

# The judgment of Edom

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now shall we turn this evening to the chapter of God's Word which we've read, and maybe in one or two other passages, and reading perhaps to begin with at verse 16 of Jeremiah 49.

Verse 16. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart.

O thou that dwellest in the cleft of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill, that thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from then, saith the Lord.

A while ago when I was at the YMCA, I looked at part of this passage, and I hope to go over some ground again, and perhaps, and to what I looked at there before, and try to find out from this very solemn passage of God's Word, what he might say to us this evening.

I want to divide the passage into two. I want to look at it first in its context, with its solemn and frightening warning.

[ 1 : 59 ] And then after that I want to take out of it a theme that runs right through the scriptures, which may be instructive to all of us, particularly to maybe certain people who've undergone hard times, sore trouble, insoluble problems.

There may be a word from God for such people, along with the content that we see as we turn to this chapter.

So I want to travel along, if I can, that particular ground. Now this passage is right in the centre of a prophecy of Jeremiah against the ancient city and the people of Edom.

Those people had, in their past history, knowledge of God.

Their fathers came from the same line as many Jewish people, and they knew about the things of God.

[ 3 : 40 ] They knew about the things of God. They knew about Jehovah. They knew all about Israel's God.

But they defied him. They defied him. They knew about the things of God. And that's sometimes that, like ourselves, our problem very often is not that we don't know certain things.

We don't know what God has said to us. We do know. We know that God has declared us sinful.

We know that God has said that nothing that is sinful will enter the kingdom of God at the end. That heaven is a place that bars sinful people.

That before anyone gets into heaven, they must be cleansed and washed and forgiven. And they must become followers of God's own Son in reverse.

[ 4 : 49 ] We know as well as the Edomites what God has done in the past, both frightening and in blessing.

We know how God had delivered Israel from the hand of the Egyptians. We know how God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their homosexuality and lust and filth.

And we know how God blessed Israel in delivering her from her enemies time and again.

We know how Christ came into this world and how his enemies put him on a cross. And we know how God changed that cross from a thing of tragedy into a thing of triumph.

And we know that Christ rose from the dead. And we know something else. We know that God has said there is a coming judgment, a fearful catastrophe, a reality that yet has to be faced by us all.

[ 6 : 09 ] And our reactions to that can be very much like the reactions of the Edomites to the warnings of God, of coming judgment through the prophet Jeremiah.

They wouldn't listen. You see, Jeremiah prophesied that a nation would come under the providence of God and destroy Eden.

It's hard to believe in your own destruction. It's hard to believe in your own judgment. It's hard to believe the word of God when you don't want to believe it.

You see, Eden was a city that seemed impregnable. Many people had come against Eden.

Many nations had tried to subdue it. Many tried to conquer it. It was a city that was built very high on a hill.

[ 7 : 22 ] It had access to water so that if it would be seen there was plenty of water. And if they came near to Eden its battlements seemed secure.

They could throw the boulders over the hill and they would roll down the hill and massacre. The soldiers sent to take it.

It had been tried so often. And the people of Eden had built up a confidence in themselves.

They were so proud of their city. They were so proud of their ability. They were so proud of their capacity to handle anything.

They could even handle God. You know my friends, that's like us. That's like us. Oh God comes in grace and He says, I'm going to judge you.

[ 8 : 33 ] God comes in grace and He said, I'm willing to save you. God comes in grace and He says, I want you to repent. God comes in grace and come and receive forgiveness and to start afresh.

But we wrap some of us on the mountain of youth and we look down and say, I'll do it my way. Some men and maybe women in the congregation tonight, you're up on top of the mountain of success.

You've done well. But you don't know what may be eating at your body at this moment. Some are on the top of the mountain of pleasure.

And we all defy God. We don't want to listen to Him. We don't want to obey Him. And it was like this with the Edomites.

And there's people maybe in church this evening and you will be lost. You will face the judgment of God as the Edomites faced it.

[ 9 : 42 ] And you will be lost forever, not because there wasn't a Savior, but because you were too told and arrogant to repent.

And it will be said of you as it was said of Eden, these words, listen to them. Thy terribleness hath deceived you and the pride of your heart.

You know, the terribleness of Eden was associated with their response to the living God.

They thought they knew better. They thought they knew better than God. And so it is. As many who hear the Gospel, they think they know better than God.

You can't get anything more terrible than last. And although God had said, Edom was going to be destroyed, they laughed at it. And they said it can't be done.

