [unto him], that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off [her] ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou?"

To her husband, being conducted from her father's house to his, in order to consummate the marriage. Just as we may suppose when she was got to her husband's house, before she lighted off the beast on which she rode.

"That she moved him to ask of her father a field": Or persuaded him to make such a request to him, or that he would give her leave to make it. That is, Achsah put Othniel her espoused husband upon it, to entreat her father Caleb, or suffer her to use her interest with him to obtain a field of him. Over and above, and something better, than what he had already given.

"She lighted off her ass": That she might address herself to her father in a humble posture, and as a suppliant, which he understood by her gesture.

"And Caleb said unto her, what wouldest thou?" What wouldest thou have? what is thy request for he perceived, by the posture she put herself in, that she had something to say to him.

It seems from this that Othniel has gotten himself a smart wife. She asks her father for a certain field for herself and her husband. Caleb listens to her request.

Joshua 15:19 "Who answered, Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs."

I.e. a gift, as that word signifies (Gen. 33:11).

"A south land": Meaning a dry land, which was much exposed to the south wind, which in those parts was very hot and drying, as coming from the deserts of Arabia.

"Springs of water": I.e. a field as she desired (Joshua 15:18). Wherein are springs of water, which in that country were of great price. For it is not probable that he would give her the springs, and give to another the grounds in which the springs were. Who could thereby at their pleasure deprive her of the use and benefit of her springs. So she begs for a well-moistened field, which also might give some relief to that which was dry and barren.

"The upper springs, and the nether springs": The springs both in the higher and in the lower grounds. Or two fields, one in high, another in low grounds. Or rather, one above, and the other below, that south and dry ground which she complained of, that by this means it might be watered on both sides.

South in this verse is Negeb, which is speaking of a dry land. The land with the springs would bring water to their land. Water on this dry land would cause it to flourish. We see that Caleb granted his daughter's request.

Verses 20-62: The inheritance of ... Judah": Judah's cities are grouped in 4 areas: South (verses 20-32); lowland or foothills over near the Mediterranean (verses 33-47); hilly central region (verses 48-60); Judean wilderness dropping eastward down to the Dead Sea (verses 61-62).

Joshua 15:20 "This [is] the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families."

The general description of which is given in the preceding part of the chapter, as the particular cities belonging to it are enumerated in the following part. The account of the gift of Hebron to Caleb, and the taking of Debir by Othniel. With the request of Achsah, and the grant of it, are inserted between them, and stand as it were in a parenthesis.

We see four divisions of the land of Judah. The south, the valley, the mountains, and the wilderness are the divisions. "According to their families" means large families got more, and small families got less.

Joshua 15:21 "And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coast of Edom southward were Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur,"

That is, those cities which were the outward part of the tribe of Judah, the southern border of it. For the midland cities are not in this part, of the description reckoned, which reaches from hence to the end of (Joshua 15:32).

"Toward the coast of Edom southward": It begins about the dead sea, and goes on in that part of the land of Canaan which bordered on Idumea. And so proceeds on westward towards Gaza, and the Mediterranean Sea. The cities in this part of the tribe;

"Were Kabzeel": called Jekabzeel (Neh. 11:25). And was the native place of Benaiah, one of David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:20).

"And Eder and Jagur": Of which we have no mention elsewhere.

Joshua 15:22 "And Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah,"

Of this city we read of nowhere else.

"And Dimonah": The second city is thought to be the same with Dibon (Neh. 11:25).

"And Adadah": The last of these cities is nowhere met with.

Joshua 15:23 "And Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan,"

The first of these cities seems to be Kadesh-barnea, which was to the south of the land, and on the borders of Edom. From whence the spies were sent (Num. 32:8).

"And Hazor": Is another city from that which is mentioned (Joshua 11:1); and was in the tribe of Naphtali.

"And Ithnan": Which Jerom calls Jedna, was, according to him, six miles from Eleuthero-polis, as you go to Hebron.

Joshua 15:24 "Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth,"

Ziph was of the tribe of Judah in the south, on the borders of Eleuthero-polis, as Jerom says and was eight miles from Hebron to the east. And in his time a village was shown, where David was hidden. But that Ziph seems to be in another part of this tribe near Carmel, and from whence a wilderness had its name (see Joshua 15:55).

