DEUTERONOMY

Chapter 3

*Defeat of Og King of Bashan*

**Next we turned and went up along the road toward Bashan, and Og king of Bashan with his whole army marched out to meet us in battle at Edrei. 2 The Lord said to me, “Do not be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you with his whole army and his land. Do to him what you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon.” 3 So the Lord our God also gave into our hands Og king of Bashan and all his army. We struck them down, leaving no survivors. 4 At that time we took all his cities. There was not one of the sixty cities that we did not take from them—the whole region of Argob, Og’s kingdom in Bashan. 5 All these cities were fortified with high walls and with gates and bars, and there were also a great many unwalled villages. 6 We completely destroyed them, as we had done with Sihon king of Heshbon, destroying every city—men, women and children. 7 But all the livestock and the plunder from their cities we carried off for ourselves. 8 So at that time we took from these two kings of the Amorites the territory east of the Jordan, from the Arnon Gorge as far as Mount Hermon. 9 (Hermon is called Sirion by the Sidonians; the Amorites call it Senir.) 10 We took all the towns on the plateau, and all Gilead, and all Bashan as far as Salecah and Edrei, towns of Og’s kingdom in Bashan. 11 (Only Og king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaites. His bed was made of iron and was more than thirteen feet long and six feet wide. It is still in Rabbah of the Ammonites.)**

**3:1–22** Restates Nu 21:31–35. God defeats Og’s army and the 60 fortified cities in Argob. To prevent a counterattack, all inhabitants were completely destroyed. (TLSB)

**3:1** *Bashan*. Northeast of the Sea of Chinnereth; known today as the Golan Heights. At the time of Moses, it was known for its thick forest and lush pastures. (TLSB)

*Edrei*. Site of Og’s defeat. (TLSB)

**3:3** *gave into our hands Og.* As in 2:26–37. (CSB)

**3:4** *sixty cities.* The cities were large and walled (1Ki 4:13), implying a heavily populated territory (see v. 5). (CSB)

*region of Argob.* An otherwise unidentified area in Bashan (see vv. 13–14; 1Ki 4:13). (CSB)

A section of the tableland of Bashan. (TLSB)

**3:5** *high walls, gates, and bars*. Archaeologists have discovered stone doors 18 in thick secured by bars, and walls 4 ft thick built from stacks of rocks without cement. (TLSB)

**3:6–7** See note on 2:34. (CSB)

**3:7** *plunder*. God often provided livestock and spoils as recompense for army service (2:35; Jsh 8:2). (TLSB)

**3:8** *Mount Hermon.* Snowcapped throughout the year and rising to a height of over 9,200 feet, it is one of the most prominent and beautiful mountains in Lebanon. (CSB)

Over 9,000 ft high and visible from the heights of Moab, this peak in the Anti-Lebanon range marked the northern limits of Israel’s conquests (Jsh 11:17). (TLSB)

**3:9** *Sirion.* This name for Mount Hermon is found also in a Canaanite document contemporary with Moses. (CSB)

*Senir.* This name for Mount Hermon is also found in Assyrian sources. (CSB)

**3:10** *Salecah.* A city marking the eastern boundary of Bashan (see Jos 13:11). (CSB)

**3:11** *bed … of iron.* Sarcophagi (stone coffins) of basalt have been found in Bashan, and the Hebrew for “bed” (see NIV text note) and “iron” may reflect this. If an actual bed, it was probably made of wood but with certain iron fixtures, as were the “iron chariots” (see note on Jos 17:16). (CSB)

Hbr word for “bed” may also mean “sarcophagus.” In this victory, we again see God at work. (TLSB)

*Rabbah of the Ammonites.* Called Philadelphia in NT times, Rabbah was the capital of ancient Ammon (Am 1:13–14). Today its name is Amman, the capital of the kingdom of Jordan. (CSB)

*cubits* … *common cubit*. Og’s bed was about 7 × 15 ft. (TLSB)

*Division of the Land*

**12 Of the land that we took over at that time, I gave the Reubenites and the Gadites the territory north of Aroer by the Arnon Gorge, including half the hill country of Gilead, together with its towns. 13 The rest of Gilead and also all of Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to the half tribe of Manasseh. (The whole region of Argob in Bashan used to be known as a land of the Rephaites. 14 Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, took the whole region of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites; it was named after him, so that to this day Bashan is called Havvoth Jair.) 15 And I gave Gilead to Makir. 16 But to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave the territory extending from Gilead down to the Arnon Gorge (the middle of the gorge being the border) and out to the Jabbok River, which is the border of the Ammonites. 17 Its western border was the Jordan in the Arabah, from Kinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), below the slopes of Pisgah.18 I commanded you at that time: “The Lord your God has given you this land to take possession of it. But all your able-bodied men, armed for battle, must cross over ahead of your brother Israelites. 19 However, your wives, your children and your livestock (I know you have much livestock) may stay in the towns I have given you, 20 until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they too have taken over the land that the Lord your God is giving them, across the Jordan. After that, each of you may go back to the possession I have given you.”**

**3:12–20** See Nu 32; 34:13–15. (CSB)

**3:12** Territory given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad. (TLSB)

**3:14–17** For a territorial breakdown of the tribes, as well as that of the Moabites and the Edomites. Archaeologists have discovered remains of settlements from c 1500 to 1200 BC. These include new cultural features evidenced by the types of pottery and the homes. These features are characteristic of Israelite settlements west of the Jordan. (TLSB)

**3:14** *Jair … Havvoth Jair.* See NIV text note; see also note on Jdg 10:3. (CSB)

Jair led the attack against the Argob. (TLSB)

*the Geshurites and the Maacathites.* Two comparatively small kingdoms, Geshur was east of the Sea of Galilee and Maacah was east of the Waters of Merom (see note on Jos 11:5) and north of Geshur. (CSB)

