

Numbers 34:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border.

Analysis

And as for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border—The Mediterranean Sea (yam ha-gadol, the great sea) forms Israel's western boundary. Unlike other borders requiring detailed landmarks, the sea provides natural, unambiguous limit. God uses geography—mountains, seas, rivers—to define covenant space.

The western boundary is simplest, yet Israel struggled to occupy Philistine coastal plain (Joshua 13:2-3; Judges 1:19, 3:3). The sea represents both blessing (trade, ports, fishing) and limitation (Israel wasn't called to be naval empire like Phoenicia). Each nation receives distinct calling; comparing breeds discontent. Israel's genius lay inland—agriculture, law, temple worship—not seafaring. Know your borders; thrive within them.

Historical Context

The Mediterranean coast featured Phoenician cities (Tyre, Sidon) to the north and Philistine cities (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod) to the south. Israel never controlled the entire coastline, though Solomon allied with Phoenicia for maritime trade (1 Kings 5:1-12). The coastal plain's fertility made it contested territory throughout Israel's history.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's assignment of natural boundaries teach contentment with His specific calling for your life?
2. Why might Israel's failure to fully occupy coastal regions reflect spiritual compromise rather than geographic impossibility?

Interlinear Text

גִּבּוֹל	יָם:	וְהַיָּם	לְךָ	יָם:	
border	And as for the western			And as for the western	
H1366	H3220	H1961	H0	H3220	
הַגָּדוֹל	גִּבּוֹל	זֶה	יְהוָה	לְךָ	גִּבּוֹל
ye shall even have the great	border				border
H1419	H1366	H2088	H1961	H0	H1366
יָם:					
And as for the western					
H3220					

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org