

# Deuteronomy 2 Commentary

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Moses on Mt Nebo (Deuteronomy 34:1+)  
Listen to Mt Nebo as you Ponder How Moses' May Have Felt

Deuteronomy by ~~Irving Jensen~~- used by permission  
deut

Source: Ryrie Study Bible

Deuteronomy		
Dt 1:1-4:43	Dt 4:44-26:19	Dt 27:1-34:12

Moses' First Discourse	Moses' Second Discourse				Moses' Third Discourse		
Historical Review	Legal Exposition				Prophetical Promises		
Looking Back 40 Years	Looking Up What God Expected of Israel				Looking Ahead What God Will Do for Israel		
Recapitulation of Wanderings	Rehearsal of Israel's Law				Ratification of Israel's Covenant		Historical Appendices
Remembrance of the past	Commandments for the Present				Dt 27:1-30:20 Blessing and Cursing		Dt 31:1-34:12 Death of Moses
Take Heed Don't forget	Ten Commands	Related Commands			Two Choices Affecting the Future		Moses' Parting Words
Dt 1:1-4:43 Looking Back	Dt 4:44-11:32 Exposition of Decalogue	Dt 12:1-16:17 Ceremonial Laws	Dt 16:18-20:20 Civil Laws	Dt 21:1-26:19 Social Laws	Dt 27:1-28:68 Ratification of Covenant	Dt 29:1-30:20 Terms of Covenant	Dt 31:1-34:12 Moses' Song, Blessing, Death
Plains of Moab							
ca. 2 Months Moses: Author (Except Dt 34)							

**Deuteronomy 2:1 "Then we turned and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as the LORD spoke to me, and circled Mount Seir for many days.**

- **we turned:** De 1:40 Nu 14:25
- **and circled Mount Seir:** De 1:2 Nu 21:4 Judges 11:18
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- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Numbers 14:25 "Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys; **turn** ([panah](#)) tomorrow and **set out** to the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea."

Deuteronomy 1:40 'But as for you, turn around and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.'

#### Circling Mount Seir

### NOW FOR THE REST OF THE STORY

Remember that Moses is preaching to the second generation seeking to encourage them regarding their future entrance into the promised land.

**POSB** - The second generation was soon to launch a campaign against the enemies of the promised land. They were to lay claim to the inheritance promised by God. Courage—strong courage—was needed. The people needed a strong determination and conviction that God would be present with them, guiding them all the way. Moses knew this; for that reason, he stressed the **faithfulness of God**. He preached and reminded the people of God's faithfulness. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Then** - This marks an advance in a sequence of events. Chapter 1 ends with an ignominious defeat and ineffective mourning and a command to head south to the wilderness. This is where Moses picks up the story. This departure from **Kadesh** ([Qadesh Barnea](#)) was not their second departure as recorded in Nu 20:22+ ("Now when they set out from Kadesh, the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor."), but is the **first departure** after rebelling against God in unbelief and refusing to enter the Promised Land.

**THEN occurs 117 times in Deuteronomy** - Dt 1:16; Dt 1:19; Dt 1:22; Dt 1:25; Dt 1:29; Dt 1:34; Dt 1:41; Dt 1:45; Dt 2:1; Dt 2:9; Dt 2:32; Dt 3:1; Dt 3:18; Dt 3:20; Dt 4:12; Dt 4:41; Dt 5:1; Dt 5:25; Dt 5:27; Dt 6:10; Dt 6:12; Dt 6:21; Dt 7:2; Dt 7:4; Dt 7:12; Dt 8:14; Dt 9:6; Dt 9:9; Dt 9:12; Dt 9:23; Dt 10:5; Dt 10:11; Dt 11:23; Dt 12:11; Dt 12:20; Dt 12:21; Dt 13:11; Dt 13:14; Dt 13:16; Dt 14:25; Dt 15:9; Dt 15:12; Dt 15:17; Dt 16:10; Dt 17:4; Dt 17:5; Dt 17:8; Dt 17:13; Dt 18:7; Dt 19:9; Dt 19:12; Dt 19:17; Dt 19:19; Dt 20:8; Dt 20:11; Dt 20:12; Dt 21:2; Dt 21:5; Dt 21:12; Dt 21:14; Dt 21:16; Dt 21:19; Dt 21:21; Dt 22:2; Dt 22:13; Dt 22:15; Dt 22:21; Dt 22:22; Dt 22:24; Dt 22:25; Dt 22:29; Dt 23:10; Dt 23:24; Dt 23:25; Dt 24:4; Dt 24:7; Dt 25:2; Dt 25:7; Dt 25:8; Dt 25:9; Dt 25:12; Dt 26:1; Dt 26:4; Dt 26:7; Dt 26:12; Dt 27:1; Dt 27:9; Dt 27:14; Dt 28:53; Dt 28:59; Dt 28:62; Dt 29:21; Dt 29:25; Dt 30:3; Dt 30:9; Dt 31:7; Dt 31:10; Dt 31:14; Dt 31:17; Dt 31:20; Dt 31:21; Dt 31:23; Dt 31:27; Dt 31:30; Dt 32:15; Dt 32:20; Dt 32:44; Dt 32:50; Dt 33:21; Dt 34:4; Dt 34:8

**We turned** - The verb **turned** (Hebrew - panah; Lxx = [epistrepho](#)) means to turn and head in a particular direction and is repeated in Dt 2:3. In this context it is a divinely commanded change of direction from the blessed life in the Promised Land to their promised wilderness graves (Nu 14:33). It is fascinating that the verb **turned** is often used of turning in a spiritual sense. It is almost never used of turning to God, but most often of turning from God as in Dt 29:18 (also turning to idols Lev 19:4, Dt 31:18, 20, Hos 3:1; to one's own fleshly way Isa 53:6, to mediums or spiritists Lev 19:31). It is apropos here for Israel in effect "turned their back" on God's promised land and blessed lives and instead were to journey in a wilderness land in which they would lose their lives! Don't despise God's promises beloved!

**THOUGHT** - So while Israel was physically turned by God to the wilderness, spiritually speaking this punishment was because their hearts had been turned away from God and His good and acceptable and perfect will for them to enter into the Promised Land. Is this not a picture of all of us beloved? We are either going with God and His will for our lives or we are turning toward the (spiritual) wilderness (for every place without God is in a sense a "wilderness"! ). The message? [Trust and obey](#) for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus then to trust and obey.

**Turned** (turned back, to face, to look) ([06437](#)) [panah](#) means basically to turn, usually physically turning (first use - Ge 18:22, Ex 7:23, 10:6, 32:15), but it has a number of meanings depending on the context. Vine has "to turn towards, turn back, turn around (Dt 1:40, 2:1, Dt 9:15) **Panah** is the Hebrew word the Spirit of God used to save **Charles Haddon Spurgeon** ([see his testimony](#)) when on a cold, winter day his heart was warmed by the command. "**Turn** ([epistrepho](#)) to Me and **be saved**, ([sozo](#)) all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. (Isa 45:22) **Panah in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 1:7; Deut. 1:24; Deut. 1:40; Deut. 2:1; Deut. 2:3; Deut. 2:8; Deut. 3:1; Deut. 9:15; Deut. 9:27; Deut. 10:5; Deut. 16:7; Deut. 23:11; Deut. 29:18; Deut. 30:17; Deut. 31:18; Deut. 31:20

**John Maxwell** - Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness" (Dt 2:1). This is one of the saddest statements in the Bible. Dreams are dashed as the people turn their backs on the Land of Promise. A vision vanishes as their leader Moses turns with them. Notice in Deuteronomy 1:43–46 the continual use of the second person "you." Chapter 2 opens with the first person "we." Moses did not take part in Israel's rebellion against God, but now, as their leader, he must walk with them into the wilderness. This section of Scripture fills the reader with two emotions. First, there is a sense of waste. A goal—the Promised Land—and a generation of warriors is lost. The saddest words ever penned are these: "What might have been." Now the children of Israel turn away from a dream to die. In one of his songs, singer-songwriter Mac Davis said, "There is nothing to do but bury a man when his dreams are gone." That could have been said of the Israelites. Men who were skilled warriors were walking in land they could not even possess (Dt 2:5, 9). Instead of living in a land that flowed with milk and honey they were wandering in a desert where they had to buy food and water from the residents of the land (v. 6). The hand of the Lord which was to have destroyed the enemy in Canaan was instead destroying the people of promise (Dt 2:14–15). What a terrible waste! Elton Trueblood summarized this story in one sentence: "To make your life small when it could be great is sin and heresy." These people wandering in the wilderness are like the unfinished statues sculpted by Michelangelo. Of the forty-four he attempted, only fourteen were completed. Those statues that were completed, such as Moses, The Pietà, and David have become famous. But the thirty he did not finish are interesting too. You can see some of them in a museum in Florence, Italy—huge chunks of marble from which he sculpted only an elbow or the beginning of a wrist. One shows the leg, the thigh, the knee, the calf, the foot, even the toes. But the rest of the body is locked in stone; it will never come out. Another reveals a head and shoulders, but the arms and hands are still frozen inside. Is this not also what happened to Moses and his people? They lived and died without ever coming out of themselves. They never realized the potential hidden within. There is a

charming little story about a Japanese artist who painted a picture on a fairly large canvas. Down in one corner of the canvas was a tree and on its limbs were some birds. But the rest of the canvas was bare. When the artist was asked if he was going to paint something more to fill the rest of the canvas, he replied, "Oh no, I have to leave room for the birds to fly." The canvas of the wilderness leaves no room for the descendants of Abraham to "fly." They can only wait. They will circle but not soar; they will sit but not sing. They are in a holding pattern. Though God equipped them to be eagles, they will not use their wings. There is no room in the wilderness.

**And set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as the LORD spoke to me-** After Israel had "**remained in Kadesh many days**," they finally obey the command in Dt 1:40+ (cf Nu 14:25+) to "**turn around** and **set out** for the wilderness." They disobeyed going into the Promised Land, but now obey leaving. This **Red Sea** is not the same sea Israel crossed in their deliverance from Egypt but is most likely the region of the Gulf of Aqaba, depicted in the [map above](#) as the tongue of water extending north from the "**Red Sea**". (See Utley's topic - [The Red Sea](#)) Don't miss this point that even though the people have rebelled, God still speaks to them and is concerned for their welfare.

**THOUGHT** - One might ask why would they **disobey** the command to go into the Land of Milk and Honey and then later **obey** the command to go into **the great and terrible wilderness** (Dt 1:19+)? I would propose it because they were soundly thrashed by the Amorites who chased them like a swarm of bees! God allowed them to go into the Promised Land after disobedience that they might learn the consequences of disobeying the Lord (they had already been told one consequence was that they would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land, but they would only experience this over the next 38 years). On the other hand, they would immediately experience the consequence of disobeying God and trying to take the Promised Land in their own strength. **SOME OF US ARE SLOW LEARNERS**. If God is disciplining you for some sin in which you continually obey, rest assured you will continually experience divinely allowed or sent consequences (which may vary in intensity). Israel seems to have learned the hard way and when commanded to "**GO SOUTH**" they obeyed as described in this passage.

**John Grant** - The comment of Moses, when speaking to the tribes who did not wish to cross the Jordan, should be noted: "And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years" (Nu 32:13+). Even although the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) would still be guiding them, they would be "**wandering**", not in the sense that they had lost their way but rather that **they were not travelling to their goal**. Note, however, that even in their disobedience the Lord had not abandoned them, but continued to guide (**ED: ALSO TO PROVIDE & PROTECT - MANNA, SANDALS DID NOT WEAR OUT, NO COMPLAINTS THAT THERE WAS NO WATER**). The path on which they had embarked would not be pleasant but, under the direction of the Lord, it would lead to blessing for the nation, even though the generation that refused Canaan would not enter into it. Once again it is noticeable the **Moses did not dwell on their failure**. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**And circled Mount Seir for many days** - **NET** has "detouring around Mt Seir for a long time." The **Mount Seir** mentioned here is different from **Seir** itself (Dt 2:4), which is called **Edom** for during their 38 years of wandering (see Dt 2:14+), the Israelites did not enter Edom. Some propose that Israel used Kadesh as a base (it was well supplied with oases and pastureland). The phrase **for many days** describes Israel's 38 years in the wilderness having begun their "punishment" from Kadesh-Barnea and ending up in Kadesh-Barnea (Nu 20:1+). One writer calls this the period of the "anti-Exodus." Moses gives only a few details of the wasted wilderness wandering. [See the notes below](#) on this time described primarily in Numbers 15 to 20). Note that it is clear that God's was leading the Israelites along a circuitous route around Mount Seir which is a reminder of His covenant faithfulness as He provided and protected His people on their way to the Promised Land in spite of their disobedience. He would assure that the second generation made it safely to the edge of the Promised Land.

**A B Simpson** - The wandering in the wilderness is even sadder. This is, if possible, still more sad. **A single verse completes the history of 3 million people for 38 years**. "Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me. For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir" (Dt 2:1). What a mournful picture; still more desolate as the speaker draws it out into **days** rather than **years**. Oh! how long and dreary they must have seemed to him in retrospect. Nearly **14,000 days** of useless ineffectual wandering, and that when he himself was nearly 80 years old, and was wasting the last 38 years of his already almost finished life in this dreary land. In the 90th Psalm he has given us some conception of those scenes: "All our days pass away under your wrath;/ we finish our years with a moan" (Ps 90:9). **Day by day and year by year he saw them fading before his eyes**. Fathers and mothers wandered in the burning sands with their thirsty little ones, and saw one and another of their neighbors faint and sink amid the sands, gasp out their lives, and leave their bones to whiten in the desert, and they knew that soon their turn would come; **for them there was no prospect but death**. Oh! how vivid a picture it is of the **emptiness and failure of the Christian life which hesitates wholly to follow the Lord and to enter into the fullness of our inheritance**. There will be very little history for many lives. One single verse in the book of Numbers (Nu 33:37) tells the story of most of the 40 years as we have already seen in that book. This very verse is the sole memorial, in the address of Moses, of that melancholy time from which his thoughts would gladly turn away. It is a chapter from the annals of eternity, and such awful blanks

will meet many of us, it is to be feared, when we come face to face with the issues of life and the books of the judgment.

Simpson's comment makes me think of a song by Robin Mark which poignantly speaks to how we have lived our lives -- have we lived them wandering in the wilderness or have we lived them for Him -- it will make all the difference in eternity! Play the song, but use the time to ponder your life (and **what's left to redeem!**)...

### [When It's All Been Said and Done](#)

When it's all been said and done  
There is just one thing that matters  
Did I do my best to live for truth?  
Did I live my life for you?  
When it's all been said and done  
All my treasures will mean nothing  
Only what I have done  
For love's rewards  
Will stand the test of time  
Lord, your mercy is so great  
That you look beyond our weakness  
That you found purest gold in miry clay  
Turning sinners into saints  
I will always sing your praise  
Here on earth and in heaven after  
For you've joined me at my true home  
When it's all been said and done  
You're my life when life is gone.

Corresponds to Events Described in Nu 21 ([Click to Enlarge](#))  
(Source: [NIV Study Bible-Fully Revised - Recommended Resource](#))

## SUMMARY OF THE "WASTED" WILDERNESS YEARS

Here is another map of the possible routes of the Exodus...I favor the "dotted route" just to the east of the King's Highway (but clearly one must avoid being dogmatic)....

[CLICK TO ENLARGE](#)  
(Source: [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Most commentaries note that it is very difficult to be absolutely certain about Israel's itinerary during the 38 years of wilderness wandering. The following notes are an attempt fill in some of the details by correlating with the related passages in Numbers.

If we compare Deut 2:1 with passages in Numbers, we see that after Israel's rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea described in Numbers 13-14, God judged the first generation and commanded them to **"turn around (INSTEAD OF GOING NORTH INTO PROMISED LAND, GO SOUTH) and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea (THE REGION OF THE GULF OF AQABA - [See map above](#))** (Dt 1:40+) Deuteronomy 1 ends with Moses' statement that the nation **"remained in Kadesh many days."** (Dt 1:46+).

And **"THEN"** (SEE THEN) in Dt 2:1 they (Israel) **obeyed** God's command and **"turned and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea (THE REGION OF THE GULF OF AQABA - [See map above](#))**. These 38 years are succinctly summarized by Moses with the description that Israel **"circled Mount Seir for many days."**

Now if we compare this statement with the book of Numbers it is clear that after the rebellion in Numbers 13-14 Moses gave very few details regarding the 38 years of **"circling" Mount Seir**.

### **Here is what we know about those "lost years" in the wilderness --**

In Numbers 15:1-41+ Moses reviews the covenant laws (which the second generation would need to

know and obey when they entered the Promised Land).

