**Obadiah**

**Overview of Obadiah**

“The name Obadiah means, “Servant or worshipper of Jehovah.” The book, named for the author, itself provides no insights into who Obadiah was, his profession, his hometown, or his family. The date of the book is difficult because there is little historic information in it. It is the shortest book in the OT. Within the book of Obadiah there is a stark contrast between the destruction of the arrogant, prideful Edomites and the faithful, true worshippers of the house of Jacob.

The entire book focuses around the dispute between Israel and Edom, which lead to the coming destruction of Edom. The Edomites were direct descendants of Esau. Their kingdom consisted of ‘Seir’ (Joshua 24:4), ‘Bozrah’ (Isaiah 63:1), and ‘Sela’ (II Kings 14:7). Sela is better known as Petra. The Edomites felt Jacob had deceived Esau and stole His birthright, cheating them out of their inheritance (Gen. 25:21-34).

Obadiah announces the ‘day of the Lord’ will fall upon the descendants of Esau because of their continuous rebellions, anger towards God’s people, Israel, and rejoicing at the destruction of Jerusalem. This little-known prophet from Judah received a vision concerning Edom. The Edomites were descendants of Esau and, at that time, were enemies of the Jews. The Edomites lived east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. This made Edom Judah’s southern neighbor, and the two shared a common border.” Perry Stone, OT Hebraic Study Bible, p. 1415.

**Obadiah Chapter 1 NLT**

*“1 This is the vision that the Sovereign Lord revealed to Obadiah concerning the land of Edom.*

