

# Obadiah Devotionals & Sermon Illustrations

## Obadiah 1:1-7

### "SUPERMEN AND AIRPLANES"

"The pride of your heart has deceived you.- Obadiah 1:3

My daughter travels all over the world as a flight attendant and often comes home with some fascinating tales. One such story is about former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali, who was seated in an aircraft that was preparing for takeoff. A flight attendant, noticing that he did not have his seatbelt fastened, asked him kindly, "Excuse me, sir, but would you mind fastening your seatbelt?"

As the story goes, Muhammad Ali looked up with that saucy grin of his and said in a slow, gravelly voice, "Superman don't need no seatbelt!" Without missing a beat, the flight attendant packed a punch with this quick reply: "Superman don't need no airplane, so how about fastening up?"

Of course, Ali was only joking. If a person really believed he was Superman, he would be seriously deluded. He would be like the ancient Edomites in today's Scripture who had been self-deceived by their own pride. The truth is, we all have the same tendency.

A. W. Tozer aptly described the kind of Christians the Lord longs for us to be: "Men and women who have stopped being 'fooled' about their own strength and are not afraid of being 'caught' depending on their all-sufficient Lord."-- Joanie E. Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sift the substance of my life,  
Filtering out the sin and strife;  
Leave me, Lord, a purer soul,  
Cleansed and sanctified and whole.-- Lemon

To experience God's strength, we must admit our weakness.

---

**Obadiah** - John Wesley is said to have remarked that he read the newspaper "to see how God was governing His world," and this is certainly a biblical approach. God rules over kingdoms and nations (2 Chron. 20:6; Dan. 5:21); and as A. T. Pierson used to say, "History is His story." This doesn't mean that God is to blame for the foolish or wicked decisions and deeds of government officials, but it does mean that He is on the throne and working out His perfect will.

The eminent British historian Herbert Butterfield said, "Perhaps history is a thing that would stop happening if God held His breath, or could be imagined as turning away to think of something else." The God who knows the number and the names of the stars (Ps. 147:4) and who sees when the tiniest bird falls dead to the ground (Matt. 10:29) is mindful of the plans and pursuits of the nations and is working out His divine purposes in human history.

Knowing that the Lord reigns over all things ought to encourage the people of God as we watch world events and grieve over the decay of people and nations. The sovereignty of God isn't an excuse for believers to be indifferent to evil in the world, nor is it an encouragement to slumber carelessly and do nothing. God's ways are hidden and mysterious, and we sometimes wonder why He permits certain things to happen, but we must still pray "Thy will be done" (Matt. 6:10) and then be available to obey whatever He tells us to do. - Warren Wiersbe

---

## Obadiah 1:1-14

### Gloating At The Enemy

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. Yet hidden away in its brief record is a vital question that affects us all: How should we respond when we see an enemy experience misfortune?

The prophet Obadiah ministered during the time that the city of Jerusalem was under fierce attack by the armies of Babylon. The neighbors of Jerusalem, the Edomites, were actually cheering on the enemy armies to destroy and kill (Ps. 137:7-9). Ironically, these hurtful jeers were spoken by blood relatives of the Jews. They were descendants of Jacob, and the Edomites were descendants of Esau.

Obadiah condemned the Edomites for gloating: "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" (Obadiah 1:12).

If someone has repeatedly been hurtful to us, it is easy to give in to vindictive pleasure when they experience misfortune. But Scripture admonishes us, "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles" (Pr. 24:17). Instead, we are to maintain an attitude of compassion and forgiveness, and trust God to bring justice in His time.— by Dennis Fisher

For Further Thought How to handle people-problems (Romans 12): Be patient (Ro 12:12), bless persecutors (Ro 12:14), be humble (Ro 12:16), don't take revenge (Ro 12:19), defeat evil with good (Ro 12:21).

Love for God can be measured by the love we show for our worst enemy.

