
Edomites

The Edomites are the descendants of Edom, i.e., Esau, according to Genesis 36:1-19. And according to Numbers 20:14-21, the Israelites were refused permission to pass inviolate through Edom. This was an instance of religious aversion probably exacerbated by Satan himself.

Saul ben-Kish, anointed first king of Israel, fought against the Edomites, I Samuel 14:47; "for Yahweh so hated the Amalekites (descendants of Esau) that He commanded Saul to have no pity on them -- not even the women and children -- but to blot out the name of Amalek entirely."

And according to I Kings 11:15,16, King David defeated the Edomites; however, Hadad, one of the royal princes, escaped to Egypt and later became an enemy of Solomon's. Indeed, by David's command, Joab ben-Zeruiah, remained in Edom six months -- "until he had cut off every male organ (ZAKR) in Edom." Then, in 875 BC, the Edomites allied with Moab and Ammon to attack Judah, II Chronicles 20:22, in the Valley of Berachah. Later, Jehoram had problems with the Edomites until, finally, Amaziah killed 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, took Sela, the capital, and executed another 10,000 by pushing them from the top of the rock (II Kings 14:7, II Chronicles 25:11,12)

Subsequent to this, the Edomites became the vassals of the Assyrians, but attempted revolutions in 711 and 701 BC. And the Edomites allied themselves with Nebuchadnezzar when he destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC, according to Psalm 137:7, which says, "Remember, O Lord, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. 'Tear it down,' they cried, 'tear it down to its foundations!'"

Nebuchadnezzar ceded portions of Judah to the Edomites after the fall of Jerusalem. This fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah in Jeremiah 49; and explains why Jeremiah had been exhorting the Jews to destroy the Edomites. Lamentations 4:21, Amos 1:11,12, and Obadiah 8-10, all prophecy the destruction of Edom by God.

The Nabataeans were the first of God's whips against the Edomites; for the Nabataeans pushed the Edomites back up into a small parcel of land next to Judah. Then John Hyrcanus I, king-hierarch of Judea, 134-104 BC, subjugated Edom in fulfillment of the above prophecies, "that Jacob shall lay Esau by the heel." Hyrcanus "permitted the Idumeans to remain in their country as free men if they would circumcise their genitals and observe Jewish law."

God's final whip against the Edomites was Rome. For the Romans used 20,000 of the Idumeans as allies in the siege of Jerusalem, 70AD. But afterwards, the Romans annihilated the Idumeans, stating simply that they were a lawless and despicable race.

In verses 3 and 4 of Malachi chapter 1, Malachi compares the priests to Esau and his descendants the Edomites. This was an insult of unimaginable contempt -- the ultimate slur. For the Edomites were uncircumcised. And as uncircumcised heathens the Amalekites had "made themselves particularly hateful by cutting off 'the circumcised members of the Israelites' (both prisoners and corpses), tossing them into the air and shouting with obscene curses to Yahweh: 'This is what you like, so take what you have chosen.' This tradition is deduced from Deuteronomy 25:18, alluding to Amalek's harassment of the Hebrews at Rephidim during the Exodus."

In other words, Malachi is equating the circumcised Levitical Priests of his day with the uncircumcised Edomites. The Edomites were unbelievers who hated Yahweh and the Jews, and who tried to destroy the Jews at every opportunity. The priests were also unbelievers who hated Yahweh, and who were trying to destroy their own country from within. Who is more to be reviled? The enemy who attempts to kill you, or traitorous compatriots who attempt to kill you?
