

Kedar

Isaiah 60 Prayer Initiative



Ancient castle in Dumat al-Jandal, Kedar, Saudi Arabia
Isaiah 21:11-12

Day 1

Kedar (Qedar)

The name Kedar first appears in the Bible in Genesis 25:12-16: *“These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and **Kedar**, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes.”*

From these verses we learn that Kedar was a descendant of Abraham, the second son of Ishmael. Kedar was a prince and at least some of Kedar’s people lived in villages and encampments near the oases needed for the watering of their flocks.



Assyrian texts talk about the cities of Adummatu (modern day Dumat al-Jandal), Tayma, and Dedan (modern day AlUla) as important villages/cities in Kedar that paid taxes to Assyria after Assyria conquered them. Kedar was known for its camels and paid some of its taxes in camels. Isaiah 60:6 talks about the multitude of camels and young camels coming to Zion, the City of God. According to the Assyrian texts, camels and spices were considered normal tribute, but most of the spices probably came from the very south of the Arabian Peninsula.

Ruling from his capital city of Nineveh, the Assyrian King Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 BCE) appears in the Bible in II Kings 15:19-20, *“Pul (another name for Tiglath-Pileser III) the king of Assyria came against the land (Israel), and Menahem (king of Israel) gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that he might help him to confirm his hold on the royal power. Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from all the wealthy men, fifty shekels of silver from every man, to give to the king of Assyria. So, the king of Assyria turned back and did not stay there in the land.”* We see from this scripture that Assyria put heavy taxation on the nations that it subjugated. As with Israel, it did not destroy a nation if it paid the taxes. However, if taxes were not paid, Assyria would kill or capture people and take them back to its territory. The Arabs like those in Kedar controlled the trade routes, the spice road, and the frankincense and myrrh road in the south. Assyria would allow the nation to continue to exist as long as it paid tribute to Assyria.

*“Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor
that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon struck down.*

Thus says the Lord:

*“Rise up, advance against Kedar!
Destroy the people of the east!”*

Jeremiah 49:28b

Tiglath-Pileser III receiving tribute. Notice the one man kissing the feet of the king. To kiss someone's feet was a very humiliating act. Isaiah 60:14 talks about people bowing before the Lord.



With the fall of the Assyrian Empire and the growth of the Babylonian Empire, Kedar remained a very important area. In fact, Nabonidus, the Babylonian king (552 – 539 BC), moved his capital to the stronghold of Tayma, in Kedar's territory. Ezekiel 27:21 connects Kedar with all of Arabia, as a general term for the area. "Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you." With time, apparently Kedar was used to refer to all the northern tribes of Arabia, even stretching all the way to Egypt.

This might have been the start of the downfall of Kedar as a nation. At some point, probably about the 2nd century BC, Kedar was absorbed into the Nabataean nation. Tayma today is not a very significant city, but it does have amazing ancient ruins that show its rich history.

