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Edom's Streams Will Be Turned into Pitch 34: 9-17

Edom's steams will be turned to pitch DIG: When and why does Edom's streams turn into pitch? What other biblical event does this remind us of? What does *tohu vohu* mean? Why is it mentioned here? Who are these *animals* that will be living in this uninhabitable wasteland?

REFLECT: How do you feel about the judgment of evil? Does it seem cruel to you or just? How do you think Jesus Christ feels when He is rejected by the ones He has given His life for? When will all this take place? Do we see revenge or righteous justice in this section?

As uncomfortable as it is, there is no escaping the Bible's teaching that those who persist in their rebellion against **ADONAI** will end in utter ruin. I have already pointed out in the study of **Isaiah 13** and **14** that throughout the Millennial Kingdom, Babylon becomes a burning wasteland, and demons would live there. The same thing will be true of **the land** of **Edom** (or modern Southern Jordan) in **the far eschatological future** at the end of the Great Tribulation. **Edom's land** will be reduced to volcanic waste. **Her streams will be turned into** black sticky **pitch, and her dust into burning sulfur.** The result of **ADONAI's** sword of judgment on **Edom** is that **her land will become blazing pitch (34:9)!** This description reminds us of those applied to Sodom and Gomorrah **(Genesis 19:24-28; Deuteronomy 29:23; Psalm 11:6; Jeremiah 49:18; Revelation 14:10-11)**.

It also will be a place of perpetual devastation, a picture of complete finality. **It will not be quenched night and day; its smoke will rise forever (34:10a).** The word **forever** means *until the end of an age or dispensation*. In this case, it will continue until the end of the dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom. Throughout the **thousand years (Revelation 20:2)**, the land of **Edom,** like Babylon, will be nothing but a burning wasteland. And in even stronger language than the first line, **Isaiah** tells us that **from generation to generation Edom will lie desolate; no one will ever pass through it again (34:10b).** It will have no *human*

inhabitants, but it *will* have inhabitants. **Isaiah** lists a number of *animals* that will dwell there.

The desert owl and screech owl will possess it (see my commentary on **Jeremiah, to see link click Ac – The Owl as a Symbol of Judgment**)**; the great owl and the raven will nest there (34:11a).** These cannot be literal animals because literal owls and ravens could not survive in the burning wasteland described here by **Isaiah**. We may not know what kind of *animals* **they** are, but we do know that **they** are the only kind of *animals* who can live in burning **pitch and burning sulfur** that will not be quenched day and night. When we look at the animal kingdom, none of them could normally survive in this kind of an environment. Then what are these?

For divine judgment itself, look at **verse 11b**. **God will stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos (*tohu or* formless) and the plumb line of destruction (*vohu or* empty).** The Hebrew for these words is used in **Genesis 1:2** to describe the earth in its formless and empty state. They are the same words here. **God's** *normal* method is to work from chaos to order. We see that in **Genesis** and here in the messianic Kingdom. He is continuing to create order out of chaos from a fallen world. This process will be finished **when perfection comes (First Corinthians 13:10),** which is the Eternal State (see the commentary on **Revelation Fq – The Eternal State**). The level, or **the measuring line** and the measure, or **the plumb line**, are commonly employed for the purpose of building up; but here **God** is represented as using these for the purpose of pulling down, inasmuch as He carries out this negative reverse of building with the same rigorous exactness as that with which a builder carries out his well-considered plan, and throws **Edom** back into a state of desolation and desert, resembling the disordered and shapeless chaos of creation.[120]

At that time, the royalty of **Edom** will disappear. **Her nobles will have nothing there to be called a kingdom, all her princes will vanish away (34:12).** Unlike other countries of that day, **Edom** had an elected monarchy. Any time a king of **Edom** would die, the **nobles** would gather to elect a new king. Now the **nobles** have disappeared and so does the elected monarchy of their kingdom. At the end of the Great Tribulation, however, not only will there be no elected monarchy, there will be no **Edom**!

When **the Messiah** returns **(63:1-6)**, all **her** defenses will be worthless. **Edom** will become a place of **thorns**, nettles, and brambles. **Thorns will overrun her**

fortifications**, nettle and brambles will** replace **her strongholds. She will become a haunt for jackals, a home for owls (34:13)**. Once again, these *animals* have to be the kind of creatures that can survive in a burning wasteland.

