

(Obadiah) How God Deals With Pride

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon on Obadiah explores the dangers of pride through the lens of God's judgment on Edom.

Duration: 47:52

Scripture: Numbers 32:23, Obadiah 1:1-15, Matthew 7:2

Topics: "Gods Judgment", "Christian Compassion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the downfall of a proud and fortified nation. He emphasizes that despite their confidence in their defenses, God declares that they will be stripped bare and face judgment. The reason for this judgment is their violence against their brother, Jacob, and their rejoicing over the suffering and destruction of the children of Judah. The preacher highlights the importance of treating the weak and vulnerable with kindness and compassion, as it reflects the true character of a person or society.

Transcript

Tonight we are going to study the brief book of Obadiah. It is the shortest book in the Old Testament. It's also one of the most obscure.

Before study started tonight, I had the occasion to ask a couple people, tell me what you know about the book of Obadiah. And I got a lot of blank responses. And that's just how it is.

This is just kind of almost logically one of the more neglected books of the Bible. But you're going to see that God has something very precious and very important to say to his people through the book of Obadiah. Let's just jump right into it.

Obadiah, verse 1. The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom. We have heard a report from the Lord and a messenger has been sent among the nations saying, Arise! Let us rise up against her for battle.

Behold, I will make you small among the nations. You shall be greatly despised. The pride of your heart has deceived you.

You who dwell in the clefts of the rock whose habitation is high. You who say in your heart, who will bring me down to the ground? Though you ascend as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down. Says the Lord.

The book of Obadiah begins with those first few words in verse 1. The vision of Obadiah. Now the Hebrew name Obadiah means worshipper of Yahweh. Or it could mean servant of Yahweh.

There are 12 or 13 different Obadiahs in the Old Testament. And one of these, 12 or 13, may be this Obadiah who wrote this book. Or this may be a completely different Obadiah.

There's a few people who are suggested as possible writers. There was an Obadiah who was an officer in King Ahab of Israel's court. And he hid God's prophets in a cave.

You'll find that in 1 Kings chapter 18. There was another Obadiah who was sent out by King Jehoshaphat of Judah to teach the law in the cities of Judah. You'll find that in 2 Chronicles chapter 17.

There was another Obadiah who was one of the overseers who helped to repair the temple in the days of Josiah, the king of Judah. You'll find that in 2 Chronicles chapter 34. And there's another Obadiah who was a priest in the days of Nehemiah.

You'll find that in Nehemiah chapter 10. Now, it could be one of the other Obadiahs mentioned in scripture. It could be none of these.

It was a fairly common name. Which specific Obadiah it was isn't so important. What's more interesting about this book is who it is directed towards.

Look at it now in verse 1. The vision of Obadiah thus says the Lord God concerning Edom. I want you to notice that primarily this is not a prophecy to the people of God. It's for us.

It's for our instruction. It's for our edification. As we're going to see before I finish with the book tonight.

But this is not primarily to the kingdom of Judah or to the kingdom of Israel or to the unified kingdom in the days of Saul and David and Solomon. No. This is a prophecy to a Gentile nation.

To a heathen nation. The nation of Edom populated, of course, by the Edomites. Now, the book of Obadiah is unique because it doesn't deal with Judah or Israel much at all.

His focus is on the sin of Edom and on the judgment that's going to come upon them. So, it's fair for us to ask who are these Edomites? Well, the Edomites are the people descended from Esau. The son of Isaac and Rebekah and the twin brother of Jacob.

You'll find that in Genesis chapter 25. Esau was nicknamed Edom because the word Edom means red. And he probably liked red things.

We're told in the book of Genesis that he liked some red stew that Jacob was making. And he was probably also red in his hair color. You know, it's just called people have red hair.

Hey, red, you know, and that's what they called him. Edom. Now, Esau eventually settled in the area known as Mount Seir.

This is an area which is south and east of the present-day state of Israel. It's in what is modern-day Jordan. We're not talking about the area directly south of Israel.

That was the area of Moab. We're talking more of the area south and then east on the other side of the Dead Sea. So Esau eventually settled in this area of Mount Seir, and he absorbed a people known as the

Horites.

Those were the people populating that region when Esau and his large family came there. And they pretty much just sort of integrated with them and overwhelmed them and began to lead them. Genesis chapter 36 refers to a long list of Edomite rulers in this area.

