

Numbers-21-fiery-serpents

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Introduction

Document Update 6/8/2017...

Some content moved to Word-Study-H2764-cherem-devoted-to-destruction-H2763-charam, article #[187](#).

This article is about Numbers chapters 20 and 21 in general and a more detail look at the “fiery serpents” which is transliterated “*HaNeChShim HaSeRaPhiM*”. These words are preceded with a Standalone Aleph Tav **תְּ** and so I decided to have some fun and do a *sod* level investigation.

Legal Analysis

I also investigate the meaning of the place called Horma (*chorma*) and look into its meaning as it relates to the narrative. We also have in this narrative a confrontation with brother Esau whose role in this world is very fascinating to me^A. There is one more legal thing to consider and that is Moses, with his brother the high priest on his side, striking the rock. This was in opposition to YHVH's instructions and the ramifications of this was that Aaron dies and Moses loses his ticket to the promised land.

ToDo

Alternative Title or Heading: "Playing with Fire – Devotion to Destruction"

Playing with god is playing with fire ➔ therefore stop playing, identify the weightier matters and do it.

Two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, were killed with a strange fire Lev 10:1. Here (maybe) is another example of two witness before YHVH.

Contrast Esau who rejected the offer given by Israel to pass through his land with those who later attacked Israel

Note how Esau has a right to reject an offer ... a most important concept in Contract/Law i.e. it must be honored.

Numbers Chapter 20 Outline ^{B C}

14-21 Moses at Kadesh desires passage through Edom, which is denied him

Num 20:1-6 ➔ Miriam dies and Israel murmurs for lack of water

Location is the desert of Zin, specifically Kadesh & Miriam dies. There was no water so that gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron. They sound very similar to the previous generation.

Num 20:14-21 ➔ Moses desires passage through Edom, which is denied him

Num 20:23-29 ➔ Aaron is judged, stripped of his priestly garments and mourned

Num 20:24 Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.

^A See Esau-And-Jacob www.MyHebrewBible.com/Article/806

^B Bible translation is KJV, with some modifications on my part.

^C **Context:** The previous chapter was about the ashes of the Red Heifer and the water of separation and it also has a Standalone Aleph Tav at Num 19:9; See Standalone-Aleph-Tav-Numbers-19-9-Red-Heifer-and-the-clean-man www.MyHebrewBible.com/Article/304

Compare and Contrast with Exo 17:1-7

¹ And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of YHVH, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people to drink. ² Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt YHVH? ³ And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore *is* this *that* thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? ⁴ And Moses cried unto YHVH, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

Comments

- **Two Generations.** The first generation of Exodus is making an exodus from Egypt into the wilderness (*Devarim*) and the generation of Numbers is exiting the wilderness going into the promised land (*Ha Erets*).
- **Two Time Frames:** The first time frame was at the beginning of Israel being in the wilderness which early on “gave the Evil Report” causing them to stuck there. The next generation of Israelites, although grumbling and chiding with Moses and with God (the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree) nevertheless did not make the catastrophic mistake of the previous generation.
- **Need for water:** Both times they sought for water to drink. This is a perfectly acceptable request when you’re in the desert although their attitude could be better.
- "Moses reaction:
 - Exo 17:4 Moses cried out to YHVH fearing he would be stoned by the people and “asking what shall I do unto this people”.
 - Num 20:6 Moses and Aaron went unto the door of the tabernacle, falling on their faces causing the glory of YHVH to appear.
- **Instructions from YHVH:**
 - Exo 17:5-6 The instructions of striking the rock were given
- **Rock: *Tzur* vs. *Sela*:** As one of the founding members of Tzur Yisrael of Arizona I always will look for the Hebrew word that is translated rock. In Exo 17:6, we find the word rock twice used, and it is a translation for *tzur*^{H6687}. *Tzur* is a different Hebrew word than that which is used in Num 20:8-11 which uses the Hebrew word is *sela*^{H5553}.
- **Sin vs. Zin:** see [Appendix 2](#)
-

Exodus 17:5-7 compared to Numbers 20:7-13

Instructions from YHVH to Moses

Exo 17:5-6 ⁵ And YHVH said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. ...

