

Heshmon

Heshmon (MT *Ḥešmôn*, “smooth site”) is a town between Hazargaddah and Beth-Pelet according to the list of twenty-nine settlements in the Negev assigned to Judah (Josh 15 : 27). Heshmon seems to be located in the western part of the Judahite Negev near Beersheba. Its exact location and its relation to the place Hashmonah (Num 33 : 29–30) are unknown. Furthermore, the text in Josh 15 is problematic. The MT presents a total of thirty-six names (Josh 15 : 21–32), whereas LXX has only thirty and lacks Heshmon which might thus be a later addition. Heshmon is also missing in the list of Simeonite towns (Josh 19 : 2–9), a close parallel to the Judahite list. The sequence Hazargaddah/Heshmon could be a dittography of Hazar-Hadattah/Kerioth-Hezron in a corrupt form. The term “Hasmoneans,” denoting the Maccabean dynasty, is usually derived from Heshmon (*mMid* 1 : 6), although Josephus relates it to the name of the great-grandfather of Mattathias (*Ant.* 12.265). Jerome wrongly translates *Asmona* as “count fast” (*Nom. hebr.* 24.10).

Bibliography: ■ Cross, F. M./G. E. Wright, "The Boundary and Province Lists of the Kingdom of Judah," *JBL* 75 (1956) 202–26. ■ Svensson, J., *Towns and Toponyms in the Old Testament* (ConBOT 38; Stockholm 1994).

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