

October 27, 2019 - Deut. 2:2-30 - Edom, Moab, Ammon and the Rephaim
Torah Reading: Deuteronomy 2:2-30 - Edom, Moab, Ammon and the Rephaim
Psalm 108
Haftarah: Obadiah 1:21 + Micah 3:9 -4:5

Moses continues to recount the history of Israel's journey.

Israel came to Mt. Seir towards the close of the 38 years, before they came to Kadesh, from whence they sent messengers to Edom, which they went round about for several days.

Deuteronomy 2:2-3 - "And the LORD spake unto me, saying, Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward."

This is another "Enough!" like the previous one said at Mt. Sinai. God is eager for His people to gain their inheritance in the Promised Land.

Special Status for Edom, Moab and Ammon

Deuteronomy 2:4-5 - "And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession."

i.e. pass along the edge or boundary of Edom, not through it, because they will fear that you might want to invade and dispossess them.

Edom was not part of Israel's promised inheritance.

- **Joshua 24:4** - "I apportioned to Esau the hill country of Seir"

Rashi - I gave ten nations to Abraham, seven of them for you [the seven of Canaan], and the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites (Gen. 15:18-21), who are Ammon, Moab, and Seir. One of them is for Esau, and the other two are for the children of Lot (Gen. Rabbah 44). As a reward [for Lot] for going with him [Abraham] to Egypt and for keeping silent when Abraham said, regarding his wife, "She is my sister," He treated him [Lot] as his [Abraham's] son [to inherit part of the land promised to Abraham] (Gen. Rabbah 44).

Background to Settlement

In the days of Abraham, a coalition of forces led by Chedorlaomer king of Elam defeated "the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim" (**Genesis 14:5**). These were all descendants of the mysterious Nephilim, described as fallen angels who produced offspring with human women. (The source of

the idea of half divine, half human heroes like Hercules)

The land was later settled by the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites. Then God promised the land of these tribes to Abraham, along with the Canaanite tribes in the Promised Land. So they along with the Horim were eventually dispossessed by the Edomites - descendants of Esau - and by Moab and the Ammonites - descendants of Lot. (**Genesis 15:18-21**). i.e. they were "given to Abraham" through his descendants by way of Esau and Lot.

Remnants of the Rephaim and other "giant" races like the Zamzummin, the Anakim and the Emim who were originally in the land were mixed in with the current tribes. For instance, Og, Amorite king of Bashan, was described as a "giant" - a descendant of the Rephaim.

Destruction Promised for Edom

But, note that in the end, although the Edomites, who were the implacable enemies of Israel, will be destroyed (**Ezekiel 35**) or "made desolate" and Israel will possess what Edom had.

See the haftarah reading for this passage:

- **Obadiah 1:17, 21** - "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. ... And saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

Or, as in the NET: "Those who have been saved/delivered will go up on Mount Zion in order to rule over Esau's mountain. Then the LORD will reign as King!"

Rashi - [I will not give you of their land] until the day arrives when the foot will tread upon the Mount of Olives [the Messianic era], as it said: "And His [God's] feet will [figuratively] stand [on that day upon the Mount of Olives]" (Zech. 14:4).

Why is Esau an Enemy of God?

Jacob and Esau as twins struggled against each other even in the womb. (**Genesis 25:22-23**)

Esau/Edom/Adam is a type of the flesh - the *sarx* in Greek which is usually depicted at war with the Spirit.

- **Galatians 5:17** - "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish."

Esau despised his spiritual birthright (**Genesis 25:30-33**), exchanging it for a bowl of pottage (or by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil). His god was his

belly, or appetites (**Philippians 3:19**).

He uses oppression, “overdriving” the flock (**Genesis 33:13**).

Esau Always “Sorry,” but Never Repentant:

Genesis 27:38 - “And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.”

See **Hebrews 12:17** - “For ye know how that afterward, when he (Esau) would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

God said ‘Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated’

Romans 9:10-13 - “And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

Malachi 1:2-3 - “‘I have loved you,’ says the LORD. But you say, ‘How have You loved us?’ ‘Was not Esau Jacob's brother?’ declares the LORD. ‘Yet I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness.’”

A paradox: Spiritually, the self-seeking of the flesh/Edom will be totally destroyed or “made desolate” - and yet Christ will possess the “land” that had belonged to Edom. This happens when we go to the cross, accept our death, and see God possess the “land” that was once controlled by the flesh or the “evil inclination.”

Don't be Debtors to the Flesh

Deuteronomy 2:6-7 - "Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink. For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing."

Rashi - you should not be ungrateful for His goodness [to you] by acting as though you were poor. Rather, show yourselves as rich people. You don't have to beg.

Paul directly references this idea:

- **Romans 8:12** - "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh."

To ask anything of the Edomites would be to become “debtors to the flesh.”

Deuteronomy 2:9 - "And the LORD said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession."

