

**Text:** Obadiah 1-21

**Title:** Judgment Against Edom, Part 1

**Truth:** Obadiah illustrates several important Biblical principles.

**Date/Location:** Wednesday December 7, 2016 at FBC

## Introduction

The first four English words (two in Hebrew) announce the prophecy as a vision—a word of revelation often delivered by God through a dream-like method. We can think of a vision as more of a day-time thing and a dream as a night-time version of something similar.

The point of Obadiah is that Edom is going to be punished by God because of an attitude—pride—and an action—evil against their brother Israel.

## I. Bible Lessons from Obadiah

Obadiah is a prophecy that brings to life several things that the Bible teaches elsewhere.

A. **Your sin will find you out.** Numbers 32:23.

B. **Reaping and sowing.** Galatians 6:7-8 – Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Hosea 10:12-13 - Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.<sup>13</sup> You have plowed wickedness; you have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, because you trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your mighty men. Hosea 8:7 – "They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up. Proverbs 22:8 - He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, and the rod of his anger will fail.

C. **God will bring down the proud.** Matt. 11:23, 23:12; Luke 1:51-52; Luke 14:11, 18:14; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5.

D. **The Abrahamic covenant is not to be treated lightly.** Gen. 12:3 records God's promise that whoever curses or dishonors or reviles Abraham will be cursed. This promise applies to Abraham's people in later years, not just Abraham personally during his lifetime.

E. Encouragement for God's people that **God will judge His enemies** and the people of God will possess that which has been promised to them. This comes out in the last section of the book in verses 15-21.

**Text:** Obadiah 1-21

**Title:** Judgment Against Edom, Part 2

**Truth:** Edom was slated to be totally destroyed.

**Date/Location:** Wednesday December 14, 2016 at FBC

## **II. The Judgment on Edom, v. 1b-9**

- A. Call to the Nations for Battle against Edom, 1b. God is saying something regarding Edom, and a messenger took the message to the nations. Perhaps that messenger is Obadiah! But they take that message and call for their people to rise up in battle against Edom. It's like they are ready to take advantage of God's pronouncement and do His bidding for Him. Often, God does use human means to accomplish His purposes, even in judgment. (Many times too, however, He does not. For instance: Sodom and Gomorrah's judgment was supernatural in nature, with angels present at its final moments. Some of the end-times judgments in the Tribulation will be supernatural as well.)
- B. Abasement of Edom, 2. After God is done with Edom, he will be very small in the sight of surrounding nations. They will be hated greatly by those nations. Just what God does to elicit such a negative reaction from the nations is not told us in verse 2. It may be that their pride, verse 3, causes their neighbors to be sick of them.
- C. The pride of Edom and God's Judgment against It, 3-4. The pride of Edom had to do with its impregnable, fortress-like placement. This was a military-type of pride. Like those who "trust in horses and chariots," the people of Edom did not trust in the Lord. Their hearts were fully set on pride and they believed no one would be able to get at them in their mountain stronghold. God could, and He did.
  - 1. Note that their pride deceived them. This self-deception is a characteristic of pride—something that it does to its victims. In other words, we are our own victims when we are proud. Pride is self-centered. It doesn't look at things from other legitimate perspectives to see how it might attenuate its self-ward look. It ignores others in interest of elevating itself, but in the end it harms itself, as we saw in I.C. above. God will see to it that the proud are brought low.
  - 2. Their pride was not well placed, even though it might have seemed to be. Their fortifications were unable to save them from the LORD God. Even greater fortresses than they occupied could not stop God from destroying them. This is clear from the hyperbolic language that God

uses when he describes the possibility of Edom flying as high as an eagle and having their home among the stars.

#### D. Total Destruction, 5-6

Their calamity will be worse than average. A thief would come and steal until he was satisfied. He would probably leave some stuff. In fact, thieves probably in the normal case leave more than they take.

The same principle is expressed again, but now in agricultural terms. The grape-gatherers would have picked the best of the grapes, but naturally would not pick the vine perfectly clean. Something would have been left. The gleanings would have been left by law-abiding citizens in Israel so that the poor would have something to come along and pick.