[ 10 : 54 ] And many people hear perhaps. You're too proud, are you, to repent? Too proud to admit to others either your sin or your salvation?

Too proud to come to Christ? How terrible is the disease that grips humanity? Deceived as to the fearfulness of Christ's warnings?

Deceived as to the gravity of time? Deceived as to the accountability of your soul to your maker?

Deceived as to the awful being of God who is holy? Deceived as to the possibility of a choice later?

Some other time? And I say to you tonight, and I say to myself, let us both be careful. You may be a Christian, a professing Christian.

[ 12 : 16 ] And many years ago, you made a very good profession. Your heart was filled with joy and zeal. Your horizons were wide. You wanted to conquer the whole of Inverness for Christ.

But that zeal is gone. That horizon has come in. That warmth has evaporated. That joy is still.

And you come to church. And you come to the permitting. And then you go on and do your own work and do your own thing.

And you've got two compartments in your life. One dewers. And the other the time for God. And you come to the parable of the sower that speaks of those who received the word with joy.

But for a season. And you read the parable of the sower. And you read of those of whom the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches and materialism, had gripped and strangled.

[ 13 : 32 ] And you say to yourself, well that's not me. There's a terribleness associated with the professing people of God.

Who when they are not in the place that God would command them to be. Not enjoying the life that God would command them to enjoy.

Having left their first faith in all its fullness. Having left their first love. And having left their first works. They say it's going to be alright at the end.

I made a choice back there. And so did the two in the parable of the sower. One was taken away by suffering.

They weren't willing to suffer for the word of God in the community. Or in the home. And the other was strangled because of the things of this life. And what I'm saying is this.

[ 14 : 35 ] If in your soul and if in my soul. We go back and say well I was alright then. And I am not right now. And you're doing nothing about it. And I'm doing nothing about it.

Then it could be. Your terribleness has deceived you. And the pride of your heart. And you're unwilling to repent afresh.

And do the first works. And feel the first love. And experience the first joy. You see. There can be in the parable of the sower.

Those that are deceived. And have a terribleness of heart. In that they reject the seed. When it's first sown. There may be some tonight that will reject it.

And I say it. Because of thy terribleness. And the pride of your heart. But there may be others. Who are in the place of the stony ground hearers. And those who have been strangled.

[ 15 : 36 ] By the gods of this world today. The modern gods. And have a name to live and are dead. And you're unwilling to admit it.

And you're not willing to go back to where you were. You're maybe among those who knows. And me with you.

Of whom it's written. Your terribleness. Your terribleness have deceived you. And the pride of your heart. Too proud.

To be the kind of witness you were once. Shall we pray. Full of things? Well it was like that with Eden. They were a proud people.

A self-confident people. An arrogant people. They thought they were alright. And this is what God said to them.

[ 16 : 33 ] thy terribleness have deceived you and the pride of your heart oh you that dwell in the clefts of the rock God speaking to them now and you hold the height of the hill you're right up there go up higher and though you make your place with the eagles you make your nest as high as the eagles the way up and on hold far higher still I will bring you down and my friend let me tell you that shortly after this a pagan army arrived and arrived at Eden and they climbed that hill and they destroyed that city and the prophet was vindicated and I would say to you and I would say to myself with regard to our salvation and with regard to our sanctification don't be deceived don't be diverted don't be distracted without holiness nobody's going to see the Lord no professor of religion even evangelical religion

God will judge those who know most the most fiercely and so this evening bearing that in mind just at the outset what is our response to be to the God who made us are we going to repent and say we're sorry are we going to come down from that mountain of arrogance and pride and get down to the old rugged cross and bend our knees and say Jesus forgive me I want to walk with you I want to be yours I want to be saved I'm going to trust you and if you're a person who's professed many years ago back to the same place and say Jesus

I've turned away I've no joy I've no life I'm living a name and I'm dead people respect me but you know what I'm like you know what I'm like in the house in the home you know what I'm like in my heart you know what I'm like when reading the Bible you know what I'm like in prayer I'm empty Jesus forgive me and take me back and you're sitting in your pew some of you this night and you and I we know we need to do it so if you're unconverted come to him if you're backslidden don't let that terribleness deceive you or your pride is at heart come back to the place where you found it the first time and don't leave it until you get it again now then as we go into this chapter you'll find that there is a reference in it actually of course to the eagle and like many other parts of God's word

