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Moshe Remembered the Events in Seir 2: 1-8

Moshe remembered the events in Seir DIG: Why is there no details of Isra'el's 40 years of wilderness wanderings? What had happened in the wilderness that allowed the 40-year judgment to end? How were the Israelites and the Edomites related? What grudge did the Edomites continue to carry against the children of Jacob? How did the Edomites treat their brothers centuries later? Why were the Edomites afraid of the Israelites? Why wasn't it necessary for the Israelites to attack their brothers? What was the end result?

REFLECT: Turned is the key word in this file. When did you turn toward the LORD? When have you turned away from ADONAI? Where are you on your journey today? Are you in the Promised Land, or in the wilderness? How do you feel when YHVH tells you to turn toward the Promised Land? Read 2:7 again and apply it to yourself. Do you believe God has provided you with all you need? We often mistake what we "want" with something we "need." All we really need is found in Yeshua. What are you seeking?



Moshe remembered that after almost forty years of wilderness wanderings, the LORD commanded His children to pass around the hill country of Mount Seir and then pass north toward the Land of Promise without disturbing the Edomites or

their possessions in any way.

Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness. This is one of the saddest statements in the Bible. Dreams are dashed as **the people** turn their backs on **the Land** of Promise.

After spending a long, but undermined, amount of time in the oasis of **Kadesh-barnea**, **the Israelites turned and journeyed into the wilderness by the way to the Sea of Reeds** (see the commentary on **Exodus**, **to see link click [Ce](#) - Salvation at the Sea of Reeds**). In spite of this **40-year** judgment of the ungrateful and rebellious generation, **YHVH** had not given up on **His people**, for **Moses** could still say **ADONAI had directed me. We went around the hill country of Seir**, the mountain range of **Edom** located south of the Dead Sea and extended down the eastern flank of the Arabah, **for many days (2:1)**.

The transition from verse 1 and 2 spans almost 40 years! **Moshe** gave no details of what **Isra'el** experienced while **wandering**. During that time, **Isra'el** was out of **God's** covenant favor. It was a death march; an anti-**Exodus** for **the generation of the Exodus**. There is no record that **the people** observed the Passover, or even circumcised **their** sons. After **Joshua** led **the nation** across the Jordan River, **he** took care of those responsibilities when **Isra'el** was back in **YHVH's** covenantal blessing (**Joshua 5:1-12**). **The people** in **Moses'** congregation who were nineteen years old when the **wandering** began were now fifty-seven (19 + 38 when **they** left **Kadesh-barnea**) and certainly would remember those difficult years and tell **their** children and grandchildren about them.⁵⁹

ADONAI now commands **the people**, go north, toward **your** Promised **Land**. **The LORD spoke to Moshe**, saying: **You have gone around this hill country long enough**. And now we have another decisive **turn, to the north**, towards **the Land** of Promise (**1:2-3**). By that time the rebellious **generation of the Exodus** had died, **their corpses** being **consumed in the wilderness (Numbers 14:33b)**. No longer will **the children** bear the sins of **their parents**, walking in circles and waiting for the old to die. **The wandering** had finally ended. Now, **the LORD** pointed the survivors toward Canaan, **the Land flowing with milk and honey (6:3)**.

Throughout this section of Scripture, **God** is continually guiding **His people**. Even the wandering has a sense of purpose. The life of a believer is in the hands of **ADONAI** as a bow and arrow are in the hands of an archer. **YHVH** is aiming at something that we cannot see; **He** stretches and we strain, and at times we say, "I cannot stand it anymore!" But **the LORD** goes on stretching until **His** purpose is accomplished - then **He** lets the arrow fly. **God** has a purpose in every zig-zag in our lives.⁶⁰

Ha'Shem told **Moses**, "**Command the people** saying: **You are about to cross into the territory of your relatives, the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir.**" **Moshe** refers to the inhabitants of the region of **Seir** as **the sons of Esau**, rather than **the Edomites**, in order to highlight the kinship between **Isra'el** and **Edom**. And as predicted in **Exodus 15:14-16**, **the Edomites** (among others) had heard of **YHWH's** great deeds on **Isra'el's** behalf and, as a result: **They will be afraid of you, so be very careful (2:4).**⁶¹