By the way, if you have a King James Version, you might want to go back and take a look at Genesis chapter 36 sometime because the old King James Version, when it refers to these rulers of the Edomites, it calls them dukes, the duke of this and the duke of that. And it's just kind of funny to read it in your Bible. You know, you think of dukes and such in the Old Testament.

Well, it just is another word for a leader, but that's the word that it uses in the Old King James Version of Genesis chapter 36. Now, as time went on and the family of Esau settled in this area of the world and developed and as their family grew, they became a sizable and a significant nation. Never a superpower.

They were always one of the little nations on the block, usually not even as big as Israel. You had a combination of these three surrounding nations to Israel. Moab, Ammon, and Edom.

And these were three smaller nations that Israel, you know, had some kind of relationship with. In any regard, when Israel came out of Egypt in the days of Moses and started coming into the Promised Land, they wanted to pass through the land of the Edomites, but the Edomites wouldn't let them. And God remembered that, and the people of Israel remembered that.

The Edomites also opposed King Saul, and they were conquered under the reigns of David and Solomon. Later on, in the days of the divided Marachi, where you had Israel in the north and Judah in the south, in the days of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, Edom joined with Moab and Ammon to attack Judah, but the Lord fought for Judah and defeated them. Do you remember that famous battle in the Old Testament where the battle was led with praise? Where they put the singers, where they put the worshipers out in front, and, you know, put the choir and the worship leaders out in the front lines of the battle, not because you want to get rid of them, but because the Lord told you that that's what you should do.

And this magnificent battle that was won by the praise of God's people, that was fought against a confederation of the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the Edomites. You also have different times when the Edomites rebelled against Judah, and times when they were conquered again. When you come into the New Testament, you have a very famous man from these people, of the Edomites, you have King Herod the Great.

This maniacal, yet great king, who was ruling over the land of Judah when Jesus was born, he was, by lineage, an Edomite. Which, by the way, was one of the reasons why he was never really accepted by the Jewish people, because he wasn't a Jew himself, he was an Edomite. Now, if you want to know what happened to the Edomites, because you've probably never met an Edomite, have you? You've never seen an Edomite passport, you've never shaken the hand, and the guy says, well, hi, I'd like to introduce myself, my name is Tom, and I'm an Edomite.

No, you've never had that. It's because the Edomites perished as a people. In the great war between the Jews and Rome, in the year 66 to 70 AD, the Edomites really threw their lot in with the Jewish people, and they decided to rebel against Rome at the same time.

Well, when Israel, when the Jewish people were crushed by Rome in 70 AD, so were the Edomites. And by the way, you never hear anything in history from the Edomites after the Romans crushed them in 70 AD. The predictions of Obadiah in verse 10 and in verse 18 of this prophecy were proved exactly true.

Now, he goes on, in verse 1 he says, The vision of Obadiah, thus says the Lord God concerning Edom. Now, because of what this book says about the Edomites in Jerusalem, we can guess at a date for Obadiah's ministry. I'm a little more confident about it than our more sensible Bible teachers and commentators.

I'll sort of throw out a perspective date. I think that he probably ministered during the reign of Jehoram, which is somewhere around the year 848 and 841 BC, somewhere 850 years before the birth of Jesus. You see, the only time markers we have, is we know that this prophecy was given sometime after a time when an attacking army came against Jerusalem and plundered them.

And so you search through the Old Testament for examples of that, and in 2 Chronicles chapter 21, it describes an attack against Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoram, and that's exactly the time I'm speaking of, about 850 years before the time of Jesus. By the way, can I give you a handy marking point of Old Testament chronology? Does your head just sometimes swim when people give dates from before Christ? Well, here's a handy marking point. Get this in your mind.

King David, his reign was a thousand years before the birth of Christ. Now, isn't that a handy marking point? So, you know that if something was 1500 years, well, it was 500 years before the time of King David. If something was 850 years before the time of Christ, you know that it was 150 years after the reign of King David.

So, that's sort of a handy marking point that I use. Just get that in your head. It's easy to remember.

David was the king of Israel a thousand years before the birth of Christ. So, about 150 years later, during the reign of Jehoram, the Philistines and the Arabians came together against Jerusalem, and they didn't conquer it, but they messed it up and they plundered it. And then they left.

So, that's the particular invasion that I would tie to this specific incident that the prophet Obadiah speaks of. Although I have to say that the evidence isn't all that clear, nor is it terribly important. There's two or three other potential invasions or attacks against Jerusalem which may be fitting the picture here, but again, it's not so much as important which specific attack it was as it is to understand what God says about the Edomites and their action in it.

