

Joshua 13:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jahazah, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

Analysis

And Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath—This verse continues the listing of cities in Reuben's territory. Jahaza (יָהֲצָה) was the site where Israel defeated Sihon (Numbers 21:23, Deuteronomy 2:32), transforming it from a place of battle into a permanent inheritance. Kedemoth (קִדְמוֹת, "eastern places") marked the wilderness from which Moses sent peace messengers to Sihon before the war (Deuteronomy 2:26). Mephaath (מִפְעָת) became a Levitical city (Joshua 21:37).

The geographical precision of these lists serves multiple purposes: legal documentation of tribal boundaries, historical record of God's faithfulness, and theological testimony that God's promises are concrete and verifiable. Every city name was a memorial stone, recalling specific acts of divine deliverance. The inclusion of Jahaza specifically reminds readers that places of past conflict can become future inheritance—battles fought in faith yield lasting blessing.

Historical Context

Jahaza's exact location is disputed, but it lay in the territory between the Arnon and Jabbok rivers. Kedemoth was on the edge of the desert wilderness east of the Jordan. The cities listed here formed a defensive network protecting Reuben's territory from Moabite incursions from the south and desert raiders from the east. Several became Levitical cities, ensuring religious teaching penetrated even the Transjordan territories.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How can places of past spiritual battles become lasting testimonies to God's faithfulness in your life?
2. What does the transformation of Jahaza from battlefield to inheritance teach about redemptive grace?
3. Why might God have inspired such detailed geographical lists in Scripture rather than general summaries?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּהְיֶה	וַקְדָּמָה	וּמִפְּעֵת:
And Jahazah	and Kedemoth	and Mephaath
H3096	H6932	H4158

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 21:23 (Parallel theme): And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness: and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel.