

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation
Part XXXII: God's Call To Doomed Edom
(Isaiah 21:11-12)

I. Introduction

- A. The theme of the book of Isaiah that is found in the prophet's name is "Jahweh is Salvation," but God saves only those who trust in Him where those who fail to believe in Him are not saved.
- B. Nevertheless, God's call to be saved extends to all of the lost, even to those who will not believe, and in the case of Isaiah 21:11-12, that call extended to doomed Edom, teaching us to evangelize all of the lost:

II. God's Call To Doomed Edom, Isaiah 21:11-12.

- A. The nation of Edom longed for a message of hope for deliverance from Assyrian oppression, Isaiah 21:11:
 - 1. We know that the nation addressed in Isaiah 21:11-12 is Edom due to the reference in verse 11 to "Seir," a mountainous area in the land of Edom, Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. II, p. 77.
 - 2. However, Isaiah calls Edom in verse 11a by the cryptic name "Dumah" (*dumah*), or "silence," B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 189. "By removing the *a* sound from the beginning of the word (*A-dom*) [for "Edom"] and placing it at the end (*dum-A*), Isaiah makes the very name Edom become a sign of Edom's future fate," of the silence of death due to invading Assyria's destruction, *Ibid.*, Young, p. 76.
 - 3. God's prophet Isaiah who "alone can give information concerning the outcome of the terrifying invasion" hears voices in a vision that call him from the region of mountainous Seir, calling Isaiah, the prophet of God, "who alone knows the actual state of world affairs," Isaiah 21:11a,b; *Ibid.*, p. 76-77.
 - 4. The voices from Edom ask Isaiah, God's watchman, "Watchman, what from (*min*) the night? Watchman, what from the night?" (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 636; *Ibid.*, Young, p. 77), Isaiah 21:11b. A better translation is, "Watchman, what part of the night is it?" that in the context of judgment can be paraphrased as: "How much of the night has passed, how much more must we endure before the light of morning comes!" (*Ibid.*)
 - 5. Thus, the nation Edom feels the dreadful pain Assyrian oppression and calls out in torment to ask how much longer it must endure it, *Ibid.* The repetition of the question indicates that it comes from a suffering people, from those who intently long for some ray of hope of deliverance from Assyrian oppression, *Ibid.*
- B. As God's watchman, the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 22:12 answers that Edom must truly repent to be delivered:
 - 1. Isaiah reports that morning comes and also night, giving no definite article to either the word "morning" or to the word "night," Isaiah 22:12a; *Ibid.*, Young. The darkness of Assyrian oppression would occur, but there also existed the hope for a morning of deliverance to those in Edom, *Ibid.*, p. 78.
 - 2. In Isaiah 22:12b, God's prophet then told Edom what to do to experience the morning of God's deliverance from the night of Assyrian oppression, saying: "If you will seek, inquire (*ba'ah*, *Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 126); seek, inquire (*ba'ah* again, *Ibid.*); turn back, return (*shuv*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; *Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 996-1000), come (*'atah*, *Ibid.*, p. 87)," and we explain this directive (as follows):
 - a. The Edomites had long oppressed Judah, a main reason for God's judgment of her, *Ibid.*; Obadiah 10.
 - b. That hatred for Judah had also led to Edom's estrangement from Israel's God, and both sins had to be addressed if Edom wished to enjoy God's deliverance from divine judgment via Assyrian invasion.
 - c. Accordingly, Edom was to inquire, she was to seek the Lord with all of her heart as commanded in Deuteronomy 4:29 so as to find Him, and upon finding Him to "return" or "turn back" in repentance from her sin against God and her hatred of Judah before the Lord would deliver her, *Ibid.*
 - d. The brevity of this directive suggests that Edom had no real hope then due to her entrenched hatred of Judah and her estrangement from the Lord. Only if Edom's people were to repent to avoid God's judgment and not just seek deliverance from Assyria without such true repentance would she be delivered, *Ibid.*
- C. In history, "(r)oving bands marauded and . . . destroyed Edom, and it became a perpetual Dumah," *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Lesson: *Though Edom earnestly desired to be delivered from Assyrian oppression, she needed to seek it through true repentance to God before He would help her. In reality, the nation was doomed to destruction due to its lack of true repentance and faith in Judah's God, being thus doomed to be left as a place of the silence of death.*

Application: *(1) May we testify to the lost of their need to trust in Christ to escape eternal hell. (2) Though some of the unsaved will not believe, we like Isaiah must serve as God's watchmen of the night and call all lost men to faith in Christ. (3) If we ourselves have not yet believed in Christ, may we do so to escape eternal hell and be saved.*