

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Watchman, What of the Night?

Isaiah offers an ominous prophecy surrounding a question that is put forth to the watchman:

- 11 The burden of Dumah. He calls to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?
- 12 The watchman said, The morning comes, and also the night: if you will inquire, inquire you: return, come. -Isaiah 21

If we can grasp its meaning, we may find major prophetic significance for today in this short prophecy called, “the burden of Dumah.”

Dumah, whose Hebrew name means “silence,” is the sixth of the twelve sons of Ishmael:

- 13 And these *are* the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,
 - 14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, -Genesis 25
- Ishmael is the son of Abraham (then called Abram) by Hagar the Egyptian servant of his wife, Sarah:
- 15 And Hagar bore Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bore, Ishmael. -Genesis 16

Even though Ishmael, whose descendents were destined to become “a great nation,” was the older son of Abraham, he was not the son with whom Yahweh established His covenant:

- 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. -Genesis 17

Yahweh established the covenant of His promise with Isaac, Abraham's younger son by his wife, Sarah:

- 21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear to you at this set time in the next year. -Genesis 17

Ishmael was the son born of the bond woman, after the flesh, whereas Isaac was born by the free woman, by the promise:

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman.

- 23 But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman *was* by promise. -Galatians 4

The promise to Abraham was the Messiah, who is the seed of the promise:

- 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is the Messiah. -Galatians 3

This promise was passed through Isaac to his younger son, Jacob, instead of to his older son, Esau. In a moment of physical hunger, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a mere bowl of pottage (soup). Esau subsequently became known by the color of that pottage, which was red. The Hebrew word for red is אֶדְוֹם (Edom):

- 30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray you, with that same red *pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called Edom.
- 31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day your birthright. -Genesis 25

Consequently, Esau hated Jacob, as the heir of the blessing of the promise, and vowed to kill him:

- 41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing where-with his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. -Genesis 27

Therefore, Yahweh said:

- 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. -Romans 9

Esau married Ishmael's daughter. He thereby brought part of the family of Ishmael into his own:

- 9 Then went Esau to Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife. -Genesis 28

Therefore, part of the descendents of Ishmael also became known as Edom, who dwelt in mount Seir:

- 8 Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom. -Genesis 36

These are not the “children of God,” but are the “children of the flesh.” God's children are those that receive His promised seed, the Messiah, by faith:

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

9 For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. -Romans 9

This promise was passed by faith on through Isaac, rather than Esau, to the children of the promise:

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. -Galatians 4

These are the children of God, which are born after the Spirit of God. They are persecuted by those that are born after the flesh:

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is now*. -Galatians 4

Consequently, just as Esau had vowed to kill Jacob because of the blessing, the “children of the flesh” still seek to destroy the “children of the promise.”

Therefore, Yahweh has set watchmen upon the walls of “Jerusalem” to warn His people. They shall never, He says, hold their peace nor keep silence. They are to continue to mention Yahweh until He “makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth:”

6 I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: you that make mention of Yahweh, keep not silence,

7 And give him no rest, till he establishes, and till he makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. -Isaiah 62

It is tempting to think that this prophecy concerns the physical city of Jerusalem that is in the modern nation called “Israel.” However, as Paul explains, there are two Jerusalems! The physical city is a place of bondage and is a type of Hagar, the bond woman, and mount Sinai. As such, it is the mother of the children of the flesh:

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar.

25 For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. -Galatians 4

This Jerusalem, which is also called “Zion,” dwells with the “daughter of Babylon:”

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7 Deliver yourself, O Zion, that dwell *with* the daughter of Babylon. -Zechariah 2

The “daughter of Babylon” is Edom, a child of the flesh:

7 Remember, O Yahweh, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze *it*, raze *it*, even to the foundation thereof.

8 O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, that rewards you as you have served us. -Psalms 137

The other Jerusalem, the heavenly city, “which is above,” offers liberty to the “children of the promise,” those which are born of the Spirit:

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. -Galatians 4

Edom has been deceived by pride. They have lifted themselves up “as the eagle,” nesting “among the stars:”

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 exalt *yourself* as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, there will I bring you down, says Yahweh. -Obadiah 1

The “daughter of Babylon” is illuminated by the light of her king, which is proverbially called “Lucifer,” the light bearing “son of the morning.” Although he will ultimately be cut down to the ground, he will first try to lift himself up “above the stars of God:”

12 How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!

13 For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: -Isaiah 14

Likewise, the “virgin daughter of Babylon,” who had exalted herself to the world, will finally be brought down:

1 Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: *there is* no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for you shall no more be called tender and delicate. -Isaiah 47

Even though she will pridefully flourish in the light of the son of the morning, Lucifer, that light will appear as darkness in the “day of Yahweh:”

20 *Shall* not the day of Yahweh *be* darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it? -Amos 5

In Isaiah’s prophecy, Dumah, Ishmael’s son, calls out from Seir, the dwelling place of Edom, “What of the night?” The watchman answers that the morning will come. The “virgin daughter of Babylon,” also called “the lady of kingdoms,” will appear in her moment of glory. Then the night will come. She will be cast into darkness. There she will sit, bearing the burden of silence, “the burden of Dumah!”

5 Sit you silent, and get you into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for you shall no more be called, The lady of kingdoms. -Isaiah 47

If we will prayerfully inquire, then we may be able to see the unfolding answer to the question, “What of the night?”