Num 20:7-8 ⁷ And YHVH spake unto Moses, saying, ⁸ Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

In the Exodus verses Moses is told 1) that YHVH will stand before him on the rock and 2) to strike the rock (presumably once). There is no mention of speaking to it.

In the Numbers verses Moses is told 1) to only to speak to the rock and 2) It shall give for his water (*meimav*)

Actions taken by Moses

Exo 17:6 ⁶ ... And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Num 20:9-11 ⁹ And Moses took the rod from before YHVH, as he commanded him. ¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? ¹¹ And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts *also*.

In the Exodus verses it speaks about Moses follows the instruction as a matter of fact. In the Numbers verses Moses did speak to the rock as instructed, but, presumably, not the way YHVH intended because he put the focus on himself and his brother and not on YHVH.

Ramifications

Exo 17:7 ⁷ And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted YHVH, saying, Is YHVH among us, or not?

Num 20:12-13 ¹² And YHVH spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed H539 amen me not, to sanctify H6942 qadah me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. ¹³ This *is* the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with YHVH, and he was sanctified in them.

Aharon is shares the punishment with the actions that Moses, they worked (conspired?) together in **Num 20:10** it says we. They were two witnesses against YHVH and that's bad because truth is established by two or three^D.

^D See Vut-is-Truth.doc

Numbers Chapter 21 Outline

- 1-3 Israel destroys the Canaanites at Hormah
- 4-6 The people murmuring are plagued with fiery serpents
- 7-9 They repenting are healed by a bronze serpent
- 10-20 Various journeys of the Israelites
- 21-32 Sihon is overcome
- 33-35 And Og

WordStudy

H5175 *nachash* serpent

נַחַשׁ

Strong's

KJC

- serpent, 25 [Gen 3:1-2](#) (2), [Gen 3:4](#), [Gen 3:13-14](#) (2), [Gen 49:17](#), [Exo 4:3](#), [Exo 7:15](#), [Num 21:9](#) (3),
[2Ki 18:4](#), [Job 26:13](#), [Psa 58:4](#), [Psa 140:3](#), [Pro 23:32](#), [Pro 30:19](#), [Ecc 10:8](#), [Ecc 10:11](#), [Isa 27:1](#) (2),
[Jer 46:22](#), [Amo 5:19](#), [Amo 9:3](#), [Mic 7:17](#)
- serpents, 4 [Num 21:6-7](#) (2), [Deu 8:15](#), [Jer 8:17](#)
- serpent's, 2 [Isa 14:29](#), [Isa 65:25](#)

More details, see Word-Study-NaChaSh-H5175-and-H5172-to-H5180 <http://www.myhebrewbible.com/Article/311>

H8314 *seraph* fiery/serpent/

שָׁרֶף

Strong's: From H8313; burning, that is, (figuratively) poisonous (serpent); specifically a *seraph* or symbolical creature (from their copper color): - fiery (serpent), seraph.

KJC

- fiery, 5 [Num 21:6](#) (2), 8; [Deu 8:15](#), [Isa 14:29](#); [Isa 30:6](#)
- serpent, 3 [Num 21:8](#), [Isa 14:29](#), [Isa 30:6](#)
- seraphims, 2 [Isa 6:2,6](#)
- burned, 1 [Isa 44:19](#)

Isa 6:1-11 KJV ...verse 6 “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me...”