**3:15** *Makir.* See note on Ge 50:23. (CSB)

Descendants of Machir, son of Manasseh (Gn 50:23). (TLSB)

**3:17** *Kinnereth.* See note on Mk 1:16. (CSB)

*Pisgah.* On the edge of the high plateau overlooking the Dead Sea from the east. (CSB)

**3:18** *All* … *shall cross over*. Did not empty the region of all men over age 20. Joshua records that about 40,000 troops from Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed the Jordan and prepared to do battle with the Canaanites (Jsh 4:13). This figure constitutes c 37 percent of the three tribes’ available fighting force (Nu 1:20–21, 24–25, 34–35). God promised the Transjordan to Abraham (Gn 15:18). (TLSB)

**3:19** *much livestock*. God presented the tribes of Reuben and Gad with livestock and plunder for their conquest of Sihon and Og (2:35; 3:7). (TLSB)

**3:20** *rest.* A peaceful situation—free from external threat and oppression, and untroubled within by conflict, famine or plague (see 12:9–10; 25:19; see also notes on Jos 1:13; 1Ki 5:4; Heb 4:1–11). (CSB)

Only when Canaan is subdued will the fighting men from Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh return to their families. (TLSB)

*Moses Forbidden to Cross the Jordan*

**21 At that time I commanded Joshua: “You have seen with your own eyes all that the Lord your God has done to these two kings. The Lord will do the same to all the kingdoms over there where you are going. 22 Do not be afraid of them; the Lord your God himself will fight for you.” 23 At that time I pleaded with the Lord: 24 “O Sovereign Lord, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do? 25 Let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan—that fine hill country and Lebanon.” 26 But because of you the Lord was angry with me and would not listen to me. “That is enough,” the Lord said. “Do not speak to me anymore about this matter. 27 Go up to the top of Pisgah and look west and north and south and east. Look at the land with your own eyes, since you are not going to cross this Jordan. 28 But commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead this people across and will cause them to inherit the land that you will see.” 29 So we stayed in the valley near Beth Peor.**

**3:21** *commanded Joshua*. Restates Joshua’s call (Nu 27:18–23). Moses also encourages Joshua by reviewing two key issues: (1) what God has already done, and (2) what God promises to do in the future. (TLSB)

**3:22** *God himself.* The conquest narratives emphasize the truth that without the Lord’s help Israel’s victory would be impossible. The Lord’s power, not Israel’s unaided strength, achieved victory. Moses bolstered Israel’s resolve and faith by this assurance (see 1:30; 2:21–22, 31; 20:4). (CSB)

**3:1–22** Moses presents Israel’s victory over Og, the apportionment of land east of the Jordan River, and the installation of Joshua. Within these verses, believers are reminded of God’s faithfulness. As He faithfully led Israel, God will also lead His people today. His promises to us are sealed in the blood of His Son (cf 2Co 1:20). • Lord of heaven and earth, You shower Your blessings on those who are led to faith by Your Holy Spirit. Guide and protect us from the evil one, who would take away our promised inheritance. Amen. (TLSB)

**3:23–25** Moses’ final plea to be allowed to enter the land (see 1:37 and note; 31:2). (CSB)

**3:23** *pleaded*. Moses prayed for God to allow him to cross into Canaan, but God’s answer was no. Sin has consequences (cf 2Sm 12:11–18). (TLSB)

**3:24** Moses witnessed God’s awesome power for 40 years. (TLSB)

*what god*. Cf Is 40:9–31.(TLSB)

**3:26** *angry with me because of you*. Cf Nu 20:2–13. (TLSB)

*because of you.* See note on 1:37. (CSB)

*Enough from you*. God’s forgiveness does not mean a removal of the consequences attached to sin. Luth: “But why is the prayer of Moses not heard, since it is likely that he prayed in the Spirit? This is written for our example and consolation. For even though the Lord does not hear him and this causes Moses to realize that He is angry with him, as he says here, nevertheless He does not desert him; He commands him to climb the mountain and view the land, and to give orders to Joshua. So, since we do not know in what manner we should pray (Rom. 8:26), let us not be surprised if we are not heard. At the same time, however, let us in no wise doubt that we are favored by, and dear to, God; and let us grasp at the favor beneath the wrath, lest we lose heart” (AE 9:42). (TLSB)

**3:27** *Go up to the top of Pisgah.* Moses did so after he had expounded the law to the Israelites to prepare them for life in the promised land (see 32:48–52; 34:1–6). (CSB)

*Pisgah.* See note on v. 17. (CSB)

This high plain overlooking the Salt Sea from the northeast contains Mount Nebo, which rises some 2,700 ft above sea level. God permitted only Moses to see the Promised Land from here. (TLSB)

*look west and north and south and east.* Like Abraham (see Ge 13:14), Moses would inherit the promised land only through his descendants (see 34:1–4). (CSB)

**3:28** *commission Joshua.* See 31:7–8. (CSB)

Cf 31:7–8. (TLSB)

**3:29** *Beth Peor.* Means “house/sanctuary of Peor.” Very likely, reference is to the cult place where the Baal of Peor was worshiped (see Nu 23:28; 25:3, 5). (CSB)

Isrelite encampment and site of apostasy recorded in Nu 25 (cf Dt 4:3). (TLSB)

**3:23–29** Sin and its consequences walk hand in hand. Moses’ consequence was that he did not enter the Promised Land at that time. What a sad reality. Yet, see application note, ch 34. Forgiven sinners rejoice that the consequences of sin no longer bring eternal separation from God. Paul says it best: “The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rm 6:23). • Lord, despite the earthly consequences of sin, teach us to live faithfully and in view of the eternal blessings of forgiveness. Amen. (TLSB)