

# Jeremiah 49:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

## Analysis

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**Edom shall be a desolation** (לְשִׁמָּה תִהְיֶה, l'shammah tihyeh)—The noun shammah denotes horrified astonishment at judgment, used frequently in Jeremiah's oracles (see 2:15, 18:16). **Every one that goeth by it shall be astonished** (יִשְׁשׁוּ, yisshom)—travelers will hiss (שָׂרַק, sharaq), a sound expressing derision and horror, drawing attention to God's judicial handiwork.

This prophetic perfect tense treats future judgment as accomplished fact, demonstrating Yahweh's sovereign control over history. The clause **all the plagues thereof** (מַכּוֹתֶיהָ, makkoteha) employs Exodus language, suggesting Edom's judgment mirrors Egypt's—covenant breakers face covenant curses. Edom's ruins become a teaching tool, a perpetual sermon on pride's consequences.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern travelers would 'hiss' at ruins as both a protective gesture (warding off evil) and a moral commentary. Edom's desolate cities became proverbial. Malachi 1:2-4 confirms God's perpetual anger against Edom ('the people with whom the LORD is indignant forever').

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How do historical ruins and failed civilizations serve as 'witnesses' to God's justice?
2. What distinguishes astonishment at judgment from genuine repentance—and which does God desire?
3. How should Christians respond when witnessing the downfall of the proud and mighty?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהָיְתָה הַ	אֶדּוֹם	לְשָׂמָה הַ	כָּל	עֹבֵר	עַל יָהּ
H1961	Also Edom	shall be a desolation	H3605	every one that goeth	H5921
	H123	H8047		H5674	
וְשָׁם	וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	עַל	כָּל	מִכּוֹתָהּ:	
by it shall be astonished	and shall hiss	H5921	H3605	at all the plagues	
H8074	H8319			H4347	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 35:7** (Parallel theme): Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth.

**Jeremiah 50:13** (Parallel theme): Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

**Jeremiah 49:13** (Parallel theme): For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.

**Jeremiah 18:16** (Parallel theme): To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

**Jeremiah 51:37** (Parallel theme): And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

**1 Kings 9:8** (Parallel theme): And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?

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