



OBADIAH

A Prophecy against Edom

“As you have done, it will be done
to you; your deeds will return
upon your own head.” (Obadiah 1:15)

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Historical Background

- Southwest of the Dead Sea lived a group of people called the **EDOMITES**. They lived in Mount Seir, a mountainous region
- They were the descendants of Esau who lived around 2000 B.C. and who was the brother of Jacob (also called Israel) and son of Isaac and Rebecca (Gen. 25:19-34). Esau's hatred for his brother seemed to continue through his descendants. **EDOM** means "red", which is Esau's name because he sold his birthright for red pottage (Gen. 25:30). Seir means "hairy, rugged", Esau was a hairy man (Gen. 27:11)
- When Jacob's descendants were migrating from Egypt to the land of Canaan around 1400 B.C., the **Edomites** refused to allow Moses and the Israelites passage through their land. This caused great discomfort for Israel (Num. 20:14-21)

Historical Background

- For some 400 years nothing is mentioned about the **Edomites**. But they appear during the monarchy period as an adversary of Israel (1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:13-14; 1 Kings 11:15-16; 2 Chron. 20:22; 21:8; 25:11-12; 28:17)
- About 400 years later, **King David** conquered them (2 Sam. 8:14). Around 850 B.C. they revolted under King Jehoram (2 Kings 8:16-21). They were again conquered by the Maccabees around 150 B.C.

Historical Background

The area occupied by the **Edomites** is also known as Idumea and was the home of Antipater, the father of **Herod the Great**, who was ruling in Jerusalem when Jesus was born around 8 B.C. to 4 B.C.

- As part of their rebellion against Judah, they may have been supporting some of the Gentile nations who were harassing and attacking Judah

The Author and the Audience

- The name **Obadiah** means “servant of the Lord.”
- The author gives no other information about himself, his background, or the time in which he lived
- His book was written to the **Edomites**
- As the shortest book in the Old Testament (21 verses, a single chapter), its purpose is to condemn them in supporting the Gentiles against Judah
- The Edomites treated the descendants of Jacob so terrible, that other prophets denounced them. Isaiah (34:5-8), Jeremiah (49:17), Amos (1:11-12). Daniel 11:41 a prophecy concerning Edom

Basic Outline of Obadiah

- I. The Overthrow of Edom/The Coming Judgment on Edom (verses 1-9)

- II. The Offenses of Edom/Edom Mistreated Her Brother (verses 10-14)
- III. The Outlook for Edom/Israel's Final Triumph (verses 15-21)

MAJOR THEMES IN OBADIAH

- Two primary themes are in the book of Obadiah:
- **Chapter 1:1-14** - Condemnation for turning away from a neighbor in need (Judah), gloating over their misfortune, and helping their enemies
- **Chapter 1:15-21** - Promise of punishment, both by their Gentile "allies" and later by Judah

Overall major theme: Pride deceives a person and a nation (verse 3) and “As you have done, it shall be done unto you” (verse 15)

Warning against Edom

Do not :

- Rejoice over your brother's day
- Rejoice over the son of Judah
- Enter the gate of My People and rejoice over their calamity
- Loot their wealth
- Cut down their fugitives
- Imprison their survivors

Obadiah 1:3-4

"The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,
You who live in the clefts of the rock,
In the loftiness of your dwelling place,
Who say in your heart,

'Who will bring me down to earth?'

4 "Though you build high like the eagle,
Though you set your nest among the stars,
From there I will bring you down," declares the LORD".

MESSAGES FOR US

The book of Obadiah illustrates a couple of valuable lessons for Christians:

- Both the Old Testament and the New Testament warn about rejoicing over the misfortune of another (Prov. 17:5; Job 31:29-30; Matt. 5:43-48)
- Although often oppressed, God's people will ultimately triumph (Mark 10:28-30; 2 Tim. 3:10-17)

Lessons from Obadiah

- God cares for His people when they suffer

- God warns, and will judge those who persecute His people
- God will give victory to His people
- God's faithful people will inherit the kingdom of God in its fullness

GLORY BE TO GOD
FOREVER
AMEN

