

The Prophecy of **OBADIAH**

Compiled by

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For Bible Marking and Class Study

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OBADIAH

The Structure and Contents of the Prophecy

...Time

Probably just prior to the Babylonian captivity.
Approximately 600 years B.C.

...Author

Obadiah - His name means, servant or worshipper of Yahweh. As such he becomes a very fitting type of Christ. Very little is known of his origin or life apart from the fact that he belonged to the kingdom of Judah.

...Subject matter

Prophecy relates to the punishment of Edom for its cruel and unbrotherly conduct towards Judah. It also types the soon coming universal judgments on the Gentiles as Yahweh is revealed in power and great glory; fulfilling his eternal purpose of Numbers 14:21; Daniel 2:44. This time will also find Israel secure in the promised land, possessors of the first dominion which will have come to the daughter of Jerusalem. Micah 4:8; Zech. 8:23; Matt. 19:28.

...Divisions

- A. VV. 1 - 16 Edom - Destruction
- B. VV. 17 - 21 Israel - Restoration
 - VV. 1 - 2 Yahweh's Purpose
 - VV. 3 - 4 Deceived by Self
 - VV. 5 - 6 Devastation
 - VV. 7 - 9 Deceived by Others
 - VV.10 -14 Immediate Cause - Edom's sin
 - VV.15 -16 Extermination
 - VV.17 -21 Israel's Restoration

Note this Great Truth:

No one can curse Israel with impunity, Gen. 12:3

No one can harm the city of Jerusalem without paying the supreme penalty, Zech. 12:2,3.

PROPHECY OF OBADIAH

Verse by Verse

Verse 1 The vision - The prophecy is something Obadiah literally saw. Originally prophets were called seers, 1 Sam. 9:9. Obadiah is now commissioned to speak what he saw. This is the Word of God. 2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16

Lord God - Adonai Yahweh = He who will be lords or rulers.

Concerning Edom - The Edomites descended from Esau (Gen. 36:1,8-9), and were therefore Israel's brethren as they were both the sons of Isaac. They have always been bitter enemies, Amos 1:11. They type those nations fitted for destruction.

Rumour - Report or tidings

Ambassador - Yahweh's ambassador who in this instant was Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Jer. 25:9-11 - servant of Yahweh. Ezek. 30:24 - sword of Yahweh.

The heathen - Nations

Verse 2 Small among the heathen - When God's power is contrasted with that of flesh they will see how futile is man (compare Jer. 49:14-16).

Verse 3 Thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock - Edom or Idumea was rocky mountainous country and many of its inhabitants dwelt in caves and holes dug out of the rocks in the hills. The city of Petra was in Edom. This area was considered by the inhabitants to be virtually inaccessible to invading armies and this added much to Edom's pride of heart.

Verse 4 Exalt thyself as the eagle - Yahweh answers their boasting and compares them to the eagle which makes its nest in inaccessible rocks impervious to attack.

Among the stars - This refers to the confidence they placed in the ruling powers of Babylon, Isa. 14:12-13. Cp. future, Matt. 24:29

Verse 5 Thieves. . . grapegatherers - Thieves would steal only sufficient for their purpose and would leave something. Grapegatherers would leave some grapes for the gleaners but Edom was to be left bare, absolute annihilation.

Verse 6 Searched out - Rendered by Ginsburg "stripped bare."

Hidden things- R.S.V. translates this "treasure", i.e. Edom was to be stripped bare and completely robbed of all its treasures. This was to be Yahweh's punishment.

Verse 7 All the men of thy confederacy - Edom had allied herself with Babylon but her confidence in this nation was short lived. It satisfies the principles of justice, that the very nation which the Edomites had urged on to destroy Jerusalem should in turn be used by Yahweh to punish Edom.

Verse 8 Mount of Esau - Literally, Mt. Seir. Seir and Esau have same meaning - "Hairy or rough." It is a very fitting application to Edom as a nation. Contrast the mountains of Dan. 2:35; Isa. 2:2.

Verse 9 Teman - The southern district of Idumea, Hab. 3:3

Cut off by slaughter - Edom's punishment commenced with Nebuchadnezzar, but was finally wiped out by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Verse 10 Violence against thy brother Jacob - The prophecy of Obadiah depicts the final outcome of the age-old controversy between the sons of Isaac. Edom's name is the first mentioned because of Esau's desire for that red thing (red pottage A.V.). His name was changed from Esau (hairy and rough) to Edom (red). This is an important principle for the word translated red is ADOM.

