

Obadiah 1:15-21

Obadiah, Part 2 of 2: The Mount of Escape.

Proposition: *The Mount of Escape is Christ's Kingdom of Holiness.*

I. Introduction: The Enemy Without and Within.

- a. *Heeding the Warning.*
 - i. The enemy may have fallen, but sin remains.
 - ii. So long as sin remains, the enemy lives on.
- b. *Escaping the Judgement.*
 - i. Where the enemy lives on, judgement is coming.
 - ii. Before judgement comes, God offers an escape.

II. Justice on Sin: The Need of Escape. (vv. 15, 16)

- a. All need escape because *all have sinned and deserve justice.* (v. 16)
 - i. Sin opposes God as a *contradiction of life and godliness.*
 1. Indulgent pride where God calls for holiness. (Ezk. 22:30)
 2. Malicious violence where brotherhood calls for love. (Is. 5:7)
 - ii. Sin merits proportional punishment—*everlasting death.*
 1. Death: The Slaughter of the Body.
 2. Satan and Self: The Preliminary Trial of the Soul
 3. Divine Justice: The Last Trial of the Soul.
- b. All need escape because the *Day of the LORD's justice is near.* (v. 15)
 - i. On that Day, God will deal in justice with *his enemies.*
 - ii. On that Day, God will deal in mercy with *his people.*

III. Kingdom of Holiness: The Nature of Escape. (vv. 17-21)

- a. *The Mount of Escape is holy.* (v. 17a)
 - i. The mountain being defined exclusively as holy means that *sin is the sole criterion of exclusion* from the mountain.
 1. Living as though God doesn't see, can't act, won't judge, excludes one from escaping justice.
 2. Whether one is raised among God's enemies or his people, there is only one mountain of escape. (cf. Jn. 18:28)
 - ii. Therefore, holiness being the defining feature of the mountain means that *holiness is the defining feature of its inhabitants.*
 1. Keeping covenant with God—even when our enemies triumph.
 2. Loving our fellow man—even our enemies. (Je. 49:11)
- b. *The Mount of Escape is a kingdom of savior-citizens.* (vv. 17b-21a)
 - i. *Reclaiming all* that the enemy destroyed and *more.*
 1. What was lost will be regained. (v. 19; Ps. 51:18)
 2. What was never had will be possessed. (vv. 20, 21a)
 - ii. *Reunited in the likeness of holiness.*

1. Once divided, now united against sin. (vv. 17, 18; Hb. 12:22ff)
 2. Once a mortal, now a divine kingdom. (v. 21b; Rv. 11:15)
- c. *The Mount of Escape is a kingdom ruled by the LORD.* (v. 21b)
 - i. It is a *kingdom of heaven* because he is a divine king. (Ps. 50:2)
 1. He rightly exalted above earthly authority. (cf. vv. 3, 4)
 2. He is wholly capable of saving his people. (Ro. 11:26, 27)
 - ii. It is a *kingdom for men* because he is a human king. (Mt. 2:2, Zeph. 9:9, 10; Rv. 11:15)
 1. He humbly serves those who were once his enemies. (Jn. 12:15)
 2. A king perfectly imaging God in the flesh. (Hb. 1:13)

IV. Concluding Applications: A Mount of Escape for Today.

- a. *First, remember Edom!*
 - i. Esau lost everything. Edom is gone. And why? Because *God pours out divine justice on those who vainly hope in themselves.* Neither power, wisdom, nor the world could save them from the punishment which the guilt of their mountain of sins deserves.
 - ii. **Therefore, don't pride yourself an escape God has not offered.** There is only one escape, and it is holy. *Consider how dreadful that end is* which for the sinful soul knows no end, Death that does not die, misery from which escape is neither offered nor possible.
- b. *Second, flee to Zion!*
 - i. You are a sinner. God's justice demands you die, but *God's mercy has opened his holy mountain for your escape.* There, he will save you through the righteous reign of the King and restore all your sin devoured. There, you shall dwell secure, both happy and holy.
 - ii. **Therefore, slay your pride and humble yourself** before this humble King. Not one brick of your crumbling kingdom can come with you. Leave it behind for Mount Zion; leave it now! *Stop living for a world of stubble*, but be conformed in holiness to the image of Christ.
- c. *Third, worship the King!*
 - i. On Mount Zion, *the triumph of the savior-citizens shall renew into years interminable, untiring, ever-expanding* in its unity, beauty, strength, wisdom, fullness, and glory as we look to him who *is* unity, beauty, strength, wisdom, fullness, and glory.
 - ii. **Therefore, sing of his unshakable kingdom!** Magnify his irrevocable authority, his awesome righteousness, his perfect power, his infinite wisdom, his eternal glory! *Marvel everlastingly as we sing forever of his grace* that brought us up from the winepress of wrath and into the City of Peace, where the glory of our triune God dwells incarnate forever in the Savior-King, Jesus Christ.

Amen!