

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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Petra

A Place of Safety?

YHWH is Against Edom – Forever!

Malachi 1:1-4

1 The burden of the word of YHWH to Israel by Malachi.

2 “I have loved you,” says YHWH. “But you say, ‘How have you loved us?’ Was not Esau Ya’aqov’s brother?” says YHWH, “yet I loved Ya’aqov,

3 but Esau I hated, and made his mountains a desolation, and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness.”

4 Whereas Edom says, “We are beaten down, but we will return and build the waste places;” thus says YHWH Tzava’ot, “They shall build, but I will tear down; and shall call them the wicked territory, and the people against whom YHWH has indignation forever.”

The first thing that needs to be established is just exactly who Edom is according to Scripture. We find the following verse from the Torah portion Toldot.

B’reshit (Genesis) 25:30

And Esau said to Ya’aqov, “Feed me with that red soup, for I am faint.” Therefore was his name called Edom.

“Edom” is another name for the descendants of Esau. Edom is also called “Seir” or “Mount Seir” in Scripture.

B’reshit (Genesis) 32:3

And Ya’aqov sent messengers before him to Esau his brother to the land of Seir, the field of Edom.

Mount Seir was given to the descendants of Esau as a possession by YHWH. We are commanded not to possess or to attempt to take their land.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 2:4-5

4 “And command the people, saying, ‘You are to pass through the border of your brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir; and they will be afraid of you; you take good heed to yourselves therefore; 5 contend not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on; because I have given Mount Seir to Esau for a possession.’”

Please take very careful note of the instructions that YHWH gave to Moshe to give to Israel. These instructions are part of His Torah to us. YHWH states that we are not to contend with Esau. Furthermore, we are not to take his land, nor are we even to tread upon the land that YHWH gave to Esau and his descendants after him. This might explain the following prophetic passage.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 63:1-6

1 Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This One who is glorious in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? “It is I who speaks in righteousness, mighty to save.”

2 Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like him that treads in the wine press?

3 “I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the peoples there was no man with Me; yea, I trod them in My anger, and trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My raiment.

4 For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come.

5 And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore My own arm brought salvation to Me; and My wrath, it upheld Me.

6 And I trod down the peoples in My anger, and made them drunk in My wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”

Please note that YHWH states that it will be He who comes from Edom with His garments covered in the blood of those He has slain. In particular, He will come from Bozrah; i.e., it is Mashiach who has slain all those who are there. “Bozrah” is another name used for and associated with Edom. No one has gone with Him to Bozrah to do this act of vengeance. Since Scripture teaches us that we are not to seek vengeance for ourselves, but rather that we are to allow YHWH to do this, we can then understand why it is that Mashiach is alone on this particular act of vengeance.

Ovadyah (Obadiah) 1:10-11

10 “For the violence done to your brother Ya’aqov, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off for ever.

11 In the day that you stood on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even you were as one of them.”

Because of the violence and plundering done to the southern kingdom of Judah when they were taken captive by Babylon, YHWH has cut them off and will take vengeance upon them.

Yechezqel (Ezekiel) 35:3-9

3 “and say to it, ‘Thus says Adonai YHWH, “Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out My hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and an astonishment.

4 I will lay your cities waste, and you shall be desolate; and you shall know that I am YHWH.

5 Because you have had a perpetual enmity, and have given over the children of Israel to the power of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time of the iniquity of the end;”

6 “Therefore, as I live,” says Adonai YHWH, “I will prepare you to blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you.

7 And I will make Mount Seir an astonishment and a desolation; and I will cut off from it him that passes through and him that returns.

8 And I will fill its mountains with its slain; in your hills and in your valleys and in all your watercourses shall they fall that are slain with the sword.

9 I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall not be inhabited; and you shall know that I am YHWH.””

YHWH is wrathful towards Edom and Mount Seir, which is Esau. It is because they did not treat their brethren Ya’aqov with kindness and compassion. Rather they came out against him with the sword and shed his blood. For this, YHWH will slay them all.

The word “petra” comes from the Greek word for “rock” which is equivalent to the Hebrew word “selah”. Many people confuse the Hebrew word “selah” which is one of the general words for “rock” in Scripture with the place name “Petra”. This place is in the midst of Edom or present day Jordan.

Please take careful note of verse seven, in which YHWH includes all those who return to Mount Seir (Petra) as among those who will be cut off and slaughtered. We are supposed to be returning to the faith of our fathers and following Mashiach Yeshua. This includes eventually returning back to the land promised to Avraham, Yitzchaq, and Ya’aqov. The land promised to Esau is not the same land that was promised to our fathers. So, I suppose the question that one should ask himself is this: Who is my father? Is your father Ya’aqov or is your father Esau? They each have a land promise. Where you go will declare who you are aligning yourself with. If one goes to Petra and Mt. Seir, then he is declaring that he is a descendant of Esau and YHWH will treat him accordingly.

Ovadyah (Obadiah) 1:3-4

3 “The pride of your heart has deceived you, you that dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that says in his heart, ‘Who shall bring me down to the ground?’

4 Though you mount on high as the eagle, and though your nest is set among the stars, I will bring you down from there,” says YHWH.

YHWH addresses those who are dwelling in the rocks, diffs, and mountains of Esau, saying that He is going to bring down their prideful hearts. In verse seven YHWH includes all those who are allied with Edom. But to where does YHWH bring them down?