---

## **Obadiah 1:1-9**

### **Today in the Word**

Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down. - Obadiah 1:4

Theodore Roosevelt and his friend William Beebe performed a ritual each night before going to bed. They would scan the night sky until they found the constellation Pegasus. Once they located it, they looked for a small speck of light nearby and began to chant: "That is the Spiral Galaxy of Andromeda. It is as large as our Milky Way. It is one of a hundred million galaxies. It consists of one hundred billion suns, each larger than our sun." Roosevelt would then turn to Beebe and say, "Now I think we are small enough. Let's go to bed." Perspective is often the first step to gaining humility.

The nation of Edom--the descendants of Jacob's brother Esau--badly needed perspective in Obadiah's day. Edom had been the enemies of Israel from its inception. When Moses asked to pass through Edomite territory in peace before beginning Israel's conquest of the land of Canaan, he was refused, and Edomites even brought out their large army to prevent Israel from entering their land (Num. 20:14–21).

Mount Seir, a range of mountains that was fifteen to twenty miles long, epitomized Edom's rugged terrain. Its inaccessibility was a source of pride (v. 3). God, however, had a plan that would give Edom the humbling they so badly needed. He planned to raise a coalition of nations against them. As a result, this long-time enemy of Israel, that had so proudly considered itself invincible, would become "small among the nations" and "utterly despised" (vv. 1–2).

### **TODAY ALONG THE WAY**

Today's passage underscores God's fierce protection of His people. Although He does not always shield us from the malice of our enemies, He does hold them accountable for their actions ([Today in the Word. Moody Bible Institute. Used by Permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

## **Obadiah 1:1-9**

We have heard a message from the LORD. - Obadiah 1:1

### **TODAY IN THE WORD**

The killing of Al Qaeda terrorist leader Osama bin Laden, mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks, made headlines around the world earlier this year. An elite team of U.S. Navy SEAL commandos flew by helicopter into bin Laden's mansion compound in Abbottabad, about 30 miles north of Pakistan's capital city. In only 40 minutes, they succeeded in killing bin Laden and escaping with his body and a valuable trove of intelligence materials. After verifying his identity, they buried him at sea. In his address to the nation, President Obama said, "Justice has been done."

The theme of justice, already familiar this month from our study of Joel and Amos, is also at the heart of the Old Testament's shortest book, Obadiah. No specific biographical information is known about this prophet, whose name means "servant of the Lord" or "worshiper of the Lord." From internal data, the book is usually thought to have been written around 586 B.C., which means that Obadiah was a contemporary of Jeremiah. Obadiah is the only book of the Bible entirely aimed at a foreign nation. Specifically, the book's main point is that Edom would be judged by God for her participation in and gloating over Israel's downfall (vv. 1, 8-9; cf. Isa. 34:5-17). Edom may also be read as a representative of all world powers and forces opposed to God's plan and kingdom. Themes include justice, judgment, accountability, holiness, mercy, and divine sovereignty.

The Edomites were descended from Esau, Jacob's twin, so there was a great deal of history between the two nations. Sela, also called Teman, was Edom's capital city, and since it means "rock" or "cliff" it can probably be identified with the ruins of Petra, 50

miles south of the Dead Sea. A fortress city in rugged terrain, the city appeared unconquerable. Nonetheless, God promised to “make you small,” a fitting response to their pride (vv. 2-4). Friends and allies would turn on them. The nation would be so completely destroyed that there would be nothing left. Clearly, Edom’s fate would be of divine, not human, origin (vv. 5-7).

#### APPLY THE WORD

The Edomites found security and national self-esteem in their rocky fortress of a capital city. They thought no one could bring them down. God thought differently. The Edomites had put their faith in the wrong object. What about us? In what do we find security and self-esteem? We need to examine ourselves to make sure we’re finding these things in Christ alone. He is the Cornerstone. “The one who trusts in him will never be put to shame” (1 Peter 2:4-6).

---

#### Obadiah 1:10-14

You should not look down on your brother in the day of his misfortune. - Obadiah 1:12a

#### TODAY IN THE WORD

Nobody likes a sore loser, but a gloating winner is just as bad. Edom had watched with glee as Jerusalem was sacked by its enemies, and the Edomites had done nothing to help their relatives in Israel. In God’s eyes their refusal to interfere was itself an act of aggression. Although the relationship between the two nations had never been good, the Edomites did share a blood tie with the people of Judah. When they stood by while “strangers” carried off Jerusalem, they were no better than one of the aggressors (v. 11).

