

Question: *Where was the nation of Edom located, and what is that place called today?*

The Origin of the Name “Edom”

The name “Edom” means “red” in Hebrew. It was first used as a nickname for Esau, the twin brother of Jacob (Israel), the sons of Isaac and Rebekah. According to Genesis 25:25, when Esau was born, *“The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau”*. Later, Esau was also called “Edom” after he traded his birthright for red stew (see Genesis 25:30).

Genesis 25:30

He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!” (That is why he was also called Edom.)

This moment marked the beginning of a spiritual distinction between Esau (Edom) and Jacob (Israel), which would develop into a long-standing rivalry between two nations.

Edom Becomes a Nation

Esau's descendants settled in the hill country of Seir, a mountainous region south of Canaan. Over time, they became the nation of Edom. Just as Jacob's descendants became the nation of Israel, Esau's descendants became known as the Edomites.

Genesis 36:8-9

So Esau (that is, Edom) settled in the hill country of Seir. This is the account of the family line of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.

God allowed Esau's family to prosper and multiply, but despite their shared ancestry with Israel, the Edomites often lived in hostility toward them (see Numbers 20:14-21; Obadiah 1:10-14).

Where Is Edom Today?

The ancient land of Edom was located in the region that now lies in southern Jordan, particularly to the southwest, and extended

into the southern part of modern-day Israel. The capital of ancient Edom was likely the rock city of Sela, known today as Petra in Jordan.

While the Edomite nation no longer exists as a people group, their territory is still recognizable. Today, it falls within the borders of southern Jordan and parts of Israel's Negev desert.

Significance of Edom

Throughout Scripture, Edom represents more than just a geographic location or an ancient people. Edom becomes a symbol of pride, rebellion, and opposition to God's people. This is especially highlighted in the Book of Obadiah, which contains a prophecy of judgment against Edom for its violence, arrogance, and betrayal of Israel during times of distress.

Obadiah 1:3-4

"The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rocks... Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," declares the Lord.

Edom serves as a warning in Scripture: nations and individuals who oppose God's purposes and mistreat His people will ultimately face His judgment.

However, there is also hope. Some prophecies, like those in Amos 9:11-12, speak of a future time when even the remnant of Edom will be brought under God's rule, showing God's mercy and the inclusion of Gentiles in His redemptive plan.

Amos 9:11-12

"In that day I will restore David's fallen shelter... so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name," declares the Lord.

Lessons for Today

1. God remembers history and holds nations accountable. Edom's downfall came because of pride and hostility toward God's people.
2. Spiritual inheritance matters more than earthly status. Esau lost his blessing for temporary satisfaction (Hebrews 12:16-17), reminding us to value eternal things.
3. God's justice and mercy work together. While Edom was judged, the door

remains open for repentance and inclusion in God's kingdom.

Though the nation of Edom has vanished, the land it once occupied remains, divided today between Jordan and Israel. More importantly, the spiritual message of Edom endures in Scripture—as a testimony of pride judged, and as a call to humility, righteousness, and reconciliation with God.

May the Lord bless you as you seek to understand His Word and His plans for all nations.

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