

'Ovadyah ~ Part 2

Reason For Punishment

⁸ "When that Day comes," says Adonai, "won't I destroy all the wise men of Edom and leave no discernment on Mount 'Esav? ⁹ Your warriors, Teman, will be so distraught that everyone on Mount 'Esav will be slaughtered.

Edom was known for its wisdom (**Job's** companion **Eliphaz** was from **Teman**; Job 2:11; Jeremiah 49:7), but **God** would take away their wisdom and understanding. **Teman**, the area east of **Petra**, is used to refer to **Edom**.

¹⁰ For the violence done to your kinsman Ya'akov, shame will cover you; and you will be forever cut off. ¹¹ On that day you stood aside, while strangers carried off his treasure, and foreigners entered his gates to cast lots for Yerushalayim - you were no different from them. ¹² You shouldn't have gloated over your kinsman on their day of disaster or rejoiced over the people of Y'hudah on their day of destruction. You shouldn't have spoken arrogantly on a day of trouble, ¹³ or entered the gate of my people on their day of calamity - no, you shouldn't have gloated over their suffering on their day of calamity or laid hands on their treasure on their day of calamity. ¹⁴ You shouldn't have stood at the crossroads to cut down their fugitives or handed over their survivors on a day of trouble."

To harmonize the phrase *forever cut off* with the seemingly contradictory statement in Amos 9:12 (see note at 'Obidiah 18 below). Conquering soldiers who *cast lots* (Joel 3:2-3; Nahum 3:10) probably did so by shaking a container of marked pebbles until one fell out. The individual whose stone was drawn first selected the preferred portions of **Yerushalayim**. The repetition of the *day* of their *trouble* emphasizes the calamity and suffering of **Y'hudah** at the time of **Edom's** mistreatment. Ironically, this preoccupation with distress and disaster prepared the way for the **Day of the Adonai** (v. 15), when **God** would pay back **Edom** accordingly.

Future Destruction

¹⁵ For the Day of Adonai is near for all nations; as you did, it will be done to you; your dealings will come back on your own head.

The **Day of the Adonai** was a time of retribution for the **Edomites** because they cooperated with the conquering **Babylonians** in the day of **Yehuda's** distress (see note at vv. 12-14). *Your dealings will come back on your own head* literally, "**your payback or retribution.**" **Retribution** would come upon **Babylon**, the ally of **Edom** (Psalm 137:8), and all who had insulted **Y'hudah** (Lamentations 3:61-64).

¹⁶ For just as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so will all the nations drink in turn; yes, they will drink and gulp it down and be as if they had never existed. ¹⁷ But on Mount Tziyon there will be a holy remnant who will escape, and the house of Ya'akov will repossess their rightful inheritance. ¹⁸ The house of Ya'akov will be a fire and the house of Yosef a flame, setting aflame and consuming the stubble which is the house of 'Esav. None of the house of 'Esav will remain, for Adonai has spoken.

The initial occasion for the drinking bout (*as you have drunk on My holy mountain*) may have been the **Edomite** celebration over the recent demise of **Y'hudah** (ca 586 BC). However, the reference to future drinking (*so all the nations will drink in turn*) does not picture celebration but rather judgment against **Edom**. **God's** burning anger will consume His enemies like grass or chaff. He will use **Isra'el** as a blazing fire consumes grass to destroy their enemies (Zechariah 12:6).

God's People Restored

¹⁹ Those in the Negev will repossess the mountain of 'Esav, and those in the Sh'felah the land of the P'lishtim; they will repossess the field of Efrayim and the field of Shomron, and Binyamin will occupy Gil'ad. ²⁰ Those from this army of the people of Isra'el exiled among the Kena'anim as far away as Tzarfat, and the exiles from Yerushalayim in S'farad, will repossess the cities in the Negev. ²¹ Then the Tzarfat will ascend Mount Tziyon to rule over Mount 'Esav, but the kingship will belong to Adonai. ¹

All of **Isra'el**, including the **exiles** far away, will regain the full extent of the **Promised Land** - both west and east of the **Jordan** - much of which was lost over the years. The **Negev** is the desert in the far south, particularly south of **Beersheba**. **'Esav** is to the east, the **P'lishtim** are to the west, **Gil'ad** is also to the east, and **Tzarfat** is far north, a city on the **Phoenician** coast between **Tyre** and **Sidon** (1 Kings 17). The **Promised Land** became an image for the new and greater **Promised Land**, the new creation (see Hebrews 11:16). On **Isra'el's** possessing **Edom**, see Numbers 24:18 and Amos 9:12. The location of **S'farad** is debated, but the most likely place is **Sardis** in western **Turkey**. **God's** people, exiled to the farthest regions, will return to possess the land that had been taken from them. Those saviors appointed by **God** to deliver the people and bring just governance. The **Lord** has always been the King over the nations (v. 1), but here the prophet promises the future, definitive manifestation of God's kingly rule from **Mount Zion**, i.e., Jerusalem. That end-time redemptive reign will be inaugurated by the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah (Matt. 12:28) and consummated at his coming in glory (Matt. 25:34).

In our next post, we will begin to learn more about the **Prophecy of Yonah (Jonah)**.

¹ 'Ovadyah 8-21.