

What Goes Around Comes Around: Obadiah 1:15-16 Explained

Obadiah 1:15-16

For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. 16 For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever watched someone get away with doing something wrong? Maybe they lied. Maybe they cheated. Maybe they stole. Maybe they hurt someone who didn't deserve it. And you thought, "They're never going to answer for that." Have you ever felt that way?

As I was thinking about this, I remember a man from college as I was taking an electrical circuits design class with him for a Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering. The class wasn't easy at all. He was a friend who studied at my home with me several times. Pam made him food. Everyone in the class watched him cheat on tests. Dr. Peter Aronhime caught him cheating on a test. He was such a smooth talker that he talked his way right out of it. He got away with it then and in most classes. He became a Medical doctor and he also went to law school. He is well known in Louisville. I looked him up as I was writing this and his obituary came up. So, sometimes we think people won't be caught. But we'll all be caught one day.

Imagine watching someone spray paint your house in the middle of the night. They run away laughing. No police. No witnesses. No cameras. It looks like they got away with it. Now imagine the next morning someone knocks on your door. "We know exactly who did it." Everything they thought was hidden... wasn't hidden at all. What goes around, comes around.

That's Obadiah. Edom believed they had gotten away with their cruelty toward Israel. God says, **"I saw everything."** And then He gives one of the clearest principles in all the Bible: **"As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee."** God sees everything. And everything is under a great light with God.

I. GOD'S JUDGMENT IS CERTAIN

Obadiah 1:15

For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

Notice where God begins. "The day of the LORD." What is that? It is a day when God steps in and judges. People often ask, "Why doesn't God stop evil?" The Bible's answer is not that God ignores evil. It's that God has appointed a day when He will deal with it.

Imagine a courtroom. The crime has been committed. The evidence has been collected. The trial has not started yet, though. Does that mean justice has disappeared? No. It means judgment has an appointed day.

That's exactly what God is saying. The Day of the LORD is near. What goes around, comes around.

II. YOU HARVEST WHAT YOU PLANT

This is one of the clearest principles in Scripture. Look at the part of the verse that says, "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee."

Notice what God does not say. He doesn't say, "What goes around comes around." He says something greater. **"As thou hast done."** God is the One making sure justice is done. And He always will. So, when you do wrong, justice will be served up to you by the Almighty God.

Imagine standing in front of a mirror. Whatever expression you make, comes right back at you. Smile and a smile comes back. Frown and a frown comes back. Your actions have consequences.

Or think about a farmer. If he plants corn, he doesn't expect to harvest wheat. If he plants thorns, he shouldn't expect roses. Right? Do you all understand what I mean here? If you do evil, don't expect good to come from it.

If you want to become a wizard or a witch, don't expect anything good to come out of that. If you want to fornicate or have a sexual relationship outside of Biblical marriage, don't expect anything good to come out of that. If you want to lie to your pastor, don't expect anything good to come out of that. If you want to dishonor your father and your mother, don't expect anything good to come out of that.

You don't plant evil and expect blessings to come to you. A wheat farmer doesn't plant thorns and expect the greatest wheat harvest he's ever had. He's going to get thorns. Plant evil and get evil.

Every harvest begins with a seed. That's true spiritually too. Every lie plants a seed. Every act of kindness plants a seed. Every cruel word plants a seed. Every generous act plants a seed. Every time you want to mock and make fun of someone, you plant a seed. Every time you lie to someone, you plant a seed. Every time you do good, you plant a seed. Sooner or later... there will be a harvest.

That's exactly what happened to Edom. They rejoiced when Israel suffered. If you want to rejoice when your brother suffers, you planted a seed. That harvest will come. Edom took advantage of their brother nation. Jacob and Esau were twin brothers. Two nations came from them. Israel and Edom – brother nations. And judgment is coming upon Edom because of the way they treated the Israelites, their own relatives.

God says, "The harvest is coming." What goes around, comes around. And God will ALWAYS make sure of that. You won't get by with the evil you do.