Edom’s sin was threefold. First, they regarded the plight of the people of Jerusalem with an attitude of contempt. Second, they expressed outright glee over the city’s destruction, celebrating while the residents of Jerusalem suffered. Third, they took the opportunity to boast--perhaps bragging that their own location made them impregnable (v. 12).

But there was more to Edom’s response than “passive aggression.” They entered the city themselves to loot what was left. They also lay in wait for those who had fled from Jerusalem and killed them or even handed them over to the enemy (vv. 13–14).

The judgment of Edom was a living example of the warning found in Proverbs 24:17–18: “Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, or the LORD will see and disapprove and turn his wrath away from him.” The destruction of Jerusalem was a matter of divine discipline. They deserved the punishment that they received. But Edom’s gleeful response made them liable as well. Obadiah warned that God had seen this sinful attitude and would turn His wrath from Jerusalem to Edom.

#### TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Can you think of someone who recently “got what was coming to them?” At times it is hard not to rejoice over their misfortune. This is especially true if we know that they hurt others by their actions. ([Today in the Word. Moody Bible Institute. Used by Permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

#### Obadiah 1:10-14

You should not gloat over your brother in the day of his misfortune. - Obadiah 1:12

#### TODAY IN THE WORD

Though brothers, Esau and Jacob struggled and fought from the very beginning. While in the womb, the twins “jostled” one another. During their delivery, Jacob’s hand grasped his brother’s heel. He took advantage of Esau by trading him a bowl of lentil stew for his birthright, and later deceived their father into giving him, instead of his elder brother, a special blessing and a double portion of the family inheritance. The two men eventually reconciled, but tension and conflict between their descendants continued down through the centuries (Genesis 25; 27-28; 32-33).

The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, while the Israelites were the descendants of Jacob. Because of the family ties, Edom’s actions were like betraying a brother (v. 10; cf. Ps. 137:7). Instead of honoring kinship bonds or even extending the common cultural courtesy of hospitality, they had broken and dishonored the relationship and treated Jacob like a total stranger. In modern terms: What they should have done when passing their brother on the street was to offer greetings and assistance. Even ignoring him would have been rude. But they had gone so far as to rob him—how shameful!

Edom’s specific sins are itemized here. They stood by and did nothing when Judah was being conquered (v. 11). They actually rejoiced in their brother’s downfall (v. 12). Out of opportunism and pride, they participated in the sacking of Jerusalem, taking advantage of the moment to “seize their wealth in the day of their disaster” (v. 13). Worst of all, they set up roadblocks to catch escaping refugees, no doubt hoping to curry favor with the Babylonians by turning these prisoners over to them (v. 14). Like

battlefield scavengers, they “bravely” helped themselves to the spoils of the Babylonian conquest.

This list of things they should not have done suggests an opposite list of what they should have done. They should have spoken up in support of their brother. They should have helped rather than rejoicing in Judah’s troubles. They should have acted in humility, not pride. And they should have had mercy on the Israelite refugees rather than turning them away.

#### APPLY THE WORD

Edom’s pride led them to behave like bullies, kicking the people of Judah when they were down. God, on the other hand, expresses a special love for those who are poor and weak. That’s why there are provisions for aliens and strangers in the Law of Moses (Ex. 23:9), and why “pure and faultless” religion means to “look after orphans and widows in their distress” (James 1:27), and why He is pleased to use us, weak and foolish though we are, in His plans (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

#### **Obadiah 1:15-21**

The day of the LORD is near for all nations. - Obadiah 1:15

#### TODAY IN THE WORD

World-renowned physicist Stephen Hawking has decided there is no God. In an interview, he suggested that “God” could be defined as “the embodiment of the laws of nature. However, this is not what most people would think of as God. They made a human-like being with whom one can have a personal relationship. When you look at the vast size of the universe and how insignificant an accidental human life is in it, that seems most impossible.” In his book, *The Grand Design*, he wrote he’s concluded that the universe was not created by a supernatural God but by a wholly natural Big Bang. The idea of a creator is “not necessary.” “Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing.”