¹ In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. ² Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. ³ And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* YHVH of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. ⁴ And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, YHVH of hosts. ⁶ Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: ⁷ And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. ⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I; send me. ⁹ And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye

indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. ¹¹ Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

Rev ch. 8 (Rev 8:1-13) KJV Verse 3 “angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth”

¹And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. ² And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. ³ And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. ⁵ And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. ⁶ And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. ⁷ The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. ⁸ And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; ⁹ And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. ¹⁰ And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; ¹¹ And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. ¹² And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. ¹³ And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

Standalone Aleph Tav – Num 20:14

ToDo Clean this up

In Num 20:14-21 Moses desires passage through Edom, which is denied him.

Num 21:6 KJV And YHVH sent fiery serpents^E among the people, and they bit^F the people; and much people of Israel died.

What is the relationship between Esau (and his entourage) have to do with Yeshua HaMashiach whom I identify as the Aleph Tav?

What is the significance of Esau and his 400 men and how do they related to Jacob and Yeshua whom I identify as the Meshiach and also the Aleph Tav?

I realized that Jacob's problem was not 400 men but Esau plus his 400 men = 401 = the gematria value for Aleph Tav

^E See Word-Study-NaChaSh-H5175-and-H5172-to-H5180 <http://www.myhebrewbible.com/Article/311>

^F Paul stated this in

Gal 5:14-16 KJV ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ¹⁵ But if ye **bite** ^{G1143 *dakno*} and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. ¹⁶ *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

The Greek word for **bite** is *dakno* (Strong's # G1143) and is the only place it's used in the New Testament. In the LXX, this word is also used for Num 19:6

See Word-Study-H5392-neshek-usury-H5391-nashak-bite-usury-lend www.MyHebrewBible.com/Article/309

Standalone Aleph Tav – Num 21:6

Num 21:6 KJV And YHVH sent fiery serpents^G among the people, and they bit^H the people; and much people of Israel died.

Hebrew Word Order

And sent • YHVH • among the people • נָשָׁךְ • HaNeChShim • HaSeRaPhiM • and they bit • Aleph Tav-The people • died • people • and much • of Israel

Interlinier HSB5

וַיִּשְׁלַח Yah weh And YHVH vay · shal · Lach sent
אֶת־בְּעֵם et' ba · Am, among the people בְּעֵם vay · shal · Lach sent
בְּעֵם et' ba · Am, among the people בְּעֵם vay · shal · Lach sent
אֶת־נִשְׁכָּן has · se · ra · Fim, fiery han · ne · cha · Shim serpents
נִשְׁכָּן et' ba · Am, among the people נִשְׁכָּן has · se · ra · Fim, fiery han · ne · cha · Shim serpents
מִן־יִשְׂרָאֵל rav and much מִן־יִשְׂרָאֵל : vay · Ya mot died מִן־יִשְׂרָאֵל : vay · Ya mot died
וַיָּמָת ha · Am; the people וַיָּמָת ha · Am; the people

Serpent: (*nachash H5175*) The same word here as the serpent in the Garden where **Adam** was. Also, in *Joh 3:14^I*, where Y'shua refers himself to Ben **Adam** and must be lifted up similar to what Moshe is doing here. The difference between the use of the word serpent/nachash in the Garden and here in Numbers (and therefore by Y'shua's usage) is that in Numbers it is qualified as "Fiery/saraph" which is the root for the Seraphim.

Rabbi Samson Hirsch in his commentary on the fiery serpents notes that they had been there all along dogging the Israelites, but had been held back by the gracious hand of YHVH such that the Israelites were unaware of the serpents' presence (*The Pentateuch/Numbers*, p. 381). [Deu 8:15](#) .

Considering Rabbi Hirsch's comments, it's interesting that the standalone Aleph Tav sits between the people and the serpents (*NaHash*)

See comments at [Deu 25:17](#) which mentions Amalek and also has a Standalone Aleph Tav.