Moshe was commanded by **the LORD** not to declare war on the people of **Edom**. **The LORD** had promised to give **His** own **people** land; but other peoples, too, had been granted possessions by **ADONAI**. **The Edomites** were descended from **Jacob's** brother **Esau** (**Genesis 36**). **Do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land - not even a footprint - because I have given the hill country of Seir to Esau as a possession, as an inheritance from Abraham (2:5).** Although **Esau's** descendents remained hostile, the children of **Jacob** did not go to war with **them**. Such good will for **Esau's** seed contrasts sharply with the wars against **Sichon** (see [Au](#) - **The Defeat of Sihon**) and **Og** ([Av](#) - **The Defeat of Og**), whose sons embraced idolatry and other abominable practices. **YHWH** had graciously cared for **Isra'el** and **blessed His people** even during **their** years of **wandering**, so there was no need for **them** to attack **their brothers** and exploit **them**. **For ADONAI your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand - He has known your wanderings through this great wilderness. These 40 years ADONAI your God has been with you - you have lacked nothing (2:7).** So it is with us. 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!

Moses at first tried the friendly approach, but **the Edomites** wouldn't accept **their brothers** even though **the Israelites** were prepared to **pay for food and water**. Even though **Isra'el's** powerful army could have raided and taken what was needed, **Ha'Shem** commanded: **You are to buy food from them for money so that you may eat, and you are also to buy water from them for money so that you may drink (Deuteronomy 2:6; (Numbers 20:14-21).** So, he led **them** by another route that bypassed Mount **Seir**. **The Edomites** should have shown **Isra'el** brotherly love, but instead **they** preferred to continue the ancient feud between **Jacob** and **Esau (Genesis 27)**. Centuries later, **Edom** was still angry with **Isra'el** and rejoiced when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem (**Psalm 137:7; Ezekiel 2:12-14; Amos 1:11; Obediah 10-13**).

So, we went on past our relatives, the sons of Esau who dwell in Seir, away from the way of the Arabah from Elath and Ezion-geber. Although nothing of the negotiations

are conveyed here, **the Edomites** prohibited **Isra'el** from taking the customary route through **their** region (the King's Highway) and required **them** to take the longer route around the borders of **Edom**. But, in reality, **they** really didn't need the short-cut because **YHVH** was leading **them**. **We turned** once again, **and passed by the way of the wilderness of Mo'ab**, probably traveling on the Transjordanian plateau, near the transition between habitable land and the Arabian desert **(2:8)**.

Of all the problems we face in life, family disagreements are probably the most painful and the hardest to solve, and yet the Bible records so many of them. **Cain** killed **his brother Abel** (Genesis 4); **Jacob** and **Esau** were rivals; **Jacob's wives** competed with one another (Genesis 29-30); **Jacob** favored **Joseph** and therefore **Joseph's brothers hated their younger brother** (Genesis 37); and **David's** father-in-law, **King Sha'ul**, hounded after **him** and even tried to **kill him** (First Samuel 19-20). Even within the local community of believers, brothers and sisters don't always love each other. The church at **Corinth** was divided four ways (First Corinthians 1:12); the **Galatian** believers were **biting and devouring one another** (Galatians 5:15); and in the **Philippian** church, two **women** were at odds with each other (Philippians 4:2-3).⁶² We must do all we can to **love one another, just as Yeshua loves us**. **By doing this, all will know that we are His disciples** (John 13:34-35).

*Dear **Father God**, Praise **You** for your wonderful example of love! Praise **You** that you are never selfish, never grumpy, and never unkind. **You** are always kind and loving with a great, great love. Please help us to bring **You** joy and return **Your** love by our loving others. Remind us of the rewards **You** want to give us when we enter heaven and you discern our heart's attitude with **fire**. **For no one can lay any other foundation than what is already laid - which is Yeshua the Messiah. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear. For the Day will show it, because it is to be revealed by fire; and the fire itself will test each one's work - what sort it is. If anyone's work built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward** (First Corinthians 3:11-15a).*

*May we remember that it is not how the act looks outwardly to our friends or family, but the reward is based on our heart attitude of love for **You**. **For He [ADONAI] does not see a man as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but ADONAI looks into the heart.** (First Samuel 16:7). **You** are so worthy of all our love. We will not look with fear to any problem-but we will keep our eyes fixed on **You**, our big and caring and powerful **Daddy** - which will make our problem seem small. Praise **You** that when disagreements happen, we do not need to fear, we only need to look up at **You** for **You** are in control, even*

*with world-wide pandemics. We bow in worship of **You**. We do not need to know the why, for we know how great is the love of our **Almighty** and **All-powerful God** who cares so deeply for each of **His** children. In **Your** holy **Son's** name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*