For all those who say in their heart, “There is no God” (Ps. 14:1), a day of reckoning will come. “The day of the LORD is near for all nations” (Obadiah 15). On that day, people will reap what they have sown. Just as Edom had sat drinking and carousing among the ruins of Jerusalem, so also will the nations be forced to drink the cup of God’s wrath on the day of judgment (Obadiah 16). As Paul wrote: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction” (Gal. 6:7-8).

Thankfully, the day of judgment is also a day of deliverance for those who love the Lord (Obadiah 17). Righteousness will triumph over sin and evil. In terms of the judgment on Edom, in a bit of divine poetic justice Obadiah said that it would be the Israelites themselves who would execute judgment on Edom, specifically that the returnees from exile would occupy the former land of Edom (Obadiah 18-20). In the end, Mount Zion would emerge not as a place of defeat and exile and destruction, but a place of victory and deliverance and power. “And the kingdom will be the LORD’s” (Obadiah 21).

#### APPLY THE WORD

If we all reaped strictly what we’ve sown, there would be no hope for any of us. Because Jesus died in our stead, however, we no longer owe a penalty of death if we trust in His name (John 3:16). When we take communion, we do so in remembrance of Him—His body, broken for us, and His blood, shed for us (1 Cor. 11:23-26). From which cup will you drink? The cup of God’s wrath, or the cup of communion? Choose love and rejoice!

---

#### **Obadiah 1:11**

#### **Morning and Evening**

#### **C H Spurgeon**

“Even thou wast as one of them.” — Obadiah 1:11

Brotherly kindness was due from Edom to Israel in the time of need, but instead thereof, the men of Esau made common cause with Israel’s foes. Special stress in the sentence before us is laid upon the word thou; as when Caesar cried to Brutus, “and thou Brutus”; a bad action may be all the worse, because of the person who has committed it. When we sin, who are the chosen favourites of heaven, we sin with an emphasis; ours is a crying offence, because we are so peculiarly indulged. If an angel should lay his hand upon us when we are doing evil, he need not use any other rebuke than the question, “What thou? What dost thou here?” Much forgiven, much delivered, much instructed, much enriched, much blessed, shall we dare to put forth our hand unto evil? God forbid!

A few minutes of confession may be beneficial to thee, gentle reader, this morning. Hast thou never been as the wicked? At an evening party certain men laughed at uncleanness, and the joke was not altogether offensive to thine ear, even thou wast as one of

them. When hard things were spoken concerning the ways of God, thou wast bashfully silent; and so, to on-lookers, thou wast as one of them. When worldlings were bartering in the market, and driving hard bargains, wast thou not as one of them? When they were pursuing vanity with a hunter's foot, wert thou not as greedy for gain as they were? Could any difference be discerned between thee and them? Is there any difference? Here we come to close quarters. Be honest with thine own soul, and make sure that thou art a new creature in Christ Jesus; but when this is sure, walk jealously, lest any should again be able to say, "Even thou wast as one of them." Thou wouldst not desire to share their eternal doom, why then be like them here? Come not thou into their secret, lest thou come into their ruin. Side with the afflicted people of God, and not with the world.

---

## **Obadiah 1:15-21**

As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head. - Obadiah 1:15b

### **TODAY IN THE WORD**

Many people suffer from myopia, a condition that allows them to see things at close range but not far away. They are described as being nearsighted. Some are so nearsighted that they are legally blind. The Edomites suffered from spiritual myopia--too nearsighted to look into the future and realize that one day God would judge them.

The Edomites had been shortsighted in their celebration of Judah's defeat. They had not considered that the same God who had justly punished Judah would call them to account for their treatment of their neighbors when the Day of the Lord finally arrived. All the nations will be judged on the basis of their works (v. 15). This is the fate of all those who refuse to accept the grace of God. They receive justice instead of mercy.

