

DEUTERONOMY

Chapter 3

The Defeat of King Og

“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 Edrei. 2 But the LORD said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have given him and all his people and his land into your hand. And you shall do to him as you did to Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.’ 3 So the LORD our God gave into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people, and we struck him down until he had no survivor left. 4 And we took all his cities at that time—there was not a city that we did not take from them—sixty cities, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. 5 All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides very many unwalled villages. 6 And we devoted them to destruction, as we did to Sihon the king of Heshbon, devoting to destruction every city, men, women, and children. 7 But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as our plunder. 8 So we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon 9 (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites call it Senir), 10 all the cities of the tableland and all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. 11 (For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. Behold, his bed was a bed of iron. Is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit.) 12 “When we took possession of this land at that time, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites the territory beginning at Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead with its cities. 13 The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, that is, all the region of Argob, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh. (All that portion of Bashan is called the land of Rephaim. 14 Jair the Manassite took all the region of Argob, that is, Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called the villages after his own name, Havvoth-jair, as it is to this day.) 15 To Machir I gave Gilead, 16 and to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave the territory from Gilead as far as the Valley of the Arnon, with the middle of the valley as a border, as far over as the river Jabbok, the border of the Ammonites; 17 the Arabah also, with the Jordan as the border, from Chinnereth as far as the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah on the east. 18 “And I commanded you at that time, saying, ‘The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. All your men of valor shall cross over armed before your brothers, the people of Israel. 19 Only your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall remain in the cities that I have given you, 20 until the LORD gives rest to your brothers, as to you, and they also occupy the land that the LORD your God gives them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his possession which I have given you.’ 21 And I commanded Joshua at that time, ‘Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings. So will the LORD do to all the kingdoms into which you are crossing. 22 You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you.’”

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)

3:4 *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)

3:7 *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" 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." (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)

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*. 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 and north of Geshur. (CSB)

3:17 *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. (CSB)

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

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 *Lord your God who fights for you.* 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)

Moses Forbidden to Enter the Land

23 “**And I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying, 24 ‘O Lord GOD, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as yours? 25 Please let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.’ 26 But the LORD was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘Enough from you; do not speak to me of this matter again. 27 Go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward, and look at it with your eyes, for you shall not go over this Jordan. 28 But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he shall go over at the head of this people, and he shall put them in possession of the land that you shall see.’ 29 So we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor.**

3:23–25 Moses' final plea to be allowed to enter the land. (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)

3:26 *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. 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 westward and northward and southward and eastward. Like Abraham (see Ge 13:14), Moses would inherit the promised land only through his descendants (see 34:1–4). (CSB)

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)

Israelite 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)