

Deuteronomy 33:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD: possess thou the west and the south.

Analysis

O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD— Seva ratzon umale birkat YHWH combines material and spiritual abundance. Seva (satisfied/satiated) indicates contentment, not merely possession; ratzon (favor/goodwill) suggests both divine pleasure and human harmony. Naphtali's blessing emphasizes shalom—holistic well-being in relationship with God and others.

Possess thou the west and the south— Yam vedarom resha literally 'the sea and south, possess!' Naphtali's territory was in northern Galilee, with the western edge touching the Sea of Galilee (not the Mediterranean). The blessing promises fullness in every direction—abundance without lack, comprehensive inheritance. Naphtali's region was exceptionally fertile, fulfilling this promise materially. Spiritually, this is the region where Jesus conducted much of His ministry (Matthew 4:13-15), filling it with gospel light.

Historical Context

Naphtali's territory encompassed the western shore of the Sea of Galilee and the fertile Huleh Valley to the north—among Canaan's most productive agricultural regions. The tribe produced Barak, who with Deborah defeated Sisera (Judges 4-5). The blessing's fulfillment reached its apex when this 'Galilee of the Gentiles' (Isaiah 9:1-2) became the center of Jesus's ministry—satisfaction with favor indeed, as God incarnate walked among them.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What is the relationship between spiritual 'satisfaction with favor' and material 'blessing of the LORD' in biblical prosperity?
2. How does Naphtali's region becoming Jesus's ministry base demonstrate God's long-term faithfulness to prophetic blessing?

Interlinear Text

וְמַלְאָכֵץ וְשָׁבָע					
נְפִתְלִי	נְפִתְלִי	נְפִתְלִי	נְפִתְלִי	נְפִתְלִי	נְפִתְלִי
אָמֵר	אָמֵר	אָמֵר	אָמֵר	אָמֵר	אָמֵר
he said					
And of Naphtali					
H5321	H559	H5321	H7649	H7522	H4392
בְּרַכְתָּה	בְּרַכְתָּה	בְּרַכְתָּה	בְּרַכְתָּה	בְּרַכְתָּה	בְּרַכְתָּה
וְמַלְאָכֵץ	וְמַלְאָכֵץ	וְמַלְאָכֵץ	וְמַלְאָכֵץ	וְמַלְאָכֵץ	וְמַלְאָכֵץ
יְהִי הָ					
with the blessing	of the LORD	thou the west	and the south	possess	possess
H1293	H3068	H3220	H1864	H3423	

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 49:21 (Parallel theme): Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.

Matthew 4:16 (Parallel theme): The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

Psalms 36:8 (Parallel theme): They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

Jeremiah 31:14 (References Lord): And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

Matthew 4:13 (Parallel theme): And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

Psalms 90:14 (Parallel theme): O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Matthew 11:28 (Parallel theme): Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

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