

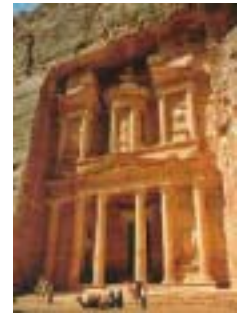


The Land of Edom

The Land of Edom is located between the northern section of the Gulf of Aqaba and the southern shore of The Dead Sea. Measuring approximately 100 miles (160 kilometers) long and 50 miles (80 kilometers) wide, it is named after Esau, the son of Isaac and Rebekah, who was the very slightly older fraternal-twin brother of Jacob / Israel (Genesis 25:23-26)

■ The region is known in various translations of the Bible as Idumea (Isaiah 34:5-6, Ezekiel 35:15), “the field of Edom” (Genesis 32:3), “the land of Edom” (Genesis 36:16). Also, because it was in part mountainous, it was also known as “the mountains of Esau” or “the mountain of Seir” (Obadiah 1:8,9,19,21). The southern part of Edom was known as Teman.

■ Sela, more popularly known by the Greek name *Petra*, is within Edom (2 Kings 14:7). One of its rock-carved faces is seen in the photograph.



■ The capital of Edom was Bozrah (Isaiah 63:1). The earlier inhabitants of the land were Horites, but they were driven out by the Edomites (Deuteronomy 2:12). Edomite tribes settled also in the south of Judah, like the Kenizzites (Genesis 36:11), to whom Caleb and Othniel descended (Joshua 15:17).

■ Although the Edomites were closely related in blood and in language to the Israelites, they were at times in a state of war with the neighboring kings of Israel and Judah (2 Kings 8:20, 2 Chronicles 28:17).

■ The Edomites refused a request by Moses for the Israelites to simply pass directly through Edomite territory on their way north (Numbers 20:14-21).

■ The territory was conquered by David (2 Samuel 8:14, 1 Kings 9:26), and in later years by Amaziah (2 Chronicles 25:11-12), but they regained their independence and again made war against Judah. The Edomites sided with the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar when they conquered Judah and devastated Jerusalem, but later the Edomites were themselves conquered by the Babylonians (Jeremiah 27:3-6). The nation lost its independence in the 5th century BC and was controlled by the Nabateans from about 312 BC. During this time, Edom was called Idumea, the area from which Herod the Great came. In more recent times, the land has been largely unoccupied, except for some Bedouins and, lately, by Jordanian military outposts.

■ There are many prophecies concerning Edom (Isaiah 34:5-6; Jeremiah 49:7-18, Ezekiel 25:13 and 35:1-15, Joel 3:19, Amos 1:11, Obadiah 1:1-21, Malachi 1:3-4).



Edom's Demise

The object of Obadiah's denunciation is the land of Edom (see previous page for a brief description of the kingdom). The main reason for the judgment is clearly spelled out in the first nine verses: Edom was sick with an offensive pride, an arrogance that had deceived the nation (v. 3).

God despises pride. Psalms 59:12-13; Proverbs 6:17; 8:13; 16:18; Mark 7:20-23; 1 John 2:16. But do you think we generally view it the same way God does? Do we ever say, "He's a drunk, but he's a good man"? Yet, we often say, "He's a good man, if a bit proud."

What was it about Edom that caused her to be so proud?

1. Independence from God. Edom had what she thought were impregnable defenses, illustrated best by the ancient city of Sela, more commonly known by its Greek name, Petra. In 1812, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt found a way to get the Arabs to allow him into the city. What Burckhardt saw amazed him. Entrance to the city is gained through a narrow, winding gorge or canyon called a *siq* (see pictures on this page). It is about a mile long and no wider than about 15 feet with towering stone walls on both sides. The difficulty of access gave the Edomites an inflated view of their invincibility: "who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to earth?'" (v.

3). Experts have concluded that a dozen men could defend the city against attack. From a human perspective, it is hard to imagine a more secure place. Yet God said He would do just that – bring them down, and hard.

2. A second component of

the pride of Edom was misplaced alliances (v. 7). Israel got in trouble many times because she sought security through alliances with other nations, instead of relying on God. Edom had a network of allies on which they relied to keep their power. But forming alliances is risky and God says that those





with whom they had peace would deceive them and overpower them. And it happened as God said: Edom's "friends" betrayed them to their enemies.

3. A third component was Edom's vaunted "wisdom" (v. 8). The Edomites were elitists and had a reputation for wisdom. Eliphaz, Job's most erudite friend, was from Teman, an Edomite city. Edom is in view when "the men of the East is mentioned" in 1 Kings 4:30. In Jeremiah 49:7, the question is asked, "Is there no longer any wisdom in Teman?"
4. A lack of brotherhood is a fourth aspect of Edom's pride (v. 10ff.). Edom refused to allow the Children of Israel to pass through its countryside when Moses led them toward the promised land. Edom had a special relationship to Israel, traced back to the twins, Jacob and Esau. Dt. 23:7 warns against hating an Edomite, "for he is your brother."

