

Deuteronomy 4:49

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, under the springs of Pisgah.

Analysis

And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, under the springs of Pisgah.

Moses completes the territorial description: vekhol ha'Aravah (וְכֹל הָעֲרָבָה, 'and all the Arabah/plain') encompasses the Jordan Rift Valley extending southward. The yam ha'Aravah (יַם הָעֲרָבָה, 'sea of the plain') is the Dead Sea, also called the Salt Sea, the lowest point on earth. Tachat ashdot haPisgah (תַּחַת אֲשְׁדוֹת הַפִּסְגָּה, 'under the slopes of Pisgah') references the mountain from which Moses would view Canaan before dying (Deuteronomy 34:1).

The comprehensive description—from Hermon in the north to the Dead Sea in the south, encompassing highlands, valleys, and plains—demonstrates the extent of what God had already accomplished. This was not marginal territory but substantial, productive land. Bashan was famous for its cattle and oaks; Gilead for its balm and pastures; the Arabah for its strategic position.

Chapter 4 thus concludes with geography as theology. The land described is real, conquered, and possessed. What Israel stands upon testifies to God's faithfulness. The same God who gave trans-Jordan will give Canaan. Past performance validates future promise. As Israel prepared to hear the law's detailed stipulations, they stood on evidence of God's trustworthiness—land under their feet that once belonged to formidable enemies.

Historical Context

Moses completes the geographical description of trans-Jordan territory, including 'all the plain' on the east side of Jordan down to the Dead Sea ('sea of the plain') under Mount Pisgah. This area, conquered from Sihon and Og, was distributed to Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, fulfilling God's promise before entering Canaan proper.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does standing on already-conquered territory prepare Israel to trust God for what remains to be conquered?
2. What 'evidence under your feet' of God's past faithfulness strengthens your faith for future challenges?

Interlinear Text

וְכָל	הָעֲרָבָה	עַל	הַיַּרְדֵּן	מִזְרָחָה	וְעַד
H3605	And all the plain	on this side	Jordan	eastward	H5704
	H6160	H5676	H3383	H4217	
וְעַד	הָעֲרָבָה	תַּחַת	אֲשֶׁר	הַפִּסְגָּה	
even unto the sea	And all the plain	H8478	under the springs	of Pisgah	
H3220	H6160		H794	H6449	

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 3:17 (Parallel theme): The plain also, and Jordan, and the coast thereof, from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, under Ashdoth-pisgah eastward.

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