The clue to what **they** really are comes next. **Desert creatures will meet with hyenas, and *wild goats* will bleat to each other; there the night creatures will also repose and find for themselves places of rest (34:14).** The Hebrew word for ***wild goats*** is the same word used for the ***wild goats*** that inhabit Babylon for the entire Messianic Kingdom. **These are demons in goat form. These other animals are also demons, which are given animal-like characteristics in places like the book of Revelation and elsewhere. Only demons can survive in a burning wasteland. Both Edom and Babylon become the home of demons for the entire millennial Kingdom.** The **goat's** head being the symbol for the church of Satan is no accident.

The phrase **night creature**, or **night monster**, is translated from the Hebrew word *lilit*. In Jewish theology, Lilit was Satan's wife. The word itself simply means *night demon*. One who wanders in desert places. When discussing evil spirits **Yeshua** mentions this, saying: **When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it (Matthew 12:43).** In **Talmudic Judaism, *Lilit* was a female demon. She was the first wife of Adam who was replaced by Eve and continued to wander in the night, seeking to harm newborn Jewish babies.** Some great little bedtime story, eh?

Therefore, these *animals* are demons that live in **Edom**, which will be a place of perpetual devastation and a burning wasteland during the thousand-year reign of **Christ**. Whether **Isaiah** is talking symbolically or literally about **the owl**s and **the falcons** depends on the context. **He** uses these terms metaphorically for demons

here, in **13:21** and **14:23.** But in **43:20**, where **he** is describing the return of the exiles from Babylon, **he** uses these terms in a literal sense. As always, we must remember that there are three important rules when interpreting Scripture: context, context, context.

This is a very difficult verse, but we do know the context is the obliteration of **Edom** during the thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom. In addition, we do know that no living creature, human or animal, could live there. **The owl will nest there and lay eggs, she will hatch them, and care for them, and care for her young under the shadow of her wings; there also the vultures will gather each with its mate (34:15).** Therefore, the only possible interpretation can be that this scene is meant to mirror the total absence of any human beings. Only demons could inhabit such a place.

The only two places that will never be inhabited again by human beings during the thousand-year Messianic Kingdom and Eternal State will be Babylon **(13:21-22)** and **Edom**. When **the LORD** returns to set up **His** Messianic Kingdom and **Edom** has become a wasteland, men will take out **the scroll** that the book of **Isaiah** is written on to verify that **his** predictions came true.[121] **Look at the scroll of the LORD and read** because **none of these will be missing, not one will lack her mate. For it is His mouth that has given the order, and His Spirit will gather them together (34:16).**

All of the creatures there, the **jackals, owls, desert creatures, hyenas, wild goats, falcons, and night creatures** will inhabit it. **None will be missing** because **God** has **given the order. The Ruach Ha'Kodesh will gather them together** in the burning wasteland of **Edom**. There, they will endure perpetual devastation. This burning **will not be quenched night and day; its smoke will rise** until the thousand years have ended**. The** same **measuring line** mentioned in **34:11** is mentioned here. **God** measures them for destruction. He **measure**s the parameters of **Edom**, their prison wasteland, and where they will be confined for a Millennium. **He allots their portions; His hand distributes them by measure. They will possess it** and **dwell there from generation to generation** until the thousand years are over **(34:17)**.

The heart that is bound together with **the LORD's** rejoices in the judgment of evil. Because if there is no judging evil, then there is no righteousness, there is no order in the universe. Everything would be *tohu vohu*. We would have **no King** and everyone would do as they see **fit (Judges 21:25)**. **Psalms 37** and **73** vividly

describe this tension between the righteous and **the wicked**. Both of these **Psalms** can be summarized by these two verses: **Turn from evil and do good; then you will live safely in the** Promised **Land forever. For God loves justice and will not abandon His faithful. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked** one **will be cut off (Psalm 37:27-28 CJB).** Now it is time to move on; however, although judgment may be necessary, it is not what **God** wants or desires. **His** ultimate goal is the salvation and joy of the redeemed.