

# Judgment Prepared in the Ungodly I

by Aaron Dunlop

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*God judges Edom for their sin of pride, conceit, and complacency, which originated in their heart condition.*

**Duration:** 37:40

**Scripture:** Obadiah 1:2-21, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Judgment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the book of Obadiah and provides an outline of its content. The sermon begins by discussing the judgment prepared for the ungodly, specifically focusing on the destruction of Edom. The preacher emphasizes that God judges complacency and conceit, urging the audience to humble themselves before God. The sermon concludes with a promise of deliverance for God's people, highlighting the importance of holiness and the ultimate victory of God's kingdom.

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## Transcript

Let me quickly go through this outline with you. I'm going to do this tonight and then just follow it throughout the coming weeks. You see in verses 2 to 9, we're dealing with what we're going to look at tonight.

Judgment is prepared in the ungodly and we're going to deal with that tonight. Then from verses 10 to 14, judgment precipitated by the ungodly. And we come there to why is God dealing with Esau in this matter? Why is he going to destroy Edom? Why is he going to bring it to naught? And we have the answer to that in verses 10 to 14.

For thy violence, or because of thy violence, verse 10. Okay, and he goes down through a whole list then from verses 12 to 14. God should not have done this.

Then judgment prescribed for the ungodly. Verses 15 and 16. And we see there some very interesting verses.

Some verses that have been the proof texts of great discussions. For instance, on the day of the Lord. This is the great day of the Lord.

We've already dealt with that to some extent. A day when God enters into time. A day that is not his normal providential dealing.

But a day that God enters into time in a phenomenal way. Both for destruction and as we're going to see for deliverance. There's two aspects to the day of the Lord.

We're going to see for destruction on the ungodly and deliverance or restoration to the godly. And then we see the decree of destruction. Not only the day of destruction, but the decree or the law.

What is the law by which God is going to do this? It is the law commonly known as Lex Talionis. Or the law of retribution. As ye have done, so ye are going to experience.

What you've done, I'm going to do to you. It is that which is otherwise known as an eye for an eye. And that's what the Lord is saying.

You've done this Edom, I'm going to do the same to you. So that's the decree of destruction. Then the demonstration of destruction, verse 16.

As ye have drunk. Some very interesting imagery here. A discussion from other parts of the Old Testament.

Scriptures speak often of drinking the wrath, the cup of God's wrath. Remember Christ in Gethsemane spoke about, If it be thy will, let this cup pass from me, the cup of the wrath of God. And the Lord, I believe, the imagery is used here.

As ye have drunk on my holy mountain, you have defiled the vessels of the temple. I, you you're sorry, are going to drink of the cup of my wrath. Until you're filled, and it's going to be as though you had not been.

So there's the demonstration of destruction. Then we come, finally, verses 17 to 21. The deliverance promised to God's people.

It is a promise of consecration. There shall be holiness. Verse 17, there shall be holiness.

Not simply that you're going to be holy. It's more than just that you're going to be holy. It is that holiness is going to flow from you.

That you're going to be channels of holiness. Then we have the promise of conquering. They shall possess.

And we go on there in verses 18 to 20. The possessions of Israel. And then the promise that is conclusive.

The kingdom shall be the Lord's. This is a conclusive promise. So there you have the outline of the book of Obadiah.

I trust you will study it, look at it. It's a small book, only 21 verses. It is not hard, therefore, as far as time is concerned.

If I can use the word master. Of course we never master scripture. But to come to an understanding of what the book is actually teaching.

Tonight I want to look at the third point on the outline. Judgment prepared for or prepared in the ungodly. Again, I'm using the prepositions there specifically.

It is judgment prepared in the ungodly. We have already looked at verse 1. It is introductory. It was preparatory.

And it sets the stage for this prophecy against the nations. But verse 2 is the actual oracle. And from verse 2 to verse 16 we have the actual oracle or the actual prophecy against Adam.

The other parts of the verse are either introductory or conclusions. But the oracle against Adam is from verse 2 to verse 16. And the outline that we have is that outline which most commentators would generally agree with.

Some commentators would put verse 2, for instance, in the introduction. But we have here in verse 2, as we are going to see, it is a direct speech to Eden. Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen.

Seeing the inevitable fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. A group of Jewish zealots headed for the hills. To be more precise, they headed for one hill for safety.