God takes a symbol of something to portray a spiritual meaning and the eagle is one of the most wonderful portrayers of the spiritual in the Bible where you find it as I say first here in Jeremiah 49 you that dwelleth in the heights even though you make your nest like the eagle I'll bring you down and that's a solemn warning that's a divine assurance and that's a coming certainty I'll bring you down I'll bring you down from the place of apparent safety I'll bring you down from the place of apparent impregnability and not only that he says if you go up even higher if you go up higher yet to where the eagles nest into their nests

I'll still bring you down I'll bring you down by the acts of my providence I'll bring you down like Pharaoh by the fulfillment of my purpose I'll bring you down like I did at Pentecost by the demonstration of my power I'll bring you down because I will send up there to the eagles the angel of death and I'll bring you down that way foolish man that thinks he's beyond the power of God we think we're sometimes beyond the power of God because we do certain things we do them in sermons like this in house of God sometimes Mr. Ferrier is preaching to you what do you and I do well we put God out of our minds by putting him out of existence in our minds by cutting off our thoughts from him we put him out of our minds by challenging the revelation that he gives of himself in his word we put him out of our minds by shutting our ears to his demands and we put him out of our minds by resting on unstable short time security oh there's dangers my friend a false sense of security that you're alright for time a false dependence on the finite a false concept of God but God says

[ 22 : 54 ] I'll bring you down if you don't believe me I'll bring you down and then I'll judge you when you go to the book of Proverbs you find it just slightly different but in the same theme Proverbs 23 and 5 you have this text riches shall fly away as the eagle into heaven what's God telling us there he's telling us that the material is not lasting that lovely new house you bought that new furniture you filled it with that new car that you've got that new interest that you've got in the building society or in your shares that new job you've got that new increase that new promotion these are all material things those new clothes those symbols of your prosperity that sometimes become anchors that pull you down through the sea of light into hell itself they'll fly away he says like the wings with the eagle soar away with amazing rapidity he tells us they're not lasting they're not satisfying they're not saving they fly away like the eagle into heaven and you lose them in the clouds of sickness you lose them in the clouds of providence you lose them in the black clouds of death sometimes you lose the things that you trust in themselves your material possessions sometimes you lose the security that they promised you it's not really there take the instance so often happens of a man and a wife who slave together they both work their hearts out they're dreaming of their retirement like many of us rightly so and they're going to live together and they've got their little house and everything's in the gardens rosy and within nine months just after retirement illness comes tragedy comes and there's no value in anything that they used all their lives to save up for because they left out God and sometimes the security that materialism promises is taken away and to some the power that it generates you know materialism generates power

I remember in one congregation there was one man in the community he generated all the power in the local community he was rich and he was powerful but you know when I saw him with his throat and the operation to it so that the man couldn't speak I never felt so sad in my life here was a man whose power was taken away what he depended upon had flown away like the eagles you see riches are the coin of time and not of eternity and very often they become the object of worship so materialism the word of God says they will fly away like the eagle and so enough for that part of the service believe God don't let your terribleness and your pride deceive you listen to God and receive his son as your saviour and if you've wandered away from him as a professing

Christian come back and don't rest until the warmth comes back and the joy comes back and the vision comes back and the love comes back and your love for people in the church comes back and your love to work for Christ among others comes back if you haven't got it beware that your terribleness has deceived you and the pride of your heart in Deuteronomy 32 and 11 we follow the eagle and we read as an eagle stirreth up her nest and flutters over her young and taketh them and beareth them on her wings now let me illustrate what happens here because there are lessons that I would like us all to learn I want to take you up to a mountain to where an eagle is nesting I want you to look into that nest and in this passage

God is likening himself to an eagle an eagle with its baby yes some of us will remember when we became children of God yes some of us will remember when we became children of God it was like the egg hash and we came out of the egg of lostness almost and we we had new life God had given us the experience of being born again to a new life some when they were young some when they were old but like the eagle up there and so the young eagle is in the nest you imagine it every morning we'll say it six o'clock the old eagle leaves the nest and even from just almost birth the young eagle sees we'll call our mommy eagle swooping up there into the sky and going away she's away for a while and then she comes back and then in her mouth she has food she puts that food into the young baby eagle's mouth oh it's lovely baby eagle is comfortable in the nest the baby eagle is satisfied eating its food the baby eagle is secure in its its parent and the mother eagle hovers over it and sits on it and it's all a lovely thing that's like what happens when you become a Christian there's a joy and there's a security and there's a feeding and you don't think that there's a care in the world and this goes on maybe for a number of weeks and the eagle is getting bigger and bigger and mother's going out in the morning and then in the evening going out and coming back and as the eagle gets bigger he's waiting for mother to come back and it's never left the nest and then one morning the young eagle wakes up and what's the time