And might I say that God isn't happy. Look at it here, verse 1. The vision of Obadiah, thus says the Lord God concerning Edom, we have heard a report from the Lord, and a messenger has been sent among the nations, saying, Arise, and let us rise up against her for the battle. As it says, Obadiah the prophet receives a news bulletin from the Lord.

This just in, God is bringing the nations against Edom in battle. The news flash, extra, extra, read all about it. And what's going to happen as a result of this coming battle? Look at it now in verse 2. Behold, I will make you small among the nations.

You shall be greatly despised. This helps explain what God is doing. He's going to take Edom and He's going to humble them.

He's going to make them small among the nations and greatly despised. Well, let's get it clear in our head. Edom was never really that big among the nations, but God's going to make them even smaller than they were.

Why? Why, God? Why are you doing this? We haven't had a single word why yet. Well, that begins in verse 3. Take a look. The pride of your heart has deceived you.

You who dwell in the clefts of the rock whose habitation is high, you who say in your hearts, who will bring me down to the ground? Though you exalt yourself as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down. Don't you love that? God's basically looking at Edom and He says, you're going down. I'm taking you down.

And let me tell you why I'm taking you down. Did you see it in verse 3? The pride of your heart has deceived you. They're filled with pride and it has deceived them.

Friends, can we take just a moment to meditate on that? On how deceptive pride is? You see, pride makes us think things about ourselves and think things about other people that just aren't true. You will not find a more deceived man or a more deceived woman than the proud person. The proud person thinks of themselves and they think of themselves as being much higher or much more important.

As a matter of fact, pride is so deceptive because it can masquerade itself so expertly. You take a look at the person who seems miserable and they hate themselves and they're just so, you know, worried about themselves and they don't like themselves and they don't like their life and they're very miserable. Well, oftentimes, the real problem with that person is pride.

You say, pride? How can you say pride? Because there they are. They're just thinking, oh my, I'm so terrible. I think so little of myself.

You know why it's pride? Because their universe revolves around them. Everything is all about them. Pride means sitting on the throne of my life is me.

King me. And there he is enthroned. And maybe king me is miserable because he thinks he deserves a lot better from everybody and they're not giving it to him.

And, you know, I'm just miserable because of that. Well, let me tell you, pride is very, very deceptive. It can deceive us about ourself.

You know, pride can also deceive you about other people too. Make you think that other people are something that they're not or that they're not something that they really are. Pride is incredibly deceptive.

Might we say that the Edomites were not the last people to walk this earth deceived by pride? Many of us face the same challenge. Now, why were the Edomites proud? Well, take a look right here, verse 3. He says, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock whose habitation is high. Now, let me be straight with you.

In my analysis, I would tell you that the Edomites didn't all have all that much to be proud of. They were never really a great superpower. They were never really a real player among the nations.

They were never really a mover or a shaker or a very prominent people. No. They were a small, relatively poor and insignificant people.

Yet, what they could be proud about, they were. And one of the things that they could be proud about was the amazing natural fortifications of Mount Seir and the area around there. They had such great natural fortifications and strengths that they boasted in the clefts of the rocks around them.

Matter of fact, if you take a look there, it says, you who exalt yourself as high as the eagle in verse 4. That's putting your pride pretty high, don't you think? That's a big boast. You're as high as the eagle. Pride is so ingrained in the human nature that even if we don't have much to be proud about, we'll find something to exalt ourselves about.

Might I say, and this is a very important reminder too, a wake-up call for some of us. You don't have to be rich or powerful or great or successful to be proud. No, no, no, no, no.

It's not just the successful and great and powerful and beautiful people who have a problem with pride. No, sometimes those who have the least reason to be proud have the most pride in their life. And that's kind of the category that the Edomites are in.

Now, they did have some things. Again, they had these great natural defenses. You know, if you want to see an example of the natural defenses of the people of Edom, you need to go to the rock city of Petra.

That was the Edomite capital. Back in their day, it was known as the city of Sila. But actually, Sila means rock, and that's what Petra means too.

It means rock, because it's a city carved out of rock. I would love to go see the rock city of Petra. It's in the modern-day Jordan.

Maybe sometime on a trip to Israel, I can make a journey over there and see it. I've heard it's incredibly impressive. First of all, to get to the city, and I don't know if it's that way today, but it certainly was this way in the ancient world.