They headed to one hill in particular because over 100 years previously, Herod had built a fortress there. He built a fortress that he thought was impregnable. And on the top of this hill, 1200 feet above sea level, they thought that they would be safe from the Roman torture and death.

It looks uninhabitable and it looks uninhabited. But the story of Lassada is absolutely fascinating. If you have ever read of anything concerning Lassada, it is fascinating what happened on this hill around A.D. 70.

As the Romans sacked Jerusalem in A.D. 70, others fled. The first group went out about 4 years previous seeing the fall. But when the Romans arrived in A.D. 70, others fled.

And the number mounted to 960 men, women and children. Living 1200 feet above sea level on this rocky hill. The Roman governor, Flavius Silva, in A.D. 72 arrived.

After having destroyed Jerusalem and the rest of Israel, he arrived at the foot of Lassada with the 10th legion and 10,000 Jewish slaves. And they built there a ramp to make it to the top of Lassada. A ramp built out of loose soil of logs and rocks and anything they could get.

And while they were doing so, the Jews, the Zealots on top were throwing boulders and hot molten liquid down over them. Josephus, the Jewish historian, who actually was a traitor to Judaism and a turncoat to the Roman government, writes in his Wars on the Jews, book 7, chapter 9, he writes of this massacre, this suicidal massacre. After it was clear that the Romans were going to actually make it over the wall, the Zealots so taken up with their cause and so adamant that the Romans would never capture them, so adamant that they would never be slaves to a Roman government, made a pact that they would kill themselves before the Romans would actually get them.

Ten men were chosen by Lot to kill all the others, their wives and children included. After they had killed everyone, one man was chosen by Lot to kill the other nine. And when they were dead, he was to set the place alight and kill himself, which he did.

Josephus records that two women and five children hid themselves and escaped to tell the story. When the Romans made it up over the fortress, they met with an eerie silence and unbelief at what had happened, that these Zealots would be so strong in their defense of Israel and their hatred against Roman

government, and they were shocked at what had happened. But the story is absolutely factual, sad.

Next to Jerusalem today, Masada is the most popular tourist attraction in Israel. It is a symbol of freedom, it is a symbol of victory, and for the Israeli defense forces today, it is the symbol of victory and freedom. And it is a sad irony that the cry that the Edomites cried hundreds of years before became the cry of the Israeli soldiers.

The cry of the Edomites was, Who shall bring us down to the ground? Who shall bring me down to the ground? The end of verse three. That was the cry of the Edomites. Today, it is a sad, sad irony that today, you go to Masada, and you attend one of the initiating services of the Israeli defense forces, they swear an oath with these words, Masada shall never fall again.

Masada shall never fall again. You think of it in the context of why the Lord was judging Edom here. And we are going to see the judgment prepared in the ungodly.

You think of it in the context of that, and the Lord's judgment upon the pride of thine heart that has deceived thee. And He was doing that then in defense of His people, as He says in the latter part of the book. It is sadly ironic that that nation whom God called His own people, and whom Christ wept over Jerusalem, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

Their cry today is of the ilk of the same arrogant pride of Edom, Masada shall never fall again. It is a sin of pride. And I have entitled this section of the book, Judgment Prepared in the Ungodly.

A general and simple summation of the book of Obadiah is God's punishment on Edom for the cruelty against God's people. That is a general summation of the book. And indeed, God points this out very specifically in verses 10 to 14.

He says, because of the violence against thy brother Jacob. He says in verses 12 to 14, this list of what they should not have done. And so He very specifically delineates the sins that they were active in against Israel.

But it is important to notice that before He gets to the specific sins, He deals not with what they have done, but what they are. I want us to see the distinction here. He first deals with not what they have done, but He deals with what they are.

And this idea is fundamental to the biblical doctrine of sin. We have already noticed it in our Sunday school lessons, in our adult Sunday school class. This doctrine of sin, where God deals with, and this is exemplified for us in this book of Obadiah, God deals with what we are first, before He deals with what we have done.

The Pelagian, as far as their doctrine of sin is concerned, says that man is born morally indifferent. He is born with the ability to do good or evil. He is sitting on the fence, and whatever way he topples is his destiny.

The semi-Pelagian defines sin as a voluntary act, not a condition. It is an act. The New Haven theology, which came out in the east coast of America in the 1800s, teaches that man is born with a tendency to sin, but the tendency to sin is not sin itself.

It is the act, they say, that defines sin. They teach, in essence, that man is corrupt because he has sinned. He is not sinned because he is corrupt, and there is a big difference.

