

~HORMAH (345)

(Hor'mah) [A Devoting to Destruction]

- A city in the southern part of the territory of Judah (**1 Chronicles Chapter 30**), but possibly the name is applied to more than one site, the other being perhaps a place or region.
- Following the return of the 12 Israelite spies to Kadesh
- So they walked and came to Moses and Aaron and all the assembly of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. And they came bringing back word to them and all the assembly and showing them the fruitage of the land.
- The Israelites at first refused to attempt an invasion of Canaan. Then, following Yehowah's condemnation of their rebellious attitude and lack of faith, they decided to attempt it, contrary to his instructions. They got up early in the morning to go up to the place that Yehowah mentioned. The record speaks of their endeavoring to go up to the top of the mountain.
- Moreover, they got up early in the morning and tried to go up to the top of the mountain, saying; Here we are, and we have to go up to the place that Yehowah mentioned. For we have sinned.
- Then we pulled away from Horeb and went marching through all that great and fear-inspiring wilderness, which you have seen, by the way of the mountainous region of the Amorites, just as Yehowah our God had commanded us, and we eventually came to Kadesh-barnea. (**Deuteronomy 1:19**)
- However, their statement about going up to the place that Yehowah mentioned, may indicate the mountainous region of the Amorites, referred to by Moses in his restatement of the events, rather than a particular mountain.
- Then we pulled away from Horeb and went marching through all that great and fear-inspiring wilderness, which you have seen, by the way of the mountainous region of the Amorites, just as Yehowah our God had commanded us, and we eventually came to Kadesh-barnea.
- I now said to you, you have come to the mountainous region of

the Amorites, which Yehowah our God is giving to us.
([Deuteronomy 1:20](#))

- See, Yehowah your God has abandoned the land to you. Go up, take possession, just as Yehowah the God of your forefathers has spoken to you. Do not be afraid, nor be terrified. ([Deuteronomy 1:21](#))
- At this you answered and said to me; We have sinned against Yehowah. We, we shall go up and fight in accord with all that Yehowah our God has commanded us! So you girded on, each one, his weapons of war and regarded it as easy to go up into the mountain. ([Deuteronomy 1:41](#))
- But Yehowah said to me; Say to them; You must not go up and fight, because I am not in your midst, that you may not be defeated before your enemies. ([Deuteronomy 1:42](#))
- So I spoke to you, and you did not listen but began to behave rebelliously against Yehowah's order and to get all heated up, and you tried to go up into the mountain. ([Deuteronomy 1:43](#))
- The record does not indicate how far they traveled, nor does it specifically indicate whether the actions described took place during one day or not, but the text seems to indicate events occurring within a relatively short space of time.
- Whatever was the case, the record shows that they were met by the Amalekites and Canaanites.
- Then the Amorites who were dwelling in that mountain came out to meet you and went chasing you, just as bees do, and scattering you in Seir as far as **Hormah**. ([Deuteronomy 1:44](#))
- Amorites, a term used to refer to the people of Canaan in general;
- As for me, I do give you one shoulder of land more than to your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorites by my sword and by my bow. ([Genesis 48:22](#))
- Now if it is bad in your eyes to serve Yehowah, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve, whether the gods that your forefathers who were on the other side of the River served

or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are dwelling. But as for me and my household, we shall serve Yehowah. (**Joshua 24:15**)

