

Psalms 78:67

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

Analysis

Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim. This verse begins the psalm's climactic section—God's choice of Judah and David over Joseph/Ephraim. **Refused** (vayyim'as, וַיִּימָאֵס) means reject or spurn—the same verb used for God's abhorrence of Israel (v. 59), now applied to specific tribal choice. **The tabernacle of Joseph** refers to Shiloh, located in Ephraimite territory (Joshua 18:1).

Ephraim, Joseph's younger son, became the dominant Northern tribe and often represented the entire northern region (Isaiah 7:2, 9). God's rejection of Ephraim reversed natural expectations—Joseph held the birthright after Reuben's disqualification (1 Chronicles 5:1-2). Yet God sovereignly chose Judah instead, demonstrating that His electing purposes aren't bound by human primogeniture rights.

This prepares for vv. 68-70's announcement of Davidic election. God's rejection of Ephraim/Joseph and selection of Judah/David manifests His sovereign freedom in election—'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy' (Exodus 33:19, Romans 9:15). Salvation depends on divine choice, not human merit or birth order.

Historical Context

After Shiloh's destruction (c. 1050 BC), the ark never returned to Ephraimite territory. David brought it to Jerusalem in Judah (2 Samuel 6). Later, the Northern

Kingdom (Ephraim) persistently apostatized under Jeroboam's golden calves, while Davidic kingship and temple worship continued in Judah. The tribal division prefigured the kingdom split (922 BC).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's rejection of naturally favored Ephraim in favor of Judah illustrate the doctrine of unconditional election?
2. What warning does Ephraim's rejection offer to churches or individuals presuming on past spiritual privilege?
3. In what ways does God's choice of the unexpected (Judah, David, Jesus) reveal His freedom from human expectations?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּמָּאֵס	בַּאֲהֶל	יוֹסֵף	וְלֹא	אֶפְרַיִם	לֹא
Moreover he refused	the tabernacle	of Joseph	not the tribe	of Ephraim	
H3988	H168	H3130	H7626	H669	H3808
בָּחַר:					
and chose					
H977					