In Numbers 16:1-50+ Moses described the rebellion and destruction of Korah (Nu 16:28-33), the death of 240 men offering incense (Nu 16:35), and the death of 14,700 in plague who rebelled the day after Korah was killed (Nu 16:41-48, 49) (the exact place and timing during the 38 year wilderness time is not given).

In Numbers 17:1-13+ Moses described the vindication of Aaron as the legitimate high priest (only Aaron's rod budded).

In Numbers 18:1-32+ Moses recorded rules, roles and privileges of the priests and Levites (which would also be important when the second generation entered the Promised Land).

In Numbers 19:1-22+ Moses recorded the purification (see [Red Heifer](#)) which was especially relevant during the 38 years when people were dying every day and touching a corpse made one unclean!

In Numbers 20:1-29+ **the 38 years of wilderness wandering is coming to an end**, [Mariam](#) died and the nation ended up back at Kadesh (Nu 20:1+) which is where they had originally rebelled (Nu 13:26+). The first generation had almost completely died. But (like father, like son) now the second generation has a "no water rebellion" described in Nu 20:2-13+ (first generation's "no water rebellions was ~40 years prior as described in Ex 17:1-7+ - apparently God subsequently provided water for 38 years in their wilderness wandering) but at this second no water test Moses also disobeyed God's instructions resulting in God's punishing him by not allowing him to enter the Promised Land. It was also at this time that Moses asked the king of Edom if Israel would go through their land on the way to an eastern entrance (east of Jordan River) to the Promised Land, but Edom refused (Nu 20:18, 20+). Finally in Nu 20:22-29+ we see Aaron's death at Mount Hor.

**Brueggemann** The unstated year must be the fortieth (**ED**: 40th since leaving Egypt, 38 years of wilderness wandering), since the summary of Israel's itinerary places Kadesh right before the stop where Aaron died in the fifth month of the fortieth year (Nu 33:38). (Numbers Commentary)

Numbers 21:1-35+ describes Israel near Mt Hor (where Aaron died -see Nu 20:22-23+) which is in the vicinity of Kadesh-Barnea ([See this map](#)). From the region of **Hor** (Mount Hor was by the border of the land of Edom - [locate this on the map](#)) Israel won a victory over **Arad** ([see map - just west of Dead Sea](#)) and **Hormah** ([see just west of Arad](#)) (see Nu 21:1-3+, a total reversal of their previous defeat 38 years earlier - Nu 14:45+). Then Israel goes back to Kadesh near Hor which is just east of Kadesh and from there "they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey." (Nu 21:4+).

It would appear that at this time God spoke to Moses (Dt 2:1) "Then they set out southward from **Mount Hor** ([see map](#)) by the way of the Red Sea ([see map](#)) most probably to Ezion Geber just north of the Gulf of Aqaba).

At some point not which is not exactly clear from the text God tells Moses **You have circled this mountain long enough. Now turn north.** (Dt 2:3+) From there Israel goes around the land of Edom (See this route depicted in [map](#) with the **orange line** on the eastern side of **Edom** and east of the King's Highway) (see Dt 2:4-7+) At some point (exact time and location uncertain) **"the people (became impatient because of the journey."** (Nu 21:4+) This led to God's judgment and [the episode of the bronze serpent](#) (Nu 21:5-9+) As Israel came closer to Moab (Nu 21:20+) they engaged and defeated [Sihon king of the Amorites](#) and [Og king of Bashan](#) (Nu 21:22-35+).

Numbers 22:1+ "Then (AFTER DEFEAT OF [Sihon](#) AND [Og](#)) the sons of Israel journeyed, and camped in the plains of Moab ([see map](#) beyond the Jordan opposite Jericho." This is where Moses gave his discourses to the second generation of Israel to prepare them to enter the Promised Land. The first generation had completely perished (Dt 2:14-16+).

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**Bob Utley** - There are several "wildernesses" connected to the exodus. SPECIAL TOPIC: THE WILDERNESSES OF THE EXODUS

1. Wilderness of Shur—in northeast Egypt (e.g., Exod. 15:22)
  2. Wilderness of Paran—central Sinai Peninsula (e.g., Gen. 21:21; Num. 10:12; 12:16; 13:3, 26)
  3. Wilderness of Sin—southern Sinai Peninsula (e.g., Exod. 16:1; 17:1; Num. 33:11, 12, also called "wilderness of Sinai," e.g., Exod. 19:1, 2; Num. 1:1, 19; 3:4; 9:1, 5)
  4. Wilderness of Zin—southern Canaan (e.g., Num. 13:21; 20:1; 27:14; 33:36; 34:3; Deut. 32:51)
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## Deuteronomy 2:2 "And the LORD spoke to me, saying,

After 38 years of wandering God again speaks to Moses with new instructions for the nation.

**And the LORD spoke to me, saying** - The phrase **LORD spoke to me** is found in Dt 2:1, 2, 17 and the related phrase **LORD said to me** is found in Deut. 1:42; Deut. 2:9; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:26; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:28; Deut. 9:12; Deut. 10:1; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 18:17. **The LORD** speaks directly to Moses just as he later does to the prophets, as He did for example to Jeremiah (Jer 1:7, 9, 12, 14; 3:6, 11; 11:6, 9, etc). Deuteronomy is repeated described as God's personal revelation to Moses. In addition to this direct revelation to Moses, Yahweh directed Israel by the movement of the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) (cf Tony Garland's [The Abiding Presence of God](#)) and also by the use of the [Urim and Thummim](#) (by the High Priest).

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**The Other Side of the Unknown** - On October 14, 1947, Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier in Bell Laboratories' experimental rocket plane, the Bell X-1. The plane, painted a bright orange, was essentially a large engine with a couple of stubby wings attached, and it was notoriously hard to control. In order to conserve fuel, it was taken aloft by a specially designed B-29 bomber and dropped before firing its engine. The penetration of the sound barrier wasn't supposed to happen that October day. The program was set up to approach the speed of sound very gradually, and Yeager's goal on the occasion was to fly at .97 Mach, 97 percent of the speed of sound. Yeager, like the other test pilots in the program, knew that unpredictable things happened the closer one flew to the sound barrier. The plane would typically begin to vibrate. The X-1 was not a particularly stable plane to begin with, and Yeager began the flight with an arm that had been injured earlier in the week. It took several seconds simply to get control of things once he had been dropped from the mother plane. When the X-1 had only 30 percent of its fuel remaining, Yeager put the plane into a shallow dive and began to increase speed. As he approached his target velocity, the vibrating increased to the point that it was difficult even to read the instruments on what people in the program had come to call the "orange beast." Those strange vibrations had caused some experts to conclude that penetration of the sound barrier was impossible. They felt that unknown forces would simply tear apart any plane that got too close to breaking through the speed of sound. Then, just when it seemed that the plane could take no more, the vibrating stopped. Yeager glanced at his air speed gauge and noted that he had just passed 1.0 Mach. For about twenty seconds, he flew at supersonic speed for the first time in human history, and he described it as though gliding on glass. All the fears and uncertainties had given way to victory over the sound barrier.

Any worthy objective has a way of generating fear. When Israel set out to conquer the promised land, their fears were evident. They didn't know what would happen once they crossed the Jordan River and entered the land. They knew that aggressive peoples lived within the area that God had promised to give them, and they knew that those peoples would resist their invasion. They had to overcome their fears if they were to conquer the land and begin to live in it. In the same way, Christians must move past their fears when dealing with each challenge to spiritual growth. They dare not shrink away from dealing with temptation and bad habits because they are afraid of the turbulence that will be a part of their lives when they go to war with them. (Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy)

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## Deuteronomy 2:3 'You have circled this mountain long enough. Now **turn north**,

- **long enough:** De 2:7,14 1:6
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**GO NORTH  
MY PEOPLE**

**You have circled this mountain long enough** - ESV - "You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough." The idea of circling emphasizes that Israel never entered into the land of Edom. Remember that all during their wilderness journey God remained faithful to lead them and provide for their needs (Dt 2:7<sup>±</sup>). The new generation needed to remember His faithfulness.

**THOUGHT** - If God had been faithful to the nation even as He was carrying out His judgment on the first generation, how could He not be just as faithful in carrying out His promise to the second generation to bring them into the promised land?

**John Maxwell** quips "they didn't know where to go. All they have been doing is just going around and around Mount Seir. It was sort of a ring-around-the-rosy; round and round they go. Finally God says that He is getting tired of that. He probably said, "Let's quit

this round and round business.” I’m afraid many Christians are doing that very same thing. Because they fail to take God at His Word, they are just marking time, and are on a merry-go-round of activity.” ([Preacher’s Commentary](#))

**Now turn (panah) north** - Refer to the [map above](#) noting "Mount Seir" which was the region south and east of Kadesh-Barnea. Jehovah is clearly guiding the rebellious nation and commands them now to turn north which would be toward the land of Canaan, the Promised Land which they would enter from the eastern border crossing the Jordan River.

**John Trapp** - Thus God’s word was their director unto all places, and in all actions. In which respect these histories of holy Scripture excel all human histories in the world, as is well observed.

**Utley** on the verb **turn** - Like so many Hebrew terms, this one has a concrete, literal meaning (e.g., here) and a developed, metaphorical meaning. “Turn” is the Hebrew term often translated “repent” (e.g., 2 Ki 17:13; 2 Chr. 30:6; Isa. 44:22; Jer. 3:11–4:2; Hosea 14:1).

**THOUGHT** - God is faithful in guiding His people. Throughout this section of Scripture, God is continually guiding the people. Even the wandering has a sense of purpose. A Christian’s life is in the hands of God as a bow and arrow are in the hands of an archer. God is aiming at something the saint cannot see; He stretches and we strain, and at times we say I cannot stand any more. But God goes on stretching until His purpose is accomplished—then He lets the arrow fly. God has a purpose in every zig-zag of Israel’s journey. (John Maxwell)

**Deuteronomy 2:4 and command the people, saying, "You will pass through the territory of your brothers the sons of Esau who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful;**

- **You will pass through:** De 23:7 Nu 20:14-21 Ob 1:10-13
- **they :** Ex 15:15 Nu 22:3,4 24:14-18
- **So be very careful;** Mt 5:16 Lu 12:15 Eph 5:15 Php 2:15 Col 4:5
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Genesis 36:6-9 Then Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his goods which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and **went to another land away from his brother Jacob**. 7 For their property had become too great for them to live together, and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock. 8 So **Esau lived in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom**. 9 These then are the records of the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the significance of Edom in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Edomites? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Numbers 20:14-21+ From Kadesh Moses then sent messengers to the king of Edom: “Thus your brother Israel has said, ‘You know all the hardship that has befallen us; 15 that our fathers went down to Egypt, and we stayed in Egypt a long time, and the Egyptians treated us and our fathers badly. 16 ‘But when we cried out to the LORD, He heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out from Egypt; now behold, we are at Kadesh, a town on the edge of your territory. 17 **‘Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or through vineyard; we will not even drink water from a well. We will go along the [king’s highway](#), not turning to the right or left, until we pass through your territory.’** 18 Edom, however, said to him, **“You shall not pass through us, or I will come out with the sword against you.”** 19 Again, the sons of Israel said to him, **“We will go up by the highway(SEE [KING’S HIGHWAY](#) BELOW - CLICK TO ENLARGE), and if I and my livestock do drink any of your water, then I will pay its price. Let me only pass through on my feet, nothing else.”** 20 But he said, **“You shall not pass through.” And Edom came out against him with a heavy force and with a strong hand** (EDOM BLOCKED ISRAEL’S PATH WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN THE SHORTEST DISTANCE TO THE [KING’S HIGHWAY](#) FROM WHICH THEY COULD HAVE GONE NORTH TOWARD MOAB AND AN EASTERN ENTRANCE INTO THE PROMISED LAND). 21 **Thus Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.**



## ISRAEL TO PASS PEACEFULLY THROUGH FEARFUL ESAU

**And command the people, saying, "You will pass through the territory of your brothers the sons of Esau who live in Seir-** Note Jehovah is guiding them even though they had rebelled. Dear rebellious believer (we all rebel from time to time), do not miss the lovingkindness and grace of God to still be willing to guide us step by step (Are you listening? Play Rich Mullin's [Step by Step](#)). This route is depicted in [map](#) with the **orange line** on the eastern side of **Edom**. Apparently even though on the eastern side of Edom, as they travelled "though on the fringes of the desert, were still in Edomite territory." (Merrill) Numbers 21:4+ adds "they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, **to go around the land of Edom.**"

**And they will be afraid of you -** (See [related passages](#) above) It was Edom's fear that led to them denying Israel access to the **King's Highway** (see Map above) which went through Edom. It is interesting to note that previously Jacob had been fearful of Esau (Ge 32:3). Now the "[tables are turned!](#)"

This declaration by Jehovah is actually a fulfillment of the prophecy in Miriam's Song of Deliverance in praise to God for Israel's Red Sea deliverance. Moses' recorded these words ""Then the chiefs of **Edom** were dismayed; The leaders of **Moab**, trembling grips them; **All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.**" (Ex 15:15+).

**So be very careful -** NET = "Watch yourselves carefully." NLT = "The Edomites will feel threatened, so be careful." The context helps understand why they are to guard themselves carefully -- they might be tempted to contend with Esau over land, but that must be avoided. Fallen flesh is greedy and by nature wants more. So Israel is warned and to their credit, they heeded the warning and restrained themselves.

**Utley on be very careful -** This phrase, in various forms, is used several times in Deuteronomy (cf. Dt 2:4; 4:9, 15, 23; 6:12; 8:11; 11:16; 12:13, 19, 30; 15:9; 24:8). It implies, "keep your mind alert," "watch what you are doing," "think clearly about the implications of your actions."

**Be very careful** (guard, observe, watch) ([08104](#)) **shamar** means to keep, watch, preserve, to guard, to be careful, to watch over, to watch carefully over, to be on one's guard. The first use of **shamar** in Ge 2:15 is instructive as Adam was placed in the garden (a perfect environment) and was commanded to "**keep**" it which in the [Septuagint](#) is translated with **phulasso** (which is used to translate many of the OT uses of **shamar**) which means to guard like a military sentinel would at his post. Clearly Adam did not do a good job at "keeping" the garden safe from intruders! And because of this failure he was cast out of the garden and angels stationed to "**guard** (Lxx = **phulasso**) the way to the tree of life" so that he would not eat of it (Ge 3:24). After Cain murdered Abel he answered God "Am I my brother's **keeper**?" (Ge 3:24)

**Vine -** Shamar means "to keep" in the sense of "tending" and taking care of....to keep" in the sense of "watching over" or giving attention to...."to keep" in the sense of saving or "retaining."

**Shamar** is clearly a key verb in Deuteronomy - Deut. 2:4; Deut. 4:2; Deut. 4:6; Deut. 4:9; Deut. 4:15; Deut. 4:23; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:10; Deut. 5:12; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:3; Deut. 6:12; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 6:25; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 10:13; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:16; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 11:32; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:13; Deut. 12:19; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 12:30; Deut. 12:32; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 15:9; Deut. 16:1; Deut. 16:12; Deut. 17:10; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 23:9; Deut. 23:23; Deut. 24:8; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 26:18; Deut. 27:1; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 29:9; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 33:9

**Bob Utley** makes an excellent point that would be easy to miss - Throughout this chapter there are several noteworthy phrases connected to **God's sovereignty**: "I will not give" (Dt 2:4, 9, 19); "I have given" (Dt 2:5, 9); "the LORD gave" (Dt 2:12); "the LORD our God is giving to us" (Dt 2:29); "God delivered him over to us" (Dt 2:33) This chapter shows the sovereignty of YHWH in international boundaries (cf. Dt 32:8; Neh. 9:22), because each of these phrases stresses that YHWH is the one Who gave the land to certain people groups to inherit. This chapter shows that YHWH did not exclusively give land to Israel, but He gave some to every nation. Some lost their land because of their sins (e.g., Ge 15:16) and Israel also lost her land for a period (i.e., Assyrian and Babylonian exiles) because of her sin. This is asserting that YHWH is the universal God. In a day of **polytheism**, this is a wonderful statement of **monotheism**. There

is one and only one God, Dt. 6:4–6. He is the One who gives the land even to the Edomites, Moabites, Amorites, etc. (esp. Deut. 32:8 in the Septuagint [LXX]).

**Deuteronomy 2:5 do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.**

- **even as little as a footstep** Ac 7:5
- **because:** De 32:8 Ge 36:8 Jos 24:4 2Ch 20:10-12 Jer 27:5 Da 4:25,32 Ac 17:26
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 23:7; 8 ("You shall not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother; you shall not detest an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land.

