

## Obadiah

Pastor Byron Chesney 12/03/2017 Berean Sunday School Class Highland Baptist Church

### † Obadiah 1:1-21

1 The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.

Obadiah is a common name in the Bible, in fact, it is believed there are 13 different Obadiah's mentioned in the Scriptures. The name Obadiah means; "**Servant of Jehovah.**" The Obadiah mentioned here is the 4<sup>th</sup> of the 12 minor prophets. It is believed that he lived in the same time period as Jeremiah.

We do not have any details about the prophet himself, he rises out of the captivity of Babylon to declare the LORD's vengeance upon Edom. It has been said that the Book of Obadiah is the Jews favorite Book. You will understand why as we continue through the rest of it.

Obadiah is the shortest Book of the Old Testament with only 21 verses and 669 words. The Prophet starts out by telling us that he had a "**vision.**" The word vision means "**a revelation, or an oracle.**" That simply means that God spoke to him and revealed to him things that would be occurring in the future.

He states that "**we have heard a rumour from the LORD.**" The word **rumour** right here is not the same as you and I think about when we hear rumor. We think it is something akin to **gossip**, but the Hebrew word this is translated from means "**report.**" You could just as well say, "**it has been reported.**" Or as Isaiah said: "**Who hath believed our report?**" it comes from the same word.

This prophecy the LORD has given to Obadiah is one concerning Edom. We do not have to guess at who or what Edom is, the Bible clearly tells us in:

**Genesis 25:29-34:** And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: 30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. 31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. 32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? 33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

Also in **Genesis 36:1** Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

**Genesis 36:8-9:** Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom. 9 And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir:

So Esau is Edom and the Edomites is the nation that sprang from Esau.

Hi brother, Jacob, was more sophisticated and was loved by his mother. Esau traded his birthright for a bowl of pottage and Jacob received the inheritance of their father which highly enraged Esau. In **Genesis 27:41** And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

Now, one thing that a lot of people have a hard time with in the Bible is that God says that he loved Jacob but he hated Esau. You will find that in **Malachi 1:2-4:** 2 I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, 3 And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. 4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

Just in case you thought that might be a typo in the Bible we are reminded of it again in the New Testament in the Book of **Romans 9:13** As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

We find here the sovereignty of God. He chose to bless Jacob and his descendants and not Esau and his descendants. And he did this before they were ever born, not after they were born. It wasn't based on anything good that Jacob did or anything bad that Esau did, it was God's sovereign will.

Now, certainly after Esau was born he rejected everything that was Godly. He did not live a life pleasing unto the LORD. He was bent on destroying his brother and shaming his family. He went to a pagan land and married a not just one but two pagan, heathen women: **Genesis 26:34-35:** And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: 35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

The Hittites were from the Land of Canaan and were enemies of the Hebrews. In fact, the LORD had commanded the Israelites to destroy the Hittites. So you can only imagine the anguish this brought to the family of Esau and how it displeased the LORD as well.

It also appears that Esau, in his own broken way, made an attempt to please his parents by marrying yet another woman, his Uncle Ishmael's daughter Mahalath. **Genesis 28:6-9:** When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; 7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram; 8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; 9 Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

Of course, Ishmael was the illegitimate son born unto Abraham by his handmaiden, Hagar. But this was an odd thing for Esau to do because the descendants of Ishmael were outcasts and had fought against Isaac and also since Ishmael was the son of a bondservant, none of his children would inherit land. This is just another example of Esau acting upon emotions and not being concerned with the spiritual things of the LORD.

2 Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised. 3 The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? 4 Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

And here we find the root of all of Esau's problems; pride. The Edomites saw themselves differently than everyone else saw them. The LORD had made them small in numbers, small in power, and small in the eyes of their enemies. He did this all because of their pride.

The Edomites were a wild and rough people. They had taken to the high mountain places of Seir and lived in the rocks, daring anyone to try and take them out. The passage that people would have to take to get into the Land of Canaan would be a narrow valley at the base of Mount Seir. The King's Highway ran through there and the Edomites strongly guarded the passageway. You would have to either pay them off or fight them to pass through. To get a good picture of this all we need to do is read what happened when Moses tried to lead the Children of Israel through that valley.

**Numbers 20:14-21:** And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us:

15 How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers:

16 And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we *are* in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border:

17 Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's *high way*, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.

18 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.

19 And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without *doing* any thing *else*, go through on my feet.

20 And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand. 21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.

Because the Edomites would not allow the Israelites to pass through by Mount Seir, Moses had to lead them through a very long and hard detour around Mount Hor by the Red Sea. You can read about that in **Numbers 21**. It was this detour where the people complained and God sent fiery serpents among the people and killed a bunch of them.

The Edomites boasted of their power and ability to live in the high places. They have deceived themselves into thinking that they are mightier than they really are. They challenge God and ask "**Who shall bring me down to the ground?**" – So, because of their pride the LORD says "**I bring thee down.**"

May I say to you that pride is the catalyst behind every sin? It is because of pride that Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. Thinking they could have the same knowledge as God and exalt themselves. God's Word informs us right quick about the truth of pride: **Proverbs 16:18** *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*

5 If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave *some* grapes?

Under normal circumstances their enemies would have at least left something behind but when God causes their enemies to invade and destroy they will completely wipe them out. There will be nothing left. Not even a single grape left on the vine.

