

# The Minor Prophets

## *OBADIAH*

- I. Central Message: The nation of Edom shall be punished for their lack of love and their pride but penitent Judah shall be reinstated.
- II. Introduction
  - A. Obadiah prophesied in the kingdom of Judah
  - B. Name means, "Servant of the Lord"
    1. nothing else know about him apart from this book
    2. 12 other men in Bible with this name
  - C. Date of writing
    1. determined by identifying the particular destruction spoken of in verse 12
    2. Jerusalem suffered four different enemy attacks
      - a. by Egypt under the leadership of king Shishak in about 972 BC
      - b. by the Philistines and Arabians in about 896 BC (II Chronicles 12:1-12)
      - c. by Israel under the leadership of king Joash in about 827 BC (II Chronicles 25:17-24)
      - d. by the Babylonians under the leadership of king Nebuchadnezzar in about 587 BC (II Chronicles 36)
    3. none of the attacks previous to the one led by Nebuchadnezzar were of the magnitude of this last one
  - D. Several other Old Testament passages which show the cruelty and pride of Edom
    1. Psalm 137:7
    2. Jeremiah 49:7-18
    3. Lamentations 4:21,22
    4. Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35:1 -15 (notice especially their hatred in verse 5 and their pride in verse 13)
    5. Amos 1:11-12
  - E. About the book
    1. Edom composed of the descendants of Esau and Judah composed of the descendants of Jacob (recall the early animosity between these twin brothers – Genesis 25-28)
      - a. the two brothers were reconciled later in life (Genesis 33:1ff)
      - b. this was apparently forgotten by their descendants and the rivalry between the two nations continued
      - c. Isaac had prophesied that Esau's people would serve Jacob's people and that one day Esau's descendants would revolt (Genesis 27:40; fulfilled, II Samuel 8:14 and II Kings 8:20)
    2. Nebuchadnezzar's invasion had taken place, Jerusalem had been destroyed and the people of Judah had been carried away into Babylonian captivity
      - a. in response to this, the people of Edom rejoiced, encouraged the destruction and even took part in it
      - b. they then proudly claimed that they were indestructible themselves
      - c. God, through Obadiah, is telling them that no human is indestructible and that they shall receive recompense for their sins

3. two sections
  - a. verses 1-14: God will bring destruction upon Edom for their cruelty and pride
  - b. verses 15-21: God will restore Judah to Jerusalem (done in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah)

III. First Section – God Will Bring Destruction Upon Edom For Their Cruelty and Pride (Obadiah 1-15)

A. Verse 1

1. “vision” = “to see” (i.e., what God allowed Obadiah to see in regard to future events)
2. “rumour” = “what is heard, report, tidings” (does not necessarily carry with it the same connotation that it does today)
3. the call has come from God to the enemies of Edom to go and battle against them (Note: This is GOD’s doing. It is His punishment and not some coincidence.)
4. those Babylonians whom they encouraged to destroy Jerusalem eventually destroyed them

B. Verse 2

1. compare this, their real position (“small”) to how they thought of themselves (proud, great, unable to be defeated)
2. what man thinks he is and what he REALLY is are sometimes very different

C. Verses 3-4

1. the deceitfulness of pride led them to believe that no one, not even God, could overthrow them (see Proverbs 16:5,18)
2. their city (cities) built into high rocks and very difficult for enemies to attack
3. verse 4 has reference to their physical location, high in the rocks
4. God WILL win

D. Verses 5-6 – the extent of the destruction of Edom

1. thieves will at least only take what they can and leave the rest
2. grape gatherers will leave some
3. but Edom will lose everything, even the things they have hidden away

E. Verse 7 – those who had formerly been their partners would now be their destroyers

F. Verses 8-9

1. mount of Esau = mount Seir
2. complete desolation

G. Verse 10-14 – the reason for their destruction

1. verse 11
  - a. “thou stoodest on the other side” = you helped the enemy destroy your brethren
  - b. “cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast one of them” = you gambled for what you could get from the people of Jerusalem even as the enemies did
2. verse 12
  - a. they treated Judah like a stranger
  - b. they took delight in seeing them destroyed
  - c. they boasted of their own strength and power and mocked Judah
3. verse 13 – they took from Judah what the Babylonians had left

4. verse 14 – they stopped those people of Jerusalem who tried to escape and delivered them to Nebuchadnezzar’s armies
- H. Verse 15
1. God’s just recompense for evil
  2. as you have been merciless, so shall God be merciless unto you (see Matthew 7:2)
- IV. Second Section – God Will Restore Judah to Jerusalem (Obadiah 16-21)
- A. Verse 16 – as you people of Jerusalem have suffered at the hands of your enemies, so also shall they suffer because of their rebellion
  - B. Verse 17 – the people of Judah shall return to Jerusalem
    1. this prophecy fulfilled as seen in II Chronicles 36:22,23 and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah
    2. this is not some reinstatement that is still in the future but was fulfilled centuries prior to the coming of Jesus to the earth
    3. “there shall be holiness” = this is why they will return, because they will repent and put God first
  - C. Verses 18-20 – be assured, Judah that those who fought against you shall themselves be destroyed for their attitudes
  - D. Verse 21 – righteousness shall again rule in Jerusalem (this it did for a period of time but soon the Jews forgot God and forsook Him again)