Rashi - God forbade Israel only to wage war against Moab. However, Israel did frighten them, appearing before them, armed for battle. Therefore, it is written, “And Moab was very frightened of the people” (Numbers 22:3) because Israel plundered and looted them [the Amorites? See below].

The Rephaim

Deuteronomy 2:10-12 - "The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; Which also were accounted giants (Rephaim), as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims. The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them."

(See below)

The Generation that Died in the Wilderness

Deuteronomy 2:14 - "And the space in which we came from Kadeshbarnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD swore unto them. For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed."

Don't Distress the Ammonites

Deuteronomy 2:19 - "And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession. (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims; A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead:"

Rashi - Regarding the children of Ammon, however, it says (verse 19), “Do not provoke them”-with any kind of provocation, as a reward for the modesty shown by their ancestress [Lot’s younger daughter], who did not publicize her father’s conduct, as did his elder daughter, who named her son Moab [מוֹאָב like מֵאָב, “from the father”] (Baba Kamma 38b).

'Giants Dwelt Therein in Old Time': The Rephaim

Genesis 6:4 - "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

Recall that the giants who were seen by the spies were called Nephilim - "fallen ones" = to fall down, cast down. All these giant races were descended from the Fallen Angels who co-habited with the children of men in an attempt to pollute the lineage of Messiah, who was destined to destroy them.

- **Numbers 13:33** - "And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Zamzummims - they are thought to be the same with the Zuzims in **Genesis 14:5**. The word signifies contrivers of evil and terrible things; they were inventors of wickedness, crafty and subtle in forming wicked and mischievous designs, which struck terror into people.

The giant Anakim, Emim, Zamzummim and later Goliath were all cousins, descended from the original Nephilim.

All these stories of earlier peoples being ejected by Moabites, Edomites and Ammonites are stated to encourage the children of Israel to hope and believe that they should be able to dispossess the Canaanites, and inherit their land; such dispossessions having been very frequent, when God willed it.

The mysterious Rephaim are mentioned here as previous inhabitants because lurking in the background of humanity's resistance to God and His Spirit is the deception of Satan's lies. The fallen Angels are emblematic of the subsequent fall of Adam and Eve.

Demons were said to be the spirits of the offspring of the fallen angels, who after death were disembodied and willing to inhabit any body, even swine (**Matthew 8:31**).

The Septuagint calls them *gigantes* and *titanes*. Rephaim also designates "shades" or "spirits" (**Isaiah 26:14; Psalm 88:11**), inhabitants of the netherworld (**Proverbs 9:18**). In Ugaritic and Phoenician texts, they are divine in origin.

Rashi notes that these were a different group of Rephaim than those in the Promised Land given over to Abraham as his inheritance (**Genesis 15:20**).

Other Lords...

Isaiah speaks of these:

- **Isaiah 26:13-14** - "O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead, they shall not

live; they are deceased (*rephaim*), they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.”

“deceased” = *rapha* - cast down (the root for Rephaim).

Who are the Rephaim in your life? The Rephaim / Nephilim etc. represent Satan’s deceptions “mated” or mixed with your human reasoning, your “self,” which once had dominion in your “land” - the self-seeking, evil inclination that seduced Eve in the Garden.

The Rephaim represent the inner voices and spirits that established your values and controlled your life before you responded to the Gospel. When they try to reassert themselves, you can speak this passage from Isaiah to the voices in your head: “They are cast down - they shall not rise!”

For more, see the note “Fallen Angels and Evil Spirits”

This all remains mysterious to us. All we need to know is that He “delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son” (**Colossians 1:13**).

To delve too deeply into the kingdom of darkness that we’ve been saved *out of* may distract us from the One Who saved us and the Kingdom we’ve been translated *into*.

- **Luke 10:20** - “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”

- **Psalms 131:1** - “...neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.”

God Orders Moses to Attack Sihon, king of Heshbon

Deuteronomy 2:24-25 - "Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, 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 thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee."

‘The dread of thee and the fear of thee’

Rashi - This [statement that nations under the whole heaven will fear the Israelites] teaches that the sun stood still for Moses on the day of the battle with Sihon, and the matter became [consequently] known under the entire heaven [that is, to the whole world] (Avodah Zarah 25a).

Deuteronomy 2:26-27 - "And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth

unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying, Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the high way, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left."

This was a general phrase for Israel's certain victory:

- **Deuteronomy 11:25** - "There shall no man be able to stand before you: Jehovah your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath spoken unto you."

Rashi - Moses said to God, "I learned this from You, Who preceded (תִּמְדִּק) the world. You could have sent one flash of lightning to consume the Egyptians, but instead, You sent me from the desert to Pharaoh. saying, (Exod. 5:1) 'Let my people go' patiently." (Midrash Tanchuma)

Deuteronomy 2:30 - "But Sihon, king of Heshbon, did not wish to let us pass by him, for the Lord your God caused his spirit to be hardened and his heart to be obstinate, in order that He would give him into your hand, as this day."