

Numbers 33:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they removed from Almon-diblathaim, and pitched in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo.

Analysis

They removed from Almon-diblathaim, and pitched in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo—(וַיָּסֻעُ מִעַלְמָן דְּבָלְתִּימָה וַיָּפֹנוּ בְּפָרִי הַעֲבָרִים לִפְנֵי נְבוּ) The Abarim range (אֲבוֹרִים, "regions beyond" or "passages") represents the final physical barrier before Jordan. Mount Nebo (נְבוּ, possibly meaning "prophet" or from Babylonian god Nabu) is where Moses will view Canaan and die (Deuteronomy 34:1-5), making this camp laden with bittersweet significance.

The phrase lifnei Nevo (לִפְנֵי נְבוּ, "before Nebo") can mean both "in front of" geographically and "in the presence of" theologically. Israel camps in the shadow of the mountain where their greatest leader will breathe his last, unable to enter the land he'd pursued for forty years. Nebo symbolizes the tension between God's discipline (Moses excluded for striking the rock, Numbers 20:12) and God's grace (Moses shown the land, given honorable death, Deuteronomy 34:5-6). Leadership transitions here from Moses to Joshua, from law-giver to land-taker.

Historical Context

Mount Nebo (modern Jebel en-Neba in Jordan) rises 2,740 feet above the Dead Sea, offering panoramic views of Canaan from Dan to the Negev. Moses ascended from these plains (Deuteronomy 34:1) shortly after delivering his final sermons (Deuteronomy). From Nebo's summit, Moses saw what faith envisions: the inheritance his eyes beheld but his feet never touched.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Moses's death at Nebo—seeing but not entering—challenge your assumptions about how God defines "successful" ministry?
2. What promised lands might you be called to glimpse and prepare for others to possess, even if you don't personally enter them?
3. How does the proximity of Nebo's judgment and grace illustrate that God's discipline of His leaders doesn't negate His love for them?

Interlinear Text

And they removed	H5265	H0	from Almondiblathaim	H5963	and pitched	H2583	in the mountains	H2022
of Abarim	H5682	before	H6440	Nebo	H5015			

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:49 (Parallel theme): Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: