

## MOAB

### 1. Moab is a Semitic nation descended from Lot and his eldest daughter.

- a. **Ge 19:36-38** 36 Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab. He is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 The younger also bore a son and called his name Ben-ammi. He is the father of the Ammonites to this day.
- b. Moab is a brother to Amon and a cousin of Israel and Edom.

### 2. God assigned Moab a territory east of the Dead Sea.

- a. **Ge 13:10-11** 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other.
- b. **Nu 21:13-15** 13 From there [Israel] set out and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that extends from the border of the Amorites, for the Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. 14 It is said in the Book of the Wars of Yahweh, Waheb in Suphah, the valleys of the Arnon, 15 and the slope of the valleys that extends to the seat of Ar and leans to the border of Moab.
- c. **Dt 2:9** 9 Yahweh said to me, Do not harass Moab or contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land for a possession, because I have given Ar to the people of Lot for a possession.

### 3. The Moabites worshipped the god Chemosh.

- a. **Nu 21:29** 29 Woe to you, O Moab! You are undone, O people of Chemosh! He has made his sons fugitives, and his daughters captives, to an Amorite king, Sihon.
- b. **Je 48:46** 46 Woe to you, O Moab! The people of Chemosh are undone, for your sons have been taken captive, and your daughters into captivity.
- c. Worship of Chemosh sometimes required human sacrifice.
  - (1) **2 Ki 3:27** 27 [The king of Moab] took his oldest son who was to reign in his place and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel. And they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.
- d. Solomon erected a high place for Chemosh east of Jerusalem.
  - (1) **1 Ki 11:7** 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem.
- e. Josiah destroyed it.
  - (1) **2 Ki 23:13** 13 The king [Josiah] defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, to the south of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

### 4. In general, Moab chose to curse Israel rather than bless her.

- a. Moab refused Israel permission to travel on the King's Highway into Canaan.

- (1) **Jdg 11:17** 17 Israel then sent messengers to the king of Edom saying, Please let us pass through your land, but the king of Edom would not listen. And they sent also to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained at Kadesh.
- (2) **Dt 23:4** 4 [Moab] did not meet you [Israel] with bread and with water on the way, when you came out of Egypt.
- (3) **Dt 2:28-29** 28 Only let me pass through on foot, 29 as the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I go over the Jordan into the land that Yahweh our God is giving to us.
- b. Balak, king of Moab, called for the prophet Balaam to curse Israel.
  - (1) Nu 22-24
  - (2) **Jos 24:9** 9 Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you....
  - (3) **Dt 23:3-5** 3 No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of Yahweh. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of Yahweh forever, ...4 because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. 5 But Yahweh your God would not listen to Balaam. Instead Yahweh your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because Yahweh your God loved you.
- c. Moabite women seduced Israelite men as they prepared to cross the Jordan.
  - (1) Nu 25
- d. Israel was therefore not to seek Moab's peace or prosperity.
  - (1) **Dt 23:3-6** 3 No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of Yahweh. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of Yahweh forever, ...4 because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. 5 But Yahweh your God would not listen to Balaam. Instead Yahweh your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because Yahweh your God loved you. 6 You shall not seek their peace or their prosperity all your days forever.
  - (2) **Ne 13:1** 1 On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people. And in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God....

## 5. From the days of the Judges, Moab often warred against Israel.

- a. The lands north of the Arnon were a continuing source of conflict between them (J. N. Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:336).
- b. **Jdg 3:12-30** 12 The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. 13 He gathered to himself the Ammonites and the Amalekites and went and defeated Israel. And they took possession of the city of palms. 14 And the people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. 15 Then the people of Israel cried out to Yahweh, and the Lord raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. ...29 And they killed at that time about 10,000 of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men. Not a man escaped. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.

- c. **1 Sa 14:47** 47 When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned he routed them.
  - d. **2 Sa 8:2** 2 [David] defeated Moab and he measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground. Two lines he measured to be put to death, and one full line to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.
  - e. **2 Ki 3:4-27** 4 Now Meshah king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and he had to deliver to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. 5 But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 6 So King Jehoram marched out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. 7 And he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to battle against Moab? ...18 This is a light thing in the sight of Yahweh. He will also give the Moabites into your hand, 19 and you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree and stop up all springs of water and ruin every good piece of land with stones. 20 The next morning, about the time of offering the sacrifice, behold, water came from the direction of Edom, till the country was filled with water. 21 When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to put on armor, from the youngest to the oldest, were called out and were drawn up at the border. 22 And when they rose early in the morning and the sun shone on the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood. 23 And they said, This is blood. The kings have surely fought together and struck one another down. Now then, Moab, to the spoil! 24 But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose and struck the Moabites, till they fled before them. And they went forward, striking the Moabites as they went. 25 And they overthrew the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a stone until it was covered. They stopped every spring of water and felled all the good trees, till only its stones were left in Kir-hareseth, and the slingers surrounded and attacked it. 26 When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him 700 swordsmen to break through, opposite the king of Edom, but they could not. 27 Then he took his oldest son who was to reign in his place and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel. And they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.
  - f. **2 Ch 20:1** 1 After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle.
  - g. **2 Ki 13:20** 20 Bands of Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year.
  - h. **2 Ki 24:2** 2 Yahweh sent against [Jehoiakim] bands of the Chaldeans, bands of the Syrians, bands of the Moabites, and bands of the Ammonites, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke by his servants the prophets.
- 6. Israel's prophets often pronounced judgment upon Moab.**
- a. **Am 2:1-3** 1 Thus says Yahweh: For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom. 2 So I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth, and Moab shall die amid uproar, amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet. 3 I will cut off the ruler from its midst, and will kill all its princes with him, says Yahweh.