God's destruction was slated to be worse than normal. Edom would be left with nothing. Everything he had would be "searched out" and "sought after."

#### E. Traitors will Join in the Destruction, 7.

1. How do we know they are traitors? Notice that they are described as people who belong to the Edomite **confederacy**. They were **at peace** with Edom. And they ate bread from Edom, so they probably had **friendly trade relations** with the nation of Edom.
2. These turn against Edom. The text says they "force you to the border", "deceive you," "prevail against you," and "lay a trap for you." That constitutes treachery.

#### F. Wise and Mighty will be Destroyed with the Rest, 8-9

1. Statesmen will be destroyed with commoners. There will be no wisdom and understanding left in the nation. Edom was a place known for wisdom, being at a crossroads of Europe, Africa, and India. See Jeremiah 49:7 and 49:20-22.
2. Warriors will be dismayed because their leadership is decapitated. Teman is the name of a descendant of Esau (Genesis 36:11, 15, 42) and where Job's friend Eliphaz was from (Job 2:1, 4:1, 15:1, 22:1, 42:7, 42:9). Since Job lived before Edom came into existence, the place name of Teman probably pre-existed Edom. Of course, there is an assumption here that Teman was the same place—perhaps there was a different place by the same name.

**Text:** Obadiah 1-21

**Title:** Judgment Against Edom, Part 3

**Truth:** Edom is to be destroyed because of its evil against Israel.

**Date/Location:** Wednesday December 21, 2016 at FBC

### **III. The Reason for the Judgment, v. 10-14**

#### **A. Summary of Charges and Judgment against Edom, 10**

1. The nation of Edom behaved violently toward Israel.
2. As a result, God was going to see to it that shame would be their portion and that they would be cut off forever. Those are stiff penalties—which tells us how seriously God takes His covenant relationship with Israel and promises to Abraham.

#### **B. Edom's Passive Support of Israel's Destruction, 11-12**

1. Standing by doing nothing, 11. The beginning of verse 11 indicates that they took the other side, at least “standing” there. The active devastation of Jacob's descendants seems to be done by strangers, that is, others who were not Edomites. Strangers carried away the army of Israel, and foreigners entered Jerusalem and cast lots for whose the spoil of Jerusalem would be. The end of verse 11 seems to suggest that Edom got in on the action as well, vying for spoils in the aftermath of siege and/or battle.
2. Rejoicing at Jacob's calamity, 12. Not only did Edom look on with evident approval at the situation against Israel, but they rejoiced over it in the day of their destruction. They spouted more of their pride when Jacob was distressed. Perhaps they boasted that they would not be defeated as easily as Judah because of their better natural defenses (v. 3). Note the prohibition against such rejoicing in Prov. 17:5, 24:17-18. Notice Job 31:29 as well. The opposite is done by the enemies of God and God's people (Psalm 35:15, 19). Love does not rejoice at evil (1 Cor. 13:6), so if Edom had any concern at all for its relative, it should not have jumped into the fray to assist Israel's enemies! It went against her with a heart full of joy (Ezekiel 36:5). That is sick, unregenerate thinking.
3. When did this occur? It could have been during the Babylonian incursions into Judah, which occurred in 605 B.C., 597 B.C., and 586 B.C., with the last the most likely since it was the most complete destruction. See Daniel 1:1-2 for the first; Ezekiel for the second; and Jeremiah 52:1-33 for the last. This agrees with Psalm 137:7 which

indicates that Edom had some negative things to say about Israel during its capture by Babylon. However, note Jeremiah 40:11 which indicates that during this destruction, there were Jews in Edom. That wouldn't make fit with the following verses. The best alternative to this is in 848-841 B.C. when the Philistines and Arabs invaded Judah during Jehoram's reign (roughly in the 850-840 B.C. timeframe). Assuming this timing, Obadiah is the earliest of the minor prophets and supplies material on the Day of the Lord to Joel and Amos.