There's pretty much one way to get to the city, and that was through a long, narrow canyon. The average distance from wall to wall in this high, high canyon, the average distance from wall to wall is 15 feet. A very narrow passage.

Students of military history and such have said that 12 men could defend that passage against an entire army because of the way that it bottlenecks. It's not just a bottleneck, it's a bottleneck about a mile long. And then once you get to the end, into the city of Petra, it opens up into a city that's literally carved out of rock.

And it's incredible the strength and the security of these fortresses. And so the people of Edom didn't have a lot to be proud about, but that was one of the things. And so their hearts were lifted up in pride about that.

Well, what else did the city, or did the people of Edom have to be proud about? Well, the Edomites also boasted in their wisdom. The men of Edom, especially the men of a city known as Timon, as it's going to be mentioned here later on in our text, they were noted for their wisdom. Sometimes in the Old Testament you hear this phrase, the men of the east, usually it refers to the wise men of Edom.

For example, 1 Kings chapter 4 verse 30 says, it declares the great wisdom of the men of the east. And in Jeremiah chapter 49 verse 7 says, Is wisdom no more in Timon? Has counsel perished from the prudent?

Has their wisdom vanished? Well, Timon, again, is one of the cities of the Edomites. So again, their great wisdom, this was another source of pride for the Edomites.

And if there was a third source of pride, it was the alliances and the confederations of the Edomites. Now, a small nation in a vulnerable place, even though they had strong natural fortifications, they were surrounded by much stronger nations. The Edomites prided themselves on the confederations that they could make with nations around them.

Now, you're going to see God shaking up all of these things to the Edomites. They were proud about their natural fortifications. They were proud about their wisdom.

They were proud about the alliances that they made with other nations. But God says to them, look at the end of verse 4, From there I will bring you down. That's the sobering truth about our pride.

Is God can bring us down any time. He can shatter our proud deception and bring us low. Might I say, if God knows how to do it, we should pretty much leave the job of bringing the proud down, we should leave that job up to God.

Sometimes it seems irresistible though, right? You see a proud person, and you can't just wait to burst their bubble. You just can't wait to look for just the perfect way, the thing to say or the thing to do that's just really going to chop their hide and make them look foolish. Oh, you think about it, right? If you're like me, you think about it ten minutes after you had the chance to say that witty thing.

It always leaves me at the moment, but boy, afterwards, oh, I should have said that. That would have really got them. And I can just kind of play it over in my head and pretend that I really did say it, and it makes me feel better.

But really, the best person at bringing down the proud is God. God can do it. God can bring down the proud in an amazing way.

He can do it much better than us. Sometimes I think God says to us, why don't you get out of the way and let me deal with this proud person. And he really knows how to pop the bubble head.

Verse 5. Now, this is the nature of God's judgment against Edom and how complete it will be. Look at it here. It says, If thieves had come to you, if robbers by night, oh, how will you be cut off? Or how you will be cut off? Would they not have stolen till they had enough? If great gatherers had come to you, would they not have left some gleanings? Oh, how Esau shall be searched out.

How his hidden treasure shall be sought after. All the men in your confederacy shall force you to the border. The men at peace with you shall deceive you and prevail against you.

Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you. No one is aware of it. Will I not in that day, says the Lord, even destroy the wise men from Edom? And understanding from the mountains of Esau, then your mighty men, oh Timon, shall be dismayed to the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

You see these three areas that the people of Edom were proud in. They were proud of their great fortifications and natural defenses, the clefts of the rock that they could hide in. And God says, you're going down.

Matter of fact, armies are going to come in and they're going to strip you completely bare. God asks the wonderful rhetorical question there in verse 5. If a thief comes to your house, he doesn't steal everything. He has to make some choices.

He can only carry out so much. There's the computer, there's the TV, there's the DVD player. What am I going to take? I can only take two.

I've got to leave one behind. So he goes and he takes some things. When they're picking grapes, they don't pick every last grape off the vine.

It's a waste of time. They get the most. They always leave some behind for the gleaners.

God says, no, it's not going to be like the thief who robs your house. It's not going to be like the great pickers who leave some behind. Everything is going to be gone.

Your natural fortifications are going to serve you not one bit. There you go, Mr. Proud Edomite. You're going down.

And then God says to them, with the great trust they had in the confederacy and the alliances that they made with other people. Take a look at here. He says, all the men in your confederacy shall force you to the border.

