

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious Part XXXVI: God's Punishment Of Edom For Taking Vengeance On Judah (Ezekiel 25:12-14)

I. Introduction

- A. Paul in Romans 12:19 KJV alluded to Deuteronomy 32:35 when writing, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."
- B. Ezekiel 25:12-14 predicted God's destruction of Edom for taking vengeance on Israel in its long conflict with Judah, and this passage offers us an important, timeless lesson on what to do when others wrong us:

II. God's Punishment Of Edom For Taking Vengeance On Judah, Ezekiel 25:12-14.

- A. God's pronouncement of judgment against Edom was for that nation's acting "revengefully against the house of Judah and" having "grievously offended in taking revenge" against them, Ezekiel 25:12 ESV.
- B. To understand what had led to Edom's bitter hatred against Judah, we review the long history of animosity that had occurred between Edom and Israel and particularly the Southern Kingdom of Judah (as follows):
 - 1. Edom had originally refused to let the nation Israel cross her territory in during the Exodus from Egypt back in Numbers 20:14-21; Bib. Know. Com., O. T., p. 1276. Though Israel offered to stay on the King's Highway trade route without trespassing on Edom's fields or vineyards or drinking from its wells, but offering to pay for water she used by her people or livestock, Edom refused with a show of force, *Ibid.*
 - 2. Saul fought Edom (1 Sam. 14:47), David captured it and made it a vassal (2 Sam. 8:13-14) and Solomon made Edom's town of Elath on the Gulf of Aqaba Israel's seaport, 1 Kings 11:14-18; *Ibid.*, p. 1276-1277.
 - 3. Edom rebelled against Israel in the latter part of Solomon's reign (1 Kings 11:14-18) but she continued to be a vassal state to Judah even after the split of the Davidic Kingdom, being controlled by a governor from Judah until after the era of Judah's king Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings 22:47-48; *Ibid.*, p. 1277.
 - 4. Edom rebelled against Judah in the reign of Judah's king Jehoram, 2 Kings 8:20-22a; *Ibid.*
 - 5. Judah and Edom then struggled with each other for the control of the vital caravan and shipping routes at the southern end of the Transjordanian highway, *Ibid.*; 2 Kings 14:7, 21-22; 2 Chronicles 28:17.
 - 6. When Judah revolted against Babylon's dominion in 588 B. C., "Edom sided with Babylon and aided Babylon in her assaults on Judah (cf. Ps. 137:7; Jer. 49:7-22)," *Ibid.*
- C. Thus, when Babylon defeated Judah, Edom's long, bitter hatred of Judah erupted into acts of ruthless revenge against her as described in Obadiah 11-14 (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Ezekiel 25:12):
 - 1. Edom stood by while Jerusalem was invaded by foreigners who then carried off their wealth and cast lots for them, which inaction gave Edom's tacit approval for the plunder of Jerusalem, Obadiah 11.
 - 2. Edom then gloated and rejoiced over Judah's fall and boasted amid her distress, Obadiah 12.
 - 3. Edom then actively participated in looting the city of Jerusalem, Obadiah 13.
 - 4. Finally, Edom killed and captured escaping Jewish people, turning them over to the Babylonians, Ob. 14.
- D. These actions amounted to wicked revenge on Edom's part, what God would severely punish, Ezek. 25:13-14:
 - 1. God promised to stretch forth His hand of judgment over Edom to kill both man and beast, Ezekiel 25:13a.
 - 2. The Lord would make the nation desolate, from Teman in central Edom to Dedan southeast of Edom in northern Arabia, the Edomites of the land being slain, Ezekiel 25:13b; *Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., O. T.
 - 3. God added that Israel would bring His vengeance against the Edomites so that the people of Edom would come to experience God's vengeance upon them for what they had done to Judah in her fall, Ezek. 25:14. This prophecy was remarkably fulfilled when the powerful Nabateans of northwestern Arabia in the intertestamental period conquered Edom, and a remnant of Edomites called Idumeans moved west to the Negev of southern Judah, *Ibid.*; Zon. Pic. Ency. Bib., vol. Four, p 347-350. (b) There, "they were forced to become Jewish converts," losing "their country and their national identity," *Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., O. T.
 - 4. For gloating over Judah's fall and helping her foes capture her people, Edom suffered total devastation and in humiliation lost her identity to Judah's people in God's vengeance on Edom for her revenge on Judah!

Lesson: By letting her long, bitter hatred of Judah erupt into heartless revenge in Judah's fall to Babylon, God arranged for Edom to suffer destruction and her remnant to lose their identity to Judah's people in just vengeance!

Application: (1) If another party wrongs us, may we not take revenge, for God handles vengeance. (2) Rather, in view of how severely God punished Edom for her revenge on Judah, may we be afraid of ever taking revenge!