

Edom and The Last Days

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Yeshua:

The word *Edom* in Hebrew means “red.” The Bible relates this name to Esau, the elder son of the Hebrew patriarch Isaac and the brother of Jacob—later named Israel. Esau became the father of the Edomites and other nations, including Amalek. The Edomites primarily inhabited the area of Mount Seir. This mountainous region, situated in modern-day Jordan, stretches along the eastern flanks of the Jordan Valley from the Dead Sea southward towards the Gulf of Aqaba.

The area is world-renowned for its red sandstone formations and dunes. Two Star Wars movies were filmed there, *The Rise of Skywalker* and *Rogue One*. In the heart of this region is the ancient city of Petra, nicknamed the Rose City. Dating to around 300 B.C., it was the capital of the Arabic Nabatean Kingdom.

At the Exodus, Moses requested permission from the king of Edom for the Israelites to pass through this region. Access was denied, and then later, the Edomites came against Israel. We read, *“So Edom came out against them with many men and with a strong hand” (Numbers 20:20, NKJV).*ⁱ

In response to their evil, we read, *“Says the Lord. Yet Jacob I have loved; But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness” (Malachi 1:2-3). “And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly. Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, And destroy the remains of the city” (Numbers 24:18-19).*

The Edomites continued to attack Israel and the Kingdom of Judah, looting the First Temple at the time of its destruction, and blocking the escape of the Jewish people, causing many to die. Interestingly, it is believed that the Edomites were eventually forced to convert to Judaism by John Hyrcanus (Maccabean leader, 2nd century B.C.). King Herod is considered to one of their descendants, as is the prophet Obadiah.ⁱⁱ It is also believed that descendants from Edom settled Rome. Thus, the current exile of the Jewish people instigated by the Roman Empire is called “the Exile of Edom.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Another wicked descendent of Esau was his chief son, Amalek. The Amalekites also sought to destroy Israel when they came out of Egypt; thus, the Lord declared, *“Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of*

Amalek from under heaven" (Exodus 17:14). The Amalekites later joined with the Canaanites, the Moabites, and the Midianites to wage war on Israel.^{iv}

The Amalekites inhabited a large swath of land, stretching into Mesopotamia. But during Biblical times, their kingdom was chiefly established in the Negev, bordering the ancient kingdom of Judah. Therefore, I believe the Mountains of the Amalekites, as referenced in scripture, likely flanked the western side of the Jordan Valley, opposite the Kingdom of Edom.^v

Lastly, we read that Ishmael, the firstborn son of Abraham, intermarried with the descendants of Esau. It is written, *"So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had" (Genesis 28:9).*

We now begin to see a mixed multitude of people descendent from Ishmael, Esau, and Amalek, many of whom are related to the Arab and Palestinian people living in and around Israel today.^{vi} Sadly, the root of hatred against their brother, Jacob, we know from scripture, will continue to the end of this age.

The sages tell us the nations of the world are presently all mixed. Therefore, any person or country that hates the God of Israel and His people is included in this mixed multitude. These enemies of God eventually consult together, culminating in a great war against the Jewish people. As we read, *"For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against Your people [Israel], And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more. For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You: The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites; Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot. Selah" (Psalm 83:2-8).*

These wars and desolations are decreed against Israel as judgments for their rejection of Christ.^{vii} So it is written, *"Egypt, Judah, Edom, the people of Ammon, Moab, and all who are in the farthest corners, who dwell in the wilderness. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart" (Jeremiah 9:26).* Notice that the Lord calls out Judah and Israel with Edom and many others.

Ultimately, it will be Israel that God uses to bring His righteous judgments against this great multitude of Gentile nations. As it is written, *"I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance," says the Lord God" (Ezekiel 25:14).* God will bring his fury against all who desecrate His land and violate His people, as we read:

"For the indignation of the Lord is against all nations, And His fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter. Also their slain shall be thrown out; Their stench shall rise from their corpses, And the mountains shall be

melted with their blood. All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; All their host shall fall down As the leaf falls from the vine, And as fruit falling from a fig tree. For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; Indeed it shall come down on Edom, And on the people of My curse, for judgment" (Isaiah 34:2-5).

