

Obadiah 1:1-16

Obadiah, Part 1 of 2: The Enemy Falls.

Proposition: *However strong, clever, and organized they may be, God will judge his enemies in justice.*

I. Introduction: A Timely Letter to the Church About the Enemy.

- a. *A Faltering Kingdom.*
 - i. A Divided Kingdom. (1 Ki. 12; 1 Ki. 14:21-30)
 - ii. A Declining Kingdom. (2 Ki. 8:16-24)
- b. *A Fierce Enemy.*
 - i. Jacob and Esau. (Ge. 25:19-34; Ge. 27; Ge. 32, 33)
 - ii. Judah and Edom. (Nu. 20:14-21; 1 Sa. 22:9; Ps. 137)
- c. *A Faithful Servant.*
 - i. The *Servant* of the LORD.
 - ii. The *Prophet* of the LORD.

II. Justice Foretold: The Report of the Enemy's Downfall. (vv. 1-9)

- a. *Conspiracy: God turns alliances into a trap. (vv. 1, 5-7)*
 - i. God's justice at *the hand of the enemy's allies.*
 1. Though the nations muster for war, God sends them. (v. 1)
 2. Though at peace with their allies, God incites them. (v. 7)
 - ii. God's purpose is *the ruin of the enemy's pride.*
 1. Their downfall will spell total humiliation. (v. 2)
 2. Their downfall will spell total desolation. (vv. 5, 6)
- b. *Counterstrike: God uses wisdom, strength against them. (vv. 2-4, 7-9)*
 - i. God turns *wisdom into folly.*
 1. Gullibility proves they can outwit neither man nor God. (v. 7c)
 2. Folly ensures that trust in their strength is misplaced. (vv. 8, 9)
 - ii. God turns *strength to weakness.*
 1. God uses their mighty walls to cut them off. (v. 3)
 2. God uses their lofty heights to cast them down. (v. 4)

III. Justice Required: The Reason for the Enemy's Downfall. (vv. 10-14)

- a. *Violence and Idleness: The failure of brotherly love. (vv. 10, 11)*
 - i. The enemy *violently joined* in their brother's calamity. (v. 10)
 1. Rooted in its particularly hateful greed.
 2. Fruited in its particularly brutal cruelty.
 - ii. The enemy *idly watched* their brother's calamity. (v. 11)
 1. Rooted in breaking the divine covenant.
 2. Fruited in breaking the fraternal covenant.
- b. *The Face of Hatred: The expression of brotherly hatred. (vv. 12-14)*
 - i. Hatred revealed in the enemy's *exultant attitude.* (vv. 12, 13b)

- ii. Hatred exercised in the enemy's *vicious plundering.* (v. 13a, c)
- iii. Hatred climaxing in the enemy's *pitiless carnage.* (v. 14)

IV. Justice Done: The Realization of the Enemy's Downfall. (vv. 15, 16)

- a. *Near Justice: God will punish the enemy on the Day of the LORD.*
 - i. Every little justice now declares the *ultimate justice to come.* (v. 15a)
 - ii. Every fallen foe proves the *final fall of all God's enemies.* (v. 15a)
- b. *Proportional Justice: God will punish the enemy justly for its sin.*
 - i. They reveled in *mercilessness*, so God will *show no mercy.* (v. 15)
 - ii. They got drunk *mocking wrath* but shall *drink wrath forever.* (v. 16)

V. Concluding Applications: Obadiah in the 21st Century Church.

- a. *First, a warning against putting truth in flesh—ourselves or others.*
 - i. Whatever our reasons for joining with this treacherous world, it will betray all who trust in it in God's providential justice. **Therefore,** *expect the world to fail you* and you will scarcely fall into its trap. *Expect all friendly relations outside the Church to sour*—even those we least expect.
 - ii. However strong or clever we think we are, God is unimpressed, melting strength to weakness and wisdom to folly, humbling man's pride and ensuring justice prevails over evil. **Therefore,** *flee all exultation in your own strength or wisdom,* lest you become like treacherous Edom—and like the world—under God's just condemnation.
- b. *Second, an encouragement to hope in the God of justice.*
 - i. However much the enemy ignores or downplays the threatenings of wrath, God makes no empty threat, and he will punish sin. Moreover, however much the enemy despises and doubts the promises of Christ, God keeps his word, and they will come to pass. **Therefore,** *don't pay attention to the mockery of the world,* but the promises of Christ. *Pay attention to Scripture's reports*—not the news media.
 - ii. However far away the Day of justice seems, or however mighty, wise, or well-organized the enemies of the Church may be, God's judgement is coming speedily, and our deliverance will be the cutting off of all God's enemies—a proportional and near justice. **Therefore,** *never take justice into your own hands,* but wait for the vengeance of the LORD.