

I Will Bring You Down

Introduction

- Jesus said, *“A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ...”* (Luke 10:30–33, ESV)
- While we often focus on the Samaritan man from Jesus’ parable, the two men who walked on by without helping teach us an equally important lesson. Jesus indicates that these two men, one a priest and another a Levite, were religiously-minded, yet unwilling to take care of the needs of man who had been robbed. Why were they unwilling to help?
- Two problems might immediately come to mind: **pride** and **indifference**. It’s easy for us to “keep our heads down” and “mind our own business” today, while ignoring the sufferings of the world around us. We turn to the tabloids or watch the daily news and find an almost endless source of “entertainment” in the misfortunes of celebrities, political leaders, and nations around the world. For whatever excuses we might have for not helping others, Jesus highlights the selfless and compassionate character of the Samaritan as the ideal for us today.
- The book of Obadiah in the Old Testament provides us with an example of a nation who did the exact same thing as these two religious men, and see how dangerous the attitudes of pride and indifference can be.
- The Backstory: Obadiah writes the shortest book of the Old Testament, as a condemnation against the nation of Edom. Edom were the descendants of Esau, brother of Jacob (who would become Israel), sons of Isaac and his father Abraham. Esau and Jacob never really got along, and their descendants didn’t either. While Judah was driven from Jerusalem by the Babylonians, the nation of Edom stood idly by and watched, taunting and oppressing the Lord’s people from afar (Psa 137:7, Eze 35, Amos 1:6-9).

“The Pride Of Your Heart Has Deceived You” (1-9)

- The Edomites enjoyed the safety of a fortified city in the mountains, which caused them to literally look down at the nations around them, especially Judah. They were arrogant and boastful, like those religious men who walked on by the man who was robbed, seeing themselves as superior and thinking no one could touch them (Oba 3). The Lord’s message to them shatters that idea!
- We learn three very important lessons about pride from Obadiah:

- **Pride is deceptive** (Oba 3) - Oh, how much we value our strength, riches, accomplishments, status, and power in this world! We may easily convince ourselves of our own superiority ... but in truth, it's all a lie. Only God is superior, and only in God are we able to overcome. Not by our own accomplishment do we have anything to boast about, our boast is only in the Father Himself, and His Son Jesus Christ (Gal 6:14).
- **God hates pride** (Oba 4) - God looks at our meager accomplishments and causes for arrogance from His sovereign throne and does not see them as accomplishments at all. No achievement or status will ever compare to His power in this world.
- **God flips pride** (Oba 8-10) - For as accomplished and well off as we think we are, God will turn the tables in the end (Luke 16:19-25). It is only the meek, the humble, the servant whose status will be elevated in the last day. All others will be brought down, as Jesus said, *"So the last will be first, and the first last."* (Matthew 20:16, ESV)

"On The Day That You Stood Aloof" (10-14)

- While Judah suffered at the hands of Babylon, Edom mocked them and stood aloof. Like the priest and the Levite who walked on by, they did not step in to help. God through the prophet says that He has not forgotten!
- When those around us suffer, we have a choice to make. We can:
 - **Step in to help** - This is obviously the ideal. As the Samaritan man did, so should we. The world in its darkness and sin need us to step in to help now more than ever. Will you "mind your own business," or will you step in to save those around you?
 - **Step in to harm** - Of course, harming our brothers should never be our aim. Even toward our enemies, Jesus calls us to a different life of love and service (Matt 5:44).
 - **Stand idly by and do nothing** - Walking on by, closing off our hearts, and minding our own business is equivalent to stepping in to harm (Oba 10-11). At it's core, we're not walking in love for your brothers when we stand idly by! Remember John's words, *"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"* (1 John 3:17, ESV)
- God condemns the actions of one who would not help those who were suffering (Oba 12-14). As these words were true for Edom long ago, they are also true for us today when we see others around us suffering:
 - Do not gloat ...
 - Do not rejoice ...
 - Do not boast ...

- Do not enter the(ir) gate ...
- Do not loot ...
- Do not stand at the crossroads ...
- Do not hand over his survivors ...

“The Kingdom Shall Be The Lord’s” (15-21)

- God now turns His attention from Edom to ALL NATIONS (Oba 15). For anyone who lives pridefully and indifferently toward the sufferings of others, they will receive punishment.
- God will hold the cup of His wrath to the lips of all nations (Oba 16), and they will experience the full extent of His justice for their behavior (Jer 25:15-16).
- But God turns the message into a positive one for Judah, and for us today. He speaks of the restoration of the exiles of Israel and the establishment of His kingdom (Oba 20-21). The adversary may seem to have the upper hand, but our confidence in God will prevail!
- Only when we live before him with humility and concern for our neighbor, will we hope to find a place in His eternal kingdom.

Conclusion

- It’s easy to keep to ourselves and mind our own business. It’s convenient to think that we’re only responsible for ourselves and for taking care of our own. It’s almost entertaining sometimes to look upon the misfortunes of others and feel better about ourselves.
- The challenging thing to do is to realize we’re no better than anyone else, to accept that we’re as accountable to God as everyone else we meet, and that we have a role in supporting the world around us as a pillar for the truth in this lost world.