Ovadyah (Obadiah) 1:9

9 “And your mighty men, Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one may be cut off from the mount of Esau by slaughter.”

He cuts them all off and brings them down to the earth out of their pride by slaughter.

Why is this important for us today? There is a teaching today in this movement that teaches that we are to flee to Petra, also known as Bozrah and Mount Seir as a place of safety sometime right before Mashiach returns. We have seen in Scriptures above that YHWH kills all those who are in those places. Furthermore, we have looked at the Torah commandment that YHWH commands us not even to set a foot in the territory of Esau, which is Edom and Mount Seir. Petra is in the midst of the territory of Edom, which is modern day Jordan. YHWH has told us in advance that He is going to go forth in an act of vengeance and slaughter all those who are in Edom and Mount Seir, including all those who return to that place (see above Yechezqel 35:7); i.e., perhaps including all those fleeing to Petra.

Here is what we need to see most clearly at this point: one’s salvation is in the person of Yeshua our Mashiach, and not in a place! Yeshua our Mashiach is our Rock! (See 1st Corinthians 10:4.) In much the same manner that Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup in pursuing what could be seen rather than walking by faith in the fullness of Mashiach who cannot be seen (yet), so those too who seek to go to a physical place of refuge also seek salvation by some tangible means rather than what is by faith and trust in the Almighty who can neither be seen nor touched.

Let us be sure that our faith is solidly in Yeshua our Mashiach whom we do not yet see, but who one day will be manifested to us and who will make our salvation complete in Him. Let us not sell our birthright or blessing for something that YHWH has clearly placed under His wrath.

It may be important to understand a little bit about this place called Petra. It is a very ancient place that existed well before the time of Mashiach. In this city there were many temples, high places, and altars erected by the citizens of this city. There is much evidence of their worship of many false gods. There is also evidence to suggest that on these altars some of the sacrifices that these people offered up to their false gods were human sacrifices. So why would YHWH tell us to go to a place which is filled with so much uncleanness, when He commanded us in His Torah to tear down such places and not to inhabit them?! Is He not calling us to come out of all that pagan nonsense? To be sure!

The following is one of the main passages of Scripture used to put forth the idea of Petra being a place of safety.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 16:1

***You men send a lamb to the ruler of the land,
From Selah in the wilderness,
Unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.***

The first question that we should ask and answer concerning this passage is who is being spoken to here. When we go back and read the verses before and after this passage we see that it is the men of Moab. Please understand that Moab is not a part of Israel. Moabites are the descendants of Lot and have aligned themselves with the descendants of Esau against Israel.

The next question we need to address is: what are these men being commanded to do? They are being commanded to send a lamb to the rulers of the land. Now, some on a deeper level believe that the lamb being spoken of here in this passage is a reference to Mashiach. It could be; but whether it is or not, those who are talmidim of Mashiach Yeshua are not being addressed and they are certainly not being told to go to the rock (Selah).

We see further down in this context that once again vengeance is being exacted upon the inhabitants of Moab and Selah (Petra). But in this passage there will be those who are spared. Who are they?

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 16:4

***“Let the outcasts of Moab stay with you;
Be a hiding place to them from the destroyer.
For the extortioner has come to an end, destruction has ceased.”***

Please note that what this passage is actually teaching us is that there will be those who are descendants of Moab who will be spared and become a part of Israel. They are the “outcasts of Moab.” In no way does this passage suggest that the talmidim of Mashiach Yeshua go to Petra. The talmidim are in no way the outcasts of Moab, as we are not the descendants of Moab!

Here is another passage commonly used in an attempt to prove that we should someday flee to Petra. First, we will read this verse from the KJV, then following it the same verse from the NAS.

Micah 2:12

“I will surely assemble, Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.”

Micah 2:12

“I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together like sheep in the fold; like a flock in the midst of its pasture they will be noisy with men.”

Please notice the difference as one translation treats the word “Bozrah” as a place name and the other actually translates the name and uses the meaning of the word. Since the phrase “as the sheep of Bozrah” is actually a Hebrew idiom, the NAS actually captures the meaning of what is being spoken in this passage. The idea here is that since Bozrah was a place where many sheep were raised and there were literally thousands upon thousands of sheep in this area, this is what Israel will look like when

YHWH brings the two houses, Israel and Yehudah, back together. This passage is speaking of the number of them, not the place in which this will happen!

Here is one more passage that usually gets tossed into the mix when Petra is put forth as a place of safety.

Daniel 11:41

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

The “him” in the above passage is referring to the abomination of desolation who will raise himself up above all gods and declare himself to be “god”. But YHWH has already spoken that He personally will take care of Moab and Edom. So He intervenes and does not allow this man to overthrow these three nations. Is this perhaps one of the reasons why their pride is raised up so high? This could very possibly be so. But YHWH is simply saving them for His own personal vengeance.

Considering the testimony and weight of all the other passages concerning Edom, one cannot base his ideas and beliefs upon just one or two passages that in the end simply do not support the idea of fleeing to Petra.

Finally, please consider this passage.

Matityah (Matthew) 24:16

“then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains.”

The city of Petra is built in series of canyons. Fleeing to Petra is not fleeing to the mountains, but rather it is fleeing to this series of canyons. I think that Yeshua knows the difference between mountains and canyons, don't you?

ABBA YHWH, increase our faith and our understanding of You and Your ways that we might walk in the fullness of them; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein and amein.

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