

Deuteronomy 2:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore:

Analysis

God's command to inform the people they would 'pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau' establishes boundaries and relationships. Though Edom descended from Esau (Jacob's brother), ethnic connection didn't grant Israel military conquest rights. God's instruction to Israel 'take ye good heed unto yourselves' warns against presumption—not every nation was designated for conquest. Respecting boundaries honors God's sovereign distribution of lands.

Historical Context

Edom's descent from Esau made them related to Israel through Jacob. Despite past conflict (Genesis 27), God commanded respect for this familial connection and honored Esau's inheritance of Seir (Deuteronomy 2:5). This shows God's justice extends beyond Israel to other nations.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you balance pursuing God's promises while respecting others' legitimate boundaries?
2. What relationships require careful wisdom and self-control to navigate well?

Interlinear Text

עֲבָר יְמֵ אֶת מֵלֵאמָר לִאמְרָה
H853 thou the people And command saying H859 Ye are to pass
H5971 H6680 H559 H5674

בְּשָׁעָה יְרֵא אֲחִיכָּה בְּנֵי עֵשָׂה בְּשָׁעָה יְרֵא אֲחִיכָּה בְּנֵי עֵשָׂה
through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau which dwell in Seir
H1366 H251 H1121 H6215 H3427 H8165

מִאָדָם מִתְּשִׁמְרָתָה מִמְּךָ אָיִרָא וְיִירָא
and they shall be afraid H4480 heed of you take ye good
H3372 H8104 H3966

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 15:15 (Parallel theme): Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

Deuteronomy 23:7 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land.