That's in verse 7. The men at peace with you shall deceive you. Aha, yes. Those people that you made the alliances with.

The pride you had in that strength with the alliance. He says, they're going to turn their backs on you. And they're going to deceive you.

They're going to double cross you and stab you in the back. That's the judgment upon you, Edom. You're going down.

And then look at the third area here. They trusted in their wisdom, didn't they? So look at it here in verse 8. He says, will I not in that day, says the Lord, even destroy the wise men from Edom? And understanding from the mountains of Esau, then your mighty men, O Timon, shall be dismayed. Your wise men.

Oh, you thought you could figure out anything. You could figure out all your problems. You trusted in those things.

You trusted in strength. You trusted in alliances. You trusted in how smart you are.

You're going down, Edom. There's not a person so high, so mighty, that God can't bring them down. Now, I don't pretend to say that this is an example of the judgment of God or anything like that.

I'm just using it as an illustrative example. But isn't it interesting how high-flying people in the technical industries, you know, those high research tech things, they're not flying so high right now, are they? With the way that the stock market is and all of that. And it all happened pretty quick, didn't it? You think of a guy like Bill Gates losing billions of dollars.

Billions. Now, of course, you say, well, he still has billions. Yeah, but he's lost an awful lot, folks.

And you know, God could take it all the way from him in a moment. In a moment. In the blink of an eye.

God knows how to bring the proud down low. Notice here, he goes on here, verse 10, as to why judgment is coming against Edom. That described how great the judgment would be, but here's why it's coming.

Verse 10. For your violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever. And the day that you stood on the other side, and the day that strangers carried captive his forces, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, even you were as one of them.

But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother and the day of his captivity, nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction, nor should you have spoken proudly in the day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of my people in the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity.

You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped, nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained in the day of distress. Now notice what he says here in verse 10. For your violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.

Do you know what the great sin of Edom was? And again, it's not really a word. I'll sort of make up a word right here. It was unbrotherliness.

The great sin of the Edomites was that when Israel, when Judah, when Jerusalem was attacked, they stood by and, well, look at what they did. It says that they stood on the other side and they did nothing. Now I want you to notice this.

First of all, their sin was made worse because of who they did it against, their brother Jacob. Now, how can you say that Edom was a brother to Israel or to Jacob? Well, again, because they share a common ancestor. They're both descendants of Isaac and Rebekah.

They both have the same grandfather. Esau and Jacob had the same grandfather, Abraham. Grandpa Abraham.

And Father Isaac. And there they were. They were brothers.

This made Edom's sin against Israel all the worse. Might I say that some sins are worse depending on whom we sin against. Now, it's a sin to treat anybody badly.

Wouldn't we agree? It's a worse sin to treat a brother or sister in Christ badly. You have even more reason to love them and to respect them and to honor them. Now, I'm not trying to say that it's not a sin when you do it against even the most rank pagan.

You should treat even the most terrible pagan as a good person and you should be a good person towards them. But I'm trying to say it's an even worse sin against a brother or sister in Christ. Or maybe we should transfer this principle to our marriages.

It's bad to speak harshly to anybody. To anyone. But it's even worse to speak harshly to your husband or wife because that's the person you should love and cherish the most.

So you see, some sins are worse simply by virtue of who we commit them against. That was the case with Edom. It would have been bad for them to do what they did to anybody.

But it was even worse because they did it to their brother nation, Judah or Israel. What did they do? Look at verse 11. In that day you stood on the other side.

What did Edom do when strangers attacked Judah and foreigners entered the gates of Jerusalem? What did they do? Nothing. That's how their sin started. They did nothing.

They stood by. Matter of fact, then they went on to the next step. Then they started cheering over Judah's misery.

He says, Nor should you have rejoiced. Now I want you to see a progression of sin. They started their sin by doing nothing.

By the way, did you know that sometimes doing nothing is a great sin? Let's remind ourselves of that. Sometimes doing nothing is a great sin. When you have the opportunity to help or the obligation to stand by a brother or sister in need.

When you have the opportunity to stand up for what's right and what's true, especially when it's helping a brother or sister under attack. And friends, it's sin to do nothing. Remember that great passage in Numbers chapter 32 verse 23 where it says, Your sin will find you out.

That's a great preaching verse, isn't it? Your sin will find you out. Hey brother, don't worry about it. Your sin will find you out.