- b. Is 15-16
- c. **Is 25:10** 10 The hand of Yahweh will rest on this mountain, and Moab shall be trampled down in his place, as straw is trampled down in a dunghill.
- d. **Zep 2:8-11** 8 I have heard the taunts of Moab and the revilings of the Ammonites, how they have taunted my people and made boasts against their territory. 9 Therefore, as I live, declares Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, Moab shall become like Sodom, and the Ammonites like Gomorrah, a land possessed by nettles and salt pits, and a waste forever. The remnant of my people shall plunder them, and the survivors of my nation shall possess them. 10 This shall be their lot in return for their pride, because they taunted and boasted against the people of Yahweh of hosts. 11 Yahweh will be awesome against them, for he will famish all the gods of the earth, and to him shall bow down, each in its place, all the lands of the nations.
- e. **Je 9:25-26** 25 Behold, the days are coming, declares Yahweh, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh— 26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.

## 7. Moab was taken over successively by Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and the Arabs.

- a. Moab was subdued by Nebuchadrezzar (Jos., *Ant.* 10.181).
  - (1) **Je 27:2-6** 2 Yahweh said to me: Make yourself straps and yoke-bars, and put them on your neck. 3 Send word to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the sons of Ammon, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon by the hand of the envoys who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. 4 Give them this charge for their masters: Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: This is what you shall say to your masters: 5 It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me. 6 Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and I have given him also the beasts of the field to serve him.
- b. In post-exilic times the Moabites were known as a race.
  - (1) **Ezr 9:1** 1 The officials approached me and said, The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.
  - (2) **Ne 13:1** 1 In [the book of Moses] was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God....
  - (3) **Ne 13:23** 23 In those days also I saw the Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.
  - (4) Alexander Jannaeus subdued them in the 2nd century bc (Jos., *Ant.* 13.374).<sup>1</sup>
- c. God handed the Moabites' territory to the Arabs.
  - (1) **Eze 25:8-11** 8 Thus says Lord Yahweh: Because Moab and Seir said, Behold, the house of Judah is like all the other nations, 9 therefore I will lay open the flank of Moab from the cities, from its cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth-

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. Thompson, *NBD*, 776.

jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim. 10 I will give it along with the Ammonites to the people of the East [the Arabs] as a possession, that the Ammonites may be remembered no more among the nations, 11 and I will execute judgments upon Moab. Then they will know that I am Yahweh.

d. Moab has disappeared as a distinct people group.

(1) **Je 48:42** 42 Moab shall be destroyed and be no longer a people, because he magnified himself against the Lord.

#### 8. Ruth the Moabites joined Israel and became the great grandmother of David.

a. **Ru 1:16-17** 16 Ruth said, Do not urge me to leave you [Naomi] or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May Yahweh do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.

b. **Ru 4:21-22** 21 Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, 22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

c. She was an ancestress of Jesus.

(1) **Mt 1:5-6** 5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of David the king.

#### 9. At times Moab welcomed Israelite fugitives, and vice versa.

a. The king of Moab protected David's parents while David was fleeing from Saul.

(1) **1 Sa 22:3-4** 3 David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. And he said to the king of Moab, Please let my father and my mother stay with you, till I know what God will do for me. 4 And he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

b. Judah was to welcome Moabite fugitives when they were taken over by Assyria.

(1) **Is 16:3-4** 3 Give counsel. Grant justice. Make your shade like night at the height of noon. Shelter the outcasts. Do not reveal the fugitive. 4 Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn among you. Be a shelter to them from the [Assyrian] destroyer.

c. Moab protected some Judeans when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians.

(1) **Je 40:11-15** 11 When all the Judeans who were in Moab, among the Ammonites and in Edom, and in other lands heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, as governor over them, 12 then all the Judeans returned from all the places to which they had been driven and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah.

d. Jews will be protected in Petra (Edom) during the Tribulation.

(1) Da 11:41; Mt 24:16; Re 12:6, 14-15

#### 10. There is a future for Moab.

a. **Je 48:47** 47 I will restore the fortunes of Moab in the latter days, declares Yahweh.

b. The nation of Jordan, where Moab used to be, is quite friendly to Israel today.

(1) An outstanding seminary in Jordan is Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (<http://www.jets.edu>).

(2) See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnTwyPPOQBQ>.

**11. The Moabite Stone (Mesha Stela), discovered at Dibon, confirms the historicity of the Old Testament.**

## *Bibliography*

J. A. Thompson, "[Moab, Moabites.](#)" ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 776.

*Notes*