III. EDOM THOUGHT THEY HAD WON

Obadiah 1:16

For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

Look, this verse is very scary to me because of the ending. "And they shall be as though they had not been." That's not something to take lightly. Look at the first part of the verse there:

"For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain." The picture is one of celebration on a holy mountain. Edom celebrated while Jerusalem suffered. And they didn't just celebrate, they took advantage of their brother nation while they were down. They did horrible evil to their brother nation.

Imagine walking past a house that has just burned down. The family is standing outside with tears in their eyes. Then someone starts laughing. Can you imagine how cruel that would be? That's this world today. People are more cruel now than anything I've ever even seen in my life. That's Edom. Instead of grieving over Israel's destruction, they celebrated it. They laughed. They mocked. They joined in with the enemy.

Have you ever seen someone enjoy another person's failure? I have. I see people that are happy because a man falls. I've seen people rejoice because someone dies. It's sickening. It's nasty.

A coworker loses his job. Someone smiles. Did you know people love to see people on their worst days? They love to see people suffer. A marriage falls apart. Someone gossips and loves it. A business fails. Someone celebrates with great joy. God notices those attitudes.

The Bible says, "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth." Why? Because God delights in mercy, not cruelty. When someone else's pain becomes our entertainment, something is wrong with our heart. Videos that go viral are those that show someone else's pain. Instead of helping someone, the people get their phones out to record the pain. People love to see that.

But you know what? What goes around, comes around. God makes sure of it.

IV. GOD HAS THE FINAL WORD

Look at verse 16 again, about halfway through. The Bible says, "they shall drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been."

The same cup Edom celebrated with would become the cup of God's judgment. When you want to celebrate evil things, expect that evil to come right back to you.

Daniel 5:1-4

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. 2 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. 3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. 4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

They took the cups out of the temple of the house of God. They drank out of them. And then praised false gods. Not a smart thing to do. That same cup from the house of God would become the cup of God's judgment.

Daniel 5:5-6

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. 6 Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

Do you know what happened to king Belshazzar? That night he died. Don't mess with God. Don't mess with His people. Don't do evil. God has the final word and what goes around comes around.

Imagine someone throwing a boomerang. For a while it flies farther and farther away. It almost disappears. Then it turns around and comes right back. That's the picture here.

Edom thought their actions were gone forever. God says, "No. They're coming back to you." Every nation. Every king. Every ruler. Every person. Will one day stand before God. No one escapes His justice. God never misses.

And always remember the last words in verse 16. "And they shall be as though they had not been." Not just a punishment. Not just defeat. Not just embarrassment. Not just losing a battle. God is saying Edom will disappear as a nation. History will move on as though they had never existed. That's exactly what happened. Today there is no nation of Edom. No king of Edom. No army of Edom. No capital city of Edom. God's prophecy was fulfilled.

CONCLUSION

Let me ask you one final question. If God never misses, how should we live? If what goes around, comes around, do you really want to do evil just so it comes back to you? Because it will. It always does. You won't get away with doing evil.

Should we seek revenge? No. Because God never misses. God says, "Vengeance is mine. I will repay." Should we envy wicked people when they seem to prosper? No. Because God never misses. Should we think our hidden sins don't matter? No. Because God never misses.

Remember that man who vandalized the house at the beginning of this sermon? He spray painted the house in the middle of the night when it was dark? He thought the darkness covered him. It didn't. God sees through the darkness. God never misses.

Remember Edom. They thought they would get away with doing this evil. They didn't. Now they don't exist.

The same God who sees every act of evil also sees every act of faithfulness. He sees every kind word from you. He sees every sacrifice you make for someone else. He sees every prayer you make. He sees every unseen act of obedience. Nothing escapes His eyes.

So don't fear when evil seems to win for a moment. Don't be discouraged when justice seems delayed. The Judge of all the earth has not forgotten.

Because... what goes around, comes around. **God never misses. You will never see God miss.** When He takes a swing at someone for doing evil, He always connects. What He promises, happens. He promises good to those who do good, and He promises evil to those who do evil.

Let's pray.