

Obadiah 1:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee: there is none understanding in him.

Analysis

All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee—Edom's allies (אָנָשִׁים בְּרִיתְךָ, anshei veritecha, "men of your covenant") will betray them. "Brought thee to the border" means either escorted you to expulsion or brought you to the brink of destruction. Those who seemed peaceful (שְׁלוֹמֶךָ, shelomecha, from שְׁלָמָם/shalom) will deceive (הַשִּׁיאֹעַב, hissi'ukha—the same root as "deceived" in verse 3 about pride) and overcome you.

They that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee (לְחִמֶּךָ יָשִׁimu מָזוֹר תָּחַטְּקָה, lachmekha yasimu mazor tachteka)—those sharing table fellowship, bound by hospitality's sacred obligations, will set traps. "There is none understanding in him" (אֵין תְּבוּנָה בּוֹ, ein tevunah bo)—Edom lacks discernment to recognize betrayal. This teaches that pride blinds to danger, false alliances provide no security, and God orchestrates judgment through unexpected means. Psalm 41:9 and John 13:18 apply similar language to Judas's betrayal of Christ—showing that even the Messiah experienced what Edom would: betrayal by close associates. Yet Christ's betrayal accomplished salvation; Edom's brought judgment.

Historical Context

Edom formed alliances with various powers—sometimes with Assyria, sometimes Babylon, later with other Arab tribes. These political calculations seemed wise but proved futile. When Babylon destroyed Jerusalem (586 BC), Edom apparently cooperated, believing this secured their position. Yet within generations, former allies turned against them. The Nabateans, who may have initially seemed peaceful trading partners, eventually displaced Edom entirely. No human alliance can protect against divine judgment. The principle applies today: trusting political, economic, or social alliances more than God leads to disappointment and destruction.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What false securities (political parties, economic systems, social networks) might you trust more than God?
2. How does pride blind people to coming betrayal, danger, or judgment?
3. In what ways does Christ's experience of betrayal by a close associate demonstrate His identification with human suffering while accomplishing redemption?

Interlinear Text

בְּרִית בָּם	אָנָשִׁים	כִּי לְשָׁלֹחׁ וְלַ	הַגָּבֶן וְלַ	שָׁלֹחׁ וְלַ	בָּעֵד
H1285	H582	H3605	H7971	H1366	H5704
of thy confederacy	All the men	have brought	the border	even to the border	thee even to the border
שָׁלֹמֶת בָּם	אָנָשִׁים	לְבָנָם	יָכַל וְ	הַשְׁיָא וְלַ	with thee have deceived
H7965	H582	H0	H3201	H1366	H5377
that were at peace	All the men				
אֵין פְּנַחַת יְבָנָם	מִזְוָר	יְשִׁים יְמֹנוּ	לְתַחְמָבָן	תַּחַמְבָּן	against thee they that eat thy bread
H369	H8478	H4204	H7760	H3899	H5377
בְּ	בְּ	בְּ	בְּ	בְּ	under thee there is none understanding
H0	H0	H0	H0	H0	H8394

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 41:9 (Parallel theme): Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Jeremiah 30:14 (Parallel theme): All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased.

Jeremiah 49:7 (Parallel theme): Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?

John 13:18 (Parallel theme): I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.