Under the standard of justice, the Edomites would be treated just as they had treated others. On the day that Jerusalem fell, they were giddy to the point of drunkenness. When the Day of the Lord finally comes, they will be forced to drink from another cup.

Elsewhere in the Bible, the metaphor of a cup is used to speak of God's wrath (cf. Isa. 51:17). In Psalm 75 it is compared to a cup of foaming wine mixed with spices (Ps. 75:8). The promise in verse 16 of Obadiah that the nations "will drink and drink and be as if they had never been" speaks of an experience of divine wrath that never ends.

### **TODAY ALONG THE WAY**

John Wesley described the Day of the Lord as a day of judgment and a day of mercy: "O make proof of His mercy, rather than His justice; of His love rather than the thunder of His power! He is not far from every one of us; and He is now come, not to condemn, but to save the world. He standeth in the midst! ([Today in the Word. Moody Bible Institute. Used by Permission. All rights reserved](#))"

---

## **Obadiah - Secret Service?**

May 4, 2002

Read: 1 Kings 18:1-20

Obadiah feared the Lord greatly. —1 Kings 18:3

Should our service for the Lord always be out in the open for all to see? Or should it sometimes be kept secret to assure its success? This may seem like an irrelevant question to believers who enjoy religious freedom. But it's the kind of dilemma more and more people are facing as opposition to Christianity grows.

In 1 Kings 18, we read that Obadiah faced this very question. As a godly man serving in King Ahab's palace, he hated what Ahab's wife Jezebel had done. While she was killing many of the Lord's prophets, Obadiah hid 100 of them in caves and secretly fed them.

During this time Obadiah had an unexpected meeting with Elijah, who asked him to inform Ahab that he had arrived. Ahab viewed Elijah as a "troubler of Israel" (v.17) and was hunting him down. So for Obadiah to tell Ahab that he had talked with Elijah would identify him with God's prophet and jeopardize his own life. But he obeyed Elijah and acted openly. He was not killed, and God blessed both his open and his secret service. As a result, many of God's prophets were saved.

O God, give us wisdom to know how best to serve You—whether openly or in secret. May our service always be motivated by our great love and respect for You. —JDB

Sometimes we face a crucial choice

To hold our peace or take a stand;

With either course we need God's help—

His wisdom and His guiding hand. —D. De Haan

God is more interested in our motives than our methods.

By Dave Branon | See Other Authors

---

### **Obadiah 1:15**

"As you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head" (Obadiah 1:15).

Among others, many prominent entertainers and respected educational leaders reject God and deny the existence of an absolute moral standard. They say we can determine for ourselves what is right and wrong. They laugh at words like patriotism, duty, loyalty, and godliness. But now their influence is reaping a bitter harvest—multiplied abortions, heartbreaking divorces, violent crimes, teenage suicides, and disturbing payoffs by foreign agents for military secrets. Discussing an unprecedented rash of Americans spying for other countries, Charles Colson said that the U.S. is reaping what it has sown.

Obadiah warned the Edomites that they would reap what they had sown. Using the past tense but speaking about the future, he portrayed the lighthearted drinking of their wild parties and said that their derisive fun would soon give way to somber drinking from the cup of God's wrath. His prophecy was fulfilled. Within a few years Edom was destroyed by Gentile powers.

We must remember the reaping principle. Woven into the fabric of life, it applies to individuals as much as to nations. It's both a warning and a promise. When we do evil, we reap judgment. But when we do good, we reap the blessing of God's approval. —H V Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Those who plant thorns cannot expect to gather flowers.

---

### **Obadiah 1:17**

#### **Our Daily Homily**

#### **F B Meyer**

**Obadiah 1:17** The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

As long as Edom invaded and annoyed the house of Jacob, the people were unable to possess their possessions in peace. No sooner did the harvest or vintage appear, than their hereditary foes swooped down to carry off the fruits of their toils. But Edom's dominion was to be ended; and then there would be no cloud in the sky, no barrier to their uninterrupted joy.

There are many instances of people not possessing their possessions. Such are those who put their plate and valuables into furniture depositories, and for years leave them to neglect; who have shelves of unread, uncut books; who do not realize that coal and iron mines lie under their estates; who never enjoy the wealth of love and tenderness in their friends' hearts; who refuse to avail themselves of resources which are well within their reach.

