

# WHY EDOM WAS DESTROYED

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Ezekiel chapter 35 is a prophecy against “mount Seir” (Ezek 35:2-3,7,15), which is Edom, the nation that descended from Israel’s twin brother Esau (Gen 32:3; 36:1,8,21; Judg 5:4). The chapter contains prophecies of Edom’s coming destruction at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians, and gives the reasons why God was bringing this judgment upon her. God repeated these prophecies through the mouths of many other prophets, including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Joel, and Obadiah.

## **Edom’s utter destruction**

Edom was a nation that God hated because of her wickedness (Mal 1:1-4). And the Lord declared that Edom would be completely destroyed. God said, “O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord” (Ezek 35:3-4). Blood would pursue them (Ezek 35:6). “Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passes out and him that returns. And I will fill his mountains with his slain men: in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword” (Ezek 35:7-8). “I will make thee desolate” (Ezek 35:14). “Thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezek 35:15; see also Isa 34:5-15; 63:1-6; Jer 49:7-22). And Edom’s destruction would be permanent. God said, “I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezek 35:9; see also Isa 34:10,17; Jer 49:13,17-18).

## **Edom’s hatred, anger, and envy towards Israel**

Why did God pronounce such severe woe upon Edom? God told Edom that He would destroy them “*because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: since thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee*” (Ezek 35:5-6). “Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the Lord was there: therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will even do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee. And thou shalt know that I am the Lord, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume. Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard them. Thus saith the Lord God; When the whole earth rejoices, I will make thee desolate. As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the

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Lord” (Ezek 35:10-15).

## **Rejoicing over Israel’s downfall**

Edom “*didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate*” (Ezek 35:15; see also Ezek 25:12). Edom had had a “perpetual hatred” towards Israel (Ezek 35:5). When Babylon came against Judah, Edom helped the Babylonians and “shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity” (Ezek 35:5). They “*did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever*” (Amos 1:11). Edom committed “violence against the children of Judah” and “shed innocent blood in their land” (Joel 3:19). Similarly, Ezekiel 25:12 says that Edom had “dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them.” The Edomites helped lead the survivors into captivity (Lam 4:21-22). Finally, Edom incited Babylon to destroy the city of Jerusalem, saying, “Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof” (Psa 137:7), and then they rejoiced when all of this was accomplished upon God’s people. The Edomites coveted the land of Israel and Judah and intended to take possession of it (Ezek 35:10-15; 36:5). Obadiah describes Edom’s “violence against thy brother Jacob” (Obad 10), the manner in which she helped the Babylonians and then rejoiced at the Judah’s fall. “In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. *But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity; neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been*” (Obad 11-16). God’s destruction of Edom for rejoicing at the desolation of their hated enemy Israel teaches us a great lesson: we must not rejoice at the fall of the enemy. God says, “*Rejoice not when thine enemy falls, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbles*” (Prov 24:17), “*and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished*” (Prov 17:5). God does not take pleasure in the fall of *His* enemies (Ezek 18:23,32; 33:11), but does good to them (Matt 5:43-48; Luke 6:27-36; Jn 3:16; Rom 5:6-11). David was a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam 13:14; Acts 13:22), and he did not rejoice at the fall of his enemy Saul (2 Sam 1), and his son Ishbosheth (2 Sam 4:8-12). We need follow David’s example and be like the Lord by not rejoicing when our enemy suffers hardship or falls.