*Edom’s Judgment Announced*

*We have heard a message from the Lord*

*that an ambassador was sent to the nations to say,*

*“Get ready, everyone!*

*Let’s assemble our armies and attack Edom!”*

*2 The Lord says to Edom,*

*“I will cut you down to size among the nations;*

*you will be greatly despised.*

*3 You have been deceived by your own pride*

*because you live in a rock fortress*

*and make your home high in the mountains.*

*‘Who can ever reach us way up here?’*

*you ask boastfully.*

*4 But even if you soar as high as eagles*

*and build your nest among the stars,*

*I will bring you crashing down,”*

*says the Lord.*

*5 “If thieves came at night and robbed you*

*(what a disaster awaits you!),*

*they would not take everything.*

*Those who harvest grapes*

*always leave a few for the poor.*

*But your enemies will wipe you out completely!*

*6 Every nook and cranny of Edom*

*will be searched and looted.*

*Every treasure will be found and taken.*

*7 “All your allies will turn against you.*

*They will help to chase you from your land.*

*They will promise you peace*

*while plotting to deceive and destroy you.*

*Your trusted friends will set traps for you,*

*and you won’t even know about it.*

*8 At that time not a single wise person*

*will be left in the whole land of Edom,”*

*says the Lord.*

*“For on the mountains of Edom*

*I will destroy everyone who has understanding.*

*9 The mightiest warriors of Teman*

*will be terrified,*

*and everyone on the mountains of Edom*

*will be cut down in the slaughter.*

*Reasons for Edom’s Punishment*

*10 “Because of the violence you did*

*to your close relatives in Israel,*

*you will be filled with shame*

*and destroyed forever.*

*11 When they were invaded,*

*you stood aloof, refusing to help them.*

*Foreign invaders carried off their wealth*

*and cast lots to divide up Jerusalem,*

*but you acted like one of Israel’s enemies.*

*12 “You should not have gloated*

*when they exiled your relatives to distant lands.*

*You should not have rejoiced*

*when the people of Judah suffered such misfortune.*

*You should not have spoken arrogantly*

*in that terrible time of trouble.*

*13 You should not have plundered the land of Israel*

*when they were suffering such calamity.*

*You should not have gloated over their destruction*

*when they were suffering such calamity.*

*You should not have seized their wealth*

*when they were suffering such calamity.*

*14 You should not have stood at the crossroads,*

*killing those who tried to escape.*

*You should not have captured the survivors*

*and handed them over in their terrible time of trouble.*

*Edom Destroyed, Israel Restored*

*15 “The day is near when I, the Lord,*

*will judge all godless nations!*

*As you have done to Israel,*

*so it will be done to you.*

*All your evil deeds*

*will fall back on your own heads.*

*16 Just as you swallowed up my people*

*on my holy mountain,*

*so you and the surrounding nations*

*will swallow the punishment I pour out on you.*

*Yes, all you nations will drink and stagger*

*and disappear from history.*

*17 “But Jerusalem will become a refuge for those who escape;*

*it will be a holy place.*

*And the people of Israel will come back*

*to reclaim their inheritance.*

*18 The people of Israel will be a raging fire,*

*and Edom a field of dry stubble.*

*The descendants of Joseph will be a flame*

*roaring across the field, devouring everything.*

*There will be no survivors in Edom.*

*I, the Lord, have spoken!*

*19 “Then my people living in the Negev*

*will occupy the mountains of Edom.*

*Those living in the foothills of Judah*

*will possess the Philistine plains*

*and take over the fields of Ephraim and Samaria.*

*And the people of Benjamin*

*will occupy the land of Gilead.*

*20 The exiles of Israel will return to their land*

*and occupy the Phoenician coast as far north as Zarephath.*

*The captives from Jerusalem exiled in the north*

*will return home and resettle the towns of the Negev.*

*21 Those who have been rescued will go up to Mount Zion in Jerusalem*

*to rule over the mountains of Edom.*

*And the Lord himself will be king!”*

**OBADIAH – JUDGMENT AGAINST ISRAEL’S BROTHER**

**A. Judgment against Edom.**

Obadiah 1:1-9 is paralleled remarkably in Jeremiah 49:7-22, so Jeremiah probably had Obadiah’s prophecy before him as he wrote and ministered.

1. **(1-4) Obadiah announces judgment against Edom and her pride.**

*The vision of Obadiah.*

*Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom*

*(We have heard a report from the LORD,*

*And a messenger has been sent among the nations, saying,*

*“Arise, and let us rise up against her for battle”):*

*“Behold, I will make you small among the nations;*

*You shall be greatly despised.*

*The pride of your heart has deceived you,*

*You who dwell in the clefts of the rock,*

*Whose habitation is high;*

*You who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to the ground?’*

*Though you ascend as high as the eagle,*

*And though you set your nest among the stars,*

*From there I will bring you down,” says the LORD.*

**a.** The vision of Obadiah: The Hebrew name Obadiah means “Worshiper of Yahweh” or “Servant of Yahweh.” There are 13 “Obadiah’s” in the Old Testament, and one of these may be the Obadiah who wrote this book.

· An Obadiah was an officer in King Ahab of Israel’s court and hid God’s prophets in a cave (1 Kings 18:3).

· An Obadiah was sent out by King Jehoshaphat of Judah to teach the law in the cities of Judah (2 Chronicles 17:7).

· An Obadiah was one of the overseers who helped repair the temple in the days of Josiah, king of Judah (2 Chronicles 34:12).

· An Obadiah was a priest in the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 10:5).

**b.** Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom: Obadiah’s prophecy is unique because he doesn’t deal with Judah or Israel much at all. His focus is on the sin of Edom and the judgment coming upon them. Who were the Edomites?

· The Edomites were the people descended from Esau, the son of Isaac and Rebekah and the brother of Jacob (Genesis 25:19-34). Esau was nicknamed “Edom” (which means, “red”) probably because he had red hair.

· Esau eventually settled in the area of Mount Seir and absorbed a people known as the Horites (see Genesis 36:8-43, which refers to Edomite rulers as dukes in the King James Version).

· When Israel came out of Egypt and wanted to pass through the land of the Edomites to enter into the Promised Land, the Edomites wouldn’t let them (Numbers 20:14-21).

· The Edomites opposed Saul and were conquered under David and Solomon (1 Samuel 14:47, 2 Samuel 8:14, 1 Kings 9:26).

· In the days of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, Edom joined with Moab and Ammon to attack Judah, but the Lord fought for Judah and defeated them (see 2 Chronicles 20:1-27, which describes the famous battle that was led with praise).

· The Edomites successfully rebelled against King Jehoram of Judah (2 Kings 8:16-22).

· King Amaziah of Judah brought them back under subjugation (2 Kings 14:9-11).

· The Edomites again attacked Judah in the days of King Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:17).

· The Edomites fought side by side with the Jews in the rebellion against Rome in A.D. 66-70 and were crushed by Rome, never to be heard of as a people again. The predictions of Obadiah 1:10 and 1:18 were proven true.