But too many of God's people are like this. The Father has caused all his fullness to reside in the nature of Jesus; He hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness in Him; He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; in our Savior are treasures of wisdom, of purity, of prevailing power, of love and patience. The Divine Merchantman has come to us to give us gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and eyesalve. But we go blundering on in our own selfish, sinful, faltering way. We do not possess our possessions. We do not call into practical use the boundless reinforcements awaiting us, at every hour, within the tiniest beckoning of our faith. We are like the manufacturer who refuses to use the steam-power, though it is laid on into the mill; or the householder who refuses to touch the button of the electric light.

---

**Obadiah 1:21 God will establish the kingdom** - The Lord will reign from Mount Zion, where His temple will stand, "and all the nations will stream to it" (Isa. 2:2 NASB). It's interesting to note that King Messiah will have "deliverers" ("saviors" KJV) assist Him in His rule over the nations. This fact should be studied with reference to our Lord's promises to His apostles (Matt. 19:27–30) and those who are faithful to Him today (Mt 24:42–51; 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27). Jesus teaches that faithfulness to Him today will mean reigning with Him in the kingdom. All of God's children look forward to the day when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord, and He shall reign forever and ever (Rev. 11:15). Then every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue confess that He is Lord of all. Meanwhile, God's people must do all they can to get the Gospel out to the billions of people in this world who have never had the opportunity to hear the name of Jesus or learn how to trust Him and be saved. When the great and terrible Day of the Lord dawns, the nations of the world will be judged for the way they have treated one another and the nation of Israel. Until that day dawns, God's church must keep praying "Thy kingdom come" and seek to obey His command to take the Gospel to the

whole world.

---

### **The Kingdom shall be the Lord's.—Obadiah 21**

That has ever been the ultimate hope of the men of faith. The prophets of God have always insisted upon His present and active sovereignty; but they have also declared with perfect unanimity that the day will come when that sovereignty will have its perfect victory in the subjugation of all things to Himself in the mind and heart and will of man. That victory is not yet. Men are in His Kingdom, but not willingly. Therefore, they know nothing of the peace and joy which are His will for them. They fight against righteousness, and so fail to find peace and joy, because righteousness fights against them. When in the final order, righteousness is the condition of human life, peace- and joy will inevitably follow. That is what we pray for when we say, "Thy Kingdom come." Faith is the assurance that this prayer will be answered. These final words of Obadiah's prophecy are the more remarkable, seeing that the burden of his message was that of the doom of Edom, the people who had persistently opposed Israel, and practised cruelty towards her. For this sin God would bring her down from her high and proud place, and utterly despoil her; and Israel should be given possession of her rightful inheritance. Having uttered this message, the prophet rose to a greater height, and saw the outworking of the Divine sovereignty, bringing deliverance even to Edom. Out of Zion saviours would come to judge the Mount of Esau, and then "the Kingdom shall be Jehovah's." That remains the one hope for the world and it is the one sufficient secret of confidence in all the days of darkness and travail which lead to the victory.

## **Obadiah 1:3 Self-deceived**

### **C H Spurgeon**

### **Sermon Notes**

The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee. — Obadiah 1:3

This is true of all proud persons, for pride is self-deceit.

There may be proud persons in this congregation. Those who are sure that they have no pride are probably the proudest of all. Those who are proud of their humility are proud indeed.

The confidence that we are not deceived may only prove the completeness of the deception under which we labor.

In considering the case of the Edomites, and the pride of their hearts, let us look to ourselves that we may profit withal.

#### **I. THEY WERE DECEIVED.**

The prophet mentions certain matters in which they were deceived.

1. As to the estimate formed of them by others. They thought themselves to be had in honor, but the prophet says, "Thou art greatly despised" (see verse 2).

You might not be pleased if you knew how little others think of you; but if you think little of others you need not wonder if you are yourself greatly despised, for "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matt. 7:2).