"Edom also shall be an astonishment; Everyone who goes by it will be astonished And will hiss at all its plagues..." Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord that He has taken against Edom, And His purposes that He has proposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; Surely He shall make their dwelling places desolate with them. (Jeremiah 49:17 & 20).

"As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom—all of it! Then they shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezekiel 35:15).

"Even though Edom has said, We have been impoverished, But we will return and build the desolate places, Thus says the Lord of hosts: They may build, but I will throw down; They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness, And the people against whom the Lord will have indignation forever. Your eyes shall see, And you shall say, The Lord is magnified beyond the border of Israel" (Malachi 1:4-5).

"Will I not in that day," says the Lord, Even destroy the wise men from Edom, And understanding from the mountains of Esau? Then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, To the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau May be cut off by slaughter. For violence against your brother Jacob, Shame shall cover you, And you shall be cut off forever" (Obadiah 1:8-10).

The Bible is filled with examples of how God has brought the Gentile nations against Israel in judgment and then turned His full wrath against these kingdoms that touched His land and His people. Yeshua spoke about this time of the end, saying, *"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Matthew 24:15-16).*

One missing detail from this verse is the reference to any specific mountain range. Some theologians have presumed that Israel will flee to Petra and the mountains of Edom. This is plausible. Or maybe the Lord is speaking in a general sense, indicating the Jewish people will run in many directions to different mountains at this time of final judgment?

Another possibility is that mountains in scripture represent kingdoms.^{viii} Maybe Yeshua is saying that the Jewish people will flee to the nations for protection? As we read, *"But the [kingdoms of the] earth helped the woman [who is Israel], and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon [Satan] had spewed out of his mouth" (Revelation 12:16).* We do not know

for sure, but one thing is clear. The Jewish people *will* need to escape Jerusalem from the wrath of God and the nations He has brought against them.

When Israel's punishment for her iniquity is finished, the Lord will gather the remnant of the Jewish people. All Israel shall be saved. As it is written, *"The punishment of your iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; He will no longer send you into captivity. He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom; He will uncover your sins!" (Lamentations 4:22).*

While the Lord has prophesied He will bring His righteous judgments and anger against Israel, and the mixed-multitude of people generally referenced as "Edom," He has also promised to send His redeemer to save all those who call upon the name of the Lord.^{ix} As it is written, *"Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?—I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes" (Isaiah 63:1-3).*

These verses reference Christ. He is the supreme judge of all creation and the only name by which men can be saved.^x And it is interesting to read that the Lord comes from Edom, specifically, Bozrah, the land of Israel's enemies. Bozrah, presently called Basira, is a pastoral city in modern-day Jordan (ancient Edom) situated southeast of the Dead Sea, about an hour north of Petra. It means sheepfold or enclosure in Hebrew.

Could it be that God, as He declared, will bring His salvation to Israel's surrounding Gentile nations and their arched enemies to provoke the Jewish people to jealousy? I believe so, as Yeshua said, *"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd" (John 10:16).*

While Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother, Jacob, he later recanted and begged his father for a blessing. Isaac, therefore, said, *"Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, And of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck" (Genesis 27:39-40).* Isaac prophetically declared that Esau's descendants would be violent men who would live out their lives serving the Jewish people. But one day, they would break Israel's yoke of bondage from their neck.

Regarding Israel and our yoke of slavery, we read, *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright" (Leviticus 26:13).* The Hebrew word for yoke is *oil*. But in these two verses, the letter *vav* (numerical value of six) is added to the phrase, indicating "your yoke" and "his yoke." Six is the measure of man and the Son of Man, who is Christ. So, it is Yeshua who ultimately redeems the descendants of both Jacob and Esau to deliver all of us into His Kingdom.

