

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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As One Of Them

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In the mid ninth century B.C., Obadiah prophesied concerning the future of Edom.

Historically, the descendents of Esau were at odds continually with the descendents of Jacob, a conflict which began with Jacob and Esau as brothers. In the reign of Jehoram, king of Judah, the Philistines and Arabians ransacked Jerusalem carrying away treasures in the king's house along with Jehoram's sons and wives (*2 Chronicles 21:16-17*)

Edom's response to Jerusalem's troubles and loss stirred God to respond with the following insight: *“In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance and foreigners entered his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them”* (*Obadiah 1:11*). By standing on the other side, though not instigating the pillage, Edom was really as one of the foreigners doing the plundering. While they were not to covetously look upon and take away substance as an enemy; nor were they to rejoice over the calamity in Jerusalem as an enemy; they were already as an enemy by simply standing on the

other side, passively letting the plundering go on.

We can stand on the other side today and let precious souls die in their sin by not presenting to them the Gospel. By remaining silent on the side lines we are just like Satan himself who does not want souls to be saved. If he can keep people from hearing the saving message, he has succeeded in their eternal destruction. Paul called Elymas the *“son of the devil”* (*Acts 13:8*) because he wanted to keep Sergius Paulus from hearing the truth of the Gospel. Yes, he was like the devil and indeed the enemy of God who actively withstood Paul and wanted to turn Sergius from the truth (*Acts 13: 10*), but are we not like “one of them” when we stand on the other side and are silent regarding the only power of God to save (*Romans 1:16, 10:17*)?

Paul could have remained silent and let hypocrisy have its corrupting work on souls. Thoughts that Peter was a fellow apostle and after all, Peter does not teach any error could have silenced his critical lips. But he did not stand passively on the other side, but instead, confronted Peter with his sin

of not walking according to the very truth of the Gospel Peter infallibly preached (*Galatians 2:12-14*).

God's condemnation of Edom should cause us to think seriously about the subject of fellowship. A man may preach the truth of the Gospel concerning Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage, but will consider men who teach error on the subject worthy of fellowship. By giving such men “God's speed” who do not bring the doctrine of Christ he is partaking of such a teacher's evil works (*2 John 11*).

Such a one giving approval is as one of them who is not bringing the true doctrine. Such are really saying that Jesus' teaching on the subject of divorce and remarriage is not clear; and/or we cannot know for sure the truth of God on this important subject. We may not be actively saying God's word is incomprehensible, but we are as one of them when we give “God's speed” to men accepting contradictory teachings. May we stand with God, and not with those on the other side.