**c**. Concerning Edom: Because of what this book says of Edom and Jerusalem, we can arrive at a date for Obadiah’s ministry. The only time markers we have in the book are the attack against Jerusalem (Obadiah 1:10-14) and the fact that this passage also seems to indicate that Edom was not under Judah’s rule at the time.

· 2 Chronicles 21:16-17 describes an attack against Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoram (848-841 B.C.) by the Philistines and the Arabians.

· 2 Kings 24-25 describes the attack of the Babylonians against Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

1. Probably the better choice is the earlier attack because Obadiah 1:10-14 doesn’t seem to indicate that Jerusalem was totally destroyed, as it was under the Babylonian attack. If Obadiah’s prophecy concerns this time period under Jehoram (848-841 B.C.), it makes him a contemporary of the prophet Elisha and also makes him the earliest of the prophets, probably before Joel by a few years. It also means that this prophet Obadiah may be the same man mentioned in 2 Chronicles 17:7.

**d**. A report from the LORD…arise, and let us rise up against her for battle: Obadiah gave a report from the LORD, announcing that God would bring nations against Edom in battle. As a result of this coming battle, God will make Edom small among the nations and greatly despised.

**e.** The pride of your heart has deceived you: This helps explain why God is bringing judgment against Edom. They are filled with pride, and it has deceived them.

1. Pride is very deceptive. It makes us think things about ourselves and others that simply are not true. The Edomites were not the last people deceived by pride.

**f**. You who dwell in the clefts of the rock: The Edomites didn’t have all that much to be proud about. They were a small, relatively poor and insignificant nation. Yet what they could be proud about, they were – they lived in an area of great natural fortifications and strength, so they boasted in the clefts of the rock around them.

**1**. Though you ascend as high as the eagle: In their pride, the Edomites thought themselves to be as high as the eagle. Pride is so ingrained in fallen human nature that even if we don’t have much to be proud about, we’ll find something to exalt ourselves. This also reminds us that we don’t have to be rich or powerful or great to be filled will pride. Sometimes those who have the least reason for pride have the most of it.

**2**. The Edomites also boasted of their secure defenses. The ancient city of Petra – once the capital city of Edom, known as Sela – had amazing defenses. It is a city carved into the rock, accessible by a narrow canyon almost a mile long. At the end of the canyon there is a spectacular city carved in stone, and seemingly incapable of being conquered by any army.

**3**. The Edomites also boasted of their wisdom. The men of Edom – especially of the city Teman – were noted for their wisdom. The phrase men of the East in the Old Testament often refers to men from Edom, and passages like 1 Kings 4:30 declare the great wisdom of the men of the East. As well, Jeremiah 49:7 says of Edom: Is wisdom no more in Teman? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished? This was another source of pride for the Edomites.

**4**. The Edomites boasted of their alliances and they trusted in their allies – their confederacy, the men at peace with you (Obadiah 1:7). They thought that their alliances made them strong, and they were proud because of that strength.

**g**. From there I will bring you down: The sobering truth about our pride is that God can bring us down anytime. He can shatter our proud deception and bring us low.

***2****. (5-9) God’s judgment against Edom will be complete.*

*“If thieves had come to you,*

*If robbers by night—*

*Oh, how you will be cut off!—*

*Would they not have stolen till they had enough?*

*If grape-gatherers had come to you,*

*Would they not have left some gleanings?*

*Oh, how Esau shall be searched out!*

*How his hidden treasures shall be sought after!*

*All the men in your confederacy*

*Shall force you to the border;*

*The men at peace with you*

*Shall deceive you and prevail against you.*

*Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you.*

*No one is aware of it.*

*Will I not in that day,” says the LORD,*

*“Even destroy the wise men from Edom,*

*And understanding from the mountains of Esau?*

*Then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed,*

*To the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau*

*May be cut off by slaughter.”*

**a**. Would they not have stolen till they had enough? Obadiah says that the judgment coming upon Edom will be far worse than what happens when robbers come and steal because they usually stop when they have enough. The judgment coming against Edom will be far more complete (everyone from the mountains of Esau may be cut off by slaughter).

**1**. The Edomites were proud of their great natural defenses, but God would break their pride and bring them low.

**b**. Men at peace with you shall deceive you: When God brings judgment against Edom, they will know the sting of treachery against them. The alliances that they once trusted in would come to nothing, and they would be double-crossed by their former friends.

**1**. The Edomites were proud of their political alliances, but God would break their pride and bring them low.

**c**. Destroy the wise men from Edom and understanding from the mountains of Esau: The Edomites were renowned for their great wisdom, but God would bring such great judgment that even their wise men would be destroyed.

**1**. The Edomites were proud of their reputation for wisdom, but God would break their pride and bring them low.

“There were wise men in Edom, but their wisdom was carnal and not spiritual. Had they understood God’s covenant with their brothers the Jews, they would have stood with them instead of rejoicing over their problems.” Perry Stone, OT Hebraic Study Bible, p. 1416

***3.*** *(10-14) Why judgment is coming against Edom.*

*“For violence against your brother Jacob,*

*Shame shall cover you,*

*And you shall be cut off forever.*

*In the day that you stood on the other side;*

*In the day that strangers carried captive his forces,*

*When foreigners entered his gates*

*And cast lots for Jerusalem;*

*Even you were as one of them.*

*But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother*

*In the day of his captivity;*

*Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah*

*In the day of their destruction;*

*Nor should you have spoken proudly*

*In the day of distress.*

*You should not have entered the gate of My people*

*In the day of their calamity.*

*Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction*

*In the day of their calamity,*

*Nor laid hands on their substance*

*In the day of their calamity.*

*You should not have stood at the crossroads*

*To cut off those among them who escaped;*

*Nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained*

*In the day of distress.”*

**a.** For violence against your brother Jacob: The family lines of both Israel and Edom go back to a common ancestor – Isaac. Esau (Edom) was the brother of Jacob (Israel). This made Edom’s sin against Israel all the worse.

**1**. Some sins become worse depending on whom we sin against. It is sin to treat someone else badly; it is worse to treat a brother or sister in Jesus badly. It is sin to speak harshly to anyone; it is worse to speak harshly to your husband or wife.

**b**. In the day you stood on the other side: What did Edom do when strangers attacked Judah and foreigners entered his gates? Nothing. They stood by and cheered for Judah’s misery (nor should you have rejoiced).

**1**. Sometimes doing nothing is a great sin. Numbers 32:23 speaks of the sin that will find you out, and the sin it speaks of is the sin of doing nothing.

1. Edom actually did worse than nothing; they rejoiced over another’s misfortune and suffering and used it as an occasion to exalt themselves (nor should you have spoken proudly in the day of distress).

**c**. Nor laid hands on their substance: Edom’s sin started with doing nothing. Then progressed to pride over Judah’s distress. Finally, they took advantage of their brother Judah’s misfortune and laid hands on their substance.

*“Those who mock the poor insult their Maker; those who rejoice at the misfortune of others will be punished.” Proverbs 17:5 NLT*

**d**. You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped: The final progression of Edom’s sin was worst of all – they joined in the attack against vulnerable Judah. When they encountered people from Judah fleeing southward from the attacking army, they killed them (cut off) or gave them over to the enemy as prisoners (delivered up those among them who remained).

**1**. “Sin proceeds by degrees; neither is any man at his worst at first.” (Trapp)

**e**. In the day of his captivity…in the day of distress…. In the day of their calamity: All in all, Edom treated God’s people terribly when distress and calamity came upon them. For all this, God’s judgment was coming upon them.

· First, they did nothing.

· Then they rejoiced in their distress and calamity.

· Then they took advantage of their vulnerable state.

· Then they joined in the violence against God’s people.

1. Are we guilty of the same – or worse – when we see others in distress or calamity? If so, God sees it as sin, and He must deal with it in our lives.

**B. Deliverance on Mount Zion.**

*1. (15-16) A promise of judgment against Edom.*

*“For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near;*

*As you have done, it shall be done to you;*

*Your reprisal shall return upon your own head.*

*For as you drank on My holy mountain,*

*So shall all the nations drink continually;*

*Yes, they shall drink, and swallow,*

*And they shall be as though they had never been.”*

**a**. The day of the LORD upon all the nations is near: God wants Edom to know that though distress and calamity came upon Judah, it can and will come upon Edom also. That day is near.

**b**. As you have done, it shall be done to you: God will give simple justice to the Edomites, no more and no less. What they did to the people of Judah will also be done to them. The same principle is true for us, so if we want mercy from God, we do well to give mercy to others.

**1**. There is a sense in which God’s judgment against Edom was just the fulfillment of His promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3: I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you. The Edomites cursed Israel, so they were cursed. If we want to be blessed, we should bless the Jewish people.

**2. (17-20) God will use Israel to bring judgment against Edom**.

*“But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance,*

*And there shall be holiness;*

*The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.*

*The house of Jacob shall be a fire,*

*And the house of Joseph a flame;*

*But the house of Esau shall be stubble;*

*They shall kindle them and devour them,*

*And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,”*

*For the LORD has spoken.*

*The South shall possess the mountains of Esau,*

*And the Lowland shall possess Philistia.*

*They shall possess the fields of Ephraim*

*And the fields of Samaria.*

*Benjamin shall possess Gilead.*

*And the captives of this host of the children of Israel*

*Shall possess the land of the Canaanites*

*As far as Zarephath.*

*The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad*

*Shall possess the cities of the South.*

**a**. On Mount Zion there shall be deliverance: The trials and burdens among God’s people are only temporary because among them there shall be deliverance. However, the attack coming against Edom will be different – Israel will be the fire and they will be the stubble, and Edom will be completely devoured.

1. The word of the Lord through Obadiah proved true. The Edomites fought side by side with the Jews in the rebellion against Rome in A.D. 66-70 and were crushed by Rome, never to be heard of as a people again. The predictions of Obadiah 1:10 and 1:18 were precisely fulfilled. You just won’t meet an Edomite today.

**b**. The South shall possess the mountains of Esau: Obadiah looks forward to a coming day when Israel will occupy and possess the land that once belonged to Esau. Though the modern borders of Israel do not encompass the ancient lands of Edom, we can trust that they one day will, either in this age or in the age to come.

**1**. The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions: Possessing these other lands can only happen when we first possess what is ours. God has given us a rich heritage of every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), but how much do we actually possess? God wants His people to possess their possessions.

**3. (21) Saviors come to Mount Zion.**

*Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion*

*To judge the mountains of Esau,*

*And the kingdom shall be the LORD’s.*

**a**. Saviors shall come to Mount Zion: The idea isn’t that there are many saviors in an ultimate sense. Here, the word “saviors” has the sense of “deliverers.” The contrast is plain; Edom will be completely destroyed, and no saviors shall help her, but saviors shall come to Mount Zion.

**b**. To judge the mountains of Esau: They will judge the mountains of Esau in at least three ways:

- The presence of deliverers is a judgment against Edom because Edom will have no deliverers.

· The judges will rule over the territory of Edom.

· The judges will actually sit in judgment over Edom and their sins.

**c**. And the kingdom shall be the LORD’s: The brief prophecy of Obadiah ends on this high note. The Edomites seemed to have their day against God’s people but at the end of it all, the kingdom shall be the LORD’s. He knows how to take care of God’s people and to advance His kingdom in a glorious way.

**1**. This note of encouragement may be the central purpose for this prophecy of Obadiah. We wonder if it ever had much of a reading in the streets or palaces of Edom; it certainly was received as welcome encouragement among the suffering people of God. ***Obadiah tells all God’s people: “Don’t worry about those who ignore your need, those who rejoice at your problems, those who take advantage of your crises, those who join their hands with others in attacking you. I will take care of them.”*** © 2022 The Enduring Word Bible Commentary by David Guzik – ewm@enduringword.com

“The prophecy concludes with a prediction of the restoration of Israel and notes that in the future Israel will possess the area of the mount of Esau (Edom and Mount Seir) and the land of the Philistines, a strip of land running parallel with the southern coastal areas in Israel. Israel will also possess the land of Ephraim and Samaria currently called the West Bank. Today Israel is in possession of, or controls the security of, much of the territory listed here.. The ‘saviors’ (vs 21) who will come to Mt. Zion and judge will be the saints at the return of Christ. (See Matthew 19:28); the ‘kingdom’ (vs. 21) is the kingdom of the Messiah (See Dan. 7:18, 27). Perry Stone, OT Hebraic Study Bible, p. 1416.

**SEE: PREDICTIONS FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF EDOM: Isaiah 34; 63:1-6; Jeremiah 49:7-22; Amos 1:11**

**Hebrews 12:25-29**

*“25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” 27 Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.”*

**SEE: Bible Project – You tube – Obadiah**

**Reading from Perry Stone, OT Hebraic Study Bible, notes on Petra: The Rose Colored city in the wilderness of Edom p. 1417.**

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**Picture above: https://stephenmillerbooks.com/obadiah-dooms-a-nation-to-die/**

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