There is a big difference. They teach that man is corrupt because he has sinned, but he is not sinned because he is corrupt. There is a fundamental error here, the Bible is opposed to, and that Obadiah addresses in this little book.

That is that sin originates in the nature and is seen in the life. I want you to understand that. Sin originates in the nature and is manifested or seen in the life.

It does not start in an act. It does not start in one act and corrupt the nature. Sin began in the nature.

It is our nature that is sinful. We act sinfully, we commit sins. Why? Because our natures are sinful.

Not the other way around. I did not commit my first sin and then fall into a state of sinfulness. I was in a state of sinfulness and committed my first sin because of my original state of total depravity.

Bob Jones Sr. used to say, men are not sinners because they sin. They sin because they are sinners. And if we are not prepared to address the issue of sin as the fundamental, immediate, universal and perpetual problem of humanity, then we are not prepared to preach the gospel.

Let me say that again. If we are not prepared to address the issue of sin as the fundamental, innate, universal, perpetual problem of humanity, then we are not prepared to preach the gospel. I was reading recently an article by Robert Shuler in which he said that he would not be prepared to address a congregation as a group of sinners.

He would never use that language, he said. Nor would he use the language, the wrath of God. I would never use that language.

He says, I preach like Jesus does, not like Paul. Shuler makes another fundamental error. And I'll tell you why he makes it.

Because he is a sinner. He makes another fundamental error because he is a sinner. And that is that he makes a dichotomy, and I want you to understand this.

He makes a dichotomy between the teaching of Christ and the writings of Paul. As you are reading through your Bible, you might hear liberals talking about John Owen writings and Pauline writings, i.e. the writings of Paul and the writings of John or the writings of Christ. And they make a dichotomy between them.

As though Paul taught one thing and John taught another thing and Christ is teaching another thing. There is no such dichotomy in Scripture. The Bible tells us that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction.

And so if you ever read of some dichotomy or that John Owen writings are against the Pauline writings, burn the book. It's heresy. It's heresy.

And Schiller makes that fundamental error when he says, I preach like Jesus does, not like Paul. The Bible tells me the same gospel Paul preached is the same gospel Christ taught. The same gospel Obadiah preached is the same gospel Christ taught.

So what Schiller is telling us then is that he doesn't preach the gospel. He doesn't preach the gospel. And if we were to put him alongside Obadiah with the message of the wrath of God that he has for Edom, if we were to put Schiller alongside Obadiah with this message of destruction for Edom, Schiller would refuse to preach it.

Schiller would refuse to preach it. But Obadiah preached it. The sins that the Lord is dealing with here are the sins of the heart.

And God is dealing with that which is in the heart first. He is judgment prepared in the ungodly. Why is God going to judge Edom? Not merely because they killed a few Jews in escaping.

Not merely because of their violence against Jacob. God's judgment upon Edom was on Edom long before the sacking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and long before the destruction of Jerusalem and the attacks on Jerusalem by the other forces. God's judgment on Edom and on Esau was there as soon as he was born.

He was born in sin and shaped in iniquity. The Bible says he was born in sin and shaped in iniquity. The sins that the Lord is dealing with here in the first part of the article might be termed those passive sins.

Those passive sins of Edom. i.e. that which they are. Now understand the difference here.

Dealing with what Edom is. He is dealing with the state of their heart. He is not yet dealing with what they did.

Later on he will deal with their active sins. But he is dealing here with their passive sins. Now I want us to understand what we are looking at here.

We are going to see that God mentions their complacency. God mentions their composure in verses 9 for instance. O mighty men and thy mighty men O teman shall be dismayed.

They are going to be dismayed. Their complacency in verses 5 and 6 is going to be disturbed. And it is not merely that the contentment and the composure of Edom is going to be disturbed.

I want us to understand that it is going to be judged. Now make me see the difference. It is not merely that God is going to come in and disturb their complacency.

It is not merely that God is going to come in and dismay them. He is going to judge them because of their complacency. He is going to judge them because of their conceit.

He is going to judge them because of their confederacy with the other nations. He is going to judge them because of their composure in the midst and in the face of destruction. God is judging them on the basis of their heart condition.

The first sin that God mentions as we have already seen in past weeks is that great sin of pride. That great sin of pride. The root of sin.

We have already seen that Edom was destroyed because of the sin that they exhibited. It is the worst possible sin, the sin of pride. It is the epitome of sin because as we have seen it is insurgence against God.

