

Parsha: Devarim

These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel on the other side of the Jordan, in the desert, in the Aravah, opposite Suf, between Paran and Tofel, Lavan, Chatzerot and Di-Zahav.

It is eleven days' journey from Horeb (Sinai) by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-Barnea.

It came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that G-d had given him in commandment to them

—after he had slain Sichon the king of the Emorite, who dwelt in Cheshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashtarot in Edrei—

Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this Torah, saying:

The L-rd our G-d spoke to us in Horeb, saying: “You have long enough stayed at this mountain.

“Turn away, and take your journey, and go to the mountain of the Emorite, and to all the places near it: in the plain, in the hills, in the lowland, in the Negev and by the seaside; to the land of the Canaanites and the Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which G-d swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give to them and to their seed after them.”

Moses Delegates the Leadership of Israel

I spoke to you at that time, saying: “I am not able to bear you alone.

“The L-rd your G-d has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day like the stars of heaven for multitude. (May the L-rd, the G-d of your fathers, make you a thousand times so many more as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you!)

“How can I alone bear your care, your burden and your strife?

“Bring wise and understanding men, known among your tribes, and I will place them at your head.”

You answered me, and said: “It is good, this thing which you have spoken, to do.”

So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men and known, and made them heads over you: captains over thousands, captains over hundreds, captains over fifties and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

I charged your judges at that time, saying: "Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Do not give anyone special recognition when rendering judgment; hear the small as well as the great; fear no man; for the judgment is G-d's. And the thing that is too hard for you, bring it to me, and I will hear it."

I commanded you at that time all the things which you should do.

The Sending of the Spies

We departed from Horeb, and we went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw, by the way of the mountain of the Emorite, as the L-rd our G-d commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-Barnea.

I said to you: "You have come to the mountain of the Emorite, which the L-rd our G-d gives to us. Behold, the L-rd your G-d has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the L-rd, the G-d of your fathers has said to you; fear not, nor be discouraged."

You all approached me, and said: "We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us back word by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come."

The thing pleased me well; so I took twelve men of you, one for a tribe. They turned and went up to the mountain, and came to the wadi of Eshkol, and searched it out.

They took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down to us, and brought us back word, and said: It is a good land which the L-rd our G-d gives us.

Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the L-rd your G-d.

You murmured in your tents, and said: "Because G-d hates us, He has brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Emori, to destroy us. Whither shall we go up? Our brethren have made our heart faint, saying: The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the giants there."

Then I said to you: "Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The L-rd your G-d who goes before you, He shall fight for you, according to all that He did for you in Egypt before your eyes; and in the wilderness, where you have seen how that G-d your G-d carried you, as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went, until you came to this place!"

Yet in this thing you did not believe the L-rd your G-d, who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way you should go, and in a cloud by day.

G-d Decrees that Moses' Generation Shall Not Enter the Land

And G-d heard the voice of your words, and was angry, and swore, saying: "Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land, which I swore to give to your fathers. Save Caleb the son of Yefunne; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he has trodden upon, and to his children, because he has wholly followed G-d."

Also with me was G-d angry for your sakes, saying: "You, too, shall not enter there."

"Rather, Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it."

"And your little ones, concerning whom you said they should be a prey, and your children who in that day had no knowledge of good and evil, they shall go in there, and to them will I give it, and they shall possess it."

"But as for you, turn, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way of the Sea of Suf."

The Attempt to Storm the Land

Then you answered and said to me: "We have sinned against G-d; we will go up and fight, according to all that the L-rd our G-d commanded us." And you girded on every man his weapons of war, and ventured to go up into the hill.

And G-d said to me: "Say to them: Neither go up, nor fight; for I am not among you; lest you be smitten before your enemies."

So I spoke to you; and you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of G-d, and went presumptuously up into the hill.

And the Emori, who dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and beat you down in Se'ir, as far as Horma.

And you returned and wept before G-d; but G-d would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear to you. So you dwelled in Kadesh many days, according to the days that you abode there. Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Sea of Suf, as G-d spoke to me; and we went about mount Se'ir many days.

After Forty Years in the Desert

G-d spoke to me, saying: "You have compassed this mountain long enough. Turn northwards."

"And command the people, saying: You are to pass through the border of your brethren the children of Esau, who dwell in Se'ir; and they shall be afraid of you: take good heed to

yourselves. Do not provoke them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Se'ir to Esau for a possession.

"You shall buy food of them for money, that you may eat; and you shall also buy water of them for money, that you may drink.

"For the L-rd your G-d has blessed you in all the work of your hand; He knows your walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the L-rd your G-d has been with you, you have lacked nothing."

And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, who dwelt in Se'ir, through the way of the Arava from Elat and from Etzyon-Gever, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

Bypassing Moab

And G-d said to me: "Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar to the children of Lot for a possession.

