

Numbers 34:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim, and pass on to Zin: and the going forth thereof shall be from the south to Kadesh-barnea, and shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass on to Azmon:

Analysis

And your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim (Ma'aleh Aqrabbim, Scorpion Pass)—God defines Promised Land boundaries with geographic precision before Israel enters. The southern border curves from Wilderness of Zin through treacherous Scorpion Pass (steep ascent southeast of Dead Sea) to Kadesh-barnea (where Israel rebelled 38 years prior, 13:26-14:4).

This isn't abstract theology but real estate covenant. The Hebrew *gevul* (border/boundary) appears repeatedly (34:3-12), showing God's promises are concrete, not merely spiritual. Abraham received general promise (Genesis 15:18-21); now Moses receives surveyor's specifications. The borders mark both gift and limitation—Israel must occupy what God gives, not expand beyond. Obedience has geography.

Historical Context

Numbers 34 (ca. 1406 BC) details borders before conquest. Kadesh-barnea was Israel's camping location during 38-year wilderness punishment. Akrabbim Pass (modern Naqb es-Safa) controlled southern access to Judean highlands. These borders defined tribal inheritances Joshua allocated (Joshua 15-19), though Israel never fully occupied all territories.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do specific, limited boundaries challenge 'prosperity gospel' assumptions about unlimited blessing?
2. What does God's pre-specification of borders teach about divine sovereignty over nations and their territories?

Interlinear Text

עַקְרָבִים לְמַעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִבְּ גַּב הַגֶּבֶן וְלִכְמָה
shall turn And your border from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim
H5437 H1366 H5045 H4608 H4610

לְקַדְּשָׁה מִבְּ גַּב תְּזַצֵּאת יְהוָה אֶל נֵהֶר וְעַבְרֵב
and pass on to Zin and the going forth from the south
H5674 H1961 H8444 H5045 H0

עַמְמָנָה: וְעַבְרֵב אֶל רְצָחָן אֶל אֶלְעָזָר בֶּרֶג עַמְמָנָה:
to Kadeshbarnea and shall go on to Hazaraddar and pass on to Azmon
H6947 H3318 H0 H2692 H5674 H6111

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 32:8 (Parallel theme): Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.