

Numbers 21:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto Medeba.

Analysis

We have shot at them—The victory song continues with graphic battle imagery. **Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon**—These cities marked the extent of Sihon's (and now Israel's) conquest. **And we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto Medeba**—Each place-name testifies to comprehensive defeat. The litany of conquered cities demonstrates totality of victory.

Israel's recitation of enemy poetry becomes appropriation—they inherit not just land but the very songs celebrating conquest of that land. This demonstrates cultural transformation through military victory: Israel doesn't just defeat enemies, they inherit and redeem enemy culture for covenantal purposes.

Historical Context

Dibon (modern Dhiban) was a major Moabite city where the Mesha Stele was discovered. Medeba appears in later biblical history (Isaiah 15:2) and became a significant city in the Nabatean and Roman periods. These place names create a geographical chain marking the scope of Amorite (then Israelite) control.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God call you to appropriate and redeem cultural elements from defeated 'enemies' (sin, worldliness) for His glory?
2. What 'cities' or strongholds in your life mark the extent of God's victories on your behalf?
3. How can you bear witness to comprehensive transformation without triumphalism or cultural imperialism?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּכּוּם	אֶבֶד	חֶשְׁבֹן	עַד	דִּיבֹן
We have shot	is perished	at them Heshbon	H5704	even unto Dibon
H3384	H6	H2809		H1769
וַיִּשְׁאֵם	עַד	נֹפֶחַ	עַד	אֶשְׁרָם
and we have laid them waste	H5704	even unto Nophah	H834	H5704
	H8074	H5302		
מִיִּדְבָּא:				
which reacheth unto Medeba				
H4311				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 15:2 (Parallel theme): He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off.

Jeremiah 48:18 (Parallel theme): Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds.

Jeremiah 48:22 (Parallel theme): And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,

Joshua 13:17 (Parallel theme): Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,

Numbers 32:34 (Parallel theme): And the children of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer,

Numbers 32:3 (Parallel theme): Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and Nimrah, and Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Shebam, and Nebo, and Beon,