#### C. Edom's Active Support of Israel's Destruction, 13-14

1. Looting, 13. The verses begin to show a more active support of the destruction of Israel. In this verse, Edom entered into the city when it was on the ropes; they gloated over its affliction; and they took part in its spoils. This was like kicking Israel when it was down.
2. Killing and Betrayal of Refugees, 14. The report just gets worse and worse. They stood at one or more key traveling points and "cut off" the Israelites who escaped. To "cut off" does not only mean "block the path to escape" but also "to kill." This was a common Old Testament phrase referring to any early demise. Plainly spoken, those trying to flee were killed. Others they captured and delivered as prisoners of war to the other nations who were defeating them. They could not trust their brother Edom to help them. They had no "underground railroad" away from the destruction.
3. We should read Numbers 20:14-21 at this point to see how Israel was refused simple passage through the land of Edom during its wilderness wandering. Judges 11:17-18 are a reminder of this event. Deut. 23:7 commanded Israel that they were not to hate the Edomites because they were blood relatives.

#### D. What does this imply for modern treatment of Israel?

1. None of the world is under the terms of the Mosaic Law today, so neither we nor Israel can claim promises (or curses) under that covenant as if they belong to us. There are general principles of blessing-for-obedience and curse-for-disobedience, but these are only general principles that must be held in tension with the principle that godly people today will suffer persecution and difficulties.
2. That said, I do believe that application of the Abrahamic covenant must be kept in mind by individuals and national governments in their international relations. This does not mean that we give a blanket "OK" to everything Israel does, but our government should ally itself

with Israel and help the nation against her enemies today. Our government should be a force for righteousness in Israel instead of an opponent.

3. Nations that mistreat Israel today will, I believe, taste of the same shame and destruction that Edom did (v. 10). Iran, for instance, is in a world of trouble with God for its anti-Israel stance. So are many of the nations that surround Israel today, and those farther away as well.

**Text:** Obadiah 1-21

**Title:** Judgment Against Edom, Part 4

**Truth:** The Day of the Lord is a time of judgment and blessing.

**Date/Location:** Wednesday December 28, 2016 at FBC

## **Review and Question**

Last time we examined 10-14 using a three-point outline: 1) Summary of Edom's bad activities and judgment, which was detailed in the following: 2) Edom's passive support of Israel's destruction; 3) Edom's active support of Israel's destruction.

The text of the NKJV says, "you should not have" or similar eight times! These occur in verses 12 (3x), 13 (2x), and 14 (2x). However, the English translations are divided over whether these should be translated as "you should not have" as if the events occurred in the past (KJV, NET, NKJ), or "do not"/"you should not" as if the command is prohibiting a potential action in the future (CSB, ESV, NAS, NIV).

The grammatical form is most often translated as a "don't start doing this" kind of prohibition of future action. Here is where context must influence translation, because verses 10-11 clearly set the context in the past. Edom has already done these despicable things to its brother Israel. Verses 12-14 simply expand on the charges that were summarized in verse 10, so it is legitimate to translate these as statements about what should not have been done in the past. Although the list of modern translations that translate it as a future prohibition is impressive, I am totally fine with the NKJV translation here. The NET study note offers a mediating position on the issue, suggesting that a future prohibition actually makes the situation more vivid, as if transporting the reader back in time to when it happened. It could be that some of the actions (like rejoicing) were still ongoing after the fact and the future prohibition is still relevant.

## **IV. The Day of the Lord, v. 15-21**

A. A Day of Destruction for Edom and the Nations, 15-16, 18

1. "You shouldn't have done it!" because, verse 15 explains using "for," the Day of the Lord (DOL) is near upon all nations. The Day of the Lord is when the Lord is going to step in and do some things that are not what normally happens. In this verse, the DOL is a day of wrath and judgment.

