

Numbers 20:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us:

Analysis

Moses sent messengers to Edom's king calling Israel 'thy brother'—referencing Esau's descent from Esau, Jacob's twin. This appeal to kinship sought peaceful passage, demonstrating that God's people should pursue peace with neighbors when possible. Yet Edom's refusal (verse 18) shows that familial connection doesn't guarantee cooperation, especially when old animosities persist.

Historical Context

The enmity between Israel and Edom originated with Jacob and Esau's conflict (Genesis 25-27), persisting for generations. This request for passage mirrored the later command not to abhor Edomites (Deuteronomy 23:7). God expected His people to overcome ancient grudges and extend peace even where it might be rejected.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What family or historical conflicts need you to take initiative in pursuing peace?
2. How do you respond when peaceful overtures are rejected by those who should welcome them?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁלַח	וּמֹשֶׁה	מְלָאכִים	מִקֵּדֶשׁ	אֶל	מֶלֶךְ	אֶדּוֹם
sent	And Moses	messengers	from Kadesh	H413	unto the king	of Edom
H7971	H4872	H4397	H6946		H4428	H123
כֹּה	אָמַר	אָחִי יִבְרָאֵל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אַתָּה	יָדָעְתָּ	אֵת כָּל
H3541	Thus saith	thy brother	Israel	H859	Thou knowest	H853 H3605
	H559	H251	H3478		H3045	
הַתְּלָא	אֲשֶׁר	מִצָּעָתָנוּ:				
all the travail	H834	that hath befallen				
H8513		H4672				

Additional Cross-References

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.