Do you know the sin that it's speaking about in Numbers chapter 32? It's speaking about the sin of doing nothing. You see the tribes of Israel, two and a half of the tribes, the tribe of Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh wanted to settle on the east side of the Jordan River. And Moses said, Fine, but you have to send your armies over to help the rest of Israel conquer the land.

Fine, they said. Now Moses said, If you do not do this, if you stay at home and do nothing to help your brother in his time of need, you better know that the Lord God sees it as sin and your sin will find you out. Sin of doing nothing can be a great sin before the Lord.

But you see, Edom actually did worse than nothing. Their sin progressed. That was where it started.

That's bad enough. But then it progressed. Then they gloated over the misfortune of Judah.

Did you notice it there? It says here at verse 12, But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother in the day of his captivity, nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction, nor should you have spoken proudly in the day of distress. That's in verse 12. You see, they were proud and puffed up and they gloated over Jerusalem's misery.

Friends, that's a sin. I know it feels good sometimes. When your opponent, when your enemy, when they're really getting theirs, you want to gloat over it, don't you? I know I do.

Oh, yes. Thank you, Lord. Oh, God, you're so yes, Lord.

Yes, yes. Do it. No, you know what? To rejoice over another person's misfortune, even if they deserve it from the hand of God.

Friends, that can be sin. That was the sin of Edom. Their sin got even worse.

Take a look at it here in verse 13. You should not have entered the gate of my people in the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction in the day of their calamity.

At the end of verse 13 now, nor laid hands on their substance in the day of calamity. Oh, now you're not just doing nothing. Now you're not just gloating, but now you're laying hands on their substance.

What are you doing? You're putting your hand in the pot against them. When the plunder is being divided from Jerusalem, you're taking some of it. So notice it.

Edom's sin started with doing nothing. Then it progressed to pride over Judah's distress. Soon they took advantage of their brother Judah's misfortune and they laid hands on their substance.

Was that the end of it? Nope. Look at verse 14. You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped, nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained in the day of distress.

You see, the final progression of Edom's sin was worst of all. They joined in the attack against vulnerable Judah. When they encountered people fleeing from Judah and Jerusalem, trying to find a refuge in the wilderness out by Edom, what did they do? Did they give them shelter? Did they help them? No.

They either killed them. That's what it means by saying cut off in verse 14. Or they gave them over to the enemy as prisoners.

They delivered them up among those who remained. Friends, let's remember something. Sin proceeds by degrees.

No man is at his worst at the first. It takes you a while to get the worst. But you follow a progression.

And that's exactly what they did. I mean, did you notice the phrase repeated through verse 10 through 14 many times in the day of calamity, in the day of distress, in the day of calamity or captivity. All in all, Edom treated God's people terribly when distress and calamity came upon them.

And for all of that, God's judgment was coming upon them. And what did they do? First they did nothing. Then they rejoiced in their distress and calamity.

Then they took advantage of their vulnerable state. And then they joined in the violence among God's people. Friends, let me just ask a very pointed question here.

Let's take this out of Israel from thousands of years ago and ancient extinct nation known as Edomites. What about you? What about me? Do we do the same things? Do we see people suffering? Do we see people hurting around us and do nothing? That was the sin of Edom. Do we rejoice at the misfortune or the suffering of others? That's sin before God.

Do we take advantage of others in their vulnerable state? Friends, if you do that, that's sin. When people are weak, when people are vulnerable, if you feel like you got to go in there and grab something from them because they're weak and vulnerable, friends, that's sin. And then if you join in violence against others, against God's people, it's sin.

Friends, if we're guilty of the same or worse, when we see others in distress or calamity, then God sees it as sin and he has to deal with it in our life. This is one of the great lessons from this book of Obadiah.

When you see people weak, when you see people vulnerable, you treat them well in the name of Jesus.

I think oftentimes the real character of a man, the real character of a society, can be seen in how they treat the weak and the vulnerable among them. When a person or when a people treat the weak and the vulnerable among them with kindness and compassion and a helping hand, it says something about them. I read a story once and it was very memorable to me and it stuck in my mind about a young lady who was dating a man in college and she was very impressed with this man because around all his friends, around all her friends, you saw what a wonderful, pleasant, kind man he was.

But then she noticed that oftentimes the maid or the custodian that would be around the dorm room, he would treat them with contempt because they were weaker and vulnerable to him. And she realized this isn't the kind of man that I want to marry at all. And it's true.