Another exciting shadow of the Messiah's future redemption is the Biblical commandment and sacrifice of the Red (Edom) Heifer. This purification ritual performed by a Kohen, a son of Aaron, was required for any person who encountered a dead body. The rabbis correlate the Red Heifer with Esau, who they say was red-skinned and filled with fire, passion, bloodshed, and bloodlust.

Again, we see a reference to Israel's enemies, the descendants of Edom. And yet, we read, *"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive" (Genesis 50:20). "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).* What the enemy intended for our destruction, God turns around and uses for our redemption.

Additionally, the word "seir" in Hebrew means "goat." The Bible refers to "goat-devils," otherwise called demons, associating the goat with evil.^{xi} The rabbis say that the eleven goat-skin draperies in the Tabernacle of Moses signify the shell or nature of sin.^{xii} We read, *"It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea" (Deuteronomy 1:2),* but miraculously, the Israelites traversed this distance in three days.^{xiii} These eleven days of travel were via "Mount Seir," these being a mystery of the kings of Edom. Interestingly, the main roadway connecting the town of Basira, and the entire region of Edom is still called the King's Highway.

The number ten signifies God's completeness and holiness. In contrast, the number eleven indicates our excessiveness or overindulgence, as it is written, *"We all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Ephesians 2:3).* Here is the mystery behind the statement of our sages: *"Whoever adds, detracts."^{xiv} And Yeshua said, "If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18).*

The word Horeb (*Chorev*) in Hebrew means destruction. The understanding of this word brings us back full circle to the prophetic fulfillment of Edom and the last days. While Edom represents Israel's enemies, God will bring His redemption and salvation to Edom for a season to provoke the Jewish people to jealousy. This season, I believe, correlates with the time and fullness of the Gentiles.

Our Savior, Yeshua, the Son of man (*Ben Adam*) and the first Adam, has dipped His garments for us in His blood (*da'm*) and stained them red (*adom*), to save the sons of men (*Bnei Adam*) from eternal destruction. But He has also dipped His garments on the blood (*da'm*) of the wicked as He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.^{xv}

As for the descendants of Edom who reject Christ, God will use them to bring His righteous indignation against the Jewish people who have also left Him. And while God has purposed to bring His final redemption to the remnant of Israel, so that all Israel shall be saved, God's full wrath and destruction will come, as prophesied, to Edom and the mixed multitude of Gentiles who joined them.

Therefore, let us pray earnestly for the salvation of the descendants of Israel and Esau. And let us declare the good news of the gospel, to the Jew first and to the Gentile. And may they who come to the knowledge of Christ provoke all to jealousy, so they also may enter the Kingdom.

Amen!

ⁱ All Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Bible (NKJV) unless otherwise noted, Thomas Nelson Inc., 1982.

ⁱⁱ *Ancient Jewish History: The Edomites*. Jewish Virtual Library.

ⁱⁱⁱ Hurwitz, Yitzi. *On the Haftarah: The Vision of Ovadia and What It All Means, For the Haftarah of Vayishlach, taken from the Teachings of the Rebbe*. Chabad.org.

^{iv} Numbers 14:45. Judges 3:13 & 6:3.

^v Judges 12:15.

^{vi} Wade, Lizzie. *Ancient DNA reveals fate of the mysterious Canaanites*. Science.

^{vii} Daniel 9:26.

^{viii} Matthew 4:8. Revelation 17:9.

^{ix} Joel 2:32.

^x Acts 4:12.

^{xi} Isaiah 13:21. Daniel 8:8. Matthew 25:32-33.

^{xii} From the teachings of Rabbi Yitzchak Luria; translated and edited by Moshe Yaakov Wisnefsky. *Eleven Days Fall from Edom: Each stage of the Exodus hints at the process of the rectification of the entire Creation*. Chabad.org.

^{xiii} See Rashi ad loc.

^{xiv} Sanhedrin 29a.

^{xv} Revelation 19:13-15.