I was nearly going to say the young eagle looked at his watch but it didn't do that and the young eagle looks at man what's wrong with mother this morning has her alarm clock gone wrong she's not flying out now she's sitting there in the nest it's about time we were getting fed and she says to mother is it not time we were getting fed mother and instead of flying out to get the food something terrible has happened away up there in the top of the hill in the cliffs mother's gone mad and some people think God goes mad sometimes and mother goes mad and all of a sudden those big wings that soar are flapping and then all of a sudden right underneath the nest the mother puts those wings and it's going like a nerve quit and then the eagle goes over the side of the cliff what's gone wrong what's gone wrong and the eagle begins to fall and the mother's up there a good distance away and it's falling and falling and falling and at last in desperation the eagle puts out its wee wings and begins to fly and all of a sudden there's a new dimension a new dimension and the young eagle begins to fly never knew about this new experience and fly up and down and the mother's watching and all of a sudden something happens the strength goes out of the young eagle and all of a sudden it's not able to fly anymore and it's really going down now and it's really desperate it's frightened it's petrified it's going down and down and down and then at the right moment the old eagle swoops down and bears it up in her wings and what God says let me read the text as an eagle stirs up her nest and flutters over her young pushes it out of the nest and then spreadeth forth her wings and taketh them bearing them out so God says he does with Israel with his people let me illustrate what this means if I can

[ 33 : 01 ] I want to see in that three lessons and you know I'm looking at the clock and I got a terrible row from my wife this morning and my daughter for keeping you all too long and it's half past seven just now so you'll bear with me I'll get a little longer just now I will end up for you I'm sorry but here's the three lessons and one is the strange activities of God with his people in his providential will and in his permissive will why does God let certain things happen why does God permit certain things happen just take a young couple they're here in the church I don't know in this church I'm just illustrating they got married they were in the youth fellowship they were a lovely pair and he led the youth fellowship and she helped for years and they waited until they had enough to get married and they got married and then for six or seven years afterwards they prepared and they'd ask God for a family and the family never came but they still kept on and worked and faith and then they asked God for the family and then the girl was pregnant and she was waiting and they got all the clothes together and the crib was there and the cot was there and the pram was there and then the doctor comes in and he says you know you've got a Mongol child handicapped forever why?

why? the strange activities of God another young couple three maybe of a four of a family very young the husband comes home one day and says I've got a pain dear and he goes through to his bed and she goes through and he's dead why?

a young couple another one or an older middle aged one that seemed so secure the man goes off and leaves this Christian wife maybe who's been converted for someone else why?

and you know right throughout life there are these strange activities of God like the eagle why?

that's a strange activities of God but they're also the revealing activities of God the revealing activities is here when all is seeming to go wrong for that young eagle there was a period when it swooped down first of all and God never came like the eagle God never seemed to come and the eagle that was going down saw his mother up there totally unconcerned and that eagle was sweeping down and down and down and it thought on that occasion it was going to die and some people are like that and their faith goes down and down and down and it seems to die and then all of a sudden unexpected they don't know where it comes from they get the strength to go up and they come up again and they think everything's alright and then all of a sudden the strength goes out of them they're going down again and again and they don't know where it is like the young eagle and then at a certain time the old eagle comes down and it's like God you see in that picture you see the love that watches the old eagle there all the time you see the assistance that's timely and only God knows what's timely he knoweth our frame he knoweth what we can endure he knoweth what we can take he knoweth what can glorify him and we might not see it but it may be going on the assistance that's timely and then the strength that's ultimately extended and so you see the revealing activities of God and you see the teaching activities of God you see what God doesn't want in his church you see that young eagle would be no good if it was up there and never learned to fly and the Christian is no good unless it learns to be spiritual and to be spiritual is not just to accept the Lord Jesus as your saviour it's to walk with Jesus as your saviour it's to learn from Jesus as your saviour it's to work for Jesus as your saviour it's to trust

