

Numbers 21:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.

Analysis

Pitched on the other side of Arnon (עַמּוֹן, Arnon)—This gorge, cut 1,700 feet deep into Moab's plateau, formed the border **between Moab and the Amorites**. Israel carefully avoided Moabite territory (Deuteronomy 2:9) but camped in no-man's-land north of Arnon. **Which cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites** clarifies that this wilderness belonged to neither kingdom—Israel could traverse it without violating kinship obligations to Lot's descendants.

God's instructions respected tribal boundaries while advancing His purpose. The specificity demonstrates covenant faithfulness: Israel honored Moab's heritage while claiming only what God designated for conquest.

Historical Context

The Arnon River (modern Wadi Mujib) empties into the Dead Sea's east shore. In the late Bronze Age, this region was contested between Moab and Amorite kingdoms. Israel's route navigated complex geopolitics under divine direction.

Related Passages

[Genesis 1:1](#) — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Israel's respect for boundaries God established for others inform Christian engagement with secular authority?
2. Where might God be calling you to advance His purposes while honoring legitimate claims of others?
3. What does this passage teach about navigating 'no-man's-land' situations ethically and faithfully?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁמָךְ	נִסְעָוָי	יִתְּחַנֵּן	מִעַל־בָּרָא	אֶרְנוֹן
H8033	From thence they removed	H5265	and pitched	H2583
			on the other side	H5676
			for Arnon	H769
אֲשֶׁר	בְּמִדְבָּר	הַצִּא	גְּבַר	בְּאָמְרִים
H834	which is in the wilderness	H4057	that cometh out	H3318
			is the border	H1366
			and the Amorites	H567
אֶרְנוֹן	לְבָנָן	מִזְמָרָת	לְבָנָן	לְבָנָן
H3588	for Arnon	H1366	between Moab	H996
			between Moab	H4124
				H996
בְּאָמְרִים				
and the Amorites				
H567				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 22:36 (Parallel theme): And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto a city of Moab, which is in the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost coast.

Judges 11:18 (Parallel theme): Then they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon was the border of Moab.

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