"And Telem": Is supposed to be the same with Telaim (1 Sam. 15:4).

"And Bealoth": Of this city we read nowhere else.

Joshua 15:25 "And Hazor, Hadattah, and Keriioth, [and] Hezron, which [is] Hazor,"

According to the Targum, two cities only are here meant, which reads, "and Hazor-hadattah, and Keriioth-hezron, which is Hazor". And this reading seems to be right; there were three Hazors in this tribe. One in (Joshua 15:23), and two more here, which are distinguished. The first is called Hazor-hadattah, or new Hazor; of which Jerom says, there is a village at this day called Asor, in the borders of Ashkelon, to the east of it. Which fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah. The Scripture makes mention of it, calling: it new Asor, to distinguish it from the old. And Keriioth-hezron is the same with Hezron (Joshua 15:3); and had also the name of Hezron. From this place, Judas Iscariot is thought to have his name, being Iscariot, a man of Keriioth.

Joshua 15:26 "Amam, and Shema, and Moladah,"

Of Amam we read nowhere else.

"And Shema": Is thought by some to be the same with Sheba, though wrongly, given afterwards to the tribe of Simeon. As was also Moladah, mentioned with it (Joshua 19:2).

"And Moladah": It is also spoken of in (1 Chron. 4:28), and seems to be the same with Malathi or Malatis, about twenty miles from Hebron.

Joshua 15:27 "And Hazar-gaddah, and Heshmon, and Beth-palet,"

The first of these, it is probable, is the same. Jerom calls Gaddah, in the tribe of Judah, which was in his day a village in the extreme borders of Daroma to the east, hanging over the dead sea.

"And Heshmon": Is met with nowhere else.

"And Beth-palet": Is in (Neh. 11:26), where it is called Beth-phelet.

Joshua 15:28 "And Hazar-shual, and Beer-sheba, and Bizjothjah,"

The first of these seems to have its name from a haunt of foxes here, and was given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:3). And is mentioned as here with Beer-sheba (1 Chron. 4:28; Neh. 11:27).

"And Beer-sheba was a city well known in the extreme border of the land of Canaan southward. Hence the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" (Judges 20:1). Of which Jerom says, Bersabee, in the tribe of Judah or Simeon, is at this day a large village, twenty miles from Hebron to the south, in which there is a Roman garrison. And from hence the borders of the land of Judea begin, and go on to Dan, which is by Paneas.

"And Bizjothjah": Of which no mention is made elsewhere.

Joshua 15:29 "Baalah, and Iim, and Azem,"

Baalah was given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:3). For Baalah is the same with Balah there, as it is with Bilba. Though according to the Jerusalem Talmud it is the same with Baalah, given to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:44). And was one of those places whose houses were in Judah and their fields in Dan.

"And Azem": Was also given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:3). It is the same with Ezem (1 Chronicles 4:29).

"And Iim": Of which we read nowhere else.

Joshua 15:30 "And Eltolad, and Chesil, and Hormah,"

The first of these cities is called Tolad (1 Chron. 4:29).

"And Chesil": Seems to be the same with Bethul and Bethuel (Joshua 19:4; 1 Chron. 4:30), and here the Greek version calls it Baithel.

"And Hormah": Is the same with Zephath (Judges 1:17). These three cities were given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:4).

Joshua 15:31 "And Ziklag, and Madmannah, and Sansannah,"

Ziklag was also given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:5). It was in the bands of the king of Gath, in the times of David, who gave it to him. It bordered on the Amalekites, and is placed by Jerom in Daroma, on the south of the lot of Judah or Simeon.

"And Madmannah": According to the same writer, was in his time called Menois, a town near the city Gaza.

"And Sansannah": Of which no mention is made elsewhere.

Joshua 15:32 "And Lebaoth, and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities [are] twenty and nine, with their villages:"

Whether Lebaoth is the same with Beth-lebaoth, given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:6), is not certain.

"And Shilhim": Is nowhere else spoken of.

"And Ain": Seems to be the same with that in (Num. 34:11).

"And Rimmon": The place Jerom calls Eremmon, which he says was a large village of the Jews, sixteen miles from Eleuthero-polis to the south, in Daroma. This and the preceding are joined together as one, and called En-rimmon (Neh. 11:29). It is probable they were near to each other, and in process of time the buildings of each might increase, so as to meet and join each other.

