

Parashat Pinchas: Judges 1:12-15

In Parashat Pinchas, we meet the incredible Mahlah, Noa, Hogla, Milcah, and Tirtzah - better known as the Daughters of Tzelophehad. After their father dies, they successfully petition Moses to become the inheritors of the family land, disrupting the existing system in which only male children could inherit property. In this section from Judges, we may be dismayed to see that women are still offered as currency - Caleb offers the marriage of his daughter to the person who can successfully go to battle and win. But Caleb's daughter refuses to simply accept her fate. Though was likely powerless to prevent the marriage, she advocated for herself, asking her father for property, and making the point that she is not the same as a piece of land. Furthermore, she asks for *springs of water*, a piece of the natural world that is life giving.

Judges 1:12-15

(12) And Caleb announced, "I will give my daughter Achsah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher."

(13) His younger kinsman, Othniel the Kenizzite, captured it; and Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah in marriage. (14)

When she came [to him], she induced him to ask her father for some property. She dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb asked her, "What is the matter?" (15) She replied, "Give me a present, for you have given me away as Negeb-land; give me springs of water." And Caleb gave her Upper and Lower Gullath.

שופטים א' י"ב-ט"ו

(יב) וַיֹּאמֶר כָּלֵב כָּלֵב אֲשֶׁר־יִכָּה אֶת־קִרְיַת־סֶפֶר וְלָכְדָהּ וְנָתַתִּי לּוֹ אֶת־עַכְסָה בְּתִי לְאִשָּׁה: (יג) וַיִּלְכְּדֶהָ עֹתְנִיָּאל בֶּן־קִנּוּז אֶתִּי כָלֵב הַקַּטָּן מִמֶּנּוּ וַיִּתֵּן־לוֹ אֶת־עַכְסָה בְּתוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: (יד) וַיְהִי בְּבוֹאָהּ וַתְּסִיתְהוּ לְשֹׂאֵל מֵאֵת־אָבִיהָ הַשְׁלֵחַ וַתִּצְנַח מֵעַל הַחֲמֹר וַיֹּאמֶר־לָהּ כָּלֵב מַה־לָּךְ: (טו) וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִבֵּה־לִּי בְרִכָּה כִּי אָרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב נָתַתָּנִי וְנָתַתָּה לִּי גִלְתַּי מִיָּם וַיִּתֵּן־לָהּ כָּלֵב אֶת גִּלְתַּי עֲלִית וְאֶת גִּלְתַּי תַּחֲתִית:

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