

Numbers 21:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the LORD, What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon,

Analysis

In the book of the wars of the LORD (בְּסֶפֶר מִלְחָמֹת יְהָוָה, be-sefer milchamot YHWH)—Moses cites an ancient military chronicle, now lost, documenting Yahweh's victories. This proves biblical writers used historical sources and expected readers to verify references. **What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon** parallels the Exodus deliverance with Transjordan conquest—both were milchamot YHWH (wars of the LORD), divine interventions in history.

The citation's fragmentary nature (verses 14-15) suggests poetic quotation. Scripture itself acknowledges non-canonical sources as historically valid, while remaining the sole inspired authority. God's mighty acts were public knowledge, recorded in multiple witnesses.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kings maintained annals of military campaigns. Israel's 'Book of the Wars of the LORD' may have been a collection of victory songs and battle accounts, similar to Egyptian campaign records or Assyrian annals, but crediting Yahweh rather than human kings.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Scripture's citation of external sources strengthen rather than weaken its authority and reliability?
2. What 'wars of the LORD' in your life deserve documentation as testimonies to His faithfulness?
3. How can you ensure your spiritual victories are recorded for others' encouragement and God's glory?

Interlinear Text

עַל כֵּן רֹאשׁ מִלְּחָמָה תְּבִשׁ פָּר אֶת יְהָנֵם הַמְּלָחָמָה
H5921 H3651 Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the LORD H853
H559 H5612 H4421 H3068

בְּאַת בְּסִינָפָה הַמְּלָחָמָה אֶת אַרְנוֹן: בְּאַת בְּסִינָפָה הַמְּלָחָמָה
What he did in the Red sea and in the brooks of Arnon
H2052 H5492 H853 H5158 H769

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