

The Theology of Obadiah

Biblical Theology 101

Book of Obadiah; Coast School of Theology; Pastor Earl Miles; 7-15-18

Who is Obadiah?

- Obadiah means ‘worshiper of Yahweh’ or ‘Servant of Yahweh’
- Prophet from the Southern Kingdom of Judah
- Probably not of the royal or priestly line since his father’s name is not mentioned

What is the occasion of this book?

- Edomites were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob whose descendants were Israel
- The conflict between Jacob and Esau continued between Israel and Edom (Genesis 25-27)
- Edom earlier had refused to let Israel pass through its land on the way to the Promised Land (Numbers 20:14-20)
- Obadiah references (10-14) an invasion of Jerusalem which was approved of and aided by Edom (appears to be the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC) (2 Kings 25)
- God’s pronouncements of judgment on other nations are most often directed against Edom
- Babylon attacked Edom in 553 BC.
- See Psalm 137; Jeremiah 49:7-22; Lamentations 4:22; Ezekiel 35; Amos 1:6-9

How is the book structured? (Outline)

1. Judgment on Edom (1-14)
 - Reasons for Judgment (3, 10-14)
2. Judgment on the Nations (15-21)
 - Extinction of the Enemies of Israel (15, 16, 18)
 - Exaltation of Israel and the Kingdom of God (17, 19-21)

What is the theology of Obadiah?

1. God sees offenses against His people as offenses against Him. (13)

- The judgment of God on Edom (1:4, 8, 18)
- What we do (sin) to God’s people is a great offense to God. (Acts 9:4)
- God is not oblivious to how people sin against us. (Matthew 25:31-46)
- ‘I will curse those who curse you.’ – Genesis 12:3

2. God will exercise justice for every offense. (15)

- God judges evil. – Exodus 34:6-7
- Sinners are not excused from their sin by the doctrine of God’s sovereignty.

- Sinners are not excused from their sin by being instruments in God's hand to bring punishment on others. – Jeremiah 25:12

3. *God will exercise poetic justice or a justice in kind. (15)*

- God's judgment is based on what people have done. - Romans 2:5-6
- 'Eye for an eye.' – Leviticus 24:19-20

4. *It is the pride of man that robs them of the mercy of God and brings judgment. (3-4)*

- Pride goes before a fall. – Proverbs 16:18
- Rejoicing over the calamity of others is displeasing to God. – Proverbs 24:17-18
- Taking advantage of those who are suffering is displeasing to God.

5. *God sends prophets to warn of coming judgment in His mercy and compassion. (10)*

- God's prophesies of judgment are a call to repentance for mercy. - Jonah 3:4-5, 10; 2 Chronicles 36:15-16

6. *God sends prophets to proclaim coming judgment on His enemies to encourage His people. (17, 20-21)*

- God's prophesies of judgment are a revelation of His justice and hatred for sin.
- God's prophesies of judgment are answers to the prayers of His saints. – Revelation 6:9-11
- God's prophesies of judgment are the expression of His commitment to judge every sin, in His timing and in His way.

7. *There is a day of judgment coming on all the nations. (15)*

8. *God's people will possess the earth. (17)*

- The survival of Israel (1:17, 19-20)
- The victory of Mount Zion and the kingdom of the LORD (1:17, 21)
- One day, God's kingdom will envelope the earth.
- God will destroy those who oppose Him and His people and will exalt His kingdom forever.

Conclusion: Why does God tell us beforehand that judgment is coming?

- To call us to repentance so we can receive mercy. – Ezekiel 33:11
- To make it clear that He hates evil and will deal justly in His time. (see Psalm 11)
- To encourage His suffering people not to lose heart and to know that deliverance will come and His perfect kingdom will be established. – 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10