(23:8) "The sons of the third generation who are born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 32:8 "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel.

Joshua 24:4 (JEHOVAH SPEAKING) 'To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and to Esau I gave Mount Seir to possess it; but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.

Acts 17:24-26+ (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER NATIONAL BOUNDARIES) "The God Who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; 26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and **the boundaries of their habitation**,

2 Chronicles 20:6 and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are **You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations?** Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You.

## NO FRATERNAL FIGHTING

About 400 years before this Jacob and Esau were brothers and here God says their descendants are to have no "family feud!"

**Do not provoke** ([garah](#)) **them** - "Do not be hostile toward them" (NET) ESV = "Do not contend" Jacob (Israel) had begun life in a sense by "contending" with Esau being born "with his hand holding on to Esau's heel" (which gave him the name "Jacob" or "heel catcher").

**For** - Term of explanation. This one is easy to assess.

**I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep** - God made it crystal clear that the Israelites were not free to take any land they wanted (or possessions of the people in the land). God did not want Israel to fall short of the best by settling for less. They were strong and might have defeated Edom, but they might also have been satisfied with that land and not seek God's best for their life.

**THOUGHT** - God does that in our life also when He keeps us from possessing or accomplishing something (someone) that might be less than His good and acceptable and perfect will for us. He Alone sees the beginning from the end. He may keep us from the "good" so that we don't miss His "best!" Perhaps you have had the experience of God keeping you from something (or someone) and you are disappointed. You need to remember that "the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly." (Ps 84:11<sup>+</sup>).

Another reason for the command to leave Edom and Moab alone is that God does not want Israel to settle down and covet land that is not theirs. He will not let them settle for less than His promise to them!

**Because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession** ([yerushshah](#)) - (Joshua 24:4) - While Jacob's birthright was Canaan, the Promised Land, Esau (Edom) had his own possession and Israel was forbidden to contend for it. The same divine declaration

was made regarding **Moab** (Dt 2:9) and **Ammon** (Dt 2:19). God's sovereignty to give Esau their land, would have been a strong encouragement to Israel that they would conquer the land He had sovereignly decreed was to be their land. In other words, if God honored the right of these pagan nations (Edom, Moab, Ammon) to possess their land, how much more would He honor His covenant promises given to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

**J Vernon McGee** - This is in the country where the rock-hewn city of Petra stands to this day. God clearly tells Israel that they cannot touch the possession of Esau. There is a lesson here for the nations today. God has set the bounds of the nations (Acts 17:26). Most wars are fought because the boundaries of nations are not respected. Another lesson to learn is that God always keeps His promises. Even to a people such as the people of Esau, God remains true to His promise.

**Constable** has an interesting additional comment - God's care of Moab (v. 9) and Ammon (v. 19) as well as Edom (v. 5) is traceable to the source of these nations in Abraham's family. They were partakers in the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant.

**Provoke** (01624)(**garah**) means engage in strife with, stir up strife. Note uses in Proverbs referring to strife (Pr 15:18, Pr 28:25, Pr 29:22). In the reflexive (hithpael -- as in Dt 2:5) it means to stir up one's self against against peoples (Dt. 2:5, 19), a king (2 Ki. 14:10; 2 Chr. 25:19); a nation (so as to provoke war) (Dt. 2:9, 24; Da 11:10, 25).

**Strong** - properly to grate, i.e. (figurative) to anger :- contend, meddle, stir up, strive.

**Bruce Waltke** - The root is often used in connection with warfare. Thus Israel was commanded to involve himself in battle with Sihon, the Amorite, so that the Amorites should be dispossessed and his land taken by the Israelites (Deut. 2:24). Warfare is also explicitly in view in Israel's relation with Moab at the time of the Conquest (Deut. 2:9), and implied in its relation with Edom and Ammon (Deut. 2:5, 19). However, Israel was prohibited from involving himself in battle with Edom, Moab and Ammon because they were blood relatives. Involvement in war is also the purpose of Amaziah of Judah in his challenge to Jehoash of Israel, that Amaziah (per Jehoash) might increase his territory (2 Kings 14:9-10). Likewise the uses in Daniel 11 clearly point to warfare: in this case between Egypt and Syria (Daniel 11:10, 25). ([Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

**Complete Biblical Library** - This verb occurs only in the Piel (intensive) and Hithpael (reflexive) stems. In the Piel stem, it means "to stir up strife." All Piel occurrences are found in Proverbs. Anger and pride are the source of strife: "A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention" (Prov. 15:18); and "He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the Lord will be prospered" (Pr 28:25); again "An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression" (Pr 29:22). In the Hithpael stem (REFLEXIVE), it means "to engage in (mutual) strife," often with resulting hostile action. When Moses would have led Israel through the land of Edom, the Lord commanded Israel not to battle (engage in strife) with them (Deut. 2:5; 2:9). Likewise, He commanded them not to fight with the Ammonites (2:19). On the other hand, in regard to Sihon, king of the Amorites, they were to engage him in battle (2:24) and defeat him. When Amaziah, king of Judah, challenged Jehoash, king of Israel, to war, Jehoash warned him: "why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall?" (2 Ki. 14:10 = 2 Chr. 25:19). The prophet Jeremiah pronounced judgment on the Babylonians, "because you have battled against the Lord" (Jer. 50:24). Further, "Those who forsake the Law praise the wicked, but such as keep the Law battle with them" (Prov. 28:4). This suggests that law abiding citizens should not be passive toward lawbreakers, but should see to it that they are brought to court. Daniel foretold that the king of the North would provoke war with the king of the South twice in Dan. 11:10.

**Garah** - 13x in 13v - contend(1), engaged in conflict(1), mobilize(2), provoke(5), stirs(3), strive(1), wage war(1).  
- Deut. 2:5; Deut. 2:9; Deut. 2:19; Deut. 2:24; 2 Ki. 14:10; 2 Chr. 25:19; Prov. 15:18; Prov. 28:4; Prov. 28:25; Prov. 29:22; Jer. 50:24; Dan. 11:10; Dan. 11:25

**Deuteronomy 2:6 "You shall buy food from them with money so that you may eat, and you shall also purchase water from them with money so that you may drink."**

- De 2:28-29 Nu 20:19 Mt 7:12 Ro 12:17 2Th 3:7,8
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Deuteronomy 2:28-29 'You will sell me food for money so that I may eat, and give me water for money so that I

may drink, only let me pass through on foot, 29 just as the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I cross over the Jordan into the land which the LORD our God is giving to us.'

Deuteronomy 23:3-4 "No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the LORD; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the LORD, 4 because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

**You shall buy food from them with money so that you may eat, and you shall also purchase water from them with money so that you may drink** - This is an amazing passage. Israel had been 38 years in the wilderness and yet God says they will have funds to purchase food and water. Amazing provision of God (explained in next verse).

It is interesting to ponder why Israel would have needed to buy food for they were still be supplied with [manna from Heaven](#). (Manna continued to be supplied until the day after their first Passover celebration in the Promised Land = Josh 5:10-12)

**Grant** adds that "It is also noteworthy that they were commanded to purchase water. The rock that was smitten in Horeb did not provide water for the whole journey. When Paul wrote "for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor 10:4) he was not indicating that the rock, or the water, (LITERALLY) followed them, but that the Lord Jesus Christ followed them providing for their needs along the way. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Jack Deere** suggests that "This likelihood of war may have been because of the scarcity of rainfall in that area (only about five inches annually). A large contingent of people moving through Seir could easily deplete the Edomites' store of water. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**David Guzik** - God commanded Israel to treat the Edomites with respect, even though they could have dominated them as a stronger nation. How we treat those weaker than ourselves is always a good measure of character. When we have the capability to dominate or abuse others and do not, it shows that we have good character. For some of these reasons, God commanded Israel to treat the weaker nation of Edom well. ([Deuteronomy 2](#))

**Meredith Kline** - The Numbers passage does not say that the Edomites refused to sell provisions to the Israelites once it was clear that Israel was content to go around Edom. Moreover, Deut 2:6 and 29 do not clearly state that Edom did sell provisions to Israel. For even Dt 2:29a possibly refers only to the last clause in verse 28 (cf. Dt 2:29b with Dt 23:3-4). Hence there is no contradiction between Numbers and Deuteronomy on this matter. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**Deuteronomy 2:7 "For the LORD your God has blessed you in all that you have done; He has known your wanderings through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have not lacked a thing."**

- **blessed:** Ge 12:2 24:35 26:12 30:27 39:5 Ps 90:17
- **He has known:** Job 23:10 Ps 1:6 31:7 Joh 10:27
- **these forty:** De 8:2-4 29:5 Ne 9:21 Lu 22:35
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OUR FAITHFUL GOD EVEN IN WILDERNESS WANDERINGS

**For** - Term of explanation - Explains how they would be able to purchase food and water. God had provided for them in the wilderness wanderings.

**The LORD your God has blessed you in all that you have done** - The ESV and NIV are more literal = "God has blessed you in all the work of your hands." (Dt 2:7ESV) Work of your hands is mentioned 5 other times in Deuteronomy - Dt 14:29; 16:15; 24:19; 28:12; 30:9. This is an amazing statement given their disobedience at Kadesh which made God angry. And it should be a great encouragement to the next generation that if Yahweh had done this to rebels in the desert wanderings, would He do any less for them when they obeyed and went into the land!

**He has known your wanderings through this great wilderness** - "He has watched your every step" (NLT). You may be in the wilderness and wonder if God sees. Read this verse again that you might lay hold of the truth that God sees you. God knows your situation.

**Related Resource:**

- [Why was Israel cursed with forty years of wilderness wandering? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**These forty years the LORD your God has been with you**- The 40 years include the first 2 arriving at and camping around Mt Sinai, then the 38 years around Kadesh Barnea. And don't miss this incredible testimony to God's goodness, for He has been faithful to bestow 40 years of blessing on an unfaithful people. As **Richard C. Halverson** said "There is nothing you can do to make God love you more. There is nothing you can do to make God love you less. His love is unconditional, impartial, everlasting, infinite, and perfect!" Donald Snow says "You may not know where God is, but He always knows where you are."

There is an Eye that never sleeps,  
Beneath the wind at night.  
There is an Ear that never shuts,  
When sinks the beam of light.

There is an Arm that never tires,  
When human strengths decay.  
There is a Love that never fails,  
When earthly loves decay.

-- George Matheson

**John Maxwell** - The people who had insulted God by not trusting Him wanted for nothing! The Lord gave them food, clothing, and protection. He knew their path in the wilderness and for forty years He took care of them. The words of "[How Firm a Foundation](#)" seem appropriate in this setting:

Fear not, I am with Thee; O be not dismayed,  
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee; and cause thee to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

**You have not lacked a thing** - God is a generous Giver. He does not withhold what we need to live. The second generation needed to keep this vital truth in mind, the truth that Yahweh had provided for them in the wilderness, which should serve to encourage them that He would also provide for them as they prepared to enter the Promised Land.

**THOUGHT** - Spiritually Peter wrote "seeing that His divine power **has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2 Peter 1:3-4+, cf Eph 1:3+) Paul wrote "And my God will supply **all your needs** according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Php 4:19+) "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich." (2 Cor 8:9) "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed." (2 Cor 9:8).

**J Vernon McGee** adds - Here is the overall view of their forty years. God knew all their trials and troubles because God had walked with them all those years. Moses could honestly say, "Thou hast lacked nothing." How wonderful! It is the same as when David looked back over his life and said, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Ps. 23:1). How could he say that? Because he had never wanted! God does not give us the promise of the luxuries of life, but God provides the necessities of life. He will do that for you and for me, also.

[\*\*O Love, that wilt not let me go,\*\*](#)

I rest my weary soul in Thee;  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.

O Light, that followest all my way,  
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;  
My heart restores its borrowed ray,  
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day  
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy, that seekest me through pain,

I cannot close my heart to Thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
And feel the promise is not vain  
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross, that liftest up my head,  
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;  
I lay in dust life's glory dead,  
And from the ground there blossoms red  
Life that shall endless be.

-- George Matheson

**Deuteronomy 2:8 "So we passed beyond our brothers the sons of Esau, who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road, away from Elath and from Ezion-geber. And we turned and passed through by the way of the wilderness of Moab.**

- **So we passed beyond** : Nu 20:20,21 Judges 11:18
- **Elath**: 1Ki 9:26, Eloth, 2Ki 14:22 16:6
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **GOD'S PAST KINDNESSES EVEN IN JUDGMENT!**

**So we passed beyond our brothers the sons of Esau, who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road, away from Elath and from Ezion-geber** - Elath and Ezion-geber are both in the region of the Gulf of Aqaba in the Red Sea in the territory of Edom. They had passed through that area years before on their way from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea (Nu 33:35-36+).

**NET Note** - **Elat** was a port city at the head of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, that is, the Gulf of Aqaba (or Gulf of Eilat). Solomon (1 Kgs 9:28), Uzziah (2 Kgs 14:22), and Ahaz (2 Kgs 16:5–6) used it as a port but eventually it became permanently part of Edom. It may be what is known today as Tell el-Kheleifeh. Modern Eilat is located further west along the northern coast. See G. Pratico, "Nelson Glueck's 1938–1940 Excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh: A Reappraisal," BASOR 259 (1985): 1–32. **Ezion Geber**. A place near the Gulf of Aqaba, Ezion-geber must be distinguished from Elat (cf. 1 Kgs 9:26–28; 2 Chr 8:17–18). It was, however, also a port city (1 Kgs 22:48–49). It may be the same as the modern site Gezirat al-Fauran, 15 mi (24 km) south-southwest from Tell el-Kheleifeh.

**And we turned ([panah](#)) and passed through by the way of the wilderness of Moab**- See the [map above](#) for Israel's journey north from the Gulf of Aqaba toward the east of Edom and then through Moab.

**Utlely on the way of the wilderness of Moab**- This desert road is parallel to "the [King's Highway](#)," but to the east. The southern end passes through Edom and is known as "**the way of the wilderness of Edom**" (cf. 2 Ki. 3:8). The [King's Highway](#) and this smaller desert road meet at Rabbath-bene-ammon, which is to the east of Jericho.

**Deuteronomy 2:9 "Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot as a possession.**

- **Do not harass Moab**, Nu 22:4 Judges 11:17 2Ch 20:10
- **Ar**: De 2:5 Nu 21:15,28
- **the sons of Lot** : De 2:19 Ge 19:36,37 Ps 83:8
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Genesis 19:36; 37 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son, and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day.



**Then** - Whenever you spot a "then" pause and ask "When is then?" It will slow you down, help you understand the context and facilitate meditation. **Then** usually marks an something occurring in sequence. As they begin to enter Moab Jehovah speaks a word of admonition so that Israel does not get any ideas about taking some of the land from the Moabites. Once again we see God's faithfulness in leading and guiding Israel step by step as they approached the Promised Land. As an aside Moses review does not mention any of the events related to [Balaam](#) and the [Moabite King Balak](#) described in Numbers 22:1-25:18+ (culminating in [Israel's sin at Baal-Peor](#) which Moses does allude to in Dt 4:3+).

**The LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor provoke (garah) them to war** - The Moabites were the Israelites' relatives through Lot and Esau and God had promised the land of Moab to Lot and his descendants (cf Ge 19:37).

**Harass** (besiege, attack) (06696)([tsûr/sur](#)) basically means to enclose and then to surround and besiege. It can refer to attacking, putting under duress, harassing or oppressing a people or nation (Dt 2:19, Dt 20:12 and Dt 20:19). It described the military practice of laying siege, usually to a city, by surrounding it and cutting off its supplies.

**For** (term of explanation) - Why Israel was not to harass or provoke Moab.

**I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot as a possession-** If Yahweh would not give Israel any of their land, they had better be warned and be careful not to try in on their own. Israel had attempted to take the Promised Land without God's presence and it cost them dearly. (Dt 1:41-44+).

**Ar** was the capital city of Moab on the "northern border of Moab on southern bank of Arnon River **see map above**) (Nu 21:15 , Nu 21:28). Israel celebrated its defeat with a proverbial taunt song (Nu 21:28). God refused to let Israel occupy **Ar**, having designated it for Lot's descendants, the Moabites (Deut 2:9 ). Israel could only pass through Ar (Deuteronomy 2:18), evidently the region controlled by the city-state. **Ar** provided provisions for the Israelites as they passed through on the last legs of the wilderness wandering (Deuteronomy 2:29):' (Holman Bible Atlas)

**NET Note on Ar** - Ar was a Moabite city on the Arnon River east of the Dead Sea. It is mentioned elsewhere in the "Book of the Wars of Yahweh" (Num 21:15; cf. 21:28; Isa 15:1). Here it is synonymous with the whole land of Moab.

