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The Oracle Concerning Edom (Dumah)

21: 11-12

The oracle concerning Edom or Dumah DIG: Dumah, invaded by the Assyrians when they came against Babylon, was an oasis on a major trade route to Seir and an ally of Babylon. In calling to the watchman regarding these events, what are the Edomites really asking? What's behind their question? And Isaiah's puzzling answer? Are there some individual Edomites who have become believers today?

REFLECT: What can the nation of Edom teach you today? How do you feel about God's promise to Abram? Are you a blessing or a curse to Isra'el and her people? How do you feel about Edom's ultimate destination? Is that fair? Is that mean? Are the consequences of God's Word that real? Where does rebellion against God lead?

An oracle concerning Dumah (21:11a). Isaiah plays games with words again. He takes the first "ah" sound in the Hebrew and transposes it to the end so that **Edom** is switched to **Dumah**. He does this because he wants to drive home the meaning of **Dumah**. **Edom** means *red* but **Dumah** means, *silence*. And this name change from **Edom** to **Dumah** is symbolic of **Edom's** future fate. **Edom** is to suffer the death of *silence*.

The **Edomites** are the descendants of **Esau** (see the commentary on **Genesis**, to see [link click In - The Written Account of the Generations of Esau](#)). Although the **Edomites** were closely related in blood and language to the **Israelites**, they refused a request by Moses for the **Israelites** to pass through their territory on their way north (**Numbers 20:14-21**). Many times, they were at war with the neighboring kings of **Isra'el** and **Judah** (**Second Kings 8:20; Second Chronicles 28:17**). Over the centuries they have opposed the people of God. Long ago **ADONAI** declared an unchangeable law of the world. He said to Abram: **I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse (Genesis 12:3a)**. The working out of this principle is seen in the nation of **Edom**.

The word **Dumah**, or *silence*, is a different kind of silence than some other Hebrew words that **Isaiah** could have used. This one means a deep, utter silence. It is a death like silence, a death-like sleep, or a death-like darkness. Look at some **Psalms**. **Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I have cried out to you; but let the wicked be put to shame and**

lie *dumah* (silent) in the grave (Psalm 31:17). Unless the LORD had given me help, I would soon have dwelt in the *dumah* (silence) of death (Psalm 94:17). The NKJV does not have **of death** because it is a word for word translation, but the NIV does have it because it is a thought for thought translation. **It is not the dead who praise the LORD, those who go down to *dumah* (silence) (Psalm 115:17).**

Next, we have a common example of something that will happen elsewhere in the Prophets where suddenly, out of nowhere, a little cryptic prophecy is given. It doesn't seem to say much at all. They are usually limited to one to five verses. This one is limited to two verses (**21:11b-12**). If it were apart from other passages of Scripture it would be impossible to understand it. If this were all we had, we would never be able to figure this out. But we can glean a lot from other verses to discover its meaning.



There is a sudden call to **the Watchman** from Mount **Seir** (say-ear), which is the key mountain range in Edom. In fact, **Seir** is an alternative name for **Edom**, because the mountains of **Seir** were given as a possession to **Esau** and **his** descendants (**Joshua 24:4**). This is where **the Edomites** settled, in what today is southern Jordan. The question is asked twice: **Watchmen, what is left of the night? Watchman, what is left of the night (21:11b)?** In Hebrew, the word for *night* has two forms, a long form and a short form. In these two questions, the first one is the long form, and the second one is the short form. The point is to heighten anxiety and give a sense of urgency and haste. The appeal is, "What part of **the night** is it?" "How much of **the night** has passed?" "How much more must be endured before the light of the morning comes?"

Then **the watchman replies**. Up to this point, the original text has all been written in Hebrew, but now when **the watchman** answers, it switches to Aramaic. **The watchman replies: Morning is coming.** The word, **is coming**, is a perfect word for certainty. **But**

also the night (21:12a) there will be no relief for **Edom**, and no consolation. While the **morning** was **coming**, it is certain that another **night** would follow. There will be no change; it will still be dark for **Edom** as a nation. For **Edom** it is **night**, total destruction. No one will be left.

But **if you would ask, then ask. And come back (turn) yet again (21:12b)**. The word **come back** or **turn (shuv)** means *turn in the sense of conversion*. The only possible relief for individual **Edomites** is to turn to **the Messiah** and to **come back** after repenting, because there is no possible relief for **Edom** as a nation. These two verses also serve as a prelude to **the far eschatological Edom** (see [Gi - Edom's Streams Will Be Turned into Pitch](#)). Other passages that deal with **the far eschatological Edom** are **Jeremiah 49:7-22; Ezekiel 25:12-14, 35:1-15; Amos 1:11-12; Obadiah 1-21; Malachi 1:2-5**.

Edom is going to play the central role in the campaign of Armageddon. **Edom** will be the place where the final remnant of **Isra'el** is hiding out during the second half of the Great Tribulation. And also, **Edom is the location of the Second Coming of Christ** (see [Kg - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah](#)). **The Jews** will not be hiding in **Edom** because of **Edom's** love for **them**. On the contrary, **Edom** will do what it can to turn **the Jews** over to the antichrist and the armies of the world that are trying to destroy **Isra'el** for the final time. Initially, **Messiah** first returns to save **all of Isra'el (Romans 11:26; Malachi Zechariah 12:7-14; Amos 9:11-12; Jeremiah 31:31-32)**. After, **Christ** and **the Jews** leave **Edom** it becomes the second burning wasteland of the Millennium. **Babylon** is one (see [Dr - I Will Cut Off from Babylon Her Name](#)) and **Edom** is the other. So, while the entire world is enjoying the thousand-year millennial reign **Yeshua Messiah**, these two spots remain a burning wasteland. This will be the death of *silence*. The oracles concerning **Babylon** and **Edom** answer the question, "Where does rebellion against **God** lead?" The answer is that they both become the home of demons during the entire Millennial Kingdom.