

Psalm 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Analysis

This verse extends the coronation decree with a divine promise of universal dominion. The imperative '**Ask of me**' invites the Messianic King to request His inheritance—a remarkable invitation suggesting royal prerogative and divine generosity. The promise is staggering in scope: '**the heathen**' (goyim, nations) as '**inheritance**' (nachalah, permanent possession) and '**the uttermost parts of the earth**' as '**possession**' (achuzzah, landed property).

The Hebrew terms carry legal connotations—nachalah typically describes inherited family land in Israel, while achuzzah denotes secured property ownership. Applying these terms to global dominion is breathtaking: the entire world becomes the Messianic King's covenant inheritance. This transcends David's historical conquests, pointing to Christ's universal reign.

Jesus referenced this authority in the Great Commission: 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth' (Matthew 28:18). Revelation depicts Christ receiving the nations as His inheritance (Revelation 11:15). The asking implies intercessory prayer—Christ intercedes for the nations (Hebrews 7:25), and the Father grants them to His kingdom. This verse grounds Christian missions: we proclaim Christ's rightful ownership of all peoples, calling them to submit to their true King.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern conquest, defeated peoples became the victor's inheritance—providing tribute, labor, and loyalty. David's empire extended from Egypt to Mesopotamia, incorporating numerous vassal nations. Solomon's kingdom represented this promise's partial fulfillment, with international delegations bringing tribute (1 Kings 10:24-25). Yet Israel's empire was temporary and geographically limited.

The psalm's cosmic scope—'uttermost parts of the earth'—exceeded any earthly kingdom, pointing to Messianic fulfillment. Isaiah prophesied the Messiah as 'a light to the Gentiles' bringing salvation 'unto the end of the earth' (Isaiah 49:6). Jesus' ministry began this ingathering, and Pentecost accelerated it as the Spirit empowered global witness. Church history records Christianity's spread to every continent—the nations literally becoming Christ's inheritance as people from every tribe and tongue enter His kingdom. The eschaton will complete this: 'The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ' (Revelation 11:15).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's universal ownership of the nations inform Christian missions and evangelism today?
2. What is the relationship between Christ's sovereign right to the nations and humanity's free will to accept or reject Him?
3. In what ways are we currently witnessing the fulfillment of the nations becoming Christ's inheritance?
4. How should believers balance confidence in Christ's ultimate victory with the reality of ongoing opposition to the gospel?

5. What does it mean practically that Christ possesses 'the uttermost parts of the earth,' including regions currently resistant to Christianity?

Interlinear Text

שָׁאַל	מִי	אֶתְּנָה	גַּוְעַם	גְּנַדְּלָתְּךָ
Ask	H4480	of me and I shall give	thee the heathen	for thine inheritance
H7592		H5414	H1471	H5159
אֶתְּנָה	אֶפְסִי	אֶרְצָן		
for thy possession	and the uttermost parts	of the earth		
H272	H657	H776		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 22:27 (Parallel theme): All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

Psalms 89:27 (Parallel theme): Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

Psalms 72:8 (Parallel theme): He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

Daniel 7:13 (Parallel theme): I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

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