

# Numbers 32:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Even the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle:

## Analysis

**The country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel** (הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת הָיְתָה לְפָנֵי יְהוָה לְפָנֵי עַדְתִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל)—they acknowledge God's military victory using the verb נָכָה (nakah, 'to strike down/defeat'). Yet this acknowledgment becomes an excuse: since God conquered it, why not settle there? **Is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle** (אֶרֶץ מִקְנֶה הוּא וְלַעֲבָדֶיךָ מִקְנֶה)—the double use of miquneh (livestock/cattle) reveals their primary concern. Perfect logic, wrong conclusion.

They correctly identify God's provision (the land) but incorrectly apply it, confusing divine victory with divine intention. This error recurs throughout Scripture: assuming God's blessing on Plan A indicates approval for our Plan B. The land was smitten 'before' Israel as a conquest route, not a settlement zone. Moses will expose this category mistake, showing how selfish pragmatism masquerades as faith.

## Historical Context

Israel defeated Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan (Numbers 21) while traveling the 'King's Highway' north through Transjordan. This territory was never part of God's Abrahamic land promise, which focused on Canaan west of Jordan (Genesis 15:18-21).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How can you distinguish between God's providential provision and His ultimate purposes for your life?
2. When have you used God's blessing as justification for settling short of His best?
3. What's the difference between pragmatic wisdom and spiritual presumption in decision-making?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶרֶץ	אֶשְׂרָר	הִכָּה	יְהוָה	לִפְנֵי	עַד ת
Even the country	H834	smote	which the LORD	before	the congregation
H776		H5221	H3068	H6440	H5712
יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֶרֶץ	מִקְנֶה:	וּא	וְלַעֲבָדֶיךָ	מִקְנֶה:
of Israel	Even the country	for cattle	H1931	and thy servants	for cattle
H3478	H776	H4735		H5650	H4735

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 21:34** (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

**Numbers 21:24** (References Israel): And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong.

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