What must we do?

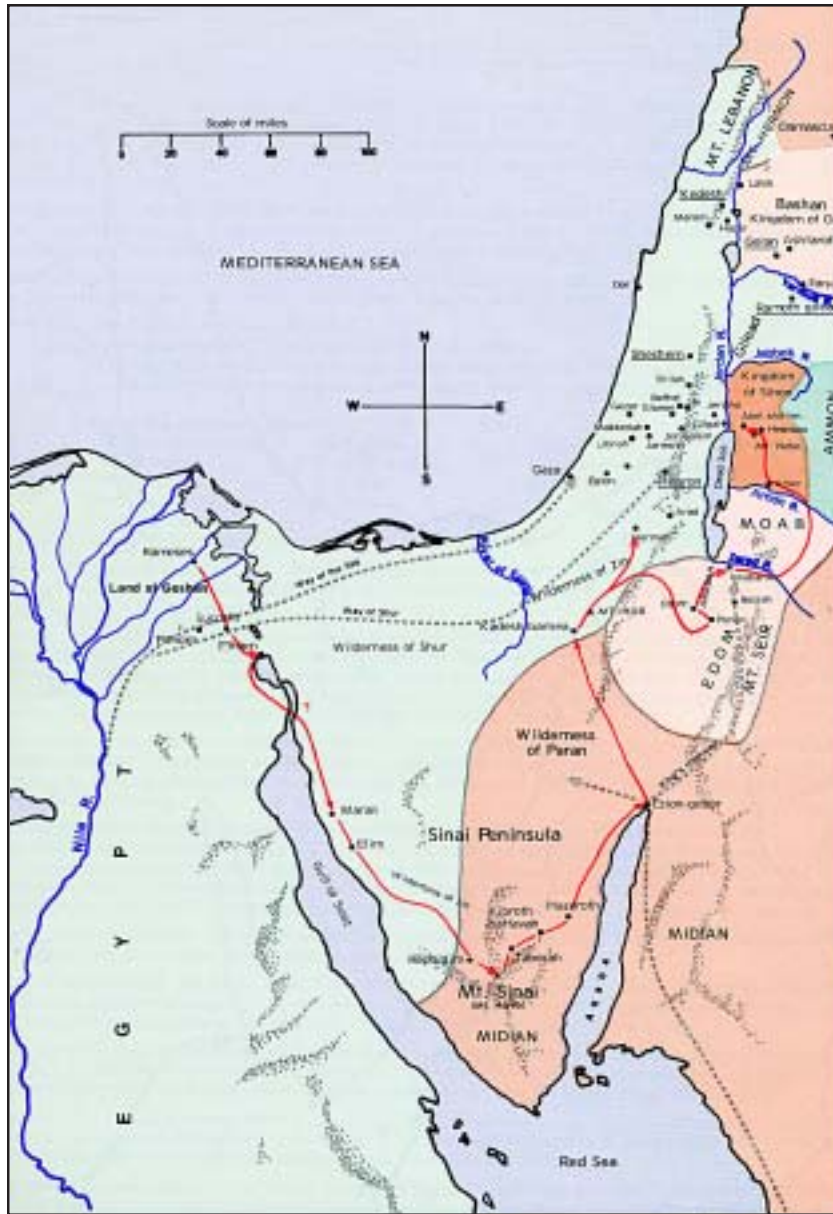
1. We must be humble. Rom. 12:3, 16; I Pet. 5:5-6.
2. We must be faithful, dependent upon God. Pr. 3:5; Jer. 9:23-24; 10:23
3. We must seek God. Acts 17:26-27
4. We must repent, turn, change. Mt. 3:7-9; I Jn. 1:9.
5. We must be careful how we treat our brethren. Rom. 10:10; 14:10, 13, 15; I Jn 3:14-17.



Edom *and surrounding areas*



View from Apollo VII





Locusts!

A locust will consume its own weight each day. Locust swarms have been known to cover as many as 400 square miles and even one square mile could teem with over 100 million insects...a single female laying her eggs in June could potentially result in 18 million offspring within four months.

Source: IVP Bible Background Commentary



**“They rush on the city,
They climb on the wall;
They climb into houses
They enter through
windows like a thief”**





“The Day of the Lord”

From the following passages, define “The Day of the Lord.”

Obadiah 15; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Isa. 13:6-10; Zephaniah 1:7, 14;
Ezek. 30:3 Acts 2:20; 2 Peter 3:10.

1. Does it always refer to final judgment?
2. If not, what other “days” in history have been a “Day of the Lord”?
3. Why was it such an important theme for the prophets to preach about?