You want to find the real character of a person, you see how they treat weak and vulnerable people in their midst. That's the measure of a man or a woman oftentimes in their character. Well, God's going to bring judgment against them.

Look at it here, verse 15. For the day of the Lord upon all the nations is near. As you have done, it shall be done to you.

Your reprisal shall return upon your own head. For as you drank on my holy mountain, so all the nations drink continually. Yes, they shall drink and swallow and it shall be as though they had never been.

God's saying that the judgment is going to come against the people of Edom just like people drink down something from a cup. And after you drink it, where is it? Well, it's gone. You can't see it anymore, right? The cup's empty.

That's what it's going to be like to Edom. They're going to be gone. To be no more.

The day of the Lord upon all the nations is near. You see, Edom rejoiced when they saw God, as it seemed to be, coming against Jerusalem, allowing them to be plundered. Oh yes, isn't that great? The day of the Lord is against Jerusalem.

God says, no. The day of the Lord against all nations is near. And you better wake up to it.

And notice the end there, verse 15. As you have done, it shall be done to you. Your reprisal shall return upon your own head.

What will God give to the Edomites? Simple justice. No more and no less. What they've done to the people of Judah will be done to them.

The same principle is to us as well. Didn't Jesus say in the Sermon on the Mount, For whatever measure you measure out to others, God will measure the same back to you. Let me ask you.

How merciful are you to other people? Now, how much mercy do you want from God? You see, somehow we want a shovel full of mercy from God, but we want to give a teaspoon full of mercy to other people. God says, no. You're using the teaspoon to measure out mercy to other people? That's what I'm going to use to measure out mercy to you.

Whoa, God, wait a minute. You see, I need a whole lot more than a teaspoon full of mercy from you. And God says, you better change your act with other people.

Grace, compassion. How about forgiveness? What do you use to measure out forgiveness to other people? Man, some of us, we use eyedroppers to measure out forgiveness to other people. God says, I'm breaking out the eyedropper with you.

No, Lord, no, no. I need a tanker truck worth of wisdom, worth of forgiveness, God. And he says, then that's what you should do to other people.

The same measure that you use towards others, God will use it unto you. Friends, there's a sense in which God's judgment against Edom is the just fulfillment of his promise to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12. You know what God said to Abraham way back then? He said, I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you.

And the Edomites cursed the people of God. They cursed the descendants of Abraham. Well, friends, when the Edomites cursed Israel, they were cursed.

You want to be blessed? Then go look for a way to bless the Jewish people. Look for a way to bless Israel. Put yourself on the positive end of that blessing to Abraham.

Now look at how God is going to use Israel to bring judgment against Edom. Verse 17. But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness.

The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph aflame. And the house of Esau shall be stubble, and they shall kindle them and devour them, and no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau, for the Lord has spoken.

The inhabitants of the south shall possess the mountains of Esau, and the inhabitants of the Philistine lowland. They shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria. Benjamin shall possess Gilead, and the captains of the host of the children of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath.

The captains of Jerusalem, who were in Sephard, shall possess the cities of the south. See, isn't it beautiful? Verse 17. In contrast to all that judgment that's going to come against the Edomites, on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance.

See, it's a beautiful thing. Among God's people, trials and burdens are only temporary, because there's going to be deliverance. On Mount Zion there will be deliverance.

Yes, I know Jerusalem. I know where Mount Zion is. I know that they were attacked.

I know that they were plundered. I know that they had a very tough time, but on Mount Zion there will be deliverance. Well, what about Edom? Nope, no deliverance there.

They're going to be destroyed completely. You see, Israel will be the fire, and Edom will be the stubble. That means they're going to be consumed completely.

Edom will be completely devoured. Now, this word of the Lord through Obadiah proved perfectly true. The Edomites fought side by side with the Jewish people in the rebellion against Rome in the year 66 to 70

A.D., and they were crushed by Rome, never to be heard of as a people again.

These predictions, such as in verse 18, and no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau, that was fulfilled exactly. Friends, I want you to see something here, that God fulfills his promises. He promises to his people deliverance.

But to those who reject him, there is no deliverance. Listen, maybe you're going through a tough time right now. Maybe it's really hard.

It's hard at home. It's hard at work. It's hard with different situations in your life.

Maybe things are very difficult. Can I give you an encouraging word? If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, if you're born again by the Spirit of God, this life is the worst it ever gets for you. There's going to be deliverance in Mount Zion.

