

1 Chronicles 5:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of Sharon, upon their borders.

Analysis

And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of Sharon, upon their borders—this verse maps Gadite territory east of Jordan: גַּלְעֵד (Gilead, 'heap of testimony') signified the covenant boundary between Jacob and Laban (Genesis 31:47-48), while בָּשָׁן (Bashan) denoted fertile highlands famous for cattle and oaks. שָׁרוֹן (Sharon) here differs from coastal Sharon, referring to Transjordan pasturelands.

The territorial description emphasizes borders and suburbs (מִגְרָשִׁים, migrasheihen, 'pasture lands'), showing tribal inheritance included both settlements and grazing lands. God's land promises weren't abstract but concrete—specific territories for specific tribes. The Transjordanian tribes' choice to settle east of Jordan (Numbers 32) required Moses' conditional approval: they must fight alongside their brothers before enjoying inheritance. Privilege always accompanies responsibility in covenant relationship.

Historical Context

Gilead and Bashan, conquered under Moses (Numbers 21:21-35) and distributed to Reuben, Gad, and half-tribe Manasseh, provided rich pasturelands ideal for livestock. Their exposed position made them vulnerable to foreign invasion, suffering first in Assyrian deportations (734-732 BC). The territories' fertility made them contested throughout Old Testament period.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Gad's inheritance east of Jordan, requiring them to fight before settling, illustrate that spiritual blessing requires faithful service?
2. What does the precision of tribal boundaries teach about God's detailed planning and provision for His people?

Interlinear Text

וְבָכָל וּבְבָנָת יִהְיֶה שָׁבֵן בְּגִלְעָד בְּבָשָׁן וּבְבָנָת יִהְיֶה שָׁבֵן
And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan and in her towns H3605
H3427 H1568 H1316 H1323

תַּוְצַא אֹתָם עַל שָׁר וְלִמְגַרְשֵׁי
and in all the suburbs of Sharon upon their borders H8444
H4054 H8289 H5921

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 27:29 (Parallel theme): And over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai:

Isaiah 35:2 (Parallel theme): It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

Song of Solomon 2:1: I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

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