

Psalms 108:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;

Analysis

Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine (לִי גִלְעָד לִי מְנַשֶּׁה, li Gil'ad li Menasheh)—God claims ownership using emphatic li (mine, to me) repeated. Gilead (Transjordan highlands) and Manasseh (tribe spanning both sides of Jordan) represent territories conquered under Joshua. God's 'mine' asserts sovereign right.

Ephraim also is the strength of mine head (וְעֵפְרַיִם מַעֲזָר רִאשִׁי, ve'Efrayim ma'oz roshi)—ma'oz (stronghold, fortress, defense) describes Ephraim as God's 'helmet,' military protection. Ephraim was Israel's most powerful northern tribe. **Judah is my lawgiver** (יְהוּדָה מְחֹקֵקִי, Yehudah mekhokeki)—mekhokek (commander's staff, scepter, lawgiver) identifies Judah as God's ruling tribe, fulfilling Jacob's prophecy (Genesis 49:10).

God assigns each tribe its function in His kingdom: Gilead and Manasseh as possessions, Ephraim as military strength, Judah as royal authority. This foreshadows Christ from Judah's line wielding ultimate authority (Revelation 5:5).

Historical Context

These tribal identities reflect the Davidic kingdom at its height. Ephraim dominated the north, Judah the south. After Solomon, the kingdom split along these lines (1 Kings 12). David here celebrates united Israel under God's sovereign distribution.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What does God's emphatic 'mine' over territories teach about His ownership rights over your life?
2. How has God assigned you specific functions (like Ephraim's strength or Judah's authority) in His kingdom purposes?
3. In what ways does Christ fulfill the royal lawgiver role promised to Judah?

Interlinear Text

י H0	גִּלְעָד H1568	י H0	מְנַשֶּׁה H4519	אֶפְרַיִם H669	וְזֶה H4581
	Gilead		is mine Manasseh	is mine Ephraim	also is the strength
י H7218	רֹאשׁ H7218	י H3063	יְהוּדָה H3063	מְחַקְקִי H2710	
	of mine head		Judah	is my lawgiver	

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 49:10 (Word): The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Psalms 122:5 (Parallel theme): For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.