"All the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages": But according to our version, and as we point them, they are thirty-eight; some make them thirty-six, others thirty-seven. The Jews generally make thirty-eight of them, as we do, and account for the difference of number thus. That nine of these cities were given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:1). And these being taken out of the thirty-eight, there remain twenty-nine. So Jarchi and Kimchi account for it; but as the number of the cities is uncertain, and this account is given before the separation of the nine, and they are all reckoned together, this does not seem to be satisfactory. Rather, as Abarbinel observes, the twenty-nine of the places enumerated were cities, and the other were villages, un-walled towns, or not of so much note as the twenty-nine.

Now we see the magnitude of the job of routing these people out. Just the 29 cities would be a large number of people to defeat. Most of these cities are not mentioned again. Ziklag is famous, because it was the residence of King David. These cities were all located in the southern area.

Joshua 15:33 "[And] in the valley, Eshtaol, and Zoreah, and Ashnah,"

In (Joshua 15:33), are enumerated the several cities belonging to the tribe of Judah which lay in the valley. Jerom says, that now all the plain and flat, level country near Eleuthero-polis, which verges to the north and west, and is called "Sephela", or the valley.

"Eshtaol": The two first of these seem to be given afterwards to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:41). Between these two places Samson was born and buried (Judges 13:2). They were both at the same distance from Eleuthero-polis, according to Jerom. Of Eshtaol he says, it is showed to this day ten miles from Eleuthero-polis, to the north, as you go to Nico-polis or Emmaus.

"And Zoreah": Of which he calls Saara, he says it is a village on the borders of Eleuthero-polis, as you go to Nico-polis, about ten miles of it in the tribe of Dan or Judah.

"And Ashnah": Of which no mention is made elsewhere. There was another place of the same name, but different from this (Joshua 15:43).

Joshua 15:34 "And Zanoah, and En-gannim, Tappuah, and Enam,"

The first of these, Jerom says, is in the borders of Eleuthero-polis, as you go to Aelia (or Jerusalem). There is at this day a village called Zanaa.

"And En-gannim": Which signifies a fountain of gardens, is now (according to the same writer), a village near Beth-el.

"And Tappuah": Was a royal city, of which see (Joshua 12:17). Enaim, in the tribe of Judah, Jerom says in his day was the village Bethenim, about the turpentine tree, or oak of Mamre. But that seems to be the same with Ain (Joshua 15:32). Of which he says the same under that word, and makes it to be two miles from the oak, and four from Hebron. Masius thinks it is the same with Enam, near to Timnath, of which (see Gen. 38:14). It following Tappuah one would be tempted to think with Jarchi it was the same with En-tappuah, but that that was on the borders of Manasseh (Joshua 17:7).

"And Enam": It has a prefix to it, and may be read "that Enam", as pointing out some known and remarkable place, though now unknown.

Joshua 15:35 "Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh, and Azekah,"

The two first of these were royal cities, of which see (Joshua 10:3).

"Socoh": Jerom says there were two little villages in his day of the name of Socho, as you go to Aelia (or Jerusalem), from Eleuthero-polis, in the ninth mile on the public way. One in the mountain, and the other in the plain, (the same with this), both of which were called Socoth. Of this place was Antigonus, president of the Sanhedrim, and successor of Simeon the just, called in the Misnah, a man of Socho.

"And Azekah": See (Joshua 10:10). It appears to be near to Socoh from (1 Sam. 17:1), where the Philistines are said to pitch their camp between them.

Joshua 15:36 "And Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages:"

Sharaim seems to be the Saara of Jerom, which he describes as a village on the borders of Eleuthero-polis, to the north as you go to Nico-polis (or Emmaus). About ten miles from it in the tribe of Dan or Judah; there was a place called Beth-shaaraim, where the Sanhedrim sometimes sat.

"And Adithaim": Jerom observes, under the word "Adithaim", that there is a village called Adia, near Gaza, and another Aditha, near Diospolis (or Lydda), to the east.

"And Gederah": Which seems to be the same Jerom calls Gaddera, in the tribe of Judah, now, he says, called a village belonging to the country of Aelia (or Jerusalem), by the name of Gadera, about the turpentine tree.

"And Gederothaim": Of which we nowhere else read.