Even if you face trials like this to the end of your days, listen, if that's just to the end of your days on earth, you're going to a more glorious place, and there's going to be deliverance on Mount Zion. Now, if you've rejected Jesus Christ, if you think you're good enough to save yourself, and you don't want Jesus' work for you on the cross to be credited for you, let me tell you something, as good as this life is, this is the best it ever gets for you. When you leave this life, you're going from the frying pan into the fire.

Literally. So it's a heavy thing to consider. God's people have a promise of deliverance.

But not, as we see here, the Edomites. No, they will be completely possessed, completely occupied. And finally, look at here, verse 21.

Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's. His friends, saviors, shall come to Mount Zion. The idea isn't that there are many saviors in some ultimate sense.

No, that's not the idea. Here, the word saviors has the idea of deliverers. Here's the whole contrast.

There are many deliverers for Mount Zion, right? Oh, God will bring a lot of deliverers for them. But how about for Edom? Any deliverers for them? Nope, not a single one. You see, that's the contrast.

Edom will be completely destroyed with no saviors or deliverers to help her. But saviors shall come to Mount Zion. And they will judge the mountains of Esau.

And look at it there, verse 21. And the kingdoms shall be the Lord's. You see, this brief prophecy of Obadiah, it ends on a high note, doesn't it? The Edomites seem to have their day against God's people.

Now, it must have been hard for the people of Jerusalem to know that the people of Edom, first of all, stood by and did nothing. Then laughed at them and rejoiced when they were going down. Then they put their hand in the till against them.

And then they even attacked some of the Israelites who were fleeing from Jerusalem. Oh, it must have hurt. It must have stung bad.

But Obadiah assures God's people, the kingdom shall be the Lord's. The Lord knows how to take care of God's people and to advance His kingdom in a glorious way. Let me finish with two very specific words of

application here.

Number one, it really matters how we treat the weak and the vulnerable, doesn't it? It matters a great deal, friends, and we saw that. We don't want to be like Edom. But I want you to know that there's a whole other reason why this book of Obadiah was written.

This note of encouragement here at the very end of the book, it may be the whole reason why this prophecy was given by Obadiah. You've got to wonder if the book of Obadiah ever had much of a wide reading in Edom. Probably not.

You know, the Edom Times probably didn't put it on the front page. If Obadiah tried to buy advertising in the Petra Chronicle, they probably didn't accept his money. You see, it probably didn't have a lot of a hearing in the streets or the palaces of the Edomites, but it certainly was received as welcome encouragement among the suffering people of God.

Do you see what Obadiah tells God's people? Yes, the message is mainly to the people of Edom, but there's a message for God's people in there too. And what's the message? Don't worry about those who ignore your need. Don't worry about those who rejoice at your problems.

Don't worry about those who take advantage of your crises. Don't worry about those who join their hands with others in attacking you. Listen, don't those things chap your hide? When you're in a crisis point, when you're in a problem place and people stand by and do nothing, it gets under your skin, doesn't it? When you're in a crisis point, when you're in a problem place and people rejoice at your suffering, oh, that makes you angry too.

But when you're in a crisis point, when you're in a problem place and people take advantage of your crisis, oh, that's going to make you mad. And how about when they join their hands against you? Oh boy, all of those things together, it just can make us furious. You know what the Lord says? Don't worry about it.

I'll take care of them. You don't have to worry about it. You don't have to get all upset about it.

I will take care of them. And that's the great message of the prophet Obadiah to the people of God. Let's take it to heart right now in the Lord, before the Lord in prayer.

Father, we want this message to be impressed on our heart. First of all, God, we pray that we would gather this enduring message of how we should treat those who are weak and vulnerable. Lord, in this we see the glory of the Lord Jesus.

How he loved the weak. How he ministered to the vulnerable. We praise you for that, Lord.

And we ask that you would give us the heart of Jesus towards the weak and the vulnerable. Lord, as well, we pray that when there are occasions in our life, when we feel that we are in a problem time or in a crisis, and it seems like, Lord, that no one is there or people are rejoicing against us or they're joining their hand against us, God, give us the trust in you to know that you can take care of them just as much as you can take care of Edom. Lord, instead, let it be our place to have generous measures of forgiveness and mercy and grace to others.

Let us do it, Lord, for your glory and by your grace. In Jesus' name, amen.

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