**NET Note on sons of Lot** - The descendants of Lot. Following the destruction of the cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, as God's judgment, Lot fathered two sons by his two daughters, namely, Moab and Ammon (Gen 19:30–38). Thus, these descendants of Lot in and around Ar were the Moabites.

**Possession** (03425)([yerushshah](#) from [yarash](#) = to posses) means possession, inheritance. It described the right to inherit the land. It could be an inheritance given or to a possession taken by force (or both). Reuben, Gad and half tribe of Manasseh received land east of the Jordan as a "**possession**" from God (Dt. 3:20; cf. Josh. 1:15; 12:6f). The descendants of Lot settled in Moab (Dt. 2:9), and in Ammon which God had given them as their possession (Dt 2:19), even as He had given did the descendants of Esau the area of Mount Seir (aka Edom - Dt. 2:5). After the civil war involving the tribe of Benjamin, the leaders of Israel were concerned that the depleted tribe not lose an inheritance; they planned "a possession" for Benjamin, according to Judg. 21:17. During the Babylonian siege of Judah, Jeremiah bought at Anathoth a parcel of land to which he retained the right of "possession" (Jer. 32:8). David declares that all those who fear God's name receive "an inheritance" (Ps. 61:5).

It is interesting to note that about 400 years later **King Jehoshaphat** used this same word ([yerushshah](#)) in an to appeal to the Lord praying "Now behold, the sons of **Ammon** and **Moab** and **Mount Seir**, whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them) see how they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your **possession** which You have given us as an inheritance." (2 Chr 20:10-11) Note how he appeals first indirectly to the Abrahamic Covenant (which promised the land to Israel as a permanent possession) and also appealed to the LORD Himself referring to the land as Your possession! A good prayer!

**Yerushshah** - 14x in 12v - inheritance(2), own(1), possession(11) - Deut. 2:5; Deut. 2:9; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:19; Deut. 3:20; Jos. 1:15; Jos. 12:6; Jos. 12:7; Jdg. 21:17; 2 Chr. 20:11; Ps. 61:5; Jer. 32:8

**Deuteronomy 2:10 (The Emim lived there formerly, a people as great, numerous, and tall as the Anakim.**

- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LARGE PEOPLE IN THE PAST

Most of the Bible versions interpret Dt 2:10-12 as parenthetical passages essentially representing an "editorial comment" (and thus the parenthesis sign added to the beginning of verse 10 and end of verse 12). One of the main points of this parenthetical statement is to show Israel had God had been faithful to His promise to give the land to Moab, even giving them victory over giant peoples (Emim, Anakites, Rephaites). If He had done this for Edom to fulfill His promise, He would do it for Israel to fulfill His promise.

**The Emim lived there formerly, a people as great, numerous, and tall as the Anakim** - The giant people known as Emims were earlier inhabitants of Moab. The Emim are also called Rephaim (Dt 2:11). The only other mention in Scripture is in Genesis 14:5 "In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim."

**NET Note on Emim** - Emites. These giant people, like the Anakites (Deut 1:28), were also known as Rephaites (v. 11). They appear elsewhere in the narrative of the invasion of the kings of the east where they are said to have lived around Shaveh Kiriathaim, perhaps 9 to 11 mi (15 to 18 km) east of the north end of the Dead Sea (Gen 14:5).

**Emim** - (Hebrews Eynim', אֵיִמִּים , terrors; Sept. Ο μυχ οι and Ο μπειν; Auth. Vers. "Emims"), a numerous and warlike tribe of the ancient Canaanites, of gigantic stature, defeated by Chedorlaomer and his allies in the plain of Kiriathaim; they occupied, in the time of Abraham, the country east of the Jordan, afterwards possessed by the Moabites (Ge 14:5; Dt 2:10-11). It would appear, from a comparison of Ge 14:5-7 with Deut 2:10-12; Deut 2:20-23, that the whole country east of Jordan was, in primitive times, held by a **race of giants**, all probably of the same stock, comprehending the **Rephaim** on the north, next the **Zuzim**, after them the **Emim**, and then the Horim on the south; and that afterwards the kingdom of Bashan embraced the territories of the first; the country of the Ammonites, the second; that of the Moabites, the third; while Edom took in the mountains of the Horim. The whole of them. were attacked and pillaged by the Eastern kings who destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. (See REPHAIM). The Emim were related to the Anakim, and were generally called by the same name; but their conquerors, the Moabites, termed them Emimthat is, "Terrible men" (Deuteronomy 2:11) — most probably on account of their fierce aspect

**Anakim** - 9v - Deut. 1:28; Deut. 2:10; Deut. 2:11; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 9:2; Jos. 11:21; Jos. 11:22; Jos. 14:12; Jos. 14:15

**The Expositor's Bible Commentary** - The parenthetical, explanatory nature of vv.10-12 and vv.20-23 has been cited as evidence that these are later additions rather than part of Moses' original speech. However, these speeches in Deuteronomy were made subsequent to the conquest of Transjordan (Dt 1:3-4), which (in Dt 3:20) is called the "possession" of the two and a half tribes. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

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### QUESTION - [Who were the Anakim / Anakites?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Anakim/Anakites were a formidable race of giant, warlike people (Deuteronomy 2:10, 21; 9:2) who occupied the lands of southern Israel near Hebron before the arrival of the Israelites (Joshua 15:13). The Anakim's ancestry has been traced back to Anak, the son of Arba (Joshua 15:13; 21:11), who at that time was regarded as the "greatest man among the Anakim" (Joshua 14:15).

The name "Anakim" most likely means "long-necked," i.e., "tall." The Hebrews thought them to be descendants of the Nephilim, a powerful race who dominated the pre-Flood world (Genesis 6:4; Numbers 13:33). When the twelve Israelite spies returned from exploring the Promised Land, they gave a frightening report of "people great and tall" whom they identified as the sons of Anak (Deuteronomy 9:2). The Israelites, seized with fear and believing themselves to be mere "grasshoppers . . . in their sight" (Numbers 13:33), rebelled against God (Deuteronomy 1:26-28) and refused to enter the land God had promised them.

The Israelites were exhorted by Moses (Deuteronomy 1:19) not to fear the Anakim, but they refused to trust God's promises (Deuteronomy 1:32-33). As a result, God became angry (Deuteronomy 1:34-39) and prohibited the "evil generation" from entering the Promised Land; Joshua and Caleb were the only exceptions (Deuteronomy 1:35-36). Because of their fear of the Anakim and their rebellion against God, the children of Israel were forced to wander for another 38 years in the wilderness.

During the conquest of Canaan, Joshua expelled the Anakim from the hill country, and Caleb finally drove them out of Hebron completely. However, a small remnant found refuge in the cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (Joshua 11:22). Many Bible scholars

speculate that the Anakim's descendants were the Philistine giants David encountered (2 Samuel 21:15-22), including Goliath of Gath (1 Samuel 17:4-7). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Deuteronomy 2:11 Like the Anakim, they are also regarded as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim.**

- **Anakim:** De 1:28 9:2 Nu 13:22,28,33
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LARGE PEOPLE REPHAIM = EMIM

**Like the Anakim** (see [above](#)), **they are also regarded as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim**- Rephaim is the general title which includes those known as Emim (fearful) by the Moabites and Zamzummim to the Ammonites. Some of them found refuge among the Philistines, and were still existing in the days of David. We know nothing of their origin.

**NET Note on Rephaites** - The earliest reference to this infamous giant race is, again, in the story of the invasion of the eastern kings (Gen 14:5). They lived around Ashteroth Karnaim, probably modern Tell Ashtarah (cf. Deut 1:4), in the Bashan plateau east of the Sea of Galilee. Og, king of Bashan, was a Rephaite (Deut 3:11; Josh 12:4; 13:12). Other texts speak of them or their kinfolk in both Transjordan (Deut 2:20; 3:13) and Canaan ( Josh 11:21–22; 14:12, 15; 15:13–14; Judg 1:20; 1 Sam 17:4 ; 1 Chr 20:4–8). They also appear in extra-biblical literature, especially in connection with the city state of Ugarit. See C. L'Heureux, "Ugaritic and Biblical Rephaim," HTR 67 (1974): 265-74.

**Rephaim** 17v - Gen. 14:5; Gen. 15:20; Deut. 2:11; Deut. 2:20; Deut. 3:11; Deut. 3:13; Jos. 12:4; Jos. 13:12; Jos. 15:8; Jos. 17:15; Jos. 18:16; 2 Sam. 5:18; 2 Sam. 5:22; 2 Sam. 23:13; 1 Chr. 11:15; 1 Chr. 14:9; Isa. 17:5

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### QUESTION - [Who were the Rephaim?](#)

**ANSWER** - There are several passages in the Old Testament that speak of the Rephaim (or Rephaites), and the context describes them as giants. The name of these people literally means "terrible ones."

The Hebrew word Rephaim has two distinct meanings: first, in poetic literature it refers to departed spirits whose dwelling place was Sheol. It is a figurative description of the dead, similar to our concept of a ghost. The second meaning of Rephaim is "a mighty people with tall stature who lived in Canaan." The word doesn't seem to be ethno-centric like "Jew" or "Egyptian" but is more of a descriptive term. This second meaning will be the focus of this article.

The first reference to the Rephaim is Genesis 14:5, when the Rephaim, Zuzim and Emim people were defeated in a battle with Kedorlaomer and his allies. When the Israelites first approached the Promised Land after the Exodus from Egypt, they were afraid to enter the land because it was filled with "giants" (the word used in Numbers 13:33 is Nephilim), the sons of Anak. Giants were widely scattered through Canaan, but were known by different local names, including Rephaim, Zuzim, Emim, and Anakim. Deuteronomy 2:20–21 says the Rephaim were strong and tall, like the Anakites. Og, king of Bashan, was described as the last of the Rephaim in his land (Deuteronomy 3:11), and his bed was thirteen feet long and six feet wide.

Is it possible that the Rephaim were literal giants? The Septuagint uses the Greek words gigas and titanes (the source of the English titan) to translate these and other verses, so the ancient Jews certainly considered them to be giants. They are described generally as being between 7 and 10 feet tall and are called "mighty men." The Egyptians wrote about giants who lived in the land of Canaan, and the folklore of other nations is full of such references. The people of the ancient world accepted the presence of giants as a fact of history, and the Bible presents them as enemies who were destroyed either by the judgment of God or in battle with men.

So where did these giants come from? One theory, based on Genesis 6:1–4, is that fallen angels (the sons of God) had sexual relations with women, resulting in the birth of giants. This is remarkably similar to Greek and Roman myths about demi-gods, but the theory has some theological and biological obstacles. Another theory, also based on Genesis 6, is that the fallen angels, having knowledge of human genetics, induced certain men and women who would have the right traits to produce a race of giants and induced them to cohabit with each other. A third theory is that the giants were simply the result of normal genetic variability within a society. Whatever the origin of the Rephaim, it is certain that a race of "giants"—strong, tall people—did exist at one time, and many cultures had dealings with them. Even today, there are people who grow to extreme sizes, whether through genetic disorders like gigantism or through normal heredity. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Deuteronomy 2:12 The Horites formerly lived in Seir, but the sons of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave to them.)**

- [Horites](#): De 2:22 Ge 14:6 36:20-30 1Ch 1:38-42
- **Esau dispossessed them**, Ge 36:31-43 1Ch 1:43-54
- **as Israel did**: De 2:22,32-37 Dt 3:1-11 Ge 36:20 Nu 21:21-35
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **HORITES DISPOSSESSED BY ESAU**

The [Horites](#) formerly lived in Seir (Edom) but the sons of [Esau](#) dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place - This review of history for Israel's close relatives the Edomites would serve to encourage Israel to enter and dispossess the Canaanites, just as the Edomites had done by defeating the Horites thus allowing the Edomites to possess the land God had given them. In other words, Edom was successful in obtaining her inheritance and Israel would likewise be successful in obtaining the Promised Land.

**Just as Israel did to the land of their possession ([yerushshah](#)) which the LORD gave to them** - This is referring to Sihon and Bashan who were destroyed and their land possessed. An alternative interpretation is that this might refer to the conquest of the entire Promised Land. If so, this would necessitate an addendum note by someone other than Moses who did not live to see this event. Some like Jack Deere favor this as a later insertion which leads him to comment

Though it is impossible to determine precisely when Dt 2:10-12 were inserted, Dt 2:12 indicates that it was after the initial conquest of the land. Editorial notes in the Pentateuch do no harm to the doctrine of biblical inspiration (see "Date and Authorship" in the Introduction). Inspiration refers to the final product rather than to the manner of writings. The original texts of Scripture are "God-breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16), and therefore contain no errors, for God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). The Holy Spirit superintended the work of editors just as He did the historical research of Luke (Luke 1:1-4) so that the final words of the text, though obtained by different methods, are the words intended by God. It was this final text (including editorial insertions) that Jesus Christ pronounced perfect (e.g., Matt. 5:18; John 10:35). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**NET Note** on [Horites](#) - (See also [ISBE Article](#)) Most likely these are the same as the well-known people of ancient Near Eastern texts described as Hurrians. They were geographically widespread and probably non-Semitic. Genesis speaks of them as the indigenous peoples of Edom that Esau expelled (Gen 36:8–19, 31–43) and also as among those who confronted the kings of the east (Gen 14:6). **Horites** - 10x in 10v - Gen. 14:6; Gen. 36:20; Gen. 36:21; Gen. 36:22; Gen. 36:29; Gen. 36:30; Num. 13:5; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:22; 1 Chr. 1:39

**Dispossessed** ([03423](#))([yarash](#)) means to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Possession of the land was directly connected to a person's relationship with the Lord; breaking the covenantal relationship led to dispossession. But even in exile in Babylon, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land because of God's faithfulness to His covenant promise to Abraham (Jer. 30:3).

**Destroy** (demolish, exterminate) ([08045](#))([shamad](#)) is a verb meaning "be destroyed, decimated, perished, overthrown, exterminated, i.e., pertaining to being in a totally ruined state, which can include death of a person or extinction of an entity." (Swanson) This verb is most commonly used in Deuteronomy and Joshua and refer to Israel destroying the Canaanites and taking over the Promised Land. The destruction depicted by **shamad** usually involves a rather sudden catastrophe such as warfare or a mass killing. For example in Dt 6:15 God says He will "**wipe**" Israel off the face of the earth, so great was His anger against them! It is worth noting that the last OT use of **shamad** is one of the greatest for the nation of Israel, the prophet **Zechariah** recording "And in that day (WHAT DAY - Read Zechariah 12:1-14+) I (JEHOVAH/YAHWEH HIMSELF) will set about to destroy all (HOW MANY?) the nations that come against Jerusalem." (Zechariah 12:9+) [Anti-Semitism](#) will be obliterated! The prophet Isaiah gives a prophecy that should startle every person who is not a believer in the Messiah - "Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it." (Isa. 13:9+)

Deut. 1:27; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:23; Deut. 4:3; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 6:15; Deut. 7:4; Deut. 7:23; Deut. 7:24; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:8; Deut. 9:14; Deut. 9:19; Deut. 9:20; Deut. 9:25; Deut. 12:30; Deut. 28:20; Deut. 28:24; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:48; Deut. 28:51; Deut. 28:61; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:4; Deut. 33:27;

Deuteronomy 2:13 'Now **arise** and **cross over** the brook Zered yourselves.' So we crossed over the brook Zered.

- **brook**, Nu 13:23
- **Zered** Nu 21:9-12
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ZERED MARKS THE END OF THE WANDERING

This verse connects with Dt 2:9, vv 10-12 being a parenthesis.

**Now** - This was a crucial turning point in the history of Israel. Based on the fact that God could enable Edom and Moab to defeat and dispossess two strong enemies, it was time for Israel to move out and possess the land God had promised them. Crossing the Brook Zered marked a pivotal stage in Israel's journey to Canaan for it marked Israel's crossing from Edom into Moab and also marked the end of the 38 year period in the wilderness (with death of all the men of war over 20, except Caleb and Joshua) (cf Nu 14:29-38+, Nu 13:30+, Nu 14:6-10+)

**Arise and cross over the brook Zered yourselves** - The word **brook** is the Hebrew word meaning torrent, torrent-valley or [wadi](#). Note Yahweh was in full control of Israel's second journey to enter the Promised Land, from the beginning (Dt 1:40, Nu 14:25), in the "middle" (Dt 2:3-4), and toward the end of the journey (Dt 2:13). [See map](#) for **Zered** located to the south and east of the Dead Sea into which it emptied. (Or [click this map and locate Zered labeled "Zered River"](#) extending eastward at the southern tip of the Dead Sea). **Zered** is today known as Wadi el-Hësa, and was the valley marking the **boundary between Moab to the north and Edom to the south**. God gives two commands to the second generation, which the NLT combines as "Get moving." It is interesting that God seems to take Israel by steps and does not just say rise up and cross the Jordan River. He is preparing them for their final conquest.