"Fourteen cities with their villages": But, upon counting them, it will appear there are fifteen, which may be reduced to fourteen, if with Kimchi we take the two last to be but one. Who in this way reconciles it; or with Jarchi make Tappuah and Enam to be one also, called Entappuah, which is the way he takes to solve the difficulty. But perhaps the case is this, that one of the places in the account was not a city, but a village.

The above is a list of all the cities of their inheritance from the area of the valley. There are fourteen cities here.

Joshua 15:37 "Zenah, and Hadashah, and Migdal-gad,"

Here begins another list or catalogue of the cities in the valley or plain. Zenah perhaps is the same with Zaanah (Micah 1:11).

"And Hadashah": Was so small a city in Judea in the times of the Misnic doctors, that they say it had but fifty dwellings in it. And Jerom speaks of a place called Adasa, in the tribe of Judah, in his times a village near Guphua. It should be Taphna:

"And Migdal-gad": Of which we nowhere else read.

Joshua 15:38 "And Dilean, and Mizpeh, and Joktheel,"

Of the first of these nothing is to be said.

"And Mizpeh": Of which name there were cities in other tribes. This in the tribe of Judah was in the times of Jerom called Mapha. On the borders of Eleuthero-polis to the south, as you go to Aelia, or Jerusalem.

"And Joktheel": Of which nothing is to be said.

Joshua 15:39 "Lachish, and Bozkath, and Eglon,"

Lachish and Eglon were royal cities, of which see (Joshua 10:3).

"And Bozkath": Is called Boscath, of which place was the mother of King Josiah (2 Kings 21:1). Some take it to be the same with Bascana, as in the Apocrypha". And when he came near to Bascama he slew Jonathan, who was buried there."

"And Eglon": Also was a royal city, of which (see Joshua 10:3).

Joshua 15:40 "And Cabbon, and Lahmam, and Kithlish,"

Cities of which we can give no account, not being mentioned elsewhere.

Joshua 15:41 "And Gederoth, Beth-dagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages:"

Gederoth is reckoned among the cities of the low country, and south of Judah (2 Chron. 28:18).

"And Beth-dagon": In it very probably was a temple of Dagon, which was a principal deity of the Philistines (1 Sam. 5:2).

"And Makkedah": See (Joshua 10:10). It was a royal city (Joshua 12:16).

"Sixteen cities with their villages": And is the exact number of them, as before enumerated.

These sixteen cities were part of the division of the cities of Judah.

Joshua 15:42 "Libnah, and Ether, and Ashan,"

Here begins another division or list of the cities of Judah, in the valley or plain. Libnah is the same with Libnah, a royal city (Joshua 10:29).

"And Ether": Was given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:7). And under Ether of the lot of Simeon, Jerom writes, there is now a very large village called Jethira, in interior Daroma, near Malatha, twenty miles from Eleuthero-polis.

"And Ashan": Also was given to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:7). And the above writer relates, that there was in his times a village called Beth-asan, belonging to Aelia, or Jerusalem. Fifteen miles from it.

Joshua 15:43 "And Jiphtah, and Ashnah, and Nezib,"

Jiphtah is nowhere else mentioned.

"And Ashnah": There was another Ashnah of this tribe, and which was in the vale also, met with already in (Joshua 15:33).

"And Nezib": Was in Jerom's times called Nasib, seven miles from Eleuthero-polis, as you go to Hebron.

Joshua 15:44 "And Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages:"

The first of these is a well-known city, which David saved from the hands of the Philistines (1 Sam. 23:1). In Jerom's time it was a little village to the east of Eleuthero-polis, about eight miles from it, as you go to Hebron. In which was shown the sepulcher of the Prophet Habakkuk.

"And Achzib": Is said to be on the borders of Asher (Joshua 19:29). And is supposed the same with Chezib (Gen. 38:5); and the Ecdippa of Josephus and others, and now called Zib (see Micah 1:14).

"And Mareshah": Jerom says, only the ruins of it were to be seen two miles from Eleuthero-polis.

"Nine cities with their villages": Which is just their number.

Joshua 15:45 "Ekron, with her towns and her villages:"

One of the five principalities of the Philistines, which with two more next mentioned, though they fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah, were never possessed by them. For which reason perhaps, Gath and Ascalon are not mentioned, and these are put for the rest (see Joshua 13:3).