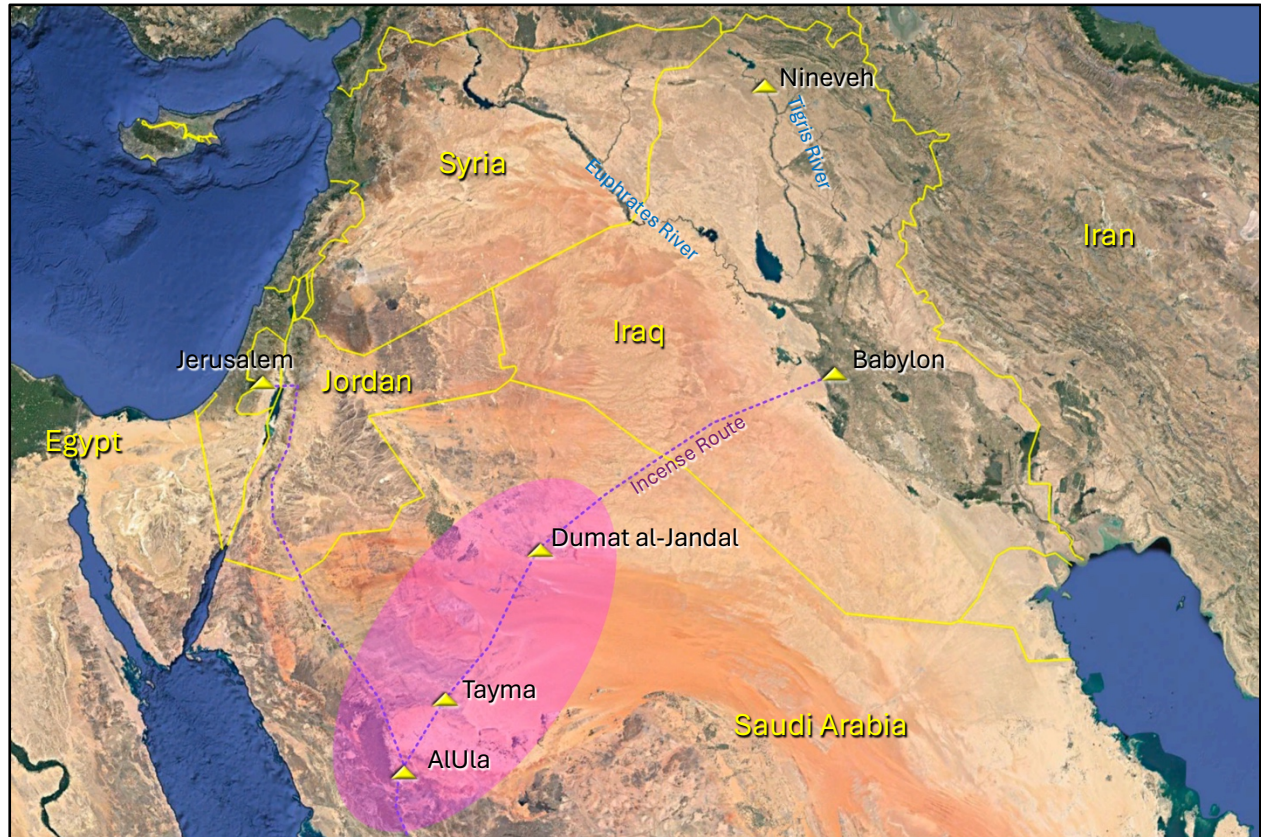
The Lord has promises for Kedar in Isaiah 60:7 that have yet to be realized: "*All the flocks of **Kedar** shall be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will beautify my beautiful house.*" Please use this prayer guide to ask the Lord to fulfill His promises to the descendants of the ancient kingdom of Kedar and the people now living in the land once known as Kedar.

Prayer Points

- *For thus the Lord said to me, "Within a year, according to the years of a hired worker, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end. And the remainder of the archers of the mighty men of the sons of Kedar will be few, for the Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken."* (Isaiah 21:16-17). The glory of Kedar has come to an end. But from Isaiah 60, we know that Kedar still has a unique role in bringing gifts to the Lord. Pray that Kedar will fulfill its unique role that is yet to come. Pray that the sons of Kedar will not glorify themselves but rather joyfully give glory to God.
- Kedar was a prince, a king of peoples, villages, and encampments. Pray that many people from the ancient roots of Kedar's leaders and the more common people will bring praise and gifts to the Lord Jesus today. Today is the day of salvation.
- Pray that as King Nabonidus desired to run his kingdom from Tayma that the Lord Jesus' kingdom will come to all the area of Kedar. Pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done among the people now living in what was once Kedar.

Day 2

Worship – All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to You



The different tribes mentioned in Isaiah 60 bring camels, an abundance of camels, to the Lord in the New Jerusalem. In particular, it is said of Kedar that they will bring flocks. In the Bible, flocks are translated to mean smaller animals like sheep and goats.

*All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you...
they shall come up with acceptance on my altar,
and I will beautify my beautiful house.*
Isaiah 60:7

From the very first acceptable offering in scripture, Genesis 4:1-4, Abel (second son of Adam and Eve, just like Kedar is the second son of Ishmael) was a keeper of sheep. It says: *“Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering.”* This first offering from the flocks was regarded as acceptable by God.

