

Numbers 20:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.

Analysis

Moses promised, 'we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left.' This specific, limited request minimized inconvenience to Edom while meeting Israel's need. Reasonable, modest requests demonstrate respect for others' concerns. Yet even such careful restraint doesn't guarantee acceptance when hearts are unwilling.

Historical Context

The 'king's highway' was a major trade route running north-south through Transjordan, later mentioned in connection with Israel's conflicts with Sihon (21:22). This well-maintained road served international commerce; Israel's use would have been temporary and minimally disruptive.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you balance asserting legitimate needs with respect for others' concerns?
2. When have reasonable requests been rejected despite your careful restraint?

Interlinear Text

נָעֻבְרָ	נָא	בְּאֶרֶץְךָ	לֹא	נָעֻבְרָ	
Let us pass	H4994	I pray thee through thy country	H3808	Let us pass	
H5674		H776		H5674	
בְּשָׂדֵה		וּבְכֶרֶם	וְלֹא	נִשְׁתֶּה	
through the fields		or through the vineyards	H3808	neither will we drink	
H7704		H3754		H8354	
מִי	בְּאֵר	דֶּרֶךְ	הַמֶּלֶךְ	לֹא	נִטָּה
of the water	of the wells	high way	by the king's	H1980	H3808
H4325	H875	H1870	H4428		we will not turn
					H5186
יְמִין	וּשְׁמֹאל	עַד	אֲשֶׁר	נָעֻבְרָ	גְּבֻלְךָ:
to the right hand	nor to the left	H5704	H834	Let us pass	thy borders
H3225	H8040			H5674	H1366

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 2:27 (Parallel theme): Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the high way, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left.