

# Judgment Prepared in the Ungodly li

by Aaron Dunlop

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of avoiding pride and complacency, and instead seeking peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 33:29

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:11, Proverbs 24:30-34, Isaiah 34:5, Matthew 6:19-20, Luke 12:48, 2 Timothy 2:15, James 1:22

**Topics:** "Judgment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of complacency and its consequences. He uses the analogy of thieves robbing vineyards to illustrate how God will strip away everything from the complacent. The preacher emphasizes the importance of studying and reading good books as tools for spiritual growth. He also highlights the pride and false security of the ungodly, who refuse to believe the Gospel due to their complacency and pride. The sermon warns against complacency and encourages listeners to seek God and avoid being complacent in their faith.

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## Transcript

If you have an outline of the book, the homiletical outline that I've printed out, you will see there, number three, that judgment is prepared in the ungodly. We began to look at this last week, that judgment is prepared in the ungodly. And I made the point that the preposition in there is purposeful and specific, because it is the sin that is in Edom, in the heart of Edom, it is the sin that is innate to Edom, that is going to be judged, and that is prepared for judgment.

And so this sin, and the judgment that is prepared in the ungodly, is clarified for us in the verses following down to and including the verse nine. There is a delineation of many different sins. As I see it, there are five of them.

Number one, there is the conceit of the ungodly. Pride of thine heart hath deceived thee. That is the mother of all sins, the pride of thine heart.

And we're going to see this as we move on. Then there is the complacency of the ungodly, that the things of Esau are searched out. They were complacent, and we're going to see this tonight.

They had become complacent with the things that they possessed. And then we see the confederacy of the ungodly. They joined forces with the ungodly, with the nations.

They had a common enemy, a common enemy. That was the people of God. And they joined forces in a confederacy against Israel.

Why? Because they had a common enemy. They had many differences with these other nations, but in this common enemy they joined forces. Then we see verse 8, a point that is not on the outline.

We see the cunning of the ungodly, or the skill of them. Verse 8, that he is going to destroy the wise men out of Edom and understanding from Mount Esau. And then finally we're going to see the composure of the ungodly.

The mighty men are going to be dismayed. These sins that we're going to look at tonight arise from that one sin of pride against God. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee.

That line sets the stage for everything that is going to be brought against Esau and Edom in this judgment. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee. We defined pride last week as that which lies to us, that which tells us something, or that which we believe that is not true.

We think something, we are puffed up with something, but in reality that is not true. I'll give you an illustration. One individual might think he's gifted in a certain area, and he pushes himself forward, and he shoehorns himself into a position.

He thinks his mind, the pride of his heart has puffed him up to tell him that he is gifted in whatever area, whatever field you choose. But in reality, in reality, he has positioned not because of his gift, but because he has pushed himself forward. The pride of his heart has deceived him.

And this is what Esau is going to experience. All of these sins that follow, the complacency that comes by their possessions, the confederacy with the other nations, the composure and the cunning and the skill of these people in Esau and Edom are proud. They are puffed up.

They think these things concerning themselves. They think they are safe on Mount Seir. But their heart, the pride of their heart, the innate mother of all sins has deceived them, and they have committed these other sins, and they are going to be judged for these other sins because they have been deceived.

They have allowed themselves to be deceived, as Eve was in the garden. We looked at that point last week, the conceit of the ungodly, and we touched briefly on the complacency of the ungodly, the complacency of the ungodly. I want to come back to this tonight, because this touches on that which Esau had gathered around them, that which the nation of Esau, of Edom, which is that nation that came out of the loins of Esau, that which they had accumulated, and they hoped in the safety then of their situation.

Verse 3 indicates that the things that Esau had gathered around them were inaccessible to the rest of the world. The pride of thine heart has deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock. They had hidden their things in the clefts of the rock, their possessions they thought were safe.

They had gotten up to Mount Seir, they had discovered caves and clefts in the rock, and there they had hidden their possessions, there they had hidden themselves safe, what they thought, from all attack, from all destruction, in the caves and hollows of the rock they thought they were secure. And there they sat complacent. My friend, as we look at this passage tonight from verse 3 to verse 9, in all of these points that I have raised and we're going to deal with tonight, we have a very lucid description of the ungodly, of the ungodly.

