

Numbers 21:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners.

Analysis

King Arad attacked Israel and took prisoners. This unprovoked assault demonstrated that Israel faced genuine military threats requiring divine intervention. God's people experience real opposition; faith doesn't eliminate conflict but provides divine resource for victory. Israel's vow (verse 2) showed they learned to seek God's help rather than trust human strength.

Historical Context

This incident occurred as Israel journeyed toward Canaan from the south. After years of wandering, they were again approaching the Promised Land, now facing resistance from its inhabitants. Arad's attack tested whether this generation had learned faith that the previous generation lacked.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you respond to opposition when pursuing what God has promised?

2. What 'vows' or commitments help you seek God's intervention rather than rely solely on human resources?

Interlinear Text

וַשְׁמָע	הַכְּנַעֲנִי	מֶלֶךְ	אַרָּד	יֵשׁ ב	הַנָּגֶב	כִּי
heard	the Canaanite	And when king	Arad	which dwelt	in the south	H3588
H8085	H3669	H4428	H6166	H3427	H5045	
בָּא	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	דֶּךָ	הָאֲתֹרִיִּם	וְלָחֶם	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	
came	against Israel	by the way	of the spies	then he fought	against Israel	
H935	H3478	H1870	H871	H3898	H3478	
וַיִּשָּׁב	מִמֶּנּוּ	שְׁבִי:				
and took	H4480	some of them prisoners				
H7617		H7628				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 33:40 (Kingdom): And king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.

Judges 1:16 (Parallel theme): And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father in law, went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people.

Joshua 12:14 (Kingdom): The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;