In the parallel passage in Nu 21:12+ Moses recorded "From there ([Oboth](#) and [Iye-abarim](#) - see on [map at southern tip of Dead Sea](#)) they set out and camped in Wadi Zered." **Wadi Zered** is clearly synonymous with **brook Zered**, the word [wadi](#) representing "a silt-filled ravine where water runs during the rainy season, a seasonal brook, not a river. The silt often forms a "road."" (Utley)

**The Expositor's Bible Commentary** - Since the fighting men of the generation that had failed to enter the land from the south at Kadesh Barnea had died off and were eliminated from the camp, the Lord's hand was no longer against Israel (Dt 2:15) (**ED NOTE:** SADLY LATER IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES "the hand of the LORD was against them for evil." Judges 2:15+). The Lord directed the new generation to cross the Zered, which flows into the southern end of the Dead Sea from the east (Dt 2:13), and then to cross the Arnon (Dt 2:24), which flows into the sea halfway up its eastern side. This brought them into the area controlled by the Amorites. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**So we crossed over the brook Zered** - Notice this time the second generation did not ask to send spies out ahead. The simply obeyed, which is always the shortest path to entering into God's blessing. They crossed over the brook Zered, heading north into the territory of Moab.

**NET Note on Wadi Zered** - Now known as Wadi el-Hësa, this valley marked the boundary between **Moab** to the north and **Edom** to the south.

**Hastings Dictionary** - The torrent-valley ([nachal](#)) of Zered is named in the itinerary of Israel's journeyings, Numbers 21:12, immediately prior to their crossing of the Arnon ([map](#)), and in Deuteronomy 2:13 as the point that marked the close of the 38 years' wanderings.

**Arise** (stand, set, get) ([06965](#)) **qum** refers literally to the physical action of "rising up" (Ge 19:33, 35, Ru 3:14) or standing as the result of rising up (Josh 7:12-13). **Uses of qum in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 2:13; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 6:7; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:12; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:19; Deut. 13:1; Deut. 16:22; Deut. 17:8; Deut. 18:15; Deut. 18:18; Deut. 19:11; Deut. 19:15; Deut. 19:16; Deut. 22:4; Deut. 22:26; Deut. 25:6; Deut. 25:7; Deut. 27:2; Deut. 27:4; Deut. 27:26; Deut. 28:7; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:36; Deut. 29:13; Deut. 29:22; Deut. 31:16; Deut. 32:38; Deut. 33:11; Deut. 34:10;

Deuteronomy 2:14 "Now the time that it took for us to come from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed over the brook Zered



was thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war perished from within the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them.

- **Kadesh-barnea:** De 1:2,19,46 Nu 13:26
- **until all the generation:** De 1:34-35 Nu 14:28-35 26:64,65 32:11 Ps 90:3,9 95:11 Eze 20:15 Heb 3:8-19 Jude 1:5
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 1:2+ (THIS REFERS TO THE FIRST JOURNEY) It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea.

Deuteronomy 1:19+ (THIS REFERS TO THE FIRST JOURNEY) "Then we set out from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, just as the LORD our God had commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.

Deuteronomy 1:46+ (THIS IS AFTER THEY REFUSED TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND) "So you remained in Kadesh many days, the days that you spent there.

Deuteronomy 1:34-35+ "Then the LORD heard the sound of your words, and He was angry and took an oath, saying, 35 '**Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers,**

Numbers 14:28-35+ "Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, '**just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; 29 your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.** 30 'Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. 31 'Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey—I will bring them in, and they will know the land which you have rejected. 32 'But as for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness. 33 'Your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they will suffer for your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness. 34 'According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you will know My opposition. 35 'I, the LORD, have spoken, surely this I will do to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be destroyed, and there they will die.'"

### PROPHECY FULFILLED AS MEN OF WAR PERISHED

Now the time that it took for us to come from Kadesh-barnea ([Qadesh Barnea](#)) until we crossed over the brook Zered ([map](#)) was thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war perished from within the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them - There are two "until's" the first marking the end of the wilderness wandering and the second coinciding with the death of all the generation of the men of war, every male between 20 and 50 years of age (cf. Ex. 30:14; 38:26; Nu 1:3; 14:29). From this time on it was only the second generation of Israelites (excepting Joshua, Caleb and Moses).

**THOUGHT - WASTED YEARS** - Thirty-eight wasted years because of unbelief and disobedience to God's clear command. This truth should put a bit of the fear of the Lord in all of us, for we are no better than Israel and it is possible we could commit a sin which resulted in entering into years of wasted life because of failure of obedience. This thought truly frightens me. While it is not exactly the same, Paul's fear described in 1 Cor 9:27+ is a close parallel for Paul wrote " I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."

**Sworn** (take an oath)([07650](#)) **shaba** from **sheba** = seven) to swear, to take an oath, to make or swear an oath, swearing to someone, thus putting oneself under obligation to someone. "In general, **shāva'** is employed in mainly these contexts: **covenant making**, where the parties involved made vows, **oaths or promises** to one another (Deut. 4:31; 1 Sa 20:42); **oath taking**, which was a serious transaction in Israel and involved a person's taking upon himself (and possibly others) **a curse** if that person did not carry out his oath faithfully; **vow making**, which was solemn and not to be broken (cf. Nu 30:2)." ([CBL](#))

Deuteronomy 2:15 "Moreover the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from within the camp until they all



perished.

- **the hand of the:** Judges 2:10-15 1Sa 5:6,9,11 7:13 Ps 32:4 Ps 78:33 Ps 90:7-9 Ps 106:26 Isa 66:14 1Co 10:5
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Judges 2:10-15+ (HAND OF THE LORD AGAIN ON ISRAEL BUT NOW THE SECOND GENERATION WHO DISOBEYED) All that generation (THE GENERATION AFTER JOSHUA) also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. (NOTE 2 PROBLEM - IGNORANCE OF YAHWEH AND HIS WORKS, HIS PERSON AND HIS POWER) 11 Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals, 12 and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the LORD to anger. 13 So they forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. 14 The anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 15 Wherever they went, **the hand of the LORD was against them for evil**, as the LORD had spoken and as the LORD had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed.

### THE HAND OF THE LORD

While Moses had just stated the first generation had perished, it is as if God wanted to underscore that they did not just die of "natural" causes per se, but they died because it was the will of the LORD.

**Moreover the hand of the LORD was against them- NET** - "Indeed, it was the very hand of the LORD that eliminated them!" Moses made it crystal clear to the second generation that the rebellious first generation did not die of natural causes but of a "supernatural cause" so to speak. This would have served as a warning to the second generation of the danger of disobeying Yahweh's commands! It is not a good thing when the **hand of the LORD** is against anyone. After David committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah, David recorded " day and night Your **hand** was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah." (Ps 32:4)

#### Related Resource:

- [Interesting Analysis on Descriptions of God as Human \(Anthropomorphic Language\)](#) - Bob Utley (Includes "Reasons for the use of this type of language")

**To destroy them from within the camp until they all perished - NIV** = until He (Yahweh) had completely eliminated them from the camp." Don't miss who destroyed **them**! As Paul says in the NT "Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness." (1Co 10:5+) The Hebrew verb **destroy** (haman) as noted below means to confuse as God did to the pursuing Egyptians in Ex 14:24+ ("**brought** the army of the Egyptians into **confusion**." ) In this context it clearly describes God's destruction of all Israel's men of war over 20. The Septuagint uses the verb **exanalisko** (cf root verb [analisko](#)) which means to utterly destroy or consume (**exanalisko** was also used in what turned out to be a prophetic warning in Ex 33:3+ = "lest I **destroy** [exanalisko] you." which is exactly what He did here in Dt 2:15! God's warnings must always be heeded!)

**Jack Deere** points out that "because of their rebellion against the Lord this first generation of Israelite warriors actually found themselves objects of God's "holy war." They left the protective care of His hand in their arrogant rebellion only to find that hand turned against them as they endured painful deaths outside the Promised Land. By reminding the people of this, Moses said in effect that God is faithful to His promises and His threats, and has the power to execute both." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**NET Note** on **within the camp** - Heb "from the middle of." Although many recent English versions leave this expression untranslated, the point seems to be that these soldiers did not die in battle but "within the camp."

**Destroy** (02000) **hamam** means to make a noise, move noisily, confuse, throw into commotion. "The basic meaning of this word seems to be "to give attention to" in the negative sense, that is, "harass," "trouble," often with the purpose of creating panic." Of the 13 uses below God is the subject in 10 verses. The word is also used to indicate the effect of a cart wheel on grain (Isaiah 28:28). But some make wheel the object and translate "set in motion." The word describes God's treatment of the Israelites over forty until they died in the

wilderness. He made sure of their death (Dt. 2:15). [Jack Deere](#) adds that "The verb for "panic or confuse" ([hamam](#)) is used for the divinely inspired panic that God sent on many of Israel's enemies so that they became too confused or terrified to fight competently." (See examples below)

Yahweh used [hamam](#) in a promise to Israel "I will send My terror ahead of you, and **throw into confusion** all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you." (Ex 23:27+, cf Josh 10:10 "Yahweh **confounded** hem before Israel." and Jdg 4:15 "Yahweh **routed** Sisera". **See also similar uses of God confusing and routing the enemy** - 1 Sa 7:10, 2 Sa 22:15, 2 Chr 15:6, Ps 18:14, Ps 144:6).

**John Maxwell** - I enjoy collecting books written by or about John Wesley. He and his followers were particularly concerned about "dying well." Dr. John Whitehead's account of John Wesley's last days points out the importance of finishing life victoriously. In the message recorded at Wesley's funeral, Dr. Whitehead notes that as Wesley lay dying, his friends entered his room and inquired about his spiritual health. Then they spent time praising God for victory at the close of his life. It was Wesley himself who warned: "Let, therefore, none presume on past mercies, as if they were out of danger." In other words, never take God for granted. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it" (Heb. 4:1-2). An entire generation lost everything at the door of the Promised Land because of their disobedience. What a waste. "You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (Gal. 5:7). (Preacher's Commentary)

#### Related Resources:

- Resources on the Hand of the Lord

**Deuteronomy 2:16 "So it came about when all the men of war had finally perished from among the people,**

### **GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISE OF PUNISHMENT**

**So it came about when all the men of war had finally perished from among the people**(cf Nu 14:29-38+) - God had promised that the first generation would not enter the Promised Land and here we see His faithfulness to keep even His promises of punishment. Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. (Gal 6:6-7+).

**Utley** - This shows a balance between the love of God and the justice of God. God's purpose is not just to punish, but to help His people learn from their mistakes. Therefore, He made these people, under His death sentence, wander around for 38 years, but He fed them, He loved them and He provided for them. It wasn't sudden death, but it was an untimely death. Everyone of the men who came up to Kadesh-barnea, 20 years of age and up, were now dead, except Joshua and Caleb.

**Deuteronomy 2:17 that the LORD spoke to me, saying,**

**that the LORD spoke to me, saying** - The phrase **LORD spoke to me** is found in Dt 2:1, 2, 17 and the related phrase **LORD said to me** is found in Deut. 1:42; Deut. 2:9; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:26; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:28; Deut. 9:12; Deut. 10:1; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 18:17. **The LORD** speaks directly to Moses just as he later does to the prophets, as He did for example to Jeremiah (Jer 1:7, 9, 12, 14; 3:6, 11; 11:6, 9, etc). Deuteronomy is repeated described as God's personal revelation to Moses. In addition to this direct revelation to Moses, Yahweh directed Israel by the movement of the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) (cf Tony Garland's [The Abiding Presence of God](#)) and also by the use of the [Urim and Thummim](#) (by the High Priest).

**Deuteronomy 2:18 'Today you shall cross over Ar, the border of Moab.**

- Nu 21:15,23 Isa 15:1
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Today you shall cross over Ar, the border of Moab** - See preceding [note](#) on **Ar. You** (Moses) and the second generation. Moses would cross the **Ar**, but not the Jordan.

**Deuteronomy 2:19 'When you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession.'**

- De 2:5,9 Ge 19:36-38 Jud 11:13-27 2Ch 20:10
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 2:4-5<sup>+</sup> command the people, saying, “You will pass through **the territory of your brothers the sons of Esau** who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful; do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep because I have given **Mount Seir** to Esau as a possession.

Deuteronomy 2:8-9<sup>+</sup> “So we passed beyond our brothers the sons of Esau, who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road, away from Elath and from Ezion-geber. And we turned and passed through by the way of the wilderness of Moab. Then the LORD said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to **the sons of Lot** (MOAB WAS ONE OF THE SONS OF LOT - Ge 19:30-38) as a possession.’

Ammon - Reuben is Where Sihon's Land Was Located

**'When you come opposite the sons of Ammon** (LOT'S OTHER SON - Ge 19:30-38), **do not harass** ([tsûr/sur](#)) **them nor provoke** ([garah](#)) **them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession** ([yerushshah](#)) **because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession** ([yerushshah](#)).’ **Sihon** king of the Amorites controlled the area between the Arnon River on the south, the Jordan on the west, the Jabbok on the north, and the border of the Ammonites on the east (In the map above the territory of Reuben was on land formerly controlled by Sihon). The Israelites were not to disturb the Ammonites but rather were to turn northwestward into the country of Sihon.

**NET Note on sons of Lot** - Following the destruction of the cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, as God's judgment, Lot fathered two sons by his two daughters, namely, Moab and Ammon (Ge 19:30–38). Thus, these descendants of Lot in and around Ar were the Moabites.

**Deuteronomy 2:20 (It is also regarded as the land of the Rephaim, for Rephaim formerly lived in it, but the Ammonites call them Zamzummin,**

- **Zamzummin**: Ge 14:5,
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Most writers interpret Dt 2:20-23 as a second parenthetical section (as was Dt 2:10-12) giving some ethnic and geographical background. This would have been good for the second generation to hear how their God had destroyed these giants.

**(It is also regarded as the land of the [Rephaim](#), for Rephaim formerly lived in it, but the Ammonites call them Zamzummin-** Again we see that giants in the land were no obstacle for God.

**Zamzummin** (זַמְזֻמִּים , zamzummīm ): A race of giants who inhabited the region East of the Jordan afterward occupied by the Ammonites who displaced them. They are identified with the [Rephaim](#) ( Deuteronomy 2:20 ). They may be the same as the Zuzim mentioned in connection with the Rephaim in Genesis 14:5 . See [REPHAIM](#) .

**NET Note** - Zamzummites. Just as the Moabites called Rephaites by the name Emites, the Ammonites called them Zamzummites (or Zazites; Gen 14:5).

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**Deuteronomy 2:21** a people as great, numerous, and tall as the [Anakim](#), but the LORD destroyed them before them. And they dispossessed them and settled in their place,

- great: De 2:10-11 1:28 3:11
- **but the Lord**: De 2:22 Jud 11:24 Jer 27:7,8 Hab 1:10,11
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 2:10-11<sup>±</sup> (The Emim lived there formerly, a people as great, numerous, and tall as the [Anakim](#).  
11 Like the [Anakim](#), they are also regarded as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim.

### YAHWEH DESTROYED THE GIANTS

**A people as great, numerous, and tall as the [Anakim](#),** - These giant peoples are like evil "Marvel Comic Book" characters which are almost "superhuman." God could have chose pygmies, but the first generation saw themselves as grasshoppers in comparison to the inhabitants of Canaan, so God wanted them to understand that every nation is like a "grasshopper" before His mighty hand. And so these victories are recounted to the new generation to show them that God is the real "Superhero," and He is on their side! This would surely have greatly encouraged their belief that they could conquer the Promised Land.

**but** - Term of contrast. They were great but not too great for Yahweh.

**The LORD destroyed ([shamad](#)) them before them** - The point is that Yahweh **destroyed** these giant people before the Ammonites. The phrase **before them** is interesting as it could be interpreted one of two ways. One is that God destroyed the giants without the Ammonites playing any personal role. The NET rendering supports that thought = "he LORD destroyed the Rephaites in advance of the Ammonites, so they dispossessed them and settled down in their place. (Deu 2:21 NET). NIV rendering has the Ammonites participating = "The LORD destroyed them from before the Ammonites, who drove them out and settled in their place." (Dt 2:21NIV) Either way the main thrust is that the victory was the LORD's and this is a truth the second generation men of war needed to hear. Surely this would encourage them as they contemplated invasion of Canaan. Note once again the juxtaposition of...

#### GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY/MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

**And they dispossessed them and settled in their place** - **Dispossessed** is the verb [yarash](#), which was used in Dt 2:12 which says the **sons of Esau dispossessed** the Horites. In that passage the verb **destroyed** ([shamad](#)) follows the dispossession and then is followed by they **settled in their place**. **Dispossessed** ([yarash](#)) is used 5 times in chapter 2 (Dt 2:12, 21, 22, 24, 31) and clearly is a key word/concept God wants to get across to the new generation.

A key truth that Moses conveys to the second generation in Deuteronomy 2 is the role of the LORD in the destruction and/or deliverance of enemies - He did the same thing for the Israelites before Sihon as He had done to the other enemies.

Deuteronomy 2:12 The Horites formerly lived in Seir, but the sons of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed (LORD NOT MENTIONED HERE BUT SAME VERB FOR "DESTROY" IN Dt 2:15) them from before them and settled in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave to them.)

Deuteronomy 2:15 "Moreover the hand of the LORD was against them, to **destroy** them from within the camp until they all perished.

Deuteronomy 2:21 a people as great, numerous, and tall as the Anakim, but the LORD **destroyed** them before them. And they dispossessed them and settled in their place,

Deuteronomy 2:30 "But Sihon king of Heshbon was not willing for us to pass through his land; for the **LORD** your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, in order to **deliver** him into your hand, as he is today.

Deuteronomy 2:31 "The LORD said to me, 'See, I have begun to **deliver** Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to occupy, that you may possess his land.'

Deuteronomy 2:33 "The LORD our God **delivered** him over to us, and we defeated him with his sons and all his people.

Deuteronomy 2:36 "From Aroer which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon and from the city which is in the

valley, even to Gilead, there was no city that was too high for us; the LORD our God **delivered** all over to us.

**Deuteronomy 2:22 just as He did for the sons of Esau, who live in Seir, when He destroyed the Horites from before them; they dispossessed them and settled in their place even to this day.**

- **Esau:** Ge 36:8
- **the Horites :** De 2:12 Ge 14:6 36:20-30 1Ch 1:38-42
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JEHOVAH DESTROYED THE HORITES

**just as** - Term of comparison. **NET** has "This is exactly what he did for the descendants of Esau who lived in Seir." (Dt 2:22NET) In other words, Jehovah accomplished victory over the giants in the land enabling the Ammonites to possess their possession and He performed the same feat for the Edomites.

**He did for the sons of Esau, who live in Seir, when He destroyed([shamad](#)) the Horites from before them; they dispossessed them and settled in their place even to this day** -- Earlier Moses recorded "The **Horites** formerly lived in Seir, but the **sons of Esau dispossessed them** and **destroyed them** from before them and settled in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave to them.)(De 2:12) It would seem clear that the comparison to the Ammonites, that Yahweh is involved in both of the Ammonite and Edomite victories over their strong enemies.

**Deuteronomy 2:23 And the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and lived in their place.)**

- **Avvim:** Jos 13:3
- **Gaza:** 1Ki 4:24 Jer 25:20 Zep 2:4 Zec 9:5
- **Caphtorim:** Ge 10:14 Jer 47:4 Am 9:7 Ac 17:26
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## AVVITES DESTROYED BY YAHWEH

**And the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza ([map](#))** - The **Avvim** are mentioned only 3 times in Scripture - Deut. 2:23; Jos. 13:3; Jos. 18:2) so we do not know much about them. Could they have also been a "giant" race? Given the context, that is certainly a consideration. The related name Avvites is mentioned in Josh 13:3, 2 Ki 17:31:As far as Gaza means to the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, later associated with the Philistines, enemies of Israel in the Promised Land.

**Avvim** - A people mentioned in Deuteronomy 2:23 as being dispossessed by the Caphtorim. This, however, could not have taken place before the days of Joshua, for it is stated in Joshua 13:3 that the Israelites upon entering Canaan failed to conquer them; and their place of settlement is identical with the one mentioned in Deuteronomy 2:23. Although settled in the Philistine district, they do not appear to have had anything in common with the Philistines; they resemble rather the class of Bedouins who had made some progress toward the stage of permanent settlements. (Jewish Encyclopedia)

**NET Note - Avvites.** Otherwise unknown, these people were probably also Anakite (or Rephaite) giants who lived in the lower Mediterranean coastal plain until they were expelled by the Caphtorites. **Caphtorites.** These peoples are familiar from both the OT (Ge 10:14; 1 Chr 1:12; Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7) and ancient Near Eastern texts (Miriam Lichtheim, Ancient Egyptian Literature, 2:37–38; ANET 138). They originated in Crete (OT "Caphtor") and are identified as the ancestors of the Philistines (Gen 10:14 ; Jer 47:4).

**The Caphtorim who came from Caphtor, destroyed ([shamad](#)) them and lived in their place.)** - The NLT has "A similar thing happened when the Caphtorites from Crete invaded and destroyed the Avvites, who had lived in villages in the area of Gaza." (Dt 2:23NLT) The **Caphtorim** were precursors to the later, greater [Philistines](#) (ca 1200 b.c) The location of **Caphtor** was most likely the island of [Crete](#). In this destruction there is no statement that the LORD was involved enabling the Caphtorim to defeat the Avvim, the comparison with the previous passages leaves little doubt that He was intimately involved.

**Pulpit Commentary** note on why mention the **Caphtorim** - Caphtorim were, like the Israelites, immigrants, who drove out the original occupants of the country; and on this account, probably, are referred to by Moses here.

**Deuteronomy 2:24** 'Arise, set out, and pass through the valley of Arnon. Look! I have given Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land into your hand; begin to take possession and contend with him in battle.

- **Arnon:** De 2:36 Nu 21:10-135 Judges 11:18-21
- **behold:** Jos 6:16 2Ch 36:23 Ezr 1:2 Jer 27:5 Eze 29:20 Da 2:38 4:17
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 21:10-13+ Now the sons of Israel moved out and camped in Oboth. 11 They journeyed from [Oboth](#) and camped at [Iye-abarim](#), in the wilderness which is opposite Moab, to the east. 12 From there they set out and camped in Wadi Zered ([click this map and locate Zered labeled "Zered River"](#) at the southern tip of the Dead Sea).. 13 From there they journeyed and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that comes out of the border of the Amorites, for the Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.

gorge  
Valley of Arnon (Arnon Gorge)  
Border Between Moab (south) and Amorites (north)

## GOD'S PROMISES MUST BE POSSESSED

To summarize in the previous section Moses has reviewed Jehovah's faithfulness to enable victories by Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites and Caphtorites over strong enemies (some or all giant peoples). These truths prepared the second generation to hear and obey the seven commands in this verse.

**THOUGHT** - God did not give Israel commandments without first giving them evidence that He could enable them to carry out those commands. The same principle is true in our life beloved -- God does not command us to do something He does not enable us to obey! In the OT the context was literal physical warfare, but in the NT, the context is literal spiritual warfare. Take for example the incessant attacks on believers by their own fallen flesh, Peter exhorting the believers "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to (present tense - continually) abstain from [fleshly](#) lusts which (present tense - continually = see parallel Gal 5:17+) **wage war** against the soul.." (1 Pe 2:11+) How could believers ever hope to be victorious over our fleshly lusts which never ceases attacking? The answer of course is WE cannot hope for victory over such a formidable foe (a "giant") by depending on our own strength. However, we can trust in God to give us the strength we need (Php 4:13+). HE has given us of His omnipotent Holy Spirit to enable us in this supernatural fight with our insidious, invisible enemy, our [flesh](#) (not to mention our other enemies - the [world](#) and the [devil](#)). And so Paul commands us to "**Walk** by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the [flesh](#)." (Gal 5:16+). **Walk** is a command in the [present imperative](#) which we can ONLY obey by depending on [the Holy Spirit](#). We must still fight, but it is God Who gives us the victory, just as in the situations described in the previous passages.

Yahweh now issues **seven commands** in one verse! I think He means business! "YHWH is commanding, encouraging, and challenging His people to trust Him and obey His word as their parents did not. The land was theirs if they exercised faith!" (Utley)

While Israel was not to disturb the Edomites, Moabites, or Ammonites, because all were close relatives, Amorites ruled by Sihon were "fair game" and Yahweh gave them into their hands.

**Arise, set out**, (same verb - Dt 1:7, 19, 40, Dt 2:1) **and pass through the valley of Arnon** ([see map above](#) or [here](#)) - **NIV** = "cross the Arnon Gorge" ([See picture of the dry river bed](#)). **Arnon** is the northern boundary of Moab ([map](#)). After rehearsing Yahweh's role in the victories over giant enemies, Yahweh now commands the new generation to begin holy war (although they had experienced one victory earlier over Arad reversing their loss 38 years earlier at Hormah - cf Nu 14:45 and Nu 21:1-3). Note the repeated juxtaposition of God's sovereign gift/provision and the people's responsibility.

**THOUGHT** - This pattern of God's power and Man's responsibility applies to the NT believer's daily "holy war" with the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). Gal 5:17+ says " the (fallen, sinful) flesh (present tense - continually)



sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are (present tense - continually) in opposition to one another." Believers would not stand a chance of victory over these enemies if God did not provide us access to His supernatural power. We see this provision clearly in Romans 8:13+ where Paul writes "if by the Spirit you are (present tense - continually) putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Notice the juxtaposition of God's power (by the Spirit) and our responsibility (putting to death). While this synergistic dynamic is mysterious to me, it is absolutely Scriptural and is the (only) way for saints to have victory over their mortal enemies, the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). See also the "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)".

The command to **arise** harkens back to the same command given to Israel's patriarch Abraham in Genesis 13:17

**"Arise ([qum](#)), walk** about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you." (cf. "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you" - Josh 1:3-4)

**Look!** (PAY ATTENTION!) **I have given [Sihon](#) the [Amorite](#), king of [Heshbon](#), and his land into your hand** - Recall it was the Amorites that caused fear to 10 of the 12 men sent into spy out the Promised Land 38 years earlier. Also note that now in contrast to the situation with Edom, Moab and Ammon, God was giving (actually past tense = have [already] given) the land of Sihon into **Into your hand** which is the common way of figuratively saying into your power. It would later be allotted to the Tribe of [Reuben](#) ([see map](#))

While some writers feel that the Kingdoms of Sihon and Og were not included in the land boundaries promised to Abraham (Ge 15:18-21), but others do feel that this area (often referred to in commentaries as "Transjordan") was in the area promised to Abraham (I favor the latter interpretation).

**Grant** - Crossing the [Arnon river](#) brought Israel into territory that was possessed by the [Amorites](#), whose ruler was [Sihon](#). This warlike people occupied the high ground of the land of Canaan and had been there for many years. They were amongst those who were defeated in battle by Chedorlaomer (Ge 14:7), but had become a powerful nation, extending their rule to the east bank of the Jordan and occupying a part of the land that been possessed by the Moabites (Nu 21:26). This victory had been celebrated by a great song of triumph (Nu 21:27-30+) praising the power of Sihon. This was not the first time that Israel had faced the Amorites. Their defeat when they attempted to enter Canaan after refusing to do so (Nu 14:40-45+) has already been referred to by Moses (Dt 1:42-44). Those who came against them on that occasion were the "Amalekites ... and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill" (Num 14:45). Amongst them, however, were Amorites (Deut 1:44). ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Begin to take possession ([yarash](#)) and contend ([garah](#)) with him in battle** - The possession had been given, but God now commands them to possess their possession by waging "holy war" against Sihon (but see [caveat/disclaimer regarding the term "holy war"](#)). **Contend** is the same verb ([garah](#)) used earlier (translated provoke) in De 2:5 and Dt 2:9 to prohibit Israel from fighting, but now commanding them to fight.

**NET Note on [Heshbon](#)** - **Heshbon** is the name of a prominent site (now Tell Hesba'On, about 7.5 mi [12 km] south southwest of [Amman, Jordan](#)). Sihon made it his capital after having driven Moab from the area and forced them south to the Arnon (Num 21:26-30). Heshbon is also mentioned in Deut 1:4.

**Ryrie's Note** on Dt 2:24-37 - Compare Nu 21:21-32+. The [Amorites](#) were an alien race (not related to the Israelites)(**ED: WHICH IS WHY THEIR LAND WAS "FAIR GAME" IN CONTRAST TO THE LANDS OF EDOM, MOAB, AMMON**) that had spread across the East side of the Jordan. As a result of sinking into idolatry, they had to be destroyed. See Ge. 15:13-16+ and Deut. 7:2+. (Ryrie Study Bible)

**Meredith Kline** sums up the preceding section - By all these historical notices the covenant servant Israel was advised that the Lord had a [hegemony](#) over the territory about the promised land. In his all-controlling providence he had repeatedly dispossessed great nations—even the Anakim, whose presence in Canaan had frightened Israel into rebellion against the Lord a generation before (cf. Dt 1:28; 2:14, 15). And the Lord had done this in behalf of various peoples who enjoyed no such special status of covenant calling as elect Israel enjoyed. With what confidence, therefore, Israel might obey the Lord's summons to **rise up** (Dt 2:13) and **cross** the mountain torrents of **Zered** and **Arnon** (Dt 2:24), and soon the Jordan (cf. Josh 1:2). See Amos 9:7 for another lesson drawn from such historical data. The **Zered** marked the southern boundary of Moab, along whose eastern border Israel went, so approaching the frontiers of Ammon, which lay east and north of Moab (Dt 2:18, 19; cf. Dt 2:8b; Nu 21:11ff.). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

Three beginnings in Deuteronomy 2

- Beginning of wars (Deut. 2:24)
- Beginning of the fear of Israel (Deut. 2:25)

- Beginning of possession (Deut. 2:31)

**Deuteronomy 2:25 'This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under the heavens, who, when they hear the report of you, will tremble and be in anguish because of you.'**

- De 11:25 Dt 28:10 Ex 15:14-16 23:27 Jos 2:9-12 Josh 9:24 2Ki 7:6-7 Ps 105:38 Jer 33:9 Rev 3:9
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 23:27+ "I will send My **terror** (Hebrew = [emah](#) which conveys the thought of "panic" or "dread." God would make the nations panic as they heard of the exploits and knew the Israelites were drawing near.) ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you.

Deuteronomy 11:25+ "No man will be able to stand before you; the LORD your God will lay **the dread** ([pachad](#)) **and fear** ([yirah](#)) **of you** on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you.

Joshua 2:9-12 (RAHAB THE HARLOT) and said to the men (ISRAELITES SENT TO SPY JERICHO), **'I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you.** 10 "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond (ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF) the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 "When we heard it, **our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you;** for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. 12 "Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth,

### PAGAN NATIONS DIVINELY DIRECTED TO DREAD ISRAEL

**This day** - What day? Apparently the very day Yahweh made this declaration.

**I will begin to put the dread** ([pachad](#)) **and fear** ([yirah](#)) **of you upon the peoples everywhere under the heavens, who, when they hear the report of you, will tremble** (quake, quiver) **and be in anguish** (whirl, writhe) **because of you** - Yahweh put the fear of the Israelites in the nations, not the fear of Him. Indeed as Romans 3:18+ says "there is no fear of God before their eyes." However at least some pagans understood that YAHWEH was Israel's God and that He was the God "in heaven above and on earth beneath." (Josh 2:11). The **dread and fear** would make the nations tremble and writhe like a woman in labor!

**Dread** (**fear**) ([06343](#)) [pachad](#) describes terror, fear, panic or dread often caused by the Lord (1Sa 11:7; Job 13:11; Isa. 2:10, 19, 21). **Pachad** can be a strong emotion of fear or terror or can refer to the person or thing which arouses the terror (usually the latter sense, cp Ps 31:11). Pachad describes the state or condition of severe distress over impending trouble. Pachad is used as a Name of God in Ge 31:42, 53). Israel's enemies will dread them—Dt. 2:25; 11:25; Ps. 105:38. The Israelis will be afraid of YHWH if they sin—Dt. 28:66, 67. YHWH is to be awed—Ps. 119:120. **Uses in Deuteronomy** - Dt 2:25, 11:25, 28:67.