This same language is used in the Book of

**Jeremiah 49:7-10**

7 Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; *Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?*

8 Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time *that* I will visit him.

9 If grapegatherers come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough.

10 But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and he *is* not.

6 How are *the things* of Esau searched out! *how* are his hidden things sought up!

7 All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee *even* to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, *and* prevailed against thee; *they that eat thy bread* have laid a wound under thee: *there is none* understanding in him.

In their pride they were fooled by those that they thought were their allies. They were only in confederacy with them long enough to deceive them and then turn on them and lay waste to them.

8 Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise *men* out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? 9 And thy mighty *men*, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

The LORD says that he will dismay all of the wise men in Edom. Those that usually have good sense and an understanding will be completely dismayed and confounded, leading to their destruction and the slaughter of Edom.

Make no mistake friend, those that think they are wiser than God will be brought down. We see this same truth taught in the New Testament:

**1 Corinthians 1:25-29**

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

The Edomites thought they were wiser, craftier, more cunning, and undefeatable, but the LORD will show them that they are nothing but mere fools. **“How the mighty are fallen!”**

Men today are not much different than the Edomites. They think they know it all, that they are smarter than God. Let me tell you something friend, you may think you are some big shot, some smart guy, but we will all bow in His presence one day.

**Romans 14:11-12** For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

10 For *thy* violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. 11 In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou *wast* as one of them.

Do you remember the verse we read at the beginning from **Genesis 27:41** And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

While Esau himself may not have went through with his promise to slay his brother, we find that his spirit of hatred was passed on through his descendants and when they had the opportunity to do damage to Israel, they seized upon it. The spirit of Edom is much like the spirit of Babylon. It's an ungodly, defiant, prideful, destructive spirit.

Because of Edom's hatred toward Israel, the LORD prophesied through many prophets concerning their utter destruction. **A few are:**

#### **Ezekiel 25:12-14:**

12 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.

14 And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.

#### **Ezekiel 35:1-9**

1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it,

3 And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I *am* against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate.

4 I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

5 Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed *the blood of the* children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time *that their* iniquity *had* an end:

6 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.

7 Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth.

8 And I will fill his mountains with his slain *men*: in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword.

9 I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

#### **Isaiah 34:10-15**

10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

11 But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none *shall be* there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, *and* a court for owls.

14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

The Prophet Joel mentions this: **Joel 3:19:** Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence *against* the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

12 But thou shouldst not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldst thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldst thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

13 Thou shouldst not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldst not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid *hands* on their substance in the day of their calamity;

14 Neither shouldst thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

In the days of Jeremiah when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah and destroyed Jerusalem and took the inhabitants as captives, the Edomites rejoiced over the destruction and carnage. That is why the Psalmist says in **Psalms 137:7** Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase *it, rase it, even* to the foundation thereof.

Any of the inhabitants of Judah that managed to escape the Chaldeans and make it to the land of the Edomites, were harshly treated. They were stopped not allowed to escape and then given over to the enemy.

15 For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. 16 For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

The LORD promises that Edom will be repaid for all they have done to Israel. They will be destroyed so badly that it will be as if they had never existed. That's what you call "wiping someone off the face of the earth."

The same things that Edom did to the Israelites was done to them just 5-years later. After Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, five years later he came to the land of the Edomites and crushed them too and destroyed them. They received a just recompense for their reward.

Notice the use of the term "[the day of the LORD](#)." Not only was this prophecy meant for the days of Edom but also for a time in the future when the LORD Jesus will return in His Second Coming and take vengeance upon all His enemies and the enemies of His people. While the inhabitants of Edom were destroyed and scattered, the spirit of the Edomites still lives on.

17 But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. 18 And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be *any* remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

While Edom and all other wicked nations will be destroyed, the house of Jacob (Israel) will flourish forever.

By mentioning both Jacob and Joseph it symbolizes the entire nation of Israel. Jacob symbolizing the 2 Southern Tribes of Judah; **Judah** and **Benjamin**, and Joseph symbolizing the 10 Northern Tribes of Israel; **Asher, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Manasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon**, and **Zebulun**.

The fire and flame are symbols of purification. Israel will purify the land by completely wiping out the nation of Edom. It says [the house of Esau for stubble](#), meaning just like our empty works will be burnt up like wood, hay, and stubble.

19 And *they of the south* shall possess the mount of Esau; and *they of the plain the Philistines*: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

20 And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which *is* in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south.

21 And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

The promises of God will hold true. All the lands that he promised would be controlled by Israel and Edom would be laid to waste.

The Edomites remained enemies of the Jews for many years. When the Grecians became the dominant world power the language turned to Greek and the Edomites were called Idumeans.

Then, during the Maccabean revolt, the Edomites were forced to convert to Judaism. Just as with any people that are forced to do something, they loathed it. The Edomites would continue to despise the Jews.

Then the Romans came along and defeated the Grecians and they appointed an Idumean (Edomite) to be **King of the Jews**, that man's name was Herod.

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† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version