The unsaved individual sits with pride in his heart, no matter how often he hears the gospel, no matter how often she has been told concerning the story of the gospel and concerning the destruction that is on the evil heart, they sit in pride and they don't believe the gospel because of the pride of the heart, pride of the heart, and causes them to be complacent. They're complacent in the things that they have, they're complacent in the society that they live in, they're complacent in the things that they do, and if conscience pricks them, if conscience is nagging at them, they just buy another toy. And this world is coming down with toys, adult toys, and materialism in order to, and people buy into this philosophy that if they can be busy, and if they can do things, and if they can get things, and buy things, retail therapy, if they can get all this around them, then they're going to be happy, they're going to be secure, their conscience is going to be secure from the destruction of the spread of God.

But in 2 Samuel 5, verse 6, we have this similar pride and complacency in the Jebusites, the Jebusites who, Joshua did not capture the city of Jerusalem, the city of Jerusalem was not captured until David's day, and there the Jebusites sat secure, and they taunted David, when David came to take this city, the Jebusites taunted him, except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come up ever. That was the taunt that the Jebusites gave to David, as he was coming up to the Mount of the Jebusites, Mount Jerusalem as it is known now. They had this city, this fortified city, this fortress that they thought was secure, and they taunted him, they said except you take away the blind and the lame, you can't come up.

And most commentators take that phrase and that taunt to mean that they put, if not physically, certainly semantically, they put the lame and the blind up on the walls, and said we give you our weakest men, we give you our weakest men, if you can take them, you've got our city. And the Jebusites sitting there said, we will put our weak men up on this wall, knowing that you can't take us, that is how secure we are, that is how confident we are, that is how arrogant we are, that my friend, they said is how complacent we are. And there is where the Edomites sat, they sat with their weak men, complacent.

Such a vantage point, that depending on the security of Mount Seir, the Edomites took every license against God's people, as we are going to see in verses 10 and following, they took every license against God's people, they put themselves up in pride, they assailed the people of God, and likewise the sinner, the ungodly. And this materialistic age thinks that he no longer, he thinks that he no longer needs the comforts, and he thinks in the comforts of this world, that he is impregnable, that he is impregnable. Unbeliever, in this meeting tonight, you sit here, you have heard the gospel before, and you sit here rejecting the gospel of Jesus Christ, turning away from the salvation, why? Because you have become complacent, and you think in your heart, and are deceived in your heart, that you are impregnable.

The pride of your heart has deceived you. The pride of your heart has deceived you. When we come to verses 5 and 6 of Obadiah, there are two aspects of this judgment, and this complacent confidence that are highlighted.

And the Lord says that this, that judgment number one on the ungodly, on ungodly complacency is certain. Judgment on ungodly complacency is certain. How are thy searched out? How are the things of Esau sought up? Verse 6. How are the things of Esau searched out? How are his hidden things sought up? There is the certainty, my friend, there is the certainty that judgment on the complacency is coming.

The certainty is not only seen in the language used to contrast it, but it is seen in the grammar that is used. And you'll see there that the perfect verb is used. They have been sought up.

They have been searched out. The perfect verb is also used in verse 2. Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen. It's not saying that it has already happened historically in time.

This means, and the use of the perfect verb is common throughout the prophets. It is called the prophetic perfect. The prophetic perfect.

It is a use of the perfect verb that indicates the certainty of something. And by putting it in the perfect, God is saying it is as though it were already done. So certain is your destruction.

And so certain is this searching out. And so certain is the things of your heart going to be sought up that it can be written in the perfect tense. It can be written in the perfect tense.

It's already done. And you read through the prophets many times over and over again. This prophetic perfect is against the enemies of God.

If thieves come to thee. Verse 5. If thieves come to thee. Notice also that the prophets see the effects of this as they have already happened.

If thieves come to thee and they take the things that they want and the vine robbers come. Those come into the vineyard and they rob. He says, would they not have left something? A thief comes in and he strips a house perhaps.

But he can't carry everything. He can't carry everything. Very often a thief will come in for something in particular.