Deu 25:17 KJV Remember **Aleph Tav** what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

I wonder if Amalek was part of the story concerning the brass serpent). Maybe it's worth to see a prophecy of Amalek at ([Num 24:20](#)). The context of this is Num 24:15-25 where Balaam prophesies of the Star of Jacob, and the destruction of some nations. More verses on Amalek: [Gen 36:12](#), [Gen 36:16](#), [Exo 17:8-11](#) (4), [Exo 17:13-14](#) (2), [Exo 17:16](#),

^G See Word-Study-NaChaSh-H5175-and-H5172-to-H5180 <http://www.myhebrewbible.com/Article/311>

^H Paul stated this in

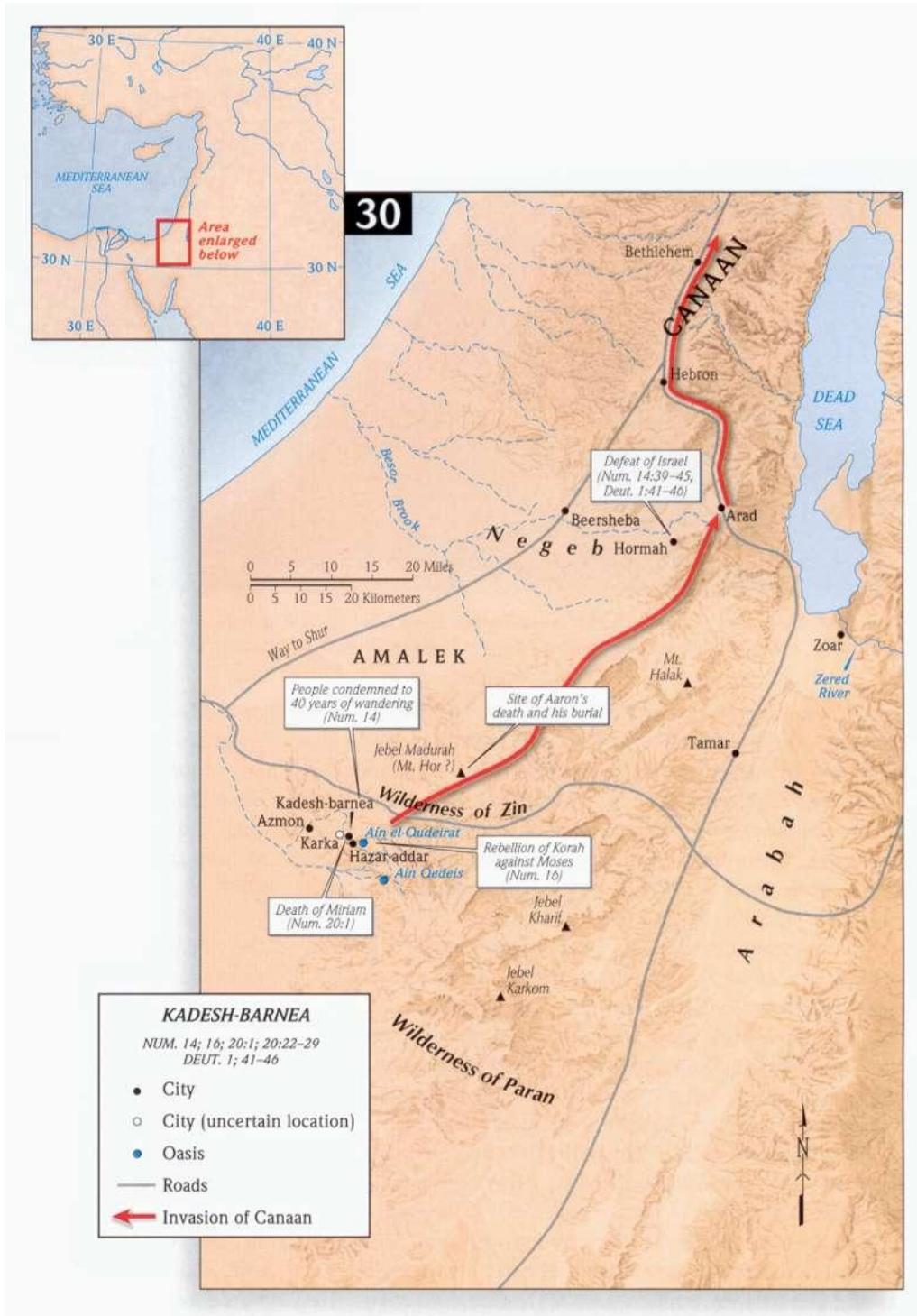
Gal 5:14-16 KJV ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ¹⁵ But if ye **bite** ^{G1143 *dakno*} and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. ¹⁶ *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

