

Is. 21:11 ¶ The oracle concerning Edom. One keeps calling to me from Seir, "Watchman, how far gone is the night? Watchman, how far gone is the night?"

Isaiah plays a word game here; for the word that is translated "Edom," meaning "red," is "Dumah," meaning "the silence of death." (The word "silent" in Psalm 31:17 and Psalm 94:17 is from the same root word.)

A call comes to the *Watchman* from Mount *Seir*, Mount *Seir* being the chief mountain range on which the Edomites lived. Because the phrase, "Watchman, how far gone is the night," is repeated, the Edomites were urgent in their call to the *Watchman*. The *Watchman* is asked how long it would be before dawn would appear. He answers in the following verse.

Is. 21:12 The watchman says, "Morning comes but also night. If you would inquire, inquire; Come back again."

The watchman responds by saying that even though *Morning comes*, it will continue to be *night*. In other words, Edom is doomed. The phrase, "Come back again," means "to turn." Thus, Edom's only hope is to turn from her sin and follow Jehovah. Scripture confirms that she never repents; so judgment will follow—as is evidenced by what is stated in the following three paragraphs.

It is interesting that the location of the Second Coming is the city of *Bozrah* (Isaiah 34:1-6; 63:1-6), located in ancient *Edom* (modern day southern Jordan). As a result of Edom's history of animosity toward the Jews, *Edom* will be judged at the Second Coming and left a *desolate* wasteland *inhabited* solely by demons (Isaiah 34:6-15; Jeremiah 49:7-13; Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35:1-15; Amos 1:11-12; Obadiah 1-21; Malachi 1:3). This means that after the Second Coming, Edom will be totally uninhabited except for demons. Therefore, even though a variety of nations will enjoy the presence of the Lord during the Millennium, no Edomite will be there to enter into the festivities. Obviously, Edom will experience "the silence of death"—"Dumah" (Isaiah 21:11).

It is clear that Christ's Second Coming will accomplish at least two objectives:

1. He will judge Edom for its persecution of the Hebrew people, as we have already discussed. (It is interesting that when the Jews take refuge in Bozrah before Christ's Second Coming, the Edomites will refuse to assist them; thus, judgment will result.)
2. He will save the remnant of the Jews who are hiding in Bozrah (a city within Edom) at the end of the Tribulation. (Read Micah 2:12—the phrase, "in the fold," means "Bozrah." This remnant is addressed in depth in the notes associated with Isaiah 10:20 as well as the notes associated with Isaiah 13:3—**Stages 4 and 5 of The Campaign of Armageddon.**)

Our study has revealed that there will be two *burning* wastelands during the Millennium—*Babylon* and *Edom* (read the notes associated with verses such as Isaiah 13:3, 14:23, 34:9, and 66:24).

Is. 21:13 ¶ The oracle about Arabia. In the thickets of Arabia you must spend the night, O caravans of Dedanites.

Arabia today is united into one area known as Saudi Arabia. In Isaiah's day, *Arabia* consisted of a variety of tribes. Isaiah received an oracle relating to the judgment of two of the major tribes

(vv.13-17), the first being the *Dedanites* (v.13) who lived southeast of Edom in northern *Arabia. Edom*, which we just addressed in verses 11-12, and *Dedan* are mentioned one after the other in Jeremiah 49:7-8 and Ezekiel 25:13 as well. *Dedan*'s economy was bolstered through caravan routs, but according to this prophecy, these *caravans* were to take refuge *In the thickets of Arabia*. We will discover why they would need to do so in verse 15 of this chapter.

Is. 21:14 Bring water for the thirsty, O inhabitants of the land of Tema, Meet the fugitive with bread.

The *Dedanites*, a very wealthy and proud people, would be cared for in their season of hiding by the tribe of *Tema* (which lived in northwest Arabia)—a very humbling situation indeed. *Dedan* and *Tema* are also listed together in Jeremiah 25:23.

Is. 21:15 For they have fled from the swords, From the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, And from the press of battle.