2. What you have sown, you will reap. Edom did not follow the golden rule (do to others as you would have them do to you), so God was going to demonstrate to them that they should have. They were going to get a taste of their own medicine. Actually it was going to be more than a taste!
  3. Someone "drank on my holy mountain," but we have to answer the question "who?" before we can carry on farther. Why? Because in verse 15 and prior, most of the references to Edom are in the second person singular. This reference in verse 16 is to "you all"—the second person plural. So there is some shift here. I think it refers to Edom with all the nations.
  4. They all had "drank on my holy mountain." This indicates that they had partaken of a celebratory drink in Zion at the defeat of their Jewish enemies.
  5. In the same way that they drank in celebration, they will "drink continually" the cup of God's judgment. They will drink it down until they are no more. The drink will cause them to disappear!
  6. Verse 18 teaches us that the tables will be turned. Whereas Israel was destroyed earlier, now Jacob and Joseph will be like the flaming fire of God's judgment, and Esau will be consumed until there is none left. Edom will be "burned to the ground."
  7. How do we know this? Because the Lord has spoken. It will be done.
- B. A Day of Deliverance for Judah, 17, 19-21
1. Where drinking in victory celebration had occurred on Mount Zion, instead there will be deliverance. It will be a holy place again, not defiled by foreign pagan invaders.
  2. Jacob—the tribe and the southern kingdom and the nation of Israel more generally will "possess their possessions." That is, they will regain control of the territory (and glory) that they had lost to Edom and the other invading nations.
  3. Sometimes "possess their possessions" is used in a spiritualized or allegorical way to speak about someone who "possesses" salvation rather than just "professes" salvation. But taking the passage literally, it is clear that verses 19-20 expand on this idea with possession of land and cities. It is not "spiritual" possession at all, but actual property that we are talking about.



4. Verses 19-20 detail what will come into the ownership and domination of Israel: mountains of Esau (far south), Philistia (very roughly Gaza strip area which abuts to Egypt), Ephraim (north of Dead Sea but south of Galilee), Samaria (similar to Ephraim), Gilead (other/eastern side of Jordan), land of the Canaanites to Zarephath (coastal city of Sidon way north of the sea of Galilee), and the cities of the south.

From north to south and east to west, the nation of Israel will regain power over its entire land. Some of those places were long held by Gentiles. The promises of God for an expansive territory are still to be fulfilled!

5. Verse 21 is somewhat enigmatic to me. Who are these saviors? They could be saints who rule with Christ as in Revelation 20:4; they could be powerful human leaders who come out of the Tribulation and are placed into positions of power by God. Whatever their identity, it is clear that they will come to Zion as friends of Israel. They will "judge" the mountains of Esau, which I believe means to "rule" or "govern" over them—not to execute justice on them because that will be done already.

6. The kingdom will belong to the Lord. This is future still to us today.

## **Conclusion**

This portion should bring great comfort to God's people. First, to the people of Israel, that their time of blessing will come. It should remind them to trust in the Lord who will bring their deliverance. It also reminds the church today that the enemies of God will be destroyed. This is satisfying in terms of divine justice, but also urges us on to proclaim the truth to the lost that they will suffer a similar fate as Edom, only eternally so.

MAP

**Text:** Various

**Title:** The Day of the Lord

**Truth:** More details on the Day of the Lord throughout Scripture.

**Date/Location:** Wednesdays January 4, 11, and 18, 2017 at FBC

## **I. The Day of the Lord as Judgment and Blessing**

Obadiah has mentioned the day of the Lord in verse 15 and that same "day" is mentioned in 23 other passages in Scripture. We will abbreviate "Day of the Lord" as DOL. In verse 15 and verse 17, there is a negative-but-positive motif that informs us as to the high-level structure of the DOL. It is:

A Day of Judgment: Obadiah 1:15-16, 18

A Day of Blessing: Obadiah 1:17, 19-21

## **II. How Long is the DOL?**

- A. The Day of the Lord is not a 24-hour day. We believe that numbered, evening-morning dark-light days in Genesis are 24 hours. But that doesn't at all mean that we think of all uses of "day" as 24-hour only. There are days like "back in the day," "in my day," etc. that refer to general periods of time.
- B. So it is with the DOL—it is a lengthy period of time promised in the prophets that will primarily bring God's judgment against God's enemies, but it will also bring a corresponding blessing on God's people.