Sheep and flocks are key in the Biblical text. Here are some important scriptures:

- Genesis 24:35 flocks are a sign of Abraham's wealth
- Genesis 29-31 Jacob takes over Laban's flocks
- Genesis 32 Jacob returns to meet Esau, his flocks being a sign of wealth and a peace offering
- Genesis 37 Joseph was pasturing the flock when he was seventeen years old
- Genesis 38 Judah promises to send Tamar an animal from his flock
- Genesis 47 Joseph's family brings their flocks and herds to Egypt
- Exodus 2 Moses in Midian: Reuel's seven daughters were shepherdesses of the flocks
- Exodus 3 Moses led the flock of Jethro (Reuel), the priest of Midian, to Horeb, the mountain of God, where he saw the burning bush, heard of God's plan to free the Hebrew slaves in Egypt and heard God's name – all because Moses was looking for green pastures for the flock
- Exodus 20:24 "An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen"
- Leviticus 1:2 "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock"
- 1 Samuel 8:1-17 The king (earthly) will take the best of the flocks
- 1 Samuel 16:1-11 David was watching his father's flock



Prayer Points

- Just as flocks have had roles to play throughout Biblical history, there is a time in the future when the people of Kedar will present the best of their flocks to the Lord, in worship to Him. Pray that today many will come to know the Lord and choose to bring their precious gifts as worship to Him, and that one day soon all the flocks of Kedar will be brought to the Lord.
- Both of the following Psalms describe people of God as His sheep: "Then he led out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock" (Psalm 78:52). "But we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will give thanks to you forever; from generation to generation we will recount your praise." (Psalm 79:13). Pray that the people of Kedar will know they are the sheep of the Lord and that the Lord will lead them even during times in the wilderness. Pray that different generations of the people of Kedar will give Him thanks forever.
- There is something astonishing about the flocks of Kedar being gathered to the Lord. They will be acceptable on His altar, and this "will beautify my (God's) beautiful house." Lord, You say that Kedar will bring beauty to Your house. We pray that they will bring You much beauty, as they come to know You today and in the future.

Day 3

Kedar – Power in the name



The word Kedar [qdr] in Hebrew can refer to dark-skinned people, black tents, and darkness. The woman from Song of Songs sings to those in Jerusalem, “*Dark am I, yet lovely, daughters of Jerusalem, dark like the tents of Kedar, like the tent curtains of Solomon* (Song of Songs 1:5).” She talks of the tents of Kedar, suggesting they are a nomadic people, but they did live in cities as well. The woman is dark and lovely like the tents of Kedar.

In Hebrew, the dark [qdr] can also be connected with mourning and repentance.

I go about darkened [qdr], but not by the sun; I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.

Job 30:28

I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all the day I go about mourning [qdr].

Psalms 38:6

For this the earth shall mourn, and the heavens above be dark [qdr] ...

Jeremiah 4:28

The Arabic (kedar / q-dh-r) signifies the parallel idea of something that is dirty, foul, unclean (i.e., sin), and it can be used in the sense of hating/avoiding/shunning something that is foul/unclean. Which again confirms the connection with repentance.

May Kedar come before the Lord and pitch their black tents of repentance in the light of His righteousness. And may their mourning be turned into dancing!



Prayer Points

Isaiah 42:1-13 is a powerful description of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God's delight. He has God's spirit. He brings justice to the nations. He will not break a bruised reed, and He will not grow discouraged. This is our Lord Jesus Christ. Take this time to read and pray through Isaiah 42 verse by verse over Kedar, so that its people will know the fullness of the Lord Jesus.

- 1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.
- 2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street;
- 3 a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
- 4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.
- 5 Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:
6 "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,
- 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
- 8 I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.
- 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."
- 10 Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise from the end of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants.
- 11 Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits;
let the habitants of Sela sing for joy, let them shout from the top of the mountains.
- 12 Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare his praise in the coastlands.
- 13 The LORD goes out like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his zeal;
he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes.