Joshua 15:46 "From Ekron even unto the sea, all that [lay] near Ashdod, with their villages:"

The Mediterranean Sea, or the west, as the Targum.

"All that lay near Ashdod, with their villages": This is the Azotus of the New Testament (Acts 8:40). Another of the principalities of the Philistines, of which (see Amos 1:8). And Ekron see (Zeph. 2:4).

Joshua 15:47 "Ashdod with her towns and her villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto the river of Egypt, and the great sea, and the border [thereof]:"

Gaza was another of the principalities of the Philistines, of which See (Amos 1:7; Zeph. 2:4; Acts 8:26). These, with the two other principalities not mentioned, Gath and Ashkelon, were in the western border of the tribe of Judah, which reached from Ekron, the first that is mentioned.

"Unto the river of Egypt": Of which see (Joshua 15:4).

"And the great sea, and the border thereof": The Mediterranean Sea, called so in comparison of the lesser seas in Judea, the salt sea, and the sea of Tiberias. Whose border was its shore, and the cities upon it, and not the isles in the sea, as Jarchi.

Mareshah was one of Rehoboam's fortified cities mentioned in (2 Chron. 14:9). Ekron, with her towns and her villages, meant the daughter cities of Ekron. The following seem to begin a list of the mountain cities. This is also known as the hill country of Judaea.

Joshua 15:48 "And in the mountains, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh,"

The hill country of Judea, as it is called (Luke 1:39). In which were the following cities.

"Shamir": The Alexandrian copy of the Greek version reads Sophir as the name. And Jerom says there was a village of this name in the mountainous parts, situated between Eleuthero-polis, and Ashkelon in the tribe of Judah (see Micah 1:11).

"And Jattir": The same writer calls Jether, in the tribe of Judah. And says there was in his time a very large village called Jethira, twenty miles from Eleuthero-polis. The inhabitants of which were then all Christians. It was situated in interior Daroma, near Malatha.

"And Socoh": Is different from Socoh in (Joshua 15:35). That was in the plain, this is in the mountain (see Joshua 15:35).

Joshua 15:49 "And Dannah, and Kirjath-sannah, which [is] Debir,"

Dannah is not mentioned elsewhere.

"And Kirjath-sannah, which is Debir. Kirjath-sannah had three names, this and Debir, and Kirjath-sepher (see Joshua 15:15). All which are of much the same signification. For "Sanna" with the Arabs, and so with the Phoenicians, signifies law, doctrine, and manner of life. And with the Mahometans the secondary law to the Koran, and answers to the Jewish Misnah. And the Greek version interprets this name "the city of letters". Jerom calls it Daenna, and seems to confound it with Dannah.

Joshua 15:50 "And Anab, and Eshtemoh, and Anim,"

Of Anab (see Joshua 11:21).

"And Eshtemoh": Jerom calls Astemech, a village in the tribe of Judah, and belongs to the Jews in Daroma. And is to the north of a place called Anem, perhaps the same with Anim here.

"And Anim": Jerom says is the village Anea, near another of the same name. Which he places to the south of Hebron, as he does this to the east. The inhabitants of which in his time were all Christians.

Joshua 15:51 "And Goshen, and Holon, and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages:"

Of Goshen in the land of Canaan see (Joshua 10:41).

"And Holon": Of which there is no other mention.

"And Giloh": Was the city of Ahithophel (2 Sam. 15:12).

"Eleven cities with their villages": The number agrees. This is the first division of cities in the mountains. A second follows.

The total of these cities was 11.

Joshua 15:52 "Arab, and Dumah, and Eshean,"

Arab is the same Jerom calls Ereb, and was in his time a village in the south, and was called Heromith.

"And Dumah": Duma, Jerom says, was a large village in the south. Also on the borders of Eleuthero-polis, seventeen miles from it.

"And Eshean": Of which we have no account.

Joshua 15:53 "And Janum, and Beth-tappuah, and Aphekah,"

Under the word "Janum", Jerom writes, there is a village called Janua, three miles from Legion to the south, but seems not to be what is written.

"And Beth-tappuah is by Jerom called Beth-aphu, and said to be a village in the tribe of Judah, fourteen miles beyond Raphia, as you go to Egypt. Which is the border of Palestine.

