

# Holier Than Thou

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## *Obadiah 1-14*

### **INTRODUCTION**

- A. Illustration about computer genius, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p. 287-88.
- B. The computer genius' problem was that he thought too much of himself.
- C. Pride can be damaging.
  - 1. "A proud look" is among the things God hates (Prov. 6:17).
  - 2. Jesus said that pride defiles a man (Mk. 7:22).
  - 3. "Be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble'" (1 Pet. 5:5).
- D. Edom was a nation of pride.
  - 1. The people of Edom thought they were superior to the Israelites.
  - 2. The people of Edom acted as though they were superior to the Israelites.

### **PRIDE CAUSES ME TO THINK I'M HOLIER THAN THOU, vv. 1-4**

- A. Obadiah's prophecy begins with what the Lord GOD says about Edom, v. 1.
  - 1. This book is not just what Obadiah has thought about Edom.
  - 2. This book contains a prophecy from God against Edom.
- B. A messenger has been sent among the nations, v. 1.
  - 1. The idea is that a messenger from God is telling the nations to come to fight against Edom.
  - 2. At the time Obadiah wrote, there was probably a coalition of Arab nations forming to come against Edom.
    - a. The Nabateans occupied old Edom beginning in the 3rd century BC; they continued that civilization until the first century AD.
    - b. During the Intertestamental Period, Judas Maccabeas subdued the Edomites.
    - c. John Hyrcanus forced the Edomites to be circumcised and incorporated them into the Jewish people.
- C. God will make Edom small among the nations, v. 2.
  - 1. Whereas Edom had once been prosperous, the nation shall become small.
  - 2. The basic meaning of small here is insignificant—Edom shall become an insignificant country.
  - 3. Edom shall be greatly despised.
    - a. "Despised" has the nuance of "to hold in contempt."
    - b. Other nations shall view Edom with contempt.
- D. The pride of Edom's heart has deceived the nation, v. 3.
  - 1. The people of Edom dwelt in the clefts of the rock.
    - a. The Edomites lived in caves and canyons among rough mountain terrain.
    - b. Located high in the mountains, the capital of the Edomites was virtually inaccessible.
  - 2. The Edomites said in their hearts, "Who will bring me down to the ground?" The Edomites really believed that no one would be able to capture them.
- E. Even though the Edomites ascended as high as eagles, God would bring them down.
- F. The Edomites believed they were better than the nations around them; they were filled with pride.
- G. Do you believe you are better than anyone else?
  - 1. When we offend someone, are we willing to apologize?
  - 2. Are we willing to admit that someone else may be right and you may be wrong?
- H. We must not think we are better than others.
  - 1. "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves" (Phil. 2:3).

2. “I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly” (Rom. 12:3)

## **PRIDE CAUSES ME TO ACT HOLIER THAN THOU, vv. 10-14**

- A. When the Babylonians came and destroyed Judah, the Edomites stood off and did nothing.
  1. The Edomites could not stand the Israelites—the nations often battled one another.
    - a. Edom is listed among the enemies against whom Saul fought (1 Sam. 14:47-48).
    - b. David subdued the Edomites (2 Sam. 8:13-14).
  2. The Edomites thought they were too good to help the Israelites—they were glad to see them suffer misfortune.
- B. Edom shall be cut off—Edom was cut off when the Edomites were incorporated in the Jewish nation.
- C. On the day the Babylonians took Judah, the Edomites stood aloof, v. 11.
  1. Destruction came against Judah.
    - a. Foreigners had come against Judah and carried off precious items.
    - b. The Babylonians cast lots to see who would get what.
  2. The Edomites became like the Babylonians—they looted the city.
  3. The Bible condemns people who just stand on the sidelines.
    - a. In the great judgment scene, what sends those on the left to hell is standing on the sidelines (Mt. 25:41-46).
    - b. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the priest and the Levite were bystanders; they didn’t get involved (Lk. 10:30-32).
  4. Christians cannot be those who simply sit on the sidelines—we need to do what we can to help.
- D. The Edomites rejoiced over the destruction of Judah, v. 12—They were tickled to death to see their enemies suffer.
- E. The Edomites even entered Judah and took goods, v. 13.
- F. The Edomites also gave those trying to escape Judah over to the Babylonians, v. 14.
- G. The Edomites acted as though they were better than the Israelites. We need to be careful that we don’t act better than others.
  1. “I don’t want to sit next to that person in church.”
  2. “I don’t want to talk to him—he’s a different color.”

## **CONCLUSION**

- A. Because the Edomites were proud, God is going to bring destruction upon them.
  1. This destruction will be total, v. 5
    - a. Thieves would only steal until they were satisfied.
    - b. Those who gather grapes would leave gleanings.
    - c. The implication here is that those who come against Edom will leave nothing.
  2. This destruction will come from Edom’s allies, v. 7.
    - a. Edom will be deceived by those they trust.
    - b. During the 5th and 6th centuries BC, the Arabs placed great pressure on the Edomites.
    - c. Because of this pressure, the Edomites were driven from their border and settled in southern Judah.
  3. God will bring down Edom’s wise men, v. 8-9.
    - a. Edom was known for wisdom, and this wisdom will be lost.
    - b. That wisdom will be lost means that the wise men won’t know how to act in battle.
- B. God will destroy us if we are proud.
  1. “Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble’” (1 Pet. 5:5).
  2. Are you proud? Are you submitting to Jesus?