

Deuteronomy 1:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

Analysis

The rhetorical question 'How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance?' emphasizes the impossibility of solo leadership over a vast nation. The three-fold description—'cumbrance' (burden), 'burden' (load), and 'strife' (disputes)—captures the comprehensive weight of leading Israel: administrative, judicial, and interpersonal challenges. This honest assessment validates the need for shared ministry and preventative structures against leader exhaustion.

Historical Context

By this point, Moses had led Israel for nearly 40 years through wilderness wanderings, dealing with constant complaints, rebellions, and disputes. The psychological and spiritual toll of this leadership required wisdom to implement sustainable systems.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What systems or structures do you need to implement for long-term sustainability?
2. How can honest acknowledgment of limitations lead to better stewardship?

Interlinear Text

אֵיכָּה	אֶשָּׂא	לְבַדִּי	טְרִחָךְ	וּמִשָּׁאָלְךָ
How	can I myself alone bear		your cumbrance	and your burden
H349	H5375	H905	H2960	H4853
וְרִיבְכֶם:				
and your strife				
H7379				

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 3:5 (Parallel theme): Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

Psalms 89:19 (Parallel theme): Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

2 Corinthians 2:16 (Parallel theme): To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

Deuteronomy 1:9 (Parallel theme): And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone: