

## Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God - 2/05/23

Great Sermons – Jonathan Edwards

**TEXT – Deuteronomy 32:35** *To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.*

### INTRO – Jonathan Edwards

- **Known For:** One of America's greatest theologians, intellectual leader and revival preacher of the 18th-century Great Awakening, and pioneer in the Reformed Church.
- **Parents:** Rev. Timothy and Esther Edwards.
- **Born:** October 5, 1703, East Windsor, Connecticut.
- **Died:** March 22, 1758, Princeton, New Jersey.

The fifth child of Rev. Timothy and Esther Edwards, Jonathan was the only boy in their family of 11 children. He was born in 1703 in East Windsor, Connecticut.

Edwards' intellectual brilliance was evident from an early age. He started at Yale before he was 13 years old and graduated as valedictorian. Three years later he received his master's degree.

At age 23, Jonathan Edwards succeeded his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, as pastor of the church in Northampton, Massachusetts. At the time, it was the richest and most influential church in the colony, outside of Boston.

**Deuteronomy 32:35** In this verse is threatened the vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, that were God's visible people, and lived under means of grace; and that notwithstanding all God's wonderful works that he had wrought towards that people, yet remained, as is expressed in verse 28, void of counsel, having no understanding in them; and that, under all the cultivations of heaven, brought forth bitter and poisonous fruit; as in the two verses next preceding the text.

The expression chosen for his text, *their foot shall slide in due time*, seems to imply the following things relating to the punishment and destruction that these wicked Israelites were exposed to.

1. That they were *always* exposed to destruction; as one that stands or walks in slippery places is always exposed to fall. This is implied in the manner of their destruction's coming upon them, being represented by their foot's sliding. The same is expressed, Psalm lxxiii. 18: "*Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction.*"
2. It implies that they were always exposed to *sudden*, unexpected destruction; as he that walks in slippery places is every moment liable to fall, he can't foresee one moment whether he shall stand or fall the next; and when he does fall, he falls at once, without warning, which is also expressed

in that Psalm lxxiii. 18, 19: "*Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment!*"

3. Another thing implied is, that they are liable to fall of *themselves*, without being thrown down by the hand of another; as he that stands or walks on slippery ground needs nothing but his own weight to throw him down.
4. That the reason why they are not fallen already, and don't fall now, is only that God's appointed time is not come. For it is said that when that due time, or appointed time comes, *their foot shall slide*. Then they shall be left to fall, as they are inclined by their own weight. God won't hold them up in these slippery places any longer, but will let them go; and then, at that very instant, they shall fall to destruction; as he that stands in such slippery declining ground on the edge of a pit that he can't stand alone, when he is let go he immediately falls and is lost.

The observation from the words that I would now insist upon is this,

*There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God.*

By the mere pleasure of God, I mean his sovereign pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation, hindered by no manner of difficulty, any more than if nothing else but God's mere will had in the least degree or in any respect whatsoever any hand in the preservation of wicked men one moment.

The truth of this observation may appear by the following considerations.

**1. There is no want of power in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment.** Men's hands can't be strong when God rises up: the strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands.

He is not only able to cast wicked men into hell, but he can most easily do it. There is no fortress that is any defence against the power of God. Though hand join in hand, and vast multitudes of God's enemies combine and associate themselves, they are easily broken in pieces: they are as great heaps of light chaff before the whirlwind; or large quantities of dry stubble before devouring flames. We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so 'tis easy for us to cut or singe a slender thread that anything hangs by; thus easy is it for God, when he pleases, to cast his enemies down to hell. What are we, that we should think to stand before him, at whose rebuke the earth trembles, and before whom the rocks are thrown down!

**2. They deserve to be cast into hell;** so that divine justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God's using his power at any moment to destroy them. Yea, on the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins. Divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such