

Joshua 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

Analysis

The instruction that 'there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure' maintained reverence before the ark. Proximity without irreverence—they followed closely enough to see but not so close as to treat holy things casually. This balances intimacy and reverence in approaching God.

Historical Context

The two-thousand-cubit distance (approximately 3,000 feet) ensured visibility across the multitude while maintaining respectful separation. This recalls Sinai's boundaries preventing touching the mountain (Exodus 19:12-13). Such separation taught that God's presence brings both blessing and danger—approach properly or face judgment.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you balance intimacy with God and reverence for His holiness?
2. What safeguards maintain appropriate respect while drawing near to God?

Interlinear Text

וְבֵין

H389

וְבֵין אֲלֵיכֶם

Yet there shall be a space

H7350

וְבֵין

H1961

וְבֵין

H996

וְבֵין אֲלֵיכֶם

H996

כָּלֶפֶת

H505

between you and it about two thousand

כָּלֶפֶת

H520

אֲלֵיכֶם

H4060

אֲלֵיכֶם

H408

תְּקַרְבָּה

H7126

אֲלֵיכֶם

H7126

אֲשֶׁר לֹמַעַן

H413

H4616

H834

עַדְעָה

unto it that ye may know

H3045

אֲשֶׁר בְּדַבֵּר

H853

אֲשֶׁר

the way

H834

H1870

לֹא כִּי בְּתַת

H1980

H0

H3588

H3808

עַבְרָתָה

for ye have not passed

H5674

מִתְמַלֵּל בְּדַבֵּר

H1870

מִתְמַלֵּל בְּדַבֵּר

the way

H8543

שְׁלַשׁ

H8032

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 89:7 (Parallel theme): God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.