## **III. When is the DOL?**

- A. All New Testament references and most OT references are clearly to a date that is still future to January 2017.
- B. There are a couple of texts that are debated as to whether they are future or not. These include the one in Amos 5:18-20, one in Ezekiel 13:5, and one in Lamentations 2:22. The Lamentations passage uses the phrase, "The day of the Lord's anger," so it is not technically the same phrase as just "the day of the Lord." With the others, it is difficult to see a strictly future interpretation.
- C. My understanding in a practical way is that certainly almost all, if not absolutely all, DOL passages are future. Any past 'instances' of DOL judgments are not directly relevant to us since they are done. If they did occur, we could consider them as foreshadowings of *the* DOL to come.

This means that the DOL exists as a technical term for a period of history in which God manifests both judgment and blessing.

- D. All chronological considerations would indicate that the DOL comes as a thief just after the rapture of the church (1 Thess. 5:2), continues through the millennial kingdom era, and concludes with the dissolution of the old heaven and earth (2 Peter 3:10).

#### **IV. What Characterizes the DOL?**

Almost all of the passages refer to the DOL as having negative or judgment content. For example, Joel 3:14 discusses the judgment of God over "multitudes in the valley of decision." The decision is not a "decision" by those judged, but the decision by the Judge Himself.

- A. An evaluation judgment of believers. 1 Cor. 5:5
- B. A destructive judgment on unbelievers. Isaiah 13:9
- C. A time of blessing for believers, 2 Cor. 1:14.
- D. A time that includes spectacular heavenly disturbances, Acts 2:20.
- E. A time that includes the destruction of the first creation, 2 Peter 3:10. This impending future destruction motivates us to live a holy life.
- F. A period that is preceded by the coming of Elijah the prophet (Mal. 4:5). By this we know that it has not yet come.
- G. List of passages: Isa. 2:12,13:6,9, Jer. 46:10, Ezek. 13:5,30:3, Joel 1:15,2:1,11,31,3:14, Amos 5:18,20, Obad. 1:15, Zeph. 1:7,14, Zech. 14:1, Mal. 4:5, Acts 2:20, 1 Cor. 5:5, 2 Cor. 1:14, 1 Thess. 5:2, 2 Pet. 3:10.

#### **V. The Phrase "The Day of the Lord" and its Inherent Meaning**

We should note that the "Day of the Lord" is a phrase that is in a grammatical construction where the "day" is characterized by the "of" part. It is a day characterized by the Lord. That is, this is not the "Lord's Day" as in Sunday, but it is the period of time characterized by the action of God.

Today, in the church age, our day is characterized by God's providential action and normal means; it could also be characterized as the time of the Gentiles and the world under the domination of the evil one.

But during *that* time, it will be the day in which the Lord is openly and supernaturally active. It is the Day of the Lord's judgment and blessing and activity, not the activity of the Gentiles or the devil or anyone else!

## VI. Zechariah 14 and the DOL

- A. This passage indicates that the day of the Lord includes the following key events:
1. A battle against Jerusalem with the Jews on the losing side (v. 1-2).
  2. The coming of Christ to the Mount of Olives and the Lord's deliverance of the city (v. 3-5).
  3. Some strange effects will occur with daylight (v. 6-7).
  4. A special river will flow out of Jerusalem (v. 8).
  5. The Lord will be king over all the earth (v. 9).
  6. Geographical changes will occur (v. 10).
  7. Restoration of the city of Jerusalem (v. 11).
  8. The destruction of the people who fought against Jerusalem (v. 12-15; this coincides with #2 above).
  9. The remaining nations of the earth will come up to Jerusalem to worship the King=God the Son (v. 16-19).
  10. Everything around Jerusalem will be ceremonially clean (v. 20-21).
- None of this has yet occurred, so it must be still future.
- B. "In that day" of verse 20 refers back to the day of the LORD in verse 1. Because of this, it seems that the DOL must include all the events listed, from the Tribulation through the millennial kingdom. Recall that Peter adds the information that the day of the Lord includes the destruction of the old creation (2 Peter 3:10). As such, it is a very lengthy period. In fact, it is 1007 years long, roughly speaking.
- C. Read the passage and consider its details carefully.
1. Another holocaust-like event is going to happen in Jerusalem, but there will be a remnant that survives.
  2. His feet = the feet of Jesus. Isaiah 29:6. The earthquake may be the same one as in Revelation 16:18-19 at Armageddon. He returns to the Mount of Olives. This is the very place where he described some of these events to the disciples near the end of his first coming (Matt. 24:3).
  3. It is not clear just what may cause the daylight effects in verses 6-7, but obviously the text is saying that a strange light will be experienced