- And these defeated the Israelites, scattering them, as far as **Hormah**.
- Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who were dwelling in that mountain came on down and began striking them and went scattering them as far as **Hormah**. (**Numbers 14:45**)
- The account in;
- Then the Amorites who were dwelling in that mountain came out to meet you and went chasing you, just as bees do, and scattering you in Seir as far as **Hormah**. (**Deuteronomy 1:44**)
- Says they were scattered in Seir as far as **Hormah**. Seir was the territory of the Edomites, and their dominion then seems to have extended West of the Wadi Arabah into the Negeb region.
- Subsequently Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom; This is what your brother Israel has said; You yourself well know all the hardship that has overtaken us. (**Numbers 20:14**)
- Finally we cried out to Yehowah and he heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt, and here we are in Kadesh, a city at the extremity of your territory. (**Numbers 20:16**)
- From Mount Halak, which goes up to Seir, and as far as Baal-gad in the valley plain of Lebanon at the base of Mount Hermon, and he captured all their kings and went striking them and putting them to death. (**Joshua 11:17**)
- Following this defeat, the Israelites returned to Kadesh.
- After that you returned and began to weep before Yehowah, but Yehowah did not listen to your voice, neither did he give ear to you. (**Deuteronomy 1:45**)
- So you kept dwelling in Kadesh many days, as many days as you did dwell there. (**Deuteronomy 1:46**)

- Their wandering period having ended, the Israelites again advanced toward Canaan and were attacked by the Canaanite king of Arad.
- Again we do not know how far to the South the king of Arad advanced before engaging in combat with the Israelites, but the Israelites, following a vow to Yehowah, gained the victory over this king and devoted his cities to destruction, thereafter naming the place **Hormah**.
- Now the Canaanite the king of Arad, who dwelt in the Negeb, got to hear that Israel had come by the way of Atharim, and he began to fight with Israel and carry away some of them as captives. (**Numbers 21:1**)
- Consequently Israel made a vow to Yehowah and said; If you will without fail give this people into my hand, I shall also certainly devote their cities to destruction. (**Numbers 21:2**)
- So Yehowah listened to Israel's voice and gave the Canaanites over, and they devoted them and their cities to destruction. Hence they called the name of the place **Hormah**. (**Numbers 21:3**)
- While Moses had already employed this name in the earlier account of the Canaanites victory over Israel, it is probable that he did so in an anticipatory way, intending to refer to it later in the record, showing the origin of the name.
- Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who were dwelling in that mountain came on down and began striking them and went scattering them as far as **Hormah**. (**Numbers 14:45**)
- The Israelites did not settle in the region then, however, but traveled around Edom and turned North, eventually making their entry into Canaan by crossing the Jordan North of the Dead Sea.
- While they continued trekking from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom, the soul of the people began tiring out because of the way. (**Numbers 21:4**)
- Then the sons of Israel pulled away and encamped on the desert plains of Moab across the Jordan from Jericho. (**Numbers 22:1**)

See Also ARAD 2

See Also DEVOTED THING

- The king of **Hormah**, one, the king of Arad, one. (**Joshua 12:14**)
- The king of **Hormah** is listed next to the king of Arad among the 31 kings defeated by Joshua. It seems unlikely that this refers to the victory gained earlier while Moses was yet alive and Joshua was serving as military commander, since these victories are listed as though gained after Israel's crossing the Jordan into Canaan.
- And these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the sons of Israel defeated on the side of the Jordan toward the west, from Baal-gad in the valley plain of Lebanon and as far as Mount Halak, which goes up to Seir, after which Joshua gave it to the tribes of Israel as a holding by their shares. (**Joshua 12:7**)
- In the mountainous region and in the Shephelah and in the Arabah and on the slopes and in the wilderness and in the Negeb, the Hittites, the Amorites and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. (**Joshua 12:8**)
- Though this victory by Joshua is not specifically described, it may be included in the statement at;
- And Joshua proceeded to strike all the land of the mountainous region and the Negeb and the Shephelah and the slopes and all their kings. He did not let a survivor remain, and everything that breathed he devoted to destruction, just as Yehowah the God of Israel had commanded. (**Joshua 10:40**)
- And Joshua went striking them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza and all the land of Goshen and up to Gibeon. (**Joshua 10:41**)
- And Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time, because it was Yehowah the God of Israel who was fighting for Israel. (**Joshua 10:42**)
- This would indicate that after Israel departed from that region in order to travel around the land of Edom, the Canaanites resettled the territory. While Joshua is shown to have defeated the king of **Hormah**, the record does not state that the Israelites then occupied the city of Hormah. The case of Gezer at;