And the vine robbers come in. And they're going to leave. Even those who are robbing the vineyards are going to leave something.

But God says on Edom. On Edom. This is what it's like when thieves come in.

And this is what it's like when they come in to rob the vineyards. But this, my friend, is what it is like when I come in, God says. I will search you out.

And the hidden things shall be sought up. Everything. Stripped clean.

Stripped clean. There is going to be nothing left. In fact, the language in verse 5 indicates this in the parenthesis there.

How art thou cut off? How art thou cut off? Not only is this judgment on complacency certain, but it is complete. It is complete. As verse 5 indicates, these things are going, these vineyards are going to be left something.

God is going to strip it clean. God is going to strip it clean. The thief is going to leave something.

But God says, I'm going to strip you. I'm going to search out your hidden things. Those things of which you're hiding.

With all of a safe place in the house for those important documents. And if thieves come in, they will never find. But God says, when I come into the heart and at the last day in the judgment of God, God says, I am going to search out those hidden things.

That is why, my friend, the Christian can pray, can pray with safety. And ought to pray to God. Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Search me, O God. Come into every corner of my heart. Every crevice of my life.

Every nook and cranny of my existence. Search me, O God, and know my heart. See if there's any sin.

That ought to be our prayer. Because God will in the end. God will in the end search out.

And he will judge complacency. And it will be complete. The great gatherers leave some.

But God's going to clean it. Some believe that this reference to the great gatherers is a reference from Leviticus chapter 19 verse 10. Where they were told, if they're gleaning in the vineyard, they were to leave some.

For the stranger, you remember in the story of Ruth. Ruth went into the vineyard. And the gleaners, as the gleaners came, they were left for the poor and the stranger.

But I can't see it applying to this passage. Because this is not speaking of Israel. This is speaking here of Edom and of Esau.

And this law was not given to Esau. But the analogy certainly fits for Israel. And they would certainly have associated with this.

The great gatherer comes in, leaves his grapes. But God will strip it clean. How are the things of Esau searched out? To intensify the pathetic nature and the false security of Edom.

And of the possessions of Edom. Obadiah formulates this uncovering and this destruction by way of a question. And these questions that we see in verse 6 and in verse 5 in the parenthesis intensifies with a sense of the pathetic nature of the security.

How are the things of Esau searched out? How is God going to cut you off? And as though he comes and he is not asking how God is going to do it. It's as though he comes to the end and he says in exasperation. How are the things of Esau searched out? How are they cut off? This intensifies the judgment of God.

My friend, it is possible for believers to become complacent in the things of God. It's possible for the believers to become comfortable in the things of God. In the things that the Lord gives us.

My believer, hear me, hear me here. It's possible for the things that God gives us as our weapons against the world. And as our helps and aids in our growth for grace.

It is possible for the believer to become comfortable and complacent in the use of them. And it is possible for the believer with all that armor that the Lord gives us. For our battle against sin and for our battle against the world.

It is possible for the believer to feel like David when he put on Saul's armor. He was cumbered with it. And he couldn't go out and fight with it.

He couldn't use it effectively because he was cumbered with it. The Lord gives us things for our good. I'm thinking in particular of a man I met recently who had a library.

One of the best commentary libraries I've ever seen in a private home. And the Bible says Paul tells Timothy. Paul tells Timothy to read and to search and to study the things of God.

And books my friend, good material, good books. Good books are God's gift to his church. To fight against sin and to grow in grace.

Good books. I would encourage you all to get good books and read them and study. But this one individual who had one of the best commentary libraries and theological libraries I have ever seen in a home.

Knew nothing, nothing of the content of them. All he knew was their monetary value. He was complacent.

He was comfortable in the armor that the Lord had given him for growth and grace. And he had brought it to a curse. It was a curse to him.

We need to be careful. We need to be careful as Christians. And even in our Bible reading.

That our Bible reading does not become a curse to us. That we become complacent in a perfunctory reading of scripture. But we know God and the power of God.

This is a complacency. Let's look thirdly then at the confederacy of the ungodly. Verse 7. All the men of thy confederacy have sought thee even, have brought thee even to the border.

The men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee and prevailed against thee. And they that did eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee. There is none understanding in him.