(The Emim dwelt there in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, like the Anaqim; who also were considered Refa'im as the Anaqim; but the Moabim call them Emim. The Horim also dwelt in Se'ir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, and they destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place; as Israel did to the land of his possession, which G-d gave to them.)

"Now rise up, and get you over the wadi Zered." And we went over the wadi Zered.

And the days in which we came from Kadesh-Barnea, until we were come over the wadi Zered, were thirty eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as G-d swore to them. For indeed the hand of G-d was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed. So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people.

Bypassing Ammon

And, that G-d spoke to me, saying: "You are to pass over through Ar, the border of Moab, this day.

"And when you come near, opposite the children of Ammon, harass them not, nor contend with them; for I will not give you of the land of the children of Ammon any possession, because I have given it to the children of Lot for a possession.

(That also was considered a land of Refa'im: Refa'im dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonim call them Zamzumim. A people great, and many, and tall, like the Anaqim; but G-d

destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their place; as He did to the children of Esau, who dwelt in Se'ir, when he destroyed the Horim from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead until this very day. And the Avvim who dwelt in Hazerim, as far as 'Azza; Kaftorim who came from Kaftor, destroyed them and dwelt in their stead.)

War with the Emori

"Rise up, take your journey, and pass over the wadi Arnon; behold, I have given into your hand Sichon the Emorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.

"This day will I begin to put the dread of you and the fear of you upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of you, and shall tremble, and quake because of you."

And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemot to Sichon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying:

"Let me pass through your land: I will go along by the high way, I will neither turn to the right hand nor to the left. You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will pass through with those who follow me (as the children of Esau who dwell in Se'ir, and the Moabim who dwell in Ar, did to me) until I shall pass over the Jordan into the land which the L-rd our G-d gives us."

But Sichon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for G-d your G-d hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into your hand, as is apparent this day.

And G-d said to me: "Behold, I have begun to give Sichon and his land before you; begin to possess, that you may inherit his land."

Then Sichon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Yahaz.

And the L-rd our G-d delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time, and devoted to destruction every city, the men, and the women, and the little ones; we left none remaining; only the cattle we took for a prey to ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.

From Aro'er, which is by the edge of the wadi of Arnon, and from the city that is by the wadi, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us: G-d our G-d delivered all to us:

Only to the land of the children of Ammon you did not come, nor to any place of the torrent of Yabbok, nor to the cities in the mountains, nor to whatever place G-d our G-d forbade us.

The Battle at Bashan

Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan; and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edre'i.

And G-d said to me: "Fear him not; for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, into your hand; and you shall do to him as you did to Sichon king of the Emori, who dwelt at Heshbon."

So the L-rd our G-d delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people; and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, sixty cities, all the region of Argov, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these cities were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars; besides unwall'd towns a great many. And we devoted them to destruction, as we did to Sichon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children, of every city. But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.

And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Emori the land that was on this side of the Jordan, from the wadi of Arnon to mount Hermon; (which Hermon the Zidonim call Siryon; and the Emori call it Senir;) all the cities of the plain, and all Gilaad, and all Bashan, as far as Salkha and Edre'i, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Refa'im; behold, his bed is a bed of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? Nine cubits is the length of it, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

Two and a Half Tribes Receive the Lands East of the Jordan

And this land, which we possessed at that time, from Aro'er, which is by the wadi Arnon, and half mount Gilaad, and its cities, I gave to the Reubenites and to the Gaddites.

And the rest of Gilaad, and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, I gave to the half tribe of Menasseh; all the region of Argov, with all Bashan, which was called the land of Refa'im. Ya'ir the son of Menasseh took all the country of Argov as far as the border of the Geshuri and the Ma'akhati; and called them (that is the Bashan) after his name, Havvot-Ya'ir, to this day. And I gave Gil'ad to Machir.

And to the the Reubenites and to the Gadites I gave from Gil'ad to the wadi Arnon, the middle of the wadi as a border, as far as the torrent of Yabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon; the Arava also and the Jordan, as a border, from Kinneret as far as the Sea of the Arava, even the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisga eastward.

And I commanded you at that time, saying: "The L-rd your G-d has given you this land to possess it; [but first you must] pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all that are fit for the war. Only your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (for I know that you

have much cattle), shall abide in your cities which I have given you. Until G-d gives rest to your brethren, as well as to you, and until they also possess the land which the L-rd our G-d has given them beyond the Jordan; then shall you return every man to his possession, which I have given you.

And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying: "Your eyes have seen all that G-d your G-d has done to these two kings; so shall G-d do to all the kingdoms into which you will pass. You shall not fear them: for the L-rd your G-d, He shall fight for you."