

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

נַעֲבֵד רַא בְּאָרֶץ בָּא נַעֲבֵד רַא
Let us pass H4994 I pray thee through thy country H3808 Let us pass H5674
H5674 H4994 H776 H3808 H5674

בְּשָׂדֶךָ הַנְשִׁטְתָּה וְבַקְכָּה נִמְמָה
through the fields or through the vineyards neither will we drink
H7704 H3754 H3808 H8354

נַעֲמָה לְאָגָלָה בְּאָרֶץ מִנְיָה
of the water of the wells high way by the king's we will not turn
H4325 H875 H1870 H4428 H1980 H3808 H5186

גַּבְלָבָן נַעֲבֵד רַא אָשָׁר עַד וְשָׁמָן אָוָל יְמִינָה
to the right hand nor to the left Let us pass thy borders
H3225 H8040 H5704 H834 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.