The *Dedanites* are addressed as having *fled from the swords*, meaning that Isaiah was allowed to look into the future and observe them fleeing from the coming destruction. The destruction mentioned here evidently points to that which came at the hands of the Assyrians, for both Sargon II and Sennacherib took credit for subduing the Arab nations. Note the following quote from *Bible Knowledge Commentary*:

In 715 Sargon II wrote that he had defeated a number of Arabian tribes and had them deported to Samaria.

Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament records the following:

...and both Sargon and Sennacherib, in their annalistic inscriptions, take credit to themselves for the subjugation of Arabian tribes.

This input is important if we are to understand what Isaiah states in the next verse of his book, Isaiah 21:16.

Is. 21:16 For thus the Lord said to me, "In a year, as a hired man would count it, all the splendor of Kedar will terminate;

Isaiah mentions a second major Arabian tribe, *Kedar*, which was located northeast of the *Dedanites*. Note the following quote from *Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament* as it relates to the tribe of *Kedar*:

***Kedar*, the *Kedarenes*, a Bedouin nation descended from *Ishmael*, dwelling in tents throughout the region between *Arabia Petraea* and *Babylonia* (see on *Gen 25:13* and *Ezek 27:21*), is here, no doubt, a general name for all the nomadic tribes and shepherd nations of *Arabia*.**

Kedar was the second son of *Ishmael*, the son of Abraham (Genesis 25:13; 1Chronicles 1:29), a tribe of *splendor* and wealth (Song of Solomon 1:5; Isaiah 60:7; Ezekiel 27:21). Isaiah states that *In a year its splendor would terminate*. Once again Isaiah predicts “when” an upcoming event will occur, something that took great courage in light of the consequence of unfulfilled prophecies (read Deuteronomy 18:20). If the Assyrians were responsible for removing *Kedar*'s

splendor, as both Sargon II and Sennacherib seem to indicate (the notes associated with Isaiah 21:15 would be helpful if read at this time), Isaiah is making reference to the aggression of the Assyrians which would come about within *a year*.

It is interesting that the prophet Jeremiah, who served much later than Isaiah, prophesied of additional aggression against the tribe of *Kedar* at the hands of the Babylonians. In fact, Jeremiah 49:28-29 confirms that *Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon* defeated *Kedar* in Jeremiah's day, long after Isaiah had died. Based on *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*—"The Babylonian Chronicle dates the Babylonian campaign in 599 BC." Thus, *Kedar* fell at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar in the year 599 BC. We must make sure not to confuse the Assyrian aggression addressed here in Isaiah with that of the Babylonians addressed by Jeremiah, for several years lapsed in between.

Is. 21:17 and the remainder of the number of bowmen, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be few; for the Lord God of Israel has spoken."

The population of the tribe of *Kedar*, a tribe of nomads (Bedouins) who lived in tents, was drastically reduced through the Assyrian attack.

Jeremiah makes reference to a location known as *Hazor* in Jeremiah 49:28, 30-33. Note the following quote from *Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament* as it relates to the difference between *Hazor* and the nomads (Bedouins) who live in tents within Arabia:

Jeremiah appears to have formed the name (Hazor) for the purpose of designating those Arabians who dwelt in *chatseeriyim*, "courts" or "villages," and who thus differed from the Bedouins proper, or nomads and dwellers in tents.

Thus *Hazor*, in Jeremiah 49:28, 30-33, is evidently another name for the land mass (cities and land) known today as Saudi Arabia, while *Kedar* was a tribe of (nomads) Bedouins who lived in tents within this land mass. Considering this, read the following:

The population of *Hazor*, present day Saudi Arabia (and not to be confused with the *Hazor* located north of the Sea of Galilee), was also drastically reduced by *Nebuchadnezzar...of Babylon* (read Jeremiah 49:30-32). This destruction, however, was not as severe as that which will occur in the prophetic future. Based on Jeremiah 49:33, *Hazor* (the land mass known today as Saudi Arabia) will be totally uninhabited by man during the Millennium. But unlike *Babylon* and *Edom*, two areas where all inhabitants will be destroyed (Isaiah 14:22; Obadiah 8-9), a portion of the population of Saudi Arabia will be spared to live elsewhere during the kingdom period (Jeremiah 49:30-32). Based on Jeremiah 49:33, *Hazor* (present day Saudi Arabia) will be *A desolation* during the Millennium.

