

Numbers 33:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they departed from Oboth, and pitched in Ije-abarim, in the border of Moab.

Analysis

They departed from Oboth, and pitched in Ije-abarim, in the border of Moab — (וַיָּעַזְבּוּ מִאַבָּת וַיָּחַנְטוּ בְּעֵי הַעֲבָרִים בְּגַבּוֹל מוֹאָב) Iye ha-Abarim means "ruins of the regions beyond" or "heaps of the passages," marking Israel's arrival at Moab's eastern frontier. The term gevul (גַּבּוֹל, "border," "boundary") is theologically loaded: Israel has reached the edge of the wilderness and stands at the threshold of inheritance.

This is more than geography—it's covenant theology. For forty years Israel wandered outside the Promised Land due to unbelief (Numbers 14). Now a new generation stands at the border, poised to enter by faith what their fathers forfeited by fear. The Abarim mountain range (including Nebo where Moses will die, Deuteronomy 34:1) dominates the horizon, visible evidence that promise is near but not yet possessed.

Historical Context

Ije-abarim (also called Iyim, v. 45) was located in the mountains east of Moab, likely modern-day Mahay in Jordan. The "border of Moab" indicates Israel respected Moab's territorial integrity per God's command (Deuteronomy 2:9), though they would camp in Moab's plains by Jordan. This was probably late 1406 BC, months before Canaan's conquest.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. When you stand at the "border" of God's promises for your life, what keeps you from stepping forward in faith?
2. How does the wilderness generation's failure at Kadesh-barnea warn you about the consequences of hesitating at the threshold of obedience?
3. What "ruins of the regions beyond" might God be calling you to leave behind as you approach new territory in your walk with Him?

Interlinear Text

בְּגַב 1^ל הַעֲבָרָה יְמֵי בְּעֵין מִאָבָת תִּלְקַנְתִּי יְסֻעָה
And they departed from Oboth and pitched ^{H88} ^{H2583} ^{H0} in Ijeabrim ^{H5863} in the border ^{H1366}

מִאָבָת
of Moab
H4124

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 21:11 (Parallel theme): And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched at Ije-abrim, in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward the sunrising.