Notice that verse 11 refers to the desert and its cities lifting their voices, and specifically the villages that Kedar inhabits. Pray for the cities and villages of Northwest Saudi Arabia (e.g., Tayma, AlUla, Dumah, Jarish, Al Kutayab), that people of these cities will lift their voices, praising our Lord Jesus Christ. Pray that the descendants of Kedar will lift their voice, sing for joy and shout praises from the top of the mountains and from the desert to the great Lord Jesus. And with that, pray that the peoples of Kedar will write new songs to the Lord, that they will fill the desert and their cities with songs unto the Lord, songs only they can write unto the Lord.

Day 4

Kedar – Three Cities

Because of war, the cities in Kedar would have changed throughout history. We are highlighting three present-day settlements in the region of Kedar for prayer. With this being a desert area, water is key to survival. This is true not only for people living in the cities but also for those traveling on the caravan roads. Let us look at the cities of Tayma, Dedan and Dumah.

Tayma (Tema, Teima)

As we have seen already that Tayma was a place where King Nabonidus of Babylon lived for 10 years. This very easily could have been around the time of Daniel. Outside of Tayma there is an Egyptian hieroglyphic road marking from the time of Ramses III that shows the connection and importance of Tayma to Egypt. Tayma was thought to have been a Jewish settlement in the first century AD. In Isaiah 21, there is a prophesy against Tayma, a rebuke from the Lord because they did not bring out water to the fugitives. It is not clear who the fugitives were, but they were probably Israelites. In Tayma today, the Bir Haddaj well is still there. This well is said to be able to water 100 camels at a time. Tayma should have provided water to the fugitives.

*To the thirsty bring water;
meet the fugitive with bread,
O inhabitants of the land of Tema.
Isaiah 21:14*

Prayer Points for Tayma

- Lord, the people of Tayma should have brought out water. You had gifted them with an incredible water source, and they did not give water to those in need. Lord, may the people of Tayma be a repentant people, seeking forgiveness for not blessing fugitives.
- Lord Jesus, You still give water; give Your living water to the people of Tayma. Let them know and taste the living water so they will never be thirsty again (John 4:10-14).



Pharaoh Ramses III
inscription near
Tayma 1192-1160 BC



The massive well
in Tayma

Dedan (known today as AlUla)

Gashmu I was the King of Dedan in the land of Kedar. This Gashmu may very well been Geshem the Arab of Nehemiah 2:19 who was mocking Nehemiah and the people of Israel during the rebuilding of the wall in Jerusalem. If this is the same person, then the influence of Kedar in northern Arabia during Nehemiah's time extended all the way to Jerusalem. Isaiah 21:13 also speaks against the caravans of the Dedanites (not so much the city, but the caravans from the city). Jeremiah 25:23 talks about the cup of God's wrath for Dedan, and Ezekiel 38:13 also has a negative prophecy for Dedan. Today, AlUla is one of the crown jewels of tourists destinations in Saudi Arabia. Millions of dollars have been invested in this beautiful desert location. It hosts Saudi's longest-running music festival. Even though not long-ago, music in Saudi was illegal.



Prayer Points for Dedan

- Father, You have blessed AlUla with great natural beauty. May the families and tribes of AlUla see the beauty You have created and know that You are the living and true God.
- Father, here in AlUla where these famous ancient ruins have been rebuilt, may Your name be made famous.
- Father, exalt Your Son in song; and may He be worshipped at these new music festivals.
- May Your people who travel to AlUla to marvel at Your natural beauty testify to Your goodness and greatness to the people of AlUla.

Dumah (Adumutu, Dumat Al-Jandal)

It is said that Dumah, the fortress, served as the base for Kedarite religious ceremonies. Dumah was also a son of Ishmael. Sennacherib, King of Assyria, conquered Dumah and took many possessions, including the queen of the Arabs and their Arab religious idols (their gods). Sennacherib died and his son Arda-Mulissu took over. Then Hazael, the king of the Arabs, went from Dumah to Nineveh with many gifts and kissed the feet of Arda-Mulissu. Arda-Mulissu returned the Arab idols: Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, and Atar-qurumâ. In Isaiah 21 there is an oracle that describes the watchmen on the wall of the fortress of Dumah. Although it has been rebuilt many times, there is still a fortress standing in Dumah today.