2. As to their personal security. They felt safe, but were near their doom. "Who shall bring me down? ... I will bring thee down, saith the Lord" (verses 3 and 4). Dwelling in their rock-city of Petra was no real security to them: neither may any one of us think himself proof against misfortune, sickness, or sudden death.

3. As to their personal wisdom. They talked of "The wise man out of Edom" (verse 8); but the Lord said, "There is none understanding in him" (verse 7).

Those who know better than the Word of God know nothing.

4. As to the value of their confidences. Edom relied on alliances, but these utterly failed. "The men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee" (verse 7). Rich relatives, influential friends, tried allies — all will fail those who trust in them.

#### **II. THEIR OWN PRIDE DECEIVED THEM.**

1. In each of the points mentioned above, pride lay at the bottom of their error.

2. In every way pride lays a man open to being deceived.

His judgment is perverted by it: he cannot hold the scales.

His standard is rendered inaccurate: his weights are false.

His desires invite flattery, and his folly accepts it.

3. In every case a proud man is a deceived man: he is not what he thinks himself to be; and he is blind to that part of his character which should cause him to be humble.

4. In spiritual cases it is emphatically so.

The self-righteous, self-sufficient, perfectionists, etc., are all deceived by the pride of their hearts.

### III. THIS PRIDE LED THEM INTO EVIL WAYS.

1. They were full of defiance. "Who shall bring me down to the ground?" This self-asserting spirit provokes hostility and leads to wars and fighting and all manner of emulations and contentions.

2. They were destitute of compassion. "Thou stoodest on the other side" (see verses 9-12). Those of kindred race were being slain, and they had no pity. Pride is stony-hearted.

3. They even shared in oppression (see verses 13 and 14). This is not unusual among purse-proud religionists. They are not slow to profit by the nurseries of God's poor people.

4. They showed contempt of holy things. "Ye have drunk upon my holy mountain" (verse 16). God will not have his church made into a tavern, or a playhouse: yet something like this may be done even now by proud hypocrites and formalists.

### IV. THESE EVIL WAYS SECURED THEIR RUIN.

1. Their defiance brought enemies upon them.

2. Their unkindness was returned into their own bosom. Verse 15 shows the *lex talionis* in action.

3. Their contempt of God made him say, "there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau" (verse 18).

How different the lot of despised Zion! (see verses 17 and 21) Let us seek him who in Zion is above all others "the Savior." Hating all pride, let us humbly rest in him.

Then we shall not be deceived, for Jesus is "the Truth."

## Warnings

There is something intensely amusing, according to our notions, in the name which the Eskimo bestow upon themselves. It appears they call themselves the "Innuit" — that is, "the people" par excellence.

Stranger, henceforth be warned; and know that pride,  
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness: that he who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; that thought with him  
Is in its infancy.— Wordsworth

If a man is a perfectionist, and thinks he is sinless, it is a proof not that he is better, but only that he is blinder, than his neighbors. — Richard Glover

When a proud man thinks best of himself, then God and man think worst of him; all his glory is but like a vapor, which climbeth as though it would go up to heaven, but when it comes to a little height, it falls down again, and never ascends more. So Adam thought that the fair apple should make him like his Maker, but God resisted his pride, and that apple made him like the serpent that tempted him with it. Absalom thought that rebellion would make him a king, but God resisted his pride, and his rebellion hanged him on a tree. — Henry Smith

The Venetian ambassador wrote of Cardinal Wolsey: "I do perceive that every year he groweth more and more in power. When I first came to England, he used to say, "His Majesty will do so and so"; subsequently, he said, "We shall do so and so"; but now he says,



"I shall do so and so." But history records how Wolsey's pride went before destruction, and his haughty spirit before a fall.

Napoleon Buonaparte, intoxicated with success, and at the height of his power, said, "I make circumstances." Let Moscow, Elba, Waterloo, and St. Helena, that rocky isle where he was caged until he fretted his life away, testify to his utter helplessness in his humiliating downfall. — J. B. Gough

As God hath two dwelling-places, heaven and a contrite heart, so hath the devil — hell and a proud heart. — T. Watson