during the evening time, when that would be very abnormal. I imagine that the light might look different than normal light (like before or after a storm when things look "green"), and the feeling of the place will be strange. Now correlate this with the opposite—the darkness that occurred when Christ hung on the cross in the middle of the day, at the height of the sun's strength.

4. The river here is where we get "peace like a river" songs and the like. It sounds similar to the living water of John 4:10-11 or the rivers of living water in John 7:37-39, although those are obviously spiritual realities. It is similar to the river mentioned in Rev. 22:1-2, but the latter is part of the new heavens and new earth, not in the millennial kingdom.
5. Matt 6:9 tells us to pray for God's kingdom to come. Zech. 14:9 prophesies the answer to that prayer will come when the Lord returns.
6. The geographical details, particularly in verses 4 and 10, are quite stunning, but such changes are no problem for God.

Consider the example of the 2010 8.8 earthquake in Chile.<sup>1</sup> Highlights: Some seacoast was raised 8 feet. A city called Concepcion moved 10 feet to the west. The capital city of Santiago moved 11 inches to the west-southwest. Other cities move significantly as well. The land will be leveled several miles around Jerusalem instead of being hilly as it is now.

7. The capital city of Gods' kingdom will be Jerusalem, and the Jews will live there safely, without fear of destruction. This is unprecedented, at least since the time of Solomon when the city and nation was unified. During some reigns of the divided kingdom the city was secure as well, but since 586 B.C. when Babylon destroyed it, it has been largely in trouble for 2500 years. The most recent 60 years have been quite abnormal, but even still, the city is split into several quarters and violence surrounds Israel.
8. The destruction that is mentioned in verses 12-15 is a gross, seemingly supernatural one. Some of the enemies will dissolve or melt down, and others will turn against themselves, which was a common phenomenon in OT history (1 Samuel 14:20). Judah will participate in the battle, and will gain a huge amount of spoils from the victory that God delivers to them. A lot of Gentile wealth will be converted into Jewish hands once again, just like at the Exodus. This will be

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.livescience.com/6795-huge-chilean-earthquake-raised-country-coast.html>

somewhat like a payment for the wrongs done to Israel over the centuries.

9. The feast of tabernacles will be held in Jerusalem every year. It is held after Rosh Hashanah and the Day of Atonement. Gentile nations will be welcome to come and worship God there along with keeping the Feast of Tabernacles. In fact, they will be obligated to do so. If they do not, they will receive the penalty of famine, and perhaps another kind of plague different from the famine but is specially designated for those nations that ignore His call to worship.

We should note that Gentiles will be doing Jewish worship. They will have to recognize the Jewish holidays, for there will be no "separation of church from state." The only acceptable religion will be that which centers on the true and living God and His Son Jesus the King.

10. The kingdom will be a time of purity from sin. Pagan Canaanites will not be present in the house of the Lord. Everything in town, so to speak, will be considered ceremonially clean. There will be no "common" vessels. The horse bells will be detailed with inscriptions recognizing the holiness of God. This speaks to the cleanliness of the area, but it also may indicate that abundance of sacrifices, so that a huge number of vessels are required to cook them.

## **Conclusion**

The book of Obadiah is all about God's judgment against Edom. That nation is an archenemy of God's people, their nemesis, but they will be destroyed. They received such words of condemnation many times throughout the Old Testament.

Because Obadiah ends with some references to the Day of the Lord, we spent a couple of sessions learning just what it is. It should both cause us to take stock of ourselves, as well as thank God for the great things He is going to do and is in the process of preparing for right now.

MAP