

Numbers 34:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward:

Analysis

The southern border beginning at the wilderness of Zin along Edom's border establishes that Israel's inheritance was distinct from their relatives. Edom (Esau's descendants) received different territory. God distinguished between Jacob and Esau in inheritance, though both were Abraham's descendants. This teaches that physical descent doesn't guarantee spiritual inheritance. The Reformed doctrine of election is illustrated—God chooses whom He will bless, not based on genealogy but according to His purpose. Not all Abraham's descendants received the promise; only Isaac's line through Jacob.

Historical Context

The southern boundary separated Israel from Edom, their brother nation descended from Esau. Despite familial connection, the two nations received distinct inheritances and had different relationships with God. Edom would later oppose Israel, demonstrating that shared ancestry doesn't guarantee shared faith or blessing. The border's definition prevented future territorial disputes.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does distinguishing between Jacob and Esau teach about election?
2. How does physical descent's insufficiency for inheritance illustrate spiritual truth?
3. In what ways does Romans 9's discussion of Jacob and Esau illuminate this passage?

Interlinear Text

לְקַרְבָּן	פָּאָת	גַּבְּנָה	מִמְּדָבָר	אֶזְרָחָלָה
H1961	H0	quarter	Then your south	shall be from the wilderness
	H6285		H5045	
עַל	אֶת	אֶת	גַּבְּנָה	גַּבְּנָה
H5921	along by the coast	of Edom	H1961	H0
	H3027	H123		H1366
מִלְחָאָת	ים	בְּמִלְחָאָת	מִזְרָחָה	מִזְרָחָה
shall be the outmost coast	sea	of the salt	eastward	
H7097	H3220	H4417	H6924	

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 14:3 (Parallel theme): All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.

Ezekiel 47:13 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the Lord GOD; This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph shall have two portions.