- The king of Eglon, one, the king of Gezer, one. (**Joshua 12:12**)
- Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were dwelling in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to dwell in among them in Gezer. (**Judges 1:29**)
- The city was included in the list of towns at the extremity of the tribe of the sons of Judah toward the boundary of Edom in the south.
- And the cities at the extremity of the tribe of the sons of Judah toward the boundary of Edom in the south came to be Kabzeel and Eder and Jagur. (**Joshua 15:21**)
- And Eltolad and Chesil and **Hormah**. (**Joshua 15:30**)
- However, it was assigned to the tribe of Simeon as an enclave city within Judah's territory.
- Then the second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the sons of Simeon by their families. And their inheritance came to be in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Judah. (**Joshua 19:1**)
- And they came to have in their inheritance Beer-sheba with Sheba, and Moladah. (**Joshua 19:2**)
- And Eltolad and Bethul and **Hormah**. (**Joshua 19:4**)
- And the sons of Ephraim had enclave cities in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Manasseh, all the cities and their settlements. (**Joshua 16:9**)
- Since the record only shows that Joshua defeated **Hormah's** king, not mentioning any conquest of the city, the tribes of Judah and Simeon thereafter combined their forces to strike the Canaanites inhabiting Zephath and to devote it to destruction. Hence the name of the city was called **Hormah**.
- But Judah marched on with Simeon his brother, and they proceeded to strike the Canaanites inhabiting Zephath and to devote it to destruction. Hence the name of the city was called **Hormah**. (**Judges 1:17**)

- Their naming of the city here simply may have been a confirmation or restatement of the name applied to it earlier. The use of the name **Hormah** back in Moses time is considered by some to have been with reference to the entire district or region instead of the one city of Zephath.

- This would mean that the entire district was under ban, or devoted to destruction, whenever that destruction should eventually be accomplished. [Commentary on the Old Testament, by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, 1973, Vol. II, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, p. 256]

See Also ZEPHATH

- The location of **Hormah** is uncertain. Various suggestions have been given, but since the proposed sites are all over 60 kilometers (37 miles) North of Kadesh-barnea, from which the Israelites initially started out early in the morning.

- Moreover, they got up early in the morning and tried to go up to the top of the mountain, saying; Here we are, and we have to go up to the place that Yehowah mentioned. For we have sinned. (**Numbers 14:40**)

- And since **Hormah** is stated to be the point to which they were scattered in defeat, evidently fleeing back toward Kadesh, such positions so far to the North would hardly seem to fit the Biblical account.

- Though still a Simeonite city in David's time, **Hormah** was one of the places he visited during his exile as a fugitive and one of the cities to which he later sent gifts.

- When David came to Ziklag he proceeded to send some of the spoil to the older men of Judah, his friends, saying; Here is a gift blessing for you from the spoil of Yehowah's enemies. (**1 Samuel 30:26**)

- To those who were in Bethel, and to those in Ramoth of the south, and to those in Jattir. (**1 Samuel 30:27**)

- And to those in Aroer, and to those in Siphmoth, and to those in Eshtemoa. (**1 Samuel 30:28**)

- And to those in Racal, and to those in the cities of the

Jerahmeelites, and to those in the cities of the Kenites. (1 Samuel 30:29)

- **And to those in **Hormah**, and to those in Borashan, and to those in Athach. (1 Samuel 30:30)**
- **And to those in Hebron, and to all the places where David had walked about, he and his men. (1 Samuel 30:31)**
- **The sons of Simeon were Nemuel and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul. (1 Chronicles 4:24)**
- **And they continued to dwell in Beer-sheba and Moladah and Hazar-shual. (1 Chronicles 4:28)**
- **And in Bilhah and in Ezem and in Tolad. (1 Chronicles 4:29)**
- **And in Bethuel and in **Hormah** and in Ziklag. (1 Chronicles 4:30)**
- **And in Beth-marcaboth and in Hazar-susim and in Beth-biri and in Shaaraim. These were their cities down till David reigned. (1 Chronicles 4:31)**