Hebrew	A.V. Trans.	Meaning
Adom	Man	Red
Adom	Adam	Red
Edom	Red	Red
Dam	Blood	Red

Esau sinned, here he was called Edom because he demonstrated his nature of Adam and as such his final punishment will be completed by the sacrifice of his typical descendents (Gog, Russia) by the shedding of blood (DAM). Cp. Ezek. 39; Isa. 63:1-3; Isa. 34:5-8; Ezek. 35:1-6. Note the important reference to blood (DAM) in these last three verses.

Cut off for ever - Contrary to some present day commentators this verse clearly indicates that Edom has been obliterated forever.

- Verse 11 Thou wast as one of them - When Babylon marched against Jerusalem and the city was breached, Edom also attacked as an enemy and a stranger. In this, Edom had rejected the ties of brotherhood with Jacob and therefore had no claim upon Yahweh's mercy.
- Verse 12 Neither shouldst thou have rejoiced - When Jacob was taken captive into foreign lands and as a stranger entered strange lands, Edom rejoiced, opening their mouth loudly and tumultuously against God's people. Now Yahweh would mock at Edom.
- Verse 13 Thou shouldst not - As Edom helped to desecrate the holy things of Yahweh, so Yahweh would bring calamity upon Edom.
- Verse 14 To cut off those of his that did escape - Edom helped to hunt the afflicted by cutting off those who fled from the face of the invader.
- VERSES 15 - 21 - PROPHECY AGAINST LATTER DAY EDOM (the sin power of the Gentiles), illustrating the sacrificial punishment of the Gentiles at the triumph of Zion.
- Verse 15 The day of the Lion - The day of triumph for the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah. Compare Joel 3:14; Mal. 4:5; Zech. 14:1.
- All the heathen - Heathen = nations. The prophecy is now enlarged and Edom is now presented as a type of the Gentile nations. (Cp. Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:15-17) In Acts 15:15-17 James substitutes "Gentiles" for Edom.
- Verse 16 All the heathen drink - Cp. Isa. 63:1-6 which contains a similar prophecy. Isaiah saw the victor of Edom from Bozrah, helping Israel, with his garments dyed red (Adom) with his blood (Dam) of the slain.
- Verse 17 Upon mount Zion shall be deliverance - From a scene of destruction and punishment, Obadiah turns to a vision of glorious deliverance. This is the burden of all the prophets of Israel, Joel 2:32; Isa. 46:13; Isa. 2: 2-4. This should be our burden also.
- Verse 18 And the house of Jacob - The restored and glorified nation of Judah constituting the nucleus of God's kingdom.

And the house of Joseph a flame - Exek. 37:16-19 shows Ephraim's house of Joseph. Zech. 9:13 shows the work of Ephraim as Yahweh's arrow and Judah his bow, referring to the regathering of Israel as they fight their way back to their land through the Gentile countries.

The house of Esau for stubble - Obadiah sees the Gentile nations under the title "house of Esau," as the combustible material which will be burnt by the flame of Ephraim which constitutes the fire in the "house of Jacob."

Not be any remaining - Utter destruction. Cp. Dan. 2:35,44

The Lord hath spoken it - The voice of authority - the divine seal - absolute certainty.

Verse 19 They of the south - The redeemed host, the cherubim of God. Christ and his brethren in militant manifestation proceeding out of Sinai: Hab. 3:3; Psa. 68:17-18; Deut. 33:1-2; Song of Solomon 3:6.

Shall possess the mount of Esau - Esau or Edom lay to the south east of Palestine. Philistia was to the south west. Ephraim and Samaria were to the north. Gilead was to the east.

Verse 20 Shall possess that of the Canaanites - Cp. Gen. 12:6; 13:7 with Zech. 14:21. The word Canaanite comes from a root Kana, signifying "to bend the knee," hence to pretend humility and thus a trader, it is thus rendered in the R.S.V. in Zech 14:21. Canaanites were a people cursed of God, Gen. 9:25. They are a fitting type of the spiritual traders - the ecclesiastical merchants of the world, Rev. 18:11. These will be destroyed and Israel shall become the head and not the tail, Deut. 28:13; Zech. 8:23. Thus Israel pushes in every direction, demanding a place to dwell.

All of these territories were then in the hands of enemies, so we see again God's promise of the ultimate triumph of Israel.

Verse 21 Saviours - These immortal saviours with the Lord Jesus Christ at their head will discipline and educate the Jews, thus turning ungodliness from Jacob, Rom. 11:25,26.

CONTRASTS REVEALED IN THIS PROPHECY

Esau.....Jacob
Edom.....Israel
Arid.....Well watered
Barren.....Productive
Repulsive.....Pleasing to the eye
Red Limestone.....White sandstone
Gog of the land of Magog.....The cherubim of glory