*The oracle
concerning Dumah.
One is calling to me
from Seir,
“Watchman, what
time of the night?
Watchman, what
time of the night?”
The watchman
says:
“Morning comes,
and also the night.
If you will inquire,
inquire;
come back again.”*
Isaiah 21:11-12



Dumah fort and minaret

Prayer Points for Dumah

- These are the names of some of the Arab gods: Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, and Atar-qurumâ. Lord, if these so-called gods in any way still have influence over the people of Dumah, will You break any hold they have on these people and may the people of Dumah know that You are God.
- Lord Jesus, as in the oracle someone is calling, may the people of Dumah know that there is One calling their name, and know that it is You, oh Lord. You are calling them to come to You. Help them to respond to Your call.
- They have been waiting a long time in the night, but Lord, the morning is coming, and You bring Your light. From a place of darkness may the people of Dumah see Your light and Your gift of love for them. May they inquire of You, Lord Jesus.
- Lord Jesus, like watchmen on a wall, may the people of Dumah be watching for You and come to know You.

Day 5

Praying for the tribes living in the territory of Kedar

There are 13 different provinces in Saudi Arabia, most of which seem to be created around watersheds or water basins. It appears the name Kedar may at one time have been used to describe all the tribes of northern Saudi Arabia and even into Sinai Peninsula.

Many Saudi tribes live around the three key cities of Kedar: Tayma, AlUla, and Dumah. These three cities are located in three different Saudi provinces: Tayma is in the Tabuk Province, AlUla is in the Medina Province, and Dumah is in the Al-Jawf Province, with neighboring Sakaka being the capital city of the Al-Jawf Province. Throughout history, tribes living in this region were conquered and deported. The people groups living in northern Saudi Arabia could have some Kedar heritage in them, but few of the tribes would be able to link themselves directly to Kedar; their blood is very mixed.



*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number,
from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,
standing before the throne and before the Lamb,
clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,
and crying out with a loud voice,
“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”
Revelation 7:9-10*

Below is a list of the major tribes living in these areas that scripture promises will be standing before the throne of the Lamb, clothed in white robes. The men of this area of Saudi Arabia already wear white robes, (the women will wear white as well). The palm branches they carry might be date palms from their oases. They will be part of His Kingdom,

knowing that “*salvation belongs to our God... and to the Lamb.*” Kedar will bring their gift to the Lamb – flocks of sheep, with their babies, little lambs.

Prayer Points

Please select a few of the people groups below and pray for these tribes to know the salvation of our God, that they will know the Lamb, that they will bring their gifts to the Lamb (their greatest gift being themselves), and that all these tribes will be part of that amazing group standing before the throne of the Lamb, singing to Lord Jesus: “*Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!*”

Major Tribes of Tayma:	Major Tribes of AlUla:	Major Tribes of Dumah:
Aneza (majority people) Shammar Sharaarat Hawaytat Bani Atiya	Bali (majority people, some of whom had converted to Judaism in ancient times) Aneza Bani Atiya Bani Sakhr	Sirhan (descended from Tayy, along with Shammar and Bani Sakhr and Al-Fadil) Bani Rasheed Shammar Al-Fadool

Lord, may salvation come to all these tribes in Saudi Arabia today. Draw them to Yourself. Send Your laborers to the key cities of Kedar to bear witness to the tribes there. May the villages and cities be filled with praises to Your name.

Thank you for praying for Kedar. May God bless you for praying for this land and the peoples living in what was once known as Kedar. May those for whom we have been praying come to know why we have been praying for them: “*For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*” 2 Corinthians 4:15

All scriptures are ESV unless otherwise noted. Some bolding in the scriptures done to bring emphasis by writer.