What a picture here of this confederacy. And the Lord here identifies another source of bitter disappointment to the Edomites. Not only were they confident in their rocky fortress of Mount Seir.

But added to that they had joined forces with the enemies of God's people. And the enemies of God. They had become confederate with them.

With the nations round about they had a common interest. And that interest was the destruction of God's people. And they thought there is strength.

There is strength in unity. There is strength in unity. But here they find that those men with whom they had become confederate had brought them to the borders.

They had deceived them. They had done a treaty with them if you like. Many people.

There are many different interpretations as to what exactly they mean by coming to the borders. Some people take it to mean coming in discussions at the border. Or coming and meeting at the boundaries.

But whatever it means they were brought to the borders as friends. They were deceived. They were prevailed against.

And those that did eat their bread. Those who they sat at the table with had laid a wound under them. Had laid a wound under them.

And that which Edom had done to Jacob in deceiving them. In deceiving Jacob. That which Esau had done to Jacob.

And that which Edom as a nation had done to Israel later on in this chapter verse 14. They had deceived them. That which they had done to Israel the nations were now going to do to them.

And here we see what we are going to look at in later weeks. Verse 15. The lex talionis.

The law of retribution. That which you have done is going to happen to you. That sin which you have committed.

And the manner in which you have prevailed against people. That exactly is what is going to happen to you. God says for the day of the Lord.

Verse 15. For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen. As thou hast done so it shall be done unto thee.

We are going to see that in later days. But here we see it in verse 7. Those men with whom they were confederate. They brought them even to the borders.

They laid a wound unto them. How my friend, how sad it is to be confederate with the world. And how is it that the ungodly individual in seeking comfort and in seeking ease of pain of conscience in this world becomes confederate with the ungodly.

Instead of seeking peace with God they seek peace with the world. They become confederate with the world. They gather around them worldly friends.

They gather around them those people that they can interact with. The world. And the pleasure crazes of the world.

And the associations of the world. And that Friday night out or whatever night it is out with the friends. That's what keeps them going throughout the week.

They have become confederate with the world. And they have been taken up with the society of this world. And peace with the world is enmity with God.

Enmity with God. But God says in John chapter 14 verse 27. Peace I give to you not as the world give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled. You make peace with the world. And you seek peace in the society of the world.

Your heart will be troubled. There's not a more, I've said this before. But there is not a more troubled part of society than high society.

Hollywood society. The inner life of those people is tortured and destroyed. Society with the world.

Peace with the world is enmity with God. And these people made a confederacy with God, with the world. But God says, unbeliever, God says peace I give to you.

You want peace? God says I can give it to you. My peace I give unto you not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled.

Fourthly, verse 8. The cunning of the ungodly or the skill and wisdom of the ungodly. We find here that God identifies this wisdom and Esau and Edom. The men of Edom were known for their wisdom and their brains.

And God says this is what they're known for. This is what I'm going to touch. Here we see another aspect of Edom's security that is crumbling round their ears.

Verse 8. Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom and understanding out of Esau? In the exercise of God's wisdom, man's wisdom peels into non-existence. In the exercise of God's wisdom, man's wisdom peels into non-existence. 1 Corinthians 1, verse 19.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. In Isaiah 29, verse 14, we read, Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder. For the wisdom of the wise men shall perish, perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid, shall be hid.

And here, Edom takes comfort in the fact that they have this wisdom, that they have this prudence, that they have this understanding that they're going to defeat, defeat Israel. That they can, not only with the rocky fortress of Mount Seir, but they can with their wisdom and their military strategy, defeat the nations of God. God says, I will destroy the wise man.

True wisdom, true wisdom is found in God, as David says in Psalm 85, verse 8, I will hear what God, the Lord, will speak. You see, that's where Edom went wrong, as we've said before, the mother of all sins is pride. The pride of thy heart hath deceived thee, but David says, true wisdom is hearing what God, the Lord, will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people and to his saints.

But let them not turn again to folly. See, the wisdom of the world, the wisdom of the world is folly, folly. This is illustrated, and this wisdom is illustrated when Israel went into the land of Canaan, into the promised land.