It is a rising up against God and it is an independence from God. God is going to judge this insurgence against Himself and this independence from God. Let us look a little closer at the sin of Edom.

The sin of conceit. The conceit of the ungodly. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee.

The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee. I want us to see first of all the irony of pride. The irony of pride.

The dictionary definition of pride is a high or inordinate opinion of one's own dignity, importance, merit or superiority whether as cherished in the mind or displayed in bearing or conduct. In short, it is the inordinate belief in something that does not exist. You see the irony of pride? It is the inordinate belief in something that does not exist but in your mind.

It is the heart deceiving the mind and then manifesting itself in the life. And this is seen in Edom. It is ironic that the nation who thought it was safest, the nation who assumed they were safe on the top of Mount Seir were on the very brink of an eternal abyss.

And the pride of their hearts deceived them and they believed a lie. Pride then in short and simplistic terms is that inordinate belief in something that does not exist. It is ironic that the thing that a man or a woman are proud of is non-existent.

One man thinks he is gifted in certain areas and he pushes himself forward in a field and he shoehorns himself into a position into a position that he wouldn't normally be in. He is deceived into thinking that he is talent and gift when nobody else sees it. He thinks he has.

Another person thinks that they have everything the world ever needed. Thinks he is handsome, he is congenial, he is intelligent, he has all the social skills and he struts about as if he were a deity. Now he might well be intelligent and he might well be handsome and he might well be gifted and he might have all the social skills and this all might be true.

But it is pride that attributes it to himself and not to the one who gave it. The pride of his heart has deceived him. It is pride that convinces him that I have gotten this by my own merit and I can strut about because this is me.

Whereby humility, humility would attribute it to another. And this is where the Edomites were. They are sitting on the top of this rocky fortress.

The plains are below them. They are safe. No one, no army could scale the heights of Mount Seir.

The pride of their hearts have deceived them. The Bible says in Proverbs 18 verse 16 A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men. A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men.

That is that if you have gifts in an area the recognition of the gift will open the doors for you to exercise those gifts. If you have gifts in one area the recognition of the gift by those around you will open doors for you to exercise those gifts. A man's gift maketh room for him and the gift brings him before great men.

It is not for us in arrogance and pride to shoehorn ourselves and to press forward because we have some ideology to do something, to be something, to accomplish something. Now I am not saying that the Lord puts you in a position that you do not give that position your all. If the Lord gives you a gift and gives you a

venue to exercise that gift you better give your all to that gift and give your all to that venue.

But it is arrogance and pride to push your way and to assume that others recognize the gift. Pride has this irony. The pride of our hearts deceive us.

My friend, it is in every heart. It is in every heart. It is such a deceptive sin.

It is unbelievable. Such a deceptive sin. We do well to check our hearts and to check our motives whatever we do and to pray that the Lord would humble us and keep us humble.

You think of men in the Bible who were great gifted men, gifted men and they were brought before great men. Not because they pushed themselves forward but because the Lord in his providence brought them forward. Think of Daniel in captivity.

Daniel was not seeking the prime minister's office in Babylon. Daniel was in his bedroom praying, praying for Israel. Joseph was in the prison doing good in whatever area, wherever he was.

He did good. He worked the work of God in the prison. And the Lord brought him before great men.

Paul in his ministry tells us that he went out preaching. Paul who was an educated man, an educated man, tells us that he came to preach at Corinth with trembling and great fear. With trembling and great fear.

And if we do the work of God and if we exercise our gifts with trembling and great fear before God, with the humility, with the humility that God gives us and pray that we get humility to serve Him, then He will use us. Paul says in Romans chapter 12, For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. We are not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.

Now that does not mean to say that we are not to think we are something and to think that the Lord has given us gifts. We are to recognize what the Lord has given us. We are to use what the Lord has given us.

But we are not to think of ourselves more high than we are. We are not to disparage ourselves. We are not to push ourselves down and trample ourselves underfoot.

We are not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought. The irony of pride deceives the heart, deceives the mind, and tells you something about yourself that is not true. That's the irony of pride.

The ignominy of pride, the ignominy of pride is a shame to pride that I believe is not attached to any other sin. It is a shame to pride. And God says to Israel, or to Edom here, shame, verse 10, shame shall cover thee.

The ignominy of pride. And here the Lord is going to bring them down. The Lord makes it clear that if they were able to soar above the eagles, if they were able to get above the stars, then He would and He could bring them down.

