

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

וְאַתָּה H853	הָעָם H5971	וְצִו H6680	לֵאמֹר H559	אֵת H859	עֲבֹר יָם H5674
thou	the people	And command	saying		Ye are to pass
בְּגִבּוֹל	אֶחֱיָיִךְ	בְּנֵי	עֵשָׂא	הַיֹּשְׁבִים	בְּשֵׁעַ יַרְדֵּן
through the coast	of your brethren	the children	of Esau	which dwell	in Seir
H1366	H251	H1121	H6215	H3427	H8165
וַיִּירָא וְ	מִכָּאֵת	וְנִשְׁמְרָתָם	מֵאֵד:		
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.