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See Word-Study-H5392-neshek-usury-H5391-nashak-bite-usury-lend www.MyHebrewBible.com/Article/309

^I **Joh 3:14 KJV** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Appendix 1: Map – Kadesh-Barnea Numbers chapters 14 to 20



Major Events

- the returning spies found the camp ([Num 13:26](#)) and gave “the evil report”.
- Miriam died and was buried ([Num 20:1](#));
- from thence messengers were sent to the king of Edom ([Num 20:14](#); [Jdg 11:16 ff](#)).
- the people rebelled because of the want of water, and Moses brought water from the rock ([Num 20:2 ff](#));

Source: ISBE

KJV Search Kadeshbarnea:
Num 32:8, Num 34:4, Deu
1:2, Deu 1:19, Deu 2:14, Deu
9:23, Jos 10:41, Jos 14:6, Jos
14:7, Jos 15:3

Strong's From the same as [H6946](#) (*qadesh* holy) and an otherwise unused word [apparently compounded of a correspondent to [H1251](#) (*bar* field) and a derivative of [H5128](#) (*nua* waver)] meaning *desert of a fugitive; Kadesh of (the) Wilderness of Wandering; Kadesh-Barnea*, a place in the Desert: - Kadesh-barnea.

Appendix 2: Comparison of the wilderness of Zin vs Sin

I don't know if there is any deep understanding in this comparison but I created this nifty table to I decided to keep it. There is also a contrast between Rephadim (H7508) and Kadesh (H6946)

Wilderness of *Sin* (Root: *Samech Yod Nun*)^{H5512} vs. *Zin* (Root: *Tzadi Nun*)^{H6790}

Exo 17:1	"...from the wilderness ^{H4057} of <i>Sin</i> ..."	after leaving Egypt
Num 13:21	"...from the wilderness ^{H4057} of <i>Zin</i> ..."	before the giving of the Evil Report
Num 20:1	"... into the desert ^{H4057} of <i>Zin</i> ..."	before entering the promised land

BDB: *Sin* means "thorn or clay" and *Zin* means flat.

H5512 *sin*^J

סִינָה

Strong's: Of uncertain derivation; *Sin*, the name of an Egyptian town and (probably) desert adjoining: - Sin.

BDB:

Sin = "thorn" or "clay"

- 1) a town in eastern Egypt
- 2) the tract of wilderness between Elim and Sinai

Part of Speech: noun proper locative

A Related Word by BDB/Strong's Number: of uncertain derivation

KJC: 6 *sin*, 6 [Exo_17:1](#) (2), [Num_33:11-12](#) (2), [Eze_30:15-16](#) (2)

H6790 *zin* or *tzin*

צִןָּה

Strong's: From an unused root meaning to *prick*; a *crag*; *Tsin*, a part of the Desert: - Zin.

BDB:

Zin = "flat"

- 1) name given to a portion of the desert tract between the Dead Sea and Arabah on the east in which Kadesh-barnea was located

Part of Speech: noun proper locative

KJC: 10

zin, 9 [Num_13:21](#), [Num_20:1](#), [Num_27:14](#) (2), [Num_33:36](#), [Num_34:3-4](#) (2), [Jos_15:1](#), [Jos_15:3](#)

because, 1 [Deu_32:51](#)

^J FWIW, Sinai (H5514), as in Mt. Sinai, is spelled the same as *sin* (H5512) but with an *ayin* added onto the end.

