

Numbers 33:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they departed from Ebronah, and encamped at Ezion-gaber.

Analysis

Departed from Ebronah, and encamped at Ezion-gaber—עֶצְיוֹן גָּבֵר ('Eṣyōn Gāber, 'backbone of a man' or 'mighty tree'). This major port city at the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba (modern Eilat region) was later developed by Solomon (1 Kings 9:26). Its strategic location connected Israel to Red Sea maritime trade.

The mention of Ezion-gaber signals Israel's southernmost penetration during the wandering—they circumnavigated Edom's territory to approach Moab from the east. This station represents both geographic extremity and divine faithfulness in bringing them full circle back toward Canaan after decades of discipline.

Historical Context

Ezion-gaber sat at a crucial crossroads of ancient trade routes. Solomon's exploitation of this port centuries later (1 Kings 9:26-28) demonstrates the enduring strategic value of locations Israel passed through during the Exodus. Archaeological excavations have identified the site with Tell el-Kheleifeh.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's guidance sometimes lead us to geographic or spiritual 'extremes' before bringing us to our destination?
2. What does Ezion-gaber's later commercial importance suggest about God's long-term purposes in Israel's wandering route?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּסְעוּ	מֵעֲבְרֹנָה	וַיַּחֲנוּ	בְּעֵצִי	גִבְרָ:
And they departed	from Ebronah	and encamped	H0	at Eziongaber
H5265	H5684	H2583		H6100

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 2:8 (Parallel theme): And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

1 Kings 9:26 (Parallel theme): And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom.

1 Kings 22:48 (Parallel theme): Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.