**Fear** ([03374](#)) [yirah](#) from verb [yare](#) = to fear) can describe dread (Dt 1:29, Dt 2:25, Ps 55:5), being terrified (Jonah 1:10), standing in awe (1Ki 3:28), or having reverence (Lev 19:3, Ex 20:20, Ps 5:7). Yirah usually refers to the fear of God in a positive sense (2Chr 19:9, Ps 19:9, 34:11, 111:10, Pr 1:7, 1:29, 2:5, 8:13, 9:10, 10:27, 14:26, 14:27, 15:16, 15:33, 16:6, 19:23, 22:4, 23:17, Isa 11:2, 11:3, 33:6). Yirah is produced by God's Word (Ps. 119:38; Pr. 2:5). The fear of the Lord may be lost by despair of one's own situation (Job 6:14) or envy of a sinner's (Pr. 23:17). Fear of the Lord restrains one from sin (Ge 20:11; Ex. 20:20), gives confidence (Job 4:6; Pr. 14:26); helps rulers and causes judges to act justly (2Sa 23:3; 2Chr. 19:9; Neh. 5:15); results in good sleep (Pr. 19:23); with humility, leads to riches, honor, and life (Pr. 22:4).

**Tremble** ([07264](#)) ([ragaz](#)) means to be agitated, quiver, quake, be excited, perturbed, deeply moved, disturbed, enraged, troubled. Septuagint translates it in Dt 2:25 with verb [tarasso](#) (agitated, disturbed).

**Anguish** (calve, give birth, shakes, travail, tremble, writhe) [02342](#) (**chul**) means to to whirl, dance. **Chul** has many different meanings, most of which derive from either the idea to whirl in circular movements and to writhe in labor pains. And so to "writhe like a woman in labor" (Isa 13:8) a vivid picture of how the nations would respond to the thought of Israelites at the doorstep of their land! Only other use in Deuteronomy is Dt 32:18.

**Deuteronomy 2:26 "So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying,**

- **Kedemoth:** Jos 13:18 21:37
- **with words of peace,:** De 20:10-18 Es 9:30 Mt 10:12-15 Lu 10:5,6,10-12
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Deuteronomy 20:10-18+ "When you approach a city to fight against it, **you shall offer it terms of peace.** 11 "If it agrees to make peace with you and opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall become your forced labor and shall serve you. 12 "However, if it does not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. 13 "When **the LORD your God gives it into your hand** you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword. 14 "Only the women and the children and the animals and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourself; and you shall use the spoil of your enemies which the LORD your God has given you. 15 "Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby. 16 "Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, **you shall not leave alive anything that breathes.** 17 "But **you shall utterly destroy** them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the LORD your God has commanded you, 18 **so that (PURPOSE) they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God.**

### **ISRAEL FIRST SEEKS PEACE**

**So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying** - As described in Deuteronomy 20:10-11+ [Kedemoth](#) was a about 8 miles north of the Arnon River ([as shown on this map](#)) which was the northern boundary of Moab. And since Israel had been commanded to cross the Arnon, it is clear that they are now in Sidon's territory. Recall that Moses had made a similar plea to Edom in Nu 20:17 which Edom refused forcing Israel (Nu 20:18-22, Nu 21:4)

**NET Note** says "[Kedemoth](#) (means "eastern regions"). This is probably Aleiyan, about 8 mi (13 km) north of the Arnon and between Dibon and Mattanah."

**Deuteronomy 2:27 'Let me pass through your land, I will travel only on the highway; I will not turn aside to the right or to the left.**

- De 2:6 Nu 21:21-23 Judges 11:19
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Let me pass through your land, I will travel only on the highway** - **NET** = "I will keep strictly to the roadway" where the Hebrew literally reads "in the way in the way" (בַּדֶּרֶךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ, baderekh baderekh) Moses using this repetition to strongly convey the fact that Israelites would not veer off the highway (the [King's Highway](#) which went through Edom, Moab, and the Kingdom of Sihon- see [map](#)).

**I will not turn aside to the right or to the left**- Recall Yahweh had said He had given the land to them, but here Moses seeks a peaceful passage as through Edom, Moab and Ammon (cf Dt 2:4+).

**Uteley on not turn aside to the right or to the left**- The phrase is based on the OT idiom of biblical faith as a path or way (e.g., Ps.

119:105). God's will is clearly marked. This concept is literal here (i.e., a highway). So the phrase, "turn to the right or left" is literal. Usually this is used metaphorically for the spiritual life (e.g., Num. 20:17; 22:26; Deut. 5:32; 17:11, 20; 28:14; Josh. 1:7; 23:6; 1 Kgs. 22:2).

**Deuteronomy 2:28 'You will sell me food for money so that I may eat, and give me water for money so that I may drink, only let me pass through on foot,**

- **only let me pass through on foot**, Nu 20:19
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**You will sell me food for money** ([keseph](#) - silver) **so that** (term of purpose) **I may eat, and give me water for money so that** (term of purpose) **I may drink, only let me pass through on foot** - Just as Israel had done passing through Edom, Moab and Ammon (cf Dt 2:6+). When Moses made the request of Edom (Nu 20:19-21), the king of Edom steadfastly refused passage through his land (which would have cut many miles off of their journey to the Promised Land).

**Deuteronomy 2:29 just as the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I cross over the Jordan into the land which the LORD our God is giving to us.'**

- **just as the sons of Esau**. De 23:3,4 Nu 20:18 Jud 11:17,18
- **into the land**: De 4:1,21,40 5:16 9:6 25:15 Ex 20:12 Jos 1:11-15
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Just as** - Term of comparison. Moses compares how Israel had passed through these other lands without incident.

**the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I cross over the Jordan into the land which the LORD our God is giving to us** - While Nu 20:19-21 records refusal to pass through Edom, one writer says this appears to have been only the Edomites of in the region of Kadesh-barnea, south of Canaan, who denied the Israelites a passage. The Edomites of mount Seir here expressly granted Israel passage as did the Moabites

**Deuteronomy 2:30 "But Sihon king of Heshbon was not willing for us to pass through his land; for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, in order to deliver him into your hand, as he is today.**

- **for the Lord**: Ex 4:21 11:10 Nu 21:23 Jos 11:19,20 Jud 11:20 Ro 9:17-23
- **obstinate**: Isa 48:4
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **GOD HARDENS SIHON'S HEART TO PREVENT ISRAEL'S PASSAGE**

**But** - Term of contrast. Contrast is with how Edom had allowed Israel passage. Not so with Sihon!

**Sihon king of [Heshbon](#) was not willing for us to pass through his land** - Sihon refused Israel safe passage.

**For** - Term of explanation. Explains why Sihon refused safe passage.

**The LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate** (made his heart defiant) - God is sovereign and His purposes will not be thwarted. One might ask why did Yahweh do this? Ge 15:16+ says the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete. Now, over 400 years later the iniquity of the Amorite (Sihon was king of the Amorites) was complete and thus God carried out the hardening as an act of divine judgement. So God put **dread** ([pachad](#)) and **fear** ([yirah](#)) of Israel on the pagan nations and here He hardens their pagan king. They are now "[ripe for picking](#)" as we might say!

**Wiersbe** explains **God hardened** - As with Pharaoh, the process of hardening involved Sihon's personal response to God's will. The Lord doesn't assault people and force them to act against their own will. The news of Israel's march had reached Sihon long before the Jews arrived on the scene, and the king had already decided to declare war. As he resisted God's Word, he experienced a

hardening of his heart. ([Be Equipped](#))

**This recalls God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart in Exodus** - Nine times in Exodus the hardening of the pharaoh's heart is ascribed to God (Ex 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8) and another nine times pharaoh is said to have hardened his own heart (Ex 7:13–14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34–35). The pharaoh alone was the agent of the hardening in each of the first five plagues and it was not until the sixth plague that God confirm the pharaoh's willful action (Ex 9:12), as he had told Moses he would do in Ex 4:21.

#### Related Resource:

- [Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Hardened** (07185) ([qashah](#)) means to be hard, to be hardened, to be stiff-necked. Also refers to something hard (difficult) to do as in Dt 1:17, Dt 15:18. **Coppes** writes that "The root qāshî apparently arose from an agricultural milieu. It emphasizes, first, the subjective effect exerted by an overly heavy yoke, which is hard to bear, and secondarily, the rebellious resistance of oxen to the yoke." (TWOT) **Qashah** thus refers to something difficult, heart, severe - severe labor (Ge 35:16, 17); cruel wrath (Ge 49:7), hardened spirit (Dt 2:30); neck (not to be) stiff (Dt 10:16); severe hand (1 Sa 5:7); harsh words (2 Sa 19:43); heavy yoke (1 Ki 12:4, 2 Chr 10:4); stiffened (hardened) neck (2 Ki 17:14, 2 Chr 30:8, 36:13, Jer 7:26, 17:23, 19:15); hardened heart (Ps 95:8; Pr 28:14, cf hardened neck - Pr 29:1); hard-pressed (Isa 8:21). Qashah refers to the nation of Israel which often stiffened their neck to Yahweh or His prophets - "Yet they did not listen to Me or incline their ear, but **stiffened** their neck; they did more evil than their fathers." (Jer 7:26).

Same verb [qashah](#) is used in Dt 10:16+

"So **circumcise** (KJV - "foreskin of") your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer."

**Comment** - Note Who does the "spiritual" surgery (Dt 30:6+). See Excursus on [Circumcision](#)

**Make...obstinate** (0553) [amets](#) means to be stout, to be strong (Ge 25:23), to be bold, to be alert. Be determined. In short it means to be strong and courageous. (2 Chr 13:18). It means to make strong or cause to grow strong (Pr 8:28; 31:17; Isa. 44:14) of inanimate objects. It is used of human activity in repairing or strengthening a house or building (2 Chr. 24:13). Metaphorically, **amets** means to harden one's attitude or heart - God "made his heart obstinate" (Dt. 2:30). To harden one's heart (Dt 15:7; 2 Chr. 36:13). It is usually used in a positive sense (cf. Deut. 3:28; 31:6, 7, 23).

Deuteronomy 15:7 "If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not **harden** your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother;

**In order to** (term of purpose) **deliver him into your hand, as he is today** - **Deliver** is [nathan](#) (used over 1800x in OT) which in this context meaning to give and in this idiom (**into your hand**) signifies into your power and authority. The Septuagint translates **give** with [paradidomi](#) which means to give one over to the power of another.

**Deuteronomy 2:31** "The LORD said to me, '**See**, I have begun to deliver Sihon and his land over to you. **Begin to occupy**, that you may possess his land.'

- **deliver Sihon**: De 2:24 Dt 1:8
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 1:8 **See**, I have placed the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to them and their descendants after them.'

**The LORD said to me, 'See, I have begun to deliver Sihon and his land over to you** - Repeats three of the commands in Dt 2:24. Yahweh began by hardening Sihon to refuse Moses' offer of peace.

**Begin to occupy**, (Now begin to conquer) **that you may possess his land** - **Occupy** and **possess** are the same verb [yarash](#). and are translated with only one verb [kleronomeo](#) in the Septuagint.



Deuteronomy 2:32 "Then Sihon with all his people came out to meet us in battle at Jahaz.

- Nu 21:23-30 Judges 11:20-23 Ne 9:22 Ps 120:7 135:11 136:19



Israel Defeats Og and Sihon (ESV Study Bible)  
(Click to Enlarge)

## SIHON MEETS ISRAEL AT JAHAZ

Then Sihon with all his people came out to meet us in battle at Jahaz- Jahaz (was probably only a few miles north of [Kedemoth](#) (Dt 2:26+) ([map](#)) What is in a man's heart shows in his behavior. So despite the fact that God had placed **dread** and **fear** of Israel in the peoples, Sihon was determined to go to battle. Notice he does not remain in his fortified cities which would theoretically have been to his advantage, but in his arrogance, he chooses to come out in the open to meet Israel. Big mistake!

**NET Note - Jahaz** ([see map](#)). This is probably Khirbet el-Medeiyineh.

Deuteronomy 2:33 "The LORD our God delivered him over to us, and we defeated him with his sons and all his people.

- **the Lord:** De 3:2,3 7:2 20:16 Ge 14:20 Jos 21:44 Jud 1:4 7:2
- **we defeated:** De 29:7,8 Nu 21:24 Jos 10:30-42
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SIHON DIVINELY DELIVERED AND HUMANLY DEFEATED

**The LORD our God delivered him over to us** - This is exactly what God had begun to do in Dt 2:31 and now He brings it to fruition.

**And we defeated him with his sons and all his people** - NET = "we struck him down, along with his sons and everyone else." As we have repeatedly seen here again we have juxtaposition of **God's sovereignty** and **Man's responsibility**.

**THOUGHT** - This episode is often referred to as a reminder to Israel of what God had done for them and became a source of encouragement to them (SEE **SIHON** BELOW). God is showing them that He is with them and will keep His promises to them. As you know, the Lord does that for many of us today. He permits us to have a difficult experience, maybe a sad one, to prepare us for life -- or to prepare us to be helpful to others/ (J. Vernon McGee)



**Sihon** - 34v - Num. 21:21; Num. 21:23; Num. 21:26; Num. 21:27; Num. 21:28; Num. 21:29; Num. 21:34; Num. 32:33; Deut. 1:4; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:26; Deut. 2:30; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 2:32; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:6; Deut. 4:46; Deut. 29:7; Deut. 31:4; Jos. 2:10; Jos. 9:10; Jos. 12:2; Jos. 12:5; Jos. 13:10; Jos. 13:21; Jos. 13:27; Jdg. 11:19; Jdg. 11:20; Jdg. 11:21; 1 Ki. 4:19; Neh. 9:22; Ps. 135:11; Ps. 136:19; Jer. 48:45

**Deuteronomy 2:34 "So we captured all his cities at that time and utterly destroyed the men, women and children of every city. We left no survivor.**

- **utterly destroyed:** De 7:2,26 20:16-18 Lev 27:28,29 Nu 21:2,3 Jos 7:11 8:25,26 9:24 Jos 11:14 1Sa 15:3,8,9
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Psalm 135:10-12 He smote many nations And slew mighty kings, 11 Sihon, king of the Amorites, And Og, king of Bashan, And all the kingdoms of Canaan; 12 And He gave their land as a heritage, A heritage to Israel His people.

Psalm 136:17-22 To Him who smote great kings, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 18 And slew mighty kings, For His lovingkindness is everlasting: 19 Sihon, king of the Amorites, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 20 And Og, king of Bashan, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 22 Even a heritage to Israel His servant, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Deuteronomy 3:6+ (OG OF BASHAN) - We utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women and children of every city.

**So we captured all his cities at that time and (placed under the ban or devoted) utterly destroyed the men, women and children of every city. We left no survivor** - The idea of utterly destroyed is rendered in NET as "put every one of them under divine judgment." NLT adds "Not a single person was spared." Israel literally exterminated this people. The Septuagint renders it with the verb [exolothreuo](#) which means to utterly destroy, root out, completely cut off, to eliminate by destruction, all indicative of a serious action. The word never means cessation of existence or extinction but a change in state which involves judgment!

**THOUGHT** - Israel obeyed and conquered Canaan but neglected to totally annihilate the godless, utterly depraved Canaanites, and this proved to be a snare that continued to defeat them. That which opposes God and godliness in our lives must be completely overcome lest it prove to be a snare and cause our spiritual defeat! One is reminded of 2 Cor 6:14-16, 2 Cor 7:1+.

**Why were these pagans to be utterly destroyed? Who would be moving in to the conquered land?** Israel a people who were (to be) holy to the LORD (cf Ex 19:6+) and to not allow themselves to be contaminated with the godless, idolatrous practices of the pagans they conquered. Any pagan idol worshippers left alive would have been a potential snare for Israel. And so we read in Deuteronomy 20:16-18+ "Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, **you shall not leave alive anything that breathes.** 17 "But **you shall utterly destroy them**, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the LORD your God has commanded you, 18 **so that** (HERE IS THE CLEAR PURPOSE FOR THE DESTRUCTION) **they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God.** " A second reason (alluded to above) is given in Ge 15:16+ which says that the iniquity of the Amorite was not yet complete. Now, some 400 years later the iniquity of the Amorite (Sihon was king of the Amorites - Dt 2:24) was complete and thus God carried out the hardening as an act of divine judgement.