And the wisdom of Edom here, in their military strategy and in their position as a nation, is shown here to be false and folly, to be secure in it. When Israel went into the promised land, the nation of Canaan was made up of many different city states, many different nations throughout the country. It would have taken Joshua years, more than a lifetime, to defeat the entire promised land if he was going to take every city state and defeat it.

But you see how God brought to folly the wisdom of the world in the fact that those city states who were at war with each other, who were at war with each other prior to this, came together in a confederacy and fought against Israel as a confederacy. And so Joshua, as he fought under the direction of God, Joshua was able to wipe out five and six or ten nations at a time, rather than taking one or two nations. The Lord brought the wisdom, this military strategy of these nations of ungodly people, the Lord brought their wisdom to naught.

They thought it would be wise if we get together in a confederacy, if we, there's strength in unity, let's get together and fight against these Israelites coming into the land. And their wisdom, so called, brought them together for Joshua. And they were in the palm of his hand to destroy under God.

The wisdom of this world was brought to nothing. This is what happened with Esau. The Lord brought their wisdom to nothing.

He destroyed the wise man out of Edom and the understanding out of Mount of Esau. Not only their cunning, but their composure. Fifthly, and lastly, verses eight and nine, or verse nine, sorry.

And thy mighty men, O T-man, shall be dismayed. There their composure of the ungodly is going to be judged. Here they sit, on their mighty fortress, with their possessions comfortably around them, hidden in the craps of the rock.

And God says he is going to destroy their composure. Do you see in all of these points, do you see in all of these points a picture of the ungodly individual? This complacency, this pride of the heart, and the composure, the composure. There are two things that give a nation advantage in battle.

Number one, military strategy, and military strength. Strategy and strength. The former of these God has said he is going to destroy in verse eight.

I will destroy the wise man out of Edom. But here is Edom, and you get the picture of Edom holding on to the last thing with confidence and with composure. If we don't have wisdom, and if we can't use our strategy, at least we have numbers, at least we have might, at least we have strength.

But God says it doesn't matter how strong you are in numbers, I am going to dismay you. I am going to destroy your composure. And here we have the last hope of Edom destroyed by God.

Their physical strength, the ability, the ability to get up and fight another day. God is going to destroy. God is going to take it away.

Why? Because of the pride of their heart. Pride is still resident in the heart. And as we said last week, pride is the one great sin that we must, that we must deal with at salvation.

Because we must humble ourselves before God. And true Protestant Christianity is the only religion in this world that demands, that demands a sinner humble himself before God. Because it is the only religion in this world that sees the salvation outside of ourselves and in another.

We must humble ourselves before God. This arrogance and pride against God, mentioned in verse 3 and delineated from verses 4 through 9, is in closing the breaking of the first commandment. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Verses 10 and following to 14. Esau, Edom will be judged for their breaking of the second table of the law. Their destruction of the people of God.

But here God is dealing with that breaking of the first table of the law. Their relationship to Him first. We have already seen that.

In that He is judging them not for what they have done, but for what they are. That's the sin in the heart. He has not yet mentioned what they have done against Israel.

He is dealing with what they are in themselves. What they are in their own hearts. What their hearts are like.

He is judging that first. And that, my friend, is the breaking of the first table of the law. Having other gods before me.

If there is anything that you have in your life that is put in place of God. Either unbeliever or believer. It's the breaking of the first commandment.

You have put the things of this world, unbeliever. You have put the things of this world. The possessions, the materialism of this world.

The friendships of the world. The composure of society. And friends around you.

You have put it before God. God will judge that. But, there is a way back to God.

From the dark paths of sin. And there is a door that is open that all may go in. It's at the cross is where we begin when we come to sinners.

As sinners to Calvary. And there is hope, my friend, for the proud heart. If it's humble before God in salvation.

There is hope for that complacency against God. If we come and find what we read in John 14, 27. The peace, the peace that God gives.

That peace that brings no trouble with it. There is peace to be found in the Saviour. And I trust as we look at this prophecy of Obadiah and judgment against God.

That we will see not only the judgment against the ungodly. But that we will see the escape from judgment that is found in Christ alone. Let's bow in prayer.

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