

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 8-26-12 PM NOTES  
OBADIAH  
#33 in Series, "The Glory of God in the Old Testament"

**Obadiah 1:1a (NKJV)** "The vision of Obadiah."

Introduction: A Closer Look at Pride

The essence of pride is living independently of God.

**Isaiah 14:13-14 (NKJV)** "<sup>13</sup>For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'"

**1 Timothy 3:6 (NKJV)** "not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil."

**Proverbs 6:16-17a (NKJV)** "<sup>16</sup>These six *things* the Lord hates, yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him: <sup>17</sup>A proud look..."

**Proverbs 13:10 (NKJV)** "By pride comes nothing but strife, but with the well-advised *is* wisdom."

**Proverbs 16:5 (NKJV)** "Everyone proud in heart *is* an abomination to the Lord; *though they join* forces, none will go unpunished."

**James 4:6 (NKJV)** "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: '*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*'"

"At every stage of our Christian development, and in every sphere of our Christian discipleship, pride is our greatest enemy and humility our greatest friend."

—John Stott

**Proverbs 16:18 (NKJV)** "Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

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A. Anti-Semitism Brings God's Judgment

**Genesis 12:1-3 (NKJV)** "<sup>1</sup> Now the Lord had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'"

B. Pride Comes Before a Fall

**Proverbs 16:18 (NKJV)** "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

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Let me tell you a true story. A husband and wife had twin sons. They were obviously fraternal twins and not identical because they were as different as day and night in appearance, appetite, and appeal. The older brother was closest to his father while the younger brother was closer to his mother. The older of the twins was an adventurer, a hunter and a man’s man. The younger brother kept close to home and loved to roam the green pastures, sit by the stream and care for the sheep. The father was a mild mannered man with a carnal bend and was drawn to the older son and loved the fresh game that the older son would kill and cook for him. The mother of these twins was drawn to the younger son and she was quite manipulative. It seemed that the younger son was by far the brighter and more ambitious of the two. The older son grew up to love the things of the world and spiritual things meant nothing to him. The younger son (though manipulative and calculating like his mother) had a love for eternal things that were not tied just to this world.

As you would expect, the two boys didn’t get along too well with one another. The younger twin took advantage of his brother’s worldly bend and bought the birthright of the first born from him for a bowl of lentil soup. The older son cared nothing for his birthright; he lived for the moment and at that moment in time he was hungry and a bowl of hearty lentil soup was more appealing to him than his birthright. A little later, the youngest son (being coached by his mother) deceived the almost blind aged father to give the youngest son the blessing of the firstborn. This deception, when discovered by the older brother, was the last straw. He felt that his younger brother had not only taken his birthright, but now had stolen the father’s blessing on the first born. The “bad blood” between the brothers intensified to the point that the younger brother fled for his life.

Both boys eventually married. The older brother married a local girl who was did not share the faith of his parents. The younger son chose a bride from among his mother’s extended family who had some knowledge of the truth – a knowledge they had gained from the testimony of the godly grandfather of the younger twin.

Over time, two nations developed from the families of these two boys. These two nations were related by blood but separated by almost everything else. Just as the brothers had not gotten along, neither did their descendents. Just as the