

Joshua 13:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah;

Analysis

And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead—Jazer (יַעֲזֵר) was a fortified Amorite city conquered by Israel (Numbers 21:32), located in a fertile region suitable for livestock (Numbers 32:1). Gilead (גִּלְעָד) refers here specifically to the southern portion, though the name could designate the entire Transjordan highlands. The Hebrew word derives from gal (גָּל, "heap") and ed (עֵד, "witness"), recalling the memorial heap between Jacob and Laban (Genesis 31:47-48)—a fitting name for territory marked by covenant witness.

And half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah—This phrase requires careful reading. Israel was forbidden to attack Ammon directly (Deuteronomy 2:19), yet Sihon had previously conquered Ammonite territory. Israel inherited what Sihon had taken, thus possessing "half the land of the children of Ammon" without violating God's command. This demonstrates divine precision: God's prohibitions don't prevent His provision. Rabbah (רַבָּה, "great") was Ammon's capital (modern Amman, Jordan).

Historical Context

Gilead was prized for its balm (Jeremiah 8:22, 46:11), a medicinal resin exported throughout the ancient world. The region's oak forests and pasture lands made it economically valuable. Jazer controlled important springs and agricultural land. The territory described formed a buffer zone between Israelite settlements and

Ammonite territory, though boundaries remained contested throughout Israel's history, leading to conflicts recorded in Judges 10-11.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's provision of Ammonite land through Sihon's prior conquest demonstrate His sovereignty in fulfilling promises without violating His commands?
2. What does the name 'Gilead' (heap of witness) suggest about the purpose of inherited blessings as testimonies to God's faithfulness?
3. How can Christians navigate situations where God's blessings come through complex historical circumstances without direct confrontation?

Interlinear Text

וְיָהּ י	לָהֶם	הַגִּבּוֹל	וְיָזַר	וְכָל	עָרֵי י	הַגִּלְעָד	
H1961	H0	And their coast	was Jazer	H3605	and all the cities	of Gilead	
		H1366	H3270		H5892	H1568	
וְחֶצֶי	אֶרֶץ	בְּנֵי י	עַם וִן	עַד	עָרוֹעַ ר	אֲשֶׁר ר	עַל
and half	the land	of the children	of Ammon	H5704	unto Aroer	H834	H5921
H2677	H776	H1121	H5983		H6177		
כִּנֹּחַ	פְּנֵי י	רַבָּה:					
that is before		Rabbah					
H6440		H7237					

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 3:11 (Parallel theme): For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

Numbers 32:35 (Parallel theme): And Atroth, Shopan, and Jaazer, and Jogbehah,

2 Samuel 12:26 (Parallel theme): And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.

2 Samuel 11:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.