"And Aphekah": Jerom speaks of a large castle in his time called Apheca, near the town of Palestine. There were several places of the name of Aphek (Joshua 12:18). As for Beth-tappuah, it seems to be a place which was dedicated to a deity to which apples were sacred. There was in later times a goddess called Pomona from hence.

Joshua 15:54 "And Humtah, and Kirjath-arba, which [is] Hebron, and Zior; nine cities with their villages:"

Of Humtah we nowhere else read.

"And Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron. Of Kirjath-arba we read frequently (see Joshua 14:15).

"And Zior": Jerom says, that in his time there was a village shown by the name of Sihor, between Aelia (or Jerusalem). And Eleuthero-polis, in the tribe of Judah.

"Nine cities with their villages": Which is exactly their number, as expressed. Here ends the second division, or of the cities in the hill country of Judea. A third follows.

Joshua 15:55 "Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah,"

Maon was the dwelling place of Nabal the Carmelite, whose possessions were in Carmel, and were not far from one another (1 Sam. 25:2). It gave name to a wilderness near where David hid himself from Saul (1 Sam. 23:25). Jerom places it to the east of Daroma, who also informs us, that there was in his time a village that went by the name of Carmelia, ten miles from Hebron towards the east. And where was a Roman garrison.

"And Ziph": According to the same writer, was eight miles from Hebron to the east. And there was a village shown in his time where David was hiding. This gave name to a wilderness also (1 Sam. 23:14).

"And Juttah": Which Jerom calls Jeshan, was in his time a large village of the Jews, eighteen miles from Eleuthero-polis, to the southern part in Daroma. Reland conjectures that this was the native place of John the Baptist. And that, instead of "a city of Judah", it should be read "the city Juta" (Luke 1:39).

These 3 hill country cities of Maon, Carmel, and Ziph kept their names. All of these cities are mentioned several times in the life of David.

Joshua 15:56 "And Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah,"

This Jezreel in the tribe of Judah is different from that which was once a royal seat of some of the kings of Israel. And from whence the famous valley of Jezreel or Esdraelon had its name. Of this we have no other account elsewhere.

"And Jokdeam": Of which we have no other mention.

"And Zanoah": Is a distinct place from the city of the same name in the valley (Joshua 15:34).

Joshua 15:57 "Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah; ten cities with their villages:"

Cain, or Hakain. "That Cain". We nowhere else read of; whether the name was given it by the old Canaanites, in memory of Cain, the son of Adam, is not certain.

"Gibeah": There were other places that went by the name of Gibeah. There was a Gibeah in Benjamin (Judges 20:4). And another in the same tribe called Gibeah of Saul (1 Sam. 11:4). To distinguish it from that. But this was in the tribe of Judah. Masius conjectures it is the same with that in (1 Sam. 23:19), which was near Ziph. And not amiss, Jerom makes mention of Gabaha and Gabatha, little villages to the east of Daroma. And of another Gabatha, near Bethlehem, in the tribe of Judah. But whether either of these are meant it is doubtful.

"Timnah": Of this city; see (Joshua 15:10).

"Ten cities with their villages": The number agrees with the names of them.

These ten cities were all part of the range of hills of Judaea.

Joshua 15:58 "Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor,"

Here begins a fourth division, or list, of the cities in the mountains. Halhul Jerom calls Ehul, and says there was in his time in the country belonging to Aelia (or Jerusalem). A village by the name of Ahula, near Hebron. And;

"Beth-zur, Jerom says, was then called Beth-seron, a village as you go from Aelia to Hebron. In the twentieth mile, near which was a fountain at the bottom of a mount, where it is said the eunuch was baptized by Philip. He makes mention of another village called Beth-sur in the tribe of Judah, a mile from Eleuthero-polis. In the Apocrypha: "So he came to Judea, and drew near to Beth-sura, which was a strong town, but distant from Jerusalem about five furlongs. And he laid sore siege unto it." It is said to be but five furlongs from Jerusalem, but it must have been at a greater distance.

"Gedor": Of this city; see (Joshua 12:13).

Joshua 15:59 "And Maarath, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their villages:"

Of these cities we have no account elsewhere. Only mention is made of Eltekeh, in the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:44).

"Six cities with their villages": These were all in the mountainous part of Judea, as were the two following.

These six cities are in the near area of the eleven previously mentioned. They are to be counted separately.

Joshua 15:60 "Kirjath-baal, which [is] Kirjath-jearim, and Rabbah; two cities with their villages:"

Of Kirjath-baal, and its several names (see Joshua 15:9).

"And Rabbah": Of which we nowhere else read. For this is a very different city from the Rabbah of the children of Ammon (2 Sam. 12:26).

"Two cities with their villages": Why these are reckoned by themselves is not certain.

Bethlehem should be included in the list of the cities above.

Joshua 15:61 "In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah,"

The wilderness of Judea, which was not a desert and uninhabited but had many cities and villages in it, those that follow.

"Beth-arabah": The first of these seems to be in the borders of Judah and Benjamin. And so is ascribed to both (see Joshua 15:6).

"Middin, and Secacah": Of the two last we read nowhere else. Only in (Judges 5:10); what we translate "ye that sit in judgment", Kimchi interprets, "ye that dwell by Middin". And says it is the name of a place in Joshua, and mentions this passage.

This was a wilderness, but not a desert. Some vegetation had been found there.

Joshua 15:62 "And Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and En-gedi; six cities with their villages."

Of Nibshan no mention is made elsewhere.

"And the city of Salt": Some take to be Zoar, so called because near the salt sea. Or where Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:22). But rather this city might be so called, because salt was made here.

"And En-gedi": Or Engaddi, is a well-known place, near the salt sea (see Ezek. 47:10). Jerom says, there was a very large village of Jews in his time called Engaddi, near the dead sea, from whence comes the opobalsam. The same place is called Hazazon-tamar, from the palm trees which grew there (2 Chron. 20:2). It was famous for vineyards also (SOS 1:14). It lay, according to Josephus, three hundred furlongs or about forty miles from Jerusalem.

"Six cities with their villages": The sum total agrees with the particulars.

This city of salt had to be located near the Salt Sea or the Dead Sea. En-gedi would later be a safe place for David to hide from Saul. We see the total of these to be six.

Joshua 15:63 "As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day."

"Jebusites": The inhabitants of Jerusalem were descendants from the third son of Canaan (Gen. 10:15-16; 15:21). Joshua killed their king who had joined a pact against Gibeon (Joshua chapter 10). Israelites called the area "Jebus" until David ordered Joab and his soldiers to capture the city (2 Sam. 5:6-7), and made it his capital. (Judges 1:8, 21), show that the Israelites conquered Jebus and burned it, but the Jebusites later regained control until David's day. Melchizedek had been a very early king (Gen. chapter 14), a believer in the true God, when the site was "Salem" (compare Psalm 76:2; "Salem" is "Jerusalem").

It is unclear whether the Israelites were simply unwilling to "drive them out" (their enemies), or "could not" because their disobedience caused God to withdraw His help. In any case, this sad note concluding the account of Judah's allotment reveals the type of enduring trouble that surfaced when God's commands were not wholly followed (Deut. 7:1-11).

The Israelites (specifically the tribe of Judah), did not manage to run out the Jebusites. They lived together in Jerusalem. The Jebusites seemed to eventually just mingle in with the children of Judah. There are some Bible teachers who compare these Jebusites to the nominal Christians in the church. They are there, but never totally committed. They attend church, but do not work to further the kingdom.

Joshua Chapter 15 Questions

1. This chapter is describing the inheritance by the tribe of _____.
2. The literal meaning of "Maaleh-acrabbim" is what?
3. Where did Miriam die?
4. What does "fetched a compass" mean?
5. What does the "Sea of Egypt" mean?
6. Jerusalem was in the land of _____.
7. What was speaking of an aqueduct to Jerusalem?
8. What does "compassed" mean?
9. Who had asked specifically for Hebron?
10. _____ and Hebron are the same city.
11. Children, in verse 14, means what?
12. What was Caleb's daughter's name?
13. Who did Caleb promise to give her to in marriage?
14. Who won her hand?
15. What did she ask her father, Caleb, for?
16. Why did she need the springs?
17. South in verse 19, is _____.
18. Why is the city of Ziklag famous?
19. What is different about Maon, Carmel, and Ziph?
20. What city was overlooked, that should have been listed?

21. Where was the city of salt located?
22. What happened to the Jebusites?
23. What do some Bible teachers compare the Jebusites to?