And He would shame them. Shame is also magnified by the contrast of the elegance and the security of the Edomites and the fall that the Lord is going to give them. And there is the shame of pride because the more proud an individual is, the more the Lord has to humble them, the more proud they are, the further they have to fall to be humbled.

There is this shame in the sin of pride that is a stink in the nostrils of God. God has named pride as one sin that He hates specifically. And this is the sin that God ranks first with Obadiah in His prophecy against Edom.

And what is more is that pride as the heart of all sin, all of the other sins flow from this. This sin, this judgment that is prepared in the ungodly, judgment is already in them. They are already condemned.

They are already under the wrath of God. It was pride that caused them then to be complacent. As we are going to see later on.

They are sitting there in their rocky fortress and they wonder, or they have hidden in the crevices of the rock all their goods. And they are complacent and content. Pride has deceived them.

It is pride that caused them to gather themselves into a confederacy against Israel and against the other nations. It was pride that in the face of war and destruction they are sitting in Mount Seir composed, composed and thinking that all is well. My friend, it is pride in the sinner's heart, it is pride in the sinner's heart that has him or her sitting in a gospel meeting composed thinking that all is well.

The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee. And pride is the sin above all other sins that the Lord will destroy at conversion. Pride is the sin above all other sins that God will destroy at conversion.

Because at conversion and biblical Christianity is unique to this. I want you to understand this. Biblical Christianity, Protestant, biblical, orthodox Christianity is unique in this one area that it demands that an individual is humble to the dust for salvation.

Why? Because biblical Christianity is the only gospel in the face of this earth that teaches that our salvation is in the work of another. It is the only gospel in the face of this earth that teaches that I can do nothing to get to heaven. It is the only gospel in the face of this earth amid all the cults and comparative religion, it is the only gospel in the face of this earth that demands that I admit that I am a sinner before God and that Christ is all I have and I must submit my life, my soul, my eternity entirely to Him.

Entirely. I met a man on the streets of Vancouver when I was doing outreach in Cloverdale and I gave him the gospel and he said to me in arrogant pride, he said, do you mean to tell me that I have to, before I'm going to become a Christian, that I have to say that everything I do is bad and everything Christ has done is good? Do you mean to tell me that I have to admit that? He said, and I said with the same certainty and conviction, yes, exactly, you have got the gospel. He went away in the same arrogance and pride that he came in.

Christianity, my friend, is the only gospel that demands the sinner to be humbled before God. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God and He will exalt you in due time. He will exalt you.

God will exalt us. And I, tonight, and those of you who are saved in this meeting are seated in the heavenlies tonight. Are seated in the heavenlies.

You're seated in heaven with Christ. Why? Because you humbled yourself to the dust and accepted what Christ has done for you. That's the gospel.

That's the gospel. That's the gospel that works. That's the only gospel there is.

Pride, the ignominy of pride deceives our hearts and brings shame and will bring shame on every individual who rejects it. Then there's the complacency of the ungodly. Verses 5 and 6, in closing briefly.

The complacency of the ungodly. Here the Lord touches on that which Edom had gathered around them. The things that they have hidden, as I've said, in the caves.

And they think that there's nothing there. No one's going to touch them. No one's going to break through and disturb them.

They're complacent. They're comfortable there. My, many a sinner sits under the sound of the gospel in complacency.

Comfortable in the things of this world. Oh, maybe a little touched in their conscience and maybe a little pricked in their conscience. But when they're pricked in their conscience they go on to do something else in this world that will get their mind off that.

And they bury their conscience and the pricking of the conscience, they smother it in activity in this world. And they become complacent with the things that they gather around them. And they become so busy with work.

I have an individual friend, a friend of mine who's an individual. He lost his son tragically to cancer. He rejects Christ and has spoken to him often about Christ.

And he has not yet, after 10 years or so, he has not yet got over the death of his 18-year-old son. Tragic. But he buries himself in work.

He buries himself in his farm to keep his mind occupied and preoccupied. He's become complacent. He's become complacent with the things of this world.

God will judge complacency. God will judge conceit. And I trust tonight that we will humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God in order that He might exalt us in due course.

What a glorious thought that if we humble ourselves, while He demands humility, and while He demands that we come to Him on bended knee, the grace of God lifts us up and sets us up and tunes us up because He puts a new song in our mouths, even prays unto our God. That's the gospel. That's blind prayer.

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