**Wiersbe** - Liberal critics of the Bible express concern at the way Israel destroyed entire nations, killed "innocent people," and confiscated their cities and their lands. But how "innocent" were these people? The critics of Scripture (and God) may not realize that the nations Israel encountered east of the Jordan and in Canaan itself were indescribably wicked. They were brutal people who sacrificed their own children to the false gods that they worshiped. Male and female prostitutes served in their temples and sexual intercourse was an important part of the Canaanite religion. These people were not left without a witness from God in creation (Rom. 1:18ff) as well as through the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who had lived in Canaan. Furthermore, the news of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, and Israel's deliverance through the Red Sea (Josh. 2:8-11) came to the ears of these people and bore witness that Jehovah alone is the true God. God had been long-suffering with these wicked nations even in Abraham's day, but now their time had run out and their judgment had come (Gen. 15:16). If these evil civilizations had not been exterminated, Israel would have been in constant danger of being tempted by pagan idolatry. In fact, that's what did

happen during the Period of the Judges, and God had to chasten His people to bring them back to the true God. Israel had important work to do on earth in producing the written Scriptures and bringing the Savior into the world, and imitating the pagan nations would have polluted Israel and threatened God's great plan of salvation for mankind. ([Be Equipped](#))

**Utterly destroyed** (destroyed completely)([02763](#))([charam](#)) to destroy, to doom, to devote, to ban. It designates a special act of consecration. It involves consecration of something or someone as a permanent and definitive offering for the sanctuary; or in war, the consecration of a city and its inhabitants to destruction and the carrying out of this destruction. The vb. denotes also the total annihilation of a population in war. This word is most commonly associated with the Israelites destroying the Canaanites upon their entry into the Promised Land (Deut. 7:2; Josh. 11:20). **Walter Kaiser** says the idea is that it is "something devoted to God; however, it is not a voluntary but an involuntary dedication. It is now set apart to be banned from the earth and will totally come back to God." In the Moabite Mesha inscription King Mesha uses the hi. of the vb., consecrate to destruction, to explain that he slaughtered all the inhabitants of Nebo because he made the city a devoted city to his god Chemosh.

Deuteronomy 3:6 "We utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women and children of every city.

Deuteronomy 7:2 and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

Deuteronomy 13:15 you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it and all that is in it and its cattle with the edge of the sword.

Deuteronomy 20:17 But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the LORD your God has commanded you,

**NET Note** - Divine judgment refers to God's designation of certain persons, places, and things as objects of his special wrath and judgment because, in his omniscience, he knows them to be impure and hopelessly unrepentant.

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#### **QUESTION - [Why did God condone such terrible violence in the Old Testament?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The fact that God commanded the killing of entire nations in the Old Testament has been the subject of harsh criticism from opponents of Christianity for some time. That there was violence in the Old Testament is indisputable. The question is whether Old Testament violence is justifiable and condoned by God. In his bestselling book *The God Delusion*, [atheist](#) Richard Dawkins refers to the God of the Old Testament as "a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser." Journalist Christopher Hitchens complains that the Old Testament contains a warrant for "indiscriminate massacre." Other critics of Christianity have leveled similar charges, accusing Yahweh of "crimes against humanity."

But are these criticisms valid? Is the God of the Old Testament a "moral monster" who arbitrarily commands genocide against innocent men, women, and children? Was His reaction to the sins of the Canaanites and the Amalekites a vicious form of "ethnic cleansing"? Or is it possible that God could have had morally sufficient reasons for ordering the destruction of these nations?

A basic knowledge of [Canaanite culture](#) reveals its inherent moral wickedness. The Canaanites were a brutal, aggressive people who engaged in bestiality, incest, and even child sacrifice. Deviant sexual acts were the norm. The Canaanites' sin was so repellent that God said, "The land vomited out its inhabitants" (Leviticus 18:25). Even so, the destruction was directed more at the Canaanite religion (Deuteronomy 7:3–5; 12:2–3) than at the Canaanite people per se. The judgment was not ethnically motivated. Individual Canaanites, like Rahab in Jericho, could still find that mercy follows repentance (Joshua 2). God's desire is that the wicked turn from their sin rather than die (Ezekiel 18:31–32; 33:11).

Besides dealing with national sins, God used the conquest of Canaan to create a religious/historical context in which He could eventually introduce the Messiah to the world. This Messiah would bring salvation not only to Israel, but also to Israel's enemies, including Canaan (Psalm 87:4–6; Mark 7:25–30).

It must be remembered that God gave the Canaanite people more than sufficient time to repent of their evil ways—over 400 years! The book of Hebrews tells us that the Canaanites were "disobedient," which implies moral culpability on their part (Hebrews 11:31). The Canaanites were aware of God's power (Joshua 2:10–11; 9:9) and could have sought repentance. Except in rare instances, they continued their rebellion against God until the bitter end.

But didn't God also command the Israelites to kill non-combatants? The biblical record is clear that He did. Here again, we must remember that, while it is true the Canaanite women did not fight, this in no way means they were innocent, as their seductive behavior in Numbers 25 indicates (Numbers 25:1–3). However, the question still remains: what about the children? This is not an easy question to answer, but we must keep several things in mind.

First, no human person (including infants) is truly innocent. The Scripture teaches that we are all born in sin (Psalm 51:5; 58:3). This implies that all people are morally culpable for Adam's sin in some way. Infants are just as condemned from sin as adults are.

Second, God is sovereign over all of life and can take it whenever He sees fit. God and God alone can give life, and God alone has the right to take it whenever He so chooses. In fact, He ultimately takes every person's life at death. It is not our life to begin with but God's. While it is wrong for us to take a life, except in instances of capital punishment, war, and self-defense, this does not mean that it is wrong for God to do so. We intuitively recognize this when we accuse some person or authority who takes human life as "playing God." God is under no obligation to extend anyone's life for even another day. How and when we die is completely up to Him.

Third, an argument could be made that it would have been cruel for God to take the lives of all the Canaanites except the infants and children. Without the protection and support of their parents, the infants and small children were likely to face death anyway due to starvation. The chances of survival for an orphan in the ancient Near East were not good.

Finally, the children of Canaan would have likely grown up sympathetic to the evil religions their parents had practiced. It was time for the culture of idolatry and perversion to end in Canaan, and God wanted to use Israel to end it. Also, the orphaned children of Canaan would naturally have grown up resentful of the Israelites. Likely, some would have later sought to avenge the "unjust" treatment of their parents and return Canaan to paganism.

It's also worth considering the eternal state of those infants killed in Canaan. If God took them before the age of moral accountability, then they went straight to heaven (as we believe). Those children are in a far better place than if they had lived into adulthood as Canaanites.

Surely, the issue of God commanding violence in the Old Testament is difficult. However, we must remember that God sees things from an eternal perspective, and His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8–9). The apostle Paul tells us that God is both kind and severe (Romans 11:22). While it is true that God's holy character demands that sin be punished, His grace and mercy remain extended to those who are willing to repent and be saved. The Canaanite destruction provides us with a sober reminder that, while our God is gracious and merciful, He is also a God of holiness and wrath. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### Related Resources:

- [Why did God command the Israelites to completely destroy the Midianites in Numbers 31:17? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org) (Speaks to rationale for total destruction).
- [What does it mean that "the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure" \(Genesis 15:16\)? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### Deuteronomy 2:35 "We took only the animals as our booty and the spoil of the cities which we had captured."

- De 20:14 Nu 31:9-11 Jos 8:27
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**We took only the animals as our booty and the spoil of the cities which we had captured**- No material things were taken, including no idols.

**Utley on booty and the spoil** - Here is an example of a limited ban (e.g., 3:6–7; Josh. 8:2, 27; 11:14). They could take some spoils after they destroyed the people. This was a part of the OT concept of holy war. The battle belonged to YHWH and so, too, the spoils (e.g., Jericho, Joshua 7:1-26).

**BOOTY** boot' i (0962, בֹּטַי). Booty occurs exclusively in the OT, usually tr. from baz, but also from malkoah, shalal, and meshissah. Booty was the proportionate share of spoils suitable for personal service to the captor, both soldier and civilian, after a proportion was reserved for the Levites and for "a tribute unto the Lord." It comprised cattle, sheep, camels, asses, women, children, clothing, armor, jewelry, and money; but often silver, gold, and vessels of brass were placed in the house of the Lord. The earliest mention of booty is in Numbers 31 with reference to Moses' instruction concerning "The booty remaining of the spoil" which the Israelite warriors took in victory over the Midianites. The precedent Moses set in equitable distribution (Num 31:27) was followed by Joshua in the conquest of Canaan (Deut 2:35; 3:7; Josh 8:2, 27; 11:14) and by David in the defeat

of the Amalekite raiders (1 Sam 30:24). (Cf. Jer 49:32; Nah 3:1; Hab 2:7.)

**Spoil** (07998) (**shalal** from verb **shalal** = to spoil or plunder) means literally means "prey," which an animal tracks down, kills, and eats (Ge 49:27), but came to mean spoil, loot, plunder, booty. **Booty** is the wealth of a person which is seized by another and includes anything and everything a soldier or army captures from an enemy and carries off. In the Hebrew Bible, the only context in which this act is allowed is in the context of war and was the main compensation for most soldiers in armies throughout history. Shalal may also represent "private gain" (Pr 31:11) The Lord will make the nations plunder for His people in Zion (Zech. 2:9; Zech 14:1). Note that spoil was not allowed when the Lord required a strict following of the **herem principle** (see note below) (under the ban, devoted to the LORD, to total destruction; cf. the story of **Achan** in Josh 7:1-26 and **Saul** in 1 Sa 15:1-35).

Persons were acceptable booty (Deut. 20:14; 2 Chr. 28:8; Jer. 45:5, 50:10; Zech. 2:9). Livestock and clothing were common types of booty (Judg. 5:30; 1 Sam. 14:32; Jer. 49:32). The rest of the objects of booty are covered under the nebulous rubric, "the booty of the city" (Josh. 8:2). Booty probably consisted of any moveable property which the individual could carry.

**Expositor's Bible Commentary – The herem principle**--חֶרֶם ("a devoted thing," and, consequently, a thing to be destroyed)--was an ancient Near Eastern practice that in its complete application required the extermination of everyone and everything that could be destroyed. Things metallic that could not be destroyed, Israel put in a place under the Lord's protection. This destruction kept captured people and things from the people but put them into the hands of God. The practice, however, was sometimes limited by the Lord's decree, as here, where the livestock and other valuable plunder were kept by the Israelites. A variation in application of herem can be seen in the rules for war in 20:10-18. This was one of the means used to bring destruction on the sinful inhabitants of Canaan and to isolate the Israelites from them and their wicked practices. The verb חֶרֶם (haram) sometimes carries the sense of "devote." Someone or something is devoted to the Lord; i.e., it is given altogether to the Lord. From this stems the practice of destroying whoever or whatever is devoted, for then it goes to God and cannot be used by the giver. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

#### Related Resource:

- [What did it mean to be devoted to destruction? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Shalal** - 65v = booty(11), gain(1), plunder(3), possessions(1), spoil(57), spoiler(1). Gen. 49:27; Exod. 15:9; Num. 31:11; Num. 31:12; Deut. 2:35; Deut. 3:7; Deut. 13:16; Deut. 20:14; Jos. 7:21; Jos. 8:2; Jos. 8:27; Jos. 11:14; Jos. 22:8; Jdg. 5:30; Jdg. 8:24; Jdg. 8:25; 1 Sam. 14:30; 1 Sam. 14:32; 1 Sam. 15:19; 1 Sam. 15:21; 1 Sam. 30:16; 1 Sam. 30:19; 1 Sam. 30:20; 1 Sam. 30:22; 1 Sam. 30:26; 2 Sam. 3:22; 2 Sam. 8:12; 2 Sam. 12:30; 2 Ki. 3:23; 1 Chr. 20:2; 1 Chr. 26:27; 2 Chr. 14:13; 2 Chr. 15:11; 2 Chr. 20:25; 2 Chr. 24:23; 2 Chr. 28:8; 2 Chr. 28:15; Est. 3:13; Est. 8:11; Ps. 68:12; Ps. 119:162; Prov. 1:13; Prov. 16:19; Prov. 31:11; Isa. 8:1; Isa. 8:4; Isa. 9:3; Isa. 10:2; Isa. 10:6; Isa. 33:4; Isa. 33:23; Isa. 53:12; Jer. 21:9; Jer. 38:2; Jer. 39:18; Jer. 45:5; Jer. 49:32; Jer. 50:10; Ezek. 7:21; Ezek. 29:19; Ezek. 38:12; Ezek. 38:13; Dan. 11:24; Zech. 2:9; Zech. 14:1

**Deuteronomy 2:36** "From Aroer which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon and from the city which is in the valley, even to Gilead, there was no city that was too high for us; the LORD our God delivered all over to us.

- **Aroer:** De 3:12 4:48 Jos 13:9 Isa 17:2 Jer 48:19
- **not:** Jos 1:5 Ps 44:3 Isa 41:15,16 Ro 8:31
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### NO WALL TOO HIGH TO CLIMB WHEN EMPOWERED BY GOD

**From Aroer which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon**([see picture](#)) **and from the city which is in the valley, even to Gilead, there was no city that was too high for us** - The fact that there was **there was no city that was too high for us** recalls the faithless declaration of 10 (of the 12) spies who said "the people who live in the land are strong, and the **cities are fortified** and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there." (Nu 13:28+). Summed up - Walls too tall. People too tall! This

description of the cities is amplified in Dt 1:28+ adding that they were "**fortified** (or walled) **to heaven**." This was clearly a declaration reflecting the unbelief of the first generation. In stark contrast, the declaration of the new generation is one of belief. Stated another way, the second generation believed God and therefore obeyed God. Faith that is genuine is faith that obeys. See [Relationship of faith and obedience](#) and [Obedience of faith](#) (phrase in Ro 1:5 and Ro 16:26+).

The message is that we are to walk by faith, not by sight.

**The LORD our God delivered all over to us** - Divine deliverance is a key thought in this section (Dt 2:30, 31, 33). As Proverbs 21:31 says "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But victory belongs to the LORD." **Delivered** is [nathan](#) which the Septuagint translates with [paradidomi](#) meaning to give one over to the power of another. God gave Israel a "special delivery" so to speak and Israel received it in faith and hence received the blessing of the land as their possession. Obedience to God is always the road to the blessing of God.

**NET Note - Aroer.** Now known as 'Ara'ir on the northern edge of the Arnon river, Aroer marked the southern limit of Moab and, later, of the allotment of the tribe of Reuben (Josh 13:9, 16).

[Aroer](#) - City on north rim of Arnon Gorge ([see map above](#)) east of Dead Sea on southern boundary of territory Israel claimed east of the Jordan River (Joshua 13:9). It figured in territorial claims of Reuben (Joshua 13:16), though the tribe of Gad originally built it (Nu 32:34). Compare Deuteronomy 3:12. Sihon, king of the Amorites, ruled it prior to Israel's conquest (Deut 4:48; Joshua 12:2). Israel claimed a three hundred year history in the area (Judges 11:26). Jehu's sins brought God's punishment on Israel, including the loss of Aroer to Hazael of Damascus (about 840 B.C.) (2 Kings 10:33). Compare Isaiah 17:2. Jeremiah asked Aroer to witness God's coming judgment on Moab (Jeremiah 48:19). The Moabites had gained control of Aroer under King Mesha, as his inscription on the Moabite Stone witnesses (about 850 B.C.). Spanish excavations show Aroer to have been more a border fortress than a major city. It is located at Khirbet Arair two and one-half miles east of the highway along the Arnon River. Aroer - 16x - Num. 32:34; Deut. 2:36; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 4:48; Jos. 12:2; Jos. 13:9; Jos. 13:16; Jos. 13:25; Jdg. 11:26; Jdg. 11:33; 1 Sam. 30:28; 2 Sam. 24:5; 2 Ki. 10:33; 1 Chr. 5:8; Isa. 17:2; Jer. 48:19

**Deuteronomy 2:37 "Only you did not go near to the land of the sons of Ammon, all along the river Jabbok and the cities of the hill country, and wherever the LORD our God had commanded us.**

- **go near to the land** De 2:5,9,19 3:16 Jud 11:15
- **Jabbok** ([map](#)): Ge 32:22 Nu 21:24 Jos 12:2
- [Deuteronomy 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 2:4-5+ Command the people, saying, "You will pass through the territory of your brothers the sons of **Esau** who live in Seir (EDOM); and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful; 5 do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep because I **have given** Mount Seir to **Esau** (BROTHER OF JACOB/ISRAEL) as a possession.

Deuteronomy 2:9+ "Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass **Moab**, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I **have given** Ar to the **sons of Lot** (MOAB AND AMMON) **as a possession.**'

Deuteronomy 2:19+ 'When you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I **have given** it to the **sons of Lot** MOAB AND AMMON) **as a possession.**'

Land of Ammon (click to enlarge)

**Only you did not go near to the land of the sons of Ammon, all along the river Jabbok ([map](#)): and the cities of the hill country, and wherever the LORD our God had commanded us** - The second generation were off to an excellent start because they had obeyed Yahweh's commands to sack Sihon and spare Edom, Moab and Ammon ([see passages above](#)). But as time would prove, a good beginning does not guarantee a good ending.