[ 38 : 09 ] Jesus as your saviour when you don't know the answers to your problems that Jesus becomes bigger than your problems and what God doesn't want is this he doesn't want spiritually limp rags he doesn't want spiritually monotonous clones you go down to Ford's factory you'll see a thousand cars come through on the assembly line they're all the same God doesn't want that God knoweth our frame he doesn't want limp rags that have no value he says be strong in the Lord learn to be strong and it's when you have to go through it that you've got to learn he doesn't want spiritually monotonous clones and he doesn't want spiritually inadequate disciples he wants his people to develop to mature and to grow in grace what does God want from his people he wants an unforced response from his people a trust in the darkness he wants growing faith in his people and he wants his people to give to him without always gain you see a thunder the young eagle may be surprised yes and so is the Christian a thunder the young eagle may be shocked often like the Christian a thunder the eagle the young one may be shattered the early experience had passed now it was the fluttering of the mother eagle instead of the feeding it was the expulsion from the nest instead of the caressing it was the unpredictable instead of the known nevertheless the less afterwards that young eagle had the ability to fly it had the security and proof of love and it had the extension of its experience and so it is with the people of God remember George Matheson he was a brilliant divinity student a gracious boy and he was so thrilled when a young lady promised to be his wife she was as beautiful he thought as an angel and he felt a pain in the back of his eye and he went to the doctor and the doctor gave him this information just like that he had six months to go before he went totally blind he went to a young girl and upset and he says my dear he said

I've had this sad fuse he told it to her waiting for her comfort waiting for her help waiting for her strength and do you know what happened she took the engagement ring off her finger and she says I'm sorry George I can't see myself going through life with a blind man and George Matheson went home and went to his knees and wept before God and he got up and he went to his desk and he took out his pen and he wrote one of the greatest hymns that's ever been written O love that wilt not let me go I rest my weary soul in thee I give thee back the life I owe and you know that hymn yes it was a strange experience and you may be here tonight and you have that experience there's a word from God for you nevertheless afterwards if you follow the eagle and I have no time now tonight you follow him into Exodus where God says you've seen what I've done to the Egyptians how I bore you in eagle wings

I really took you out of Egypt I took you into the promised land and I'm the one that will carry you wherever it's needed that you'll be carried and that's a picture of what God will do for us as church when we trust in Jesus we rest on omnipotent hands but we rest in such a way that the omnipotent hands of God interact with our human powers for our human good and for his glory as we knew it well there comes a time in an eagle's life when it goes in to the nest and in the nest it loses every feather that it's got it can't fly it can't sow it can't move it can't go for feed for food it's derelict for a period of time until the feathers grow and he renews his youth and God puts his people into places like that for that purpose and renews them and they're better for it and they're purer for it and they're better witnesses for it and they're more glorified to God through it like the eagle yes there's more than that but we're finished

I wish I could take more but I want to say two more things and then I'm done there's a number more but these two I'm going to leave with you one I heard just recently from dear George Dennett he says you know there's something about the eagle we were discussing this and he said to me did you know this about the eagle David he says ah the eagle is true to its one mate and you know my friends Christ will be true to you who trust him as if you were the one bride that he's got one mate and he wants you to be true to him as the one mate when an eagle comes to die do you know what happens to the eagle it goes up to a rock and it does something no other bird does it looks directly into the sun without fear and he puts his two claws into the rock after he's left his nest he goes away from his nest and he looks straight into the sun and he dies he dies with dignity and you remember

Stephen when they were stoning him he looked into the sun and he said I see Jesus and he died what a difference to the person who dies whose terribleness and pride has robbed them of everything to the person who dies like the eagle without fear looking up into the saviour having come through the experiences having learned and now the time has come to go and put your sort of claws of faith into the promises of God in my father's house are many mansions I go to prepare a place for you when you see me you'll be like me for you'll see me as I am to look up knowing you're cleansed in the blood of the cross and looking into the sun and dying in peace that's the Christian now tonight will you who are believers thank God for what you've got you who have drifted get back to where you were and you who have never started ask him now to be your saviour and he'll do for you what the old eagle did for the young one in his own way in his own time using his own plans his own methods and ultimately you'll find you will be presented perfect before the throne of the majesty on high cleansed by the blood of Christ covered by his righteousness and made fit for his presence you can have nothing more like that in this life may God help you to ask Jesus tonight to be your saviour shall we pray may thy blessing be upon us oh God and thy grace in our hearts we thank you for your word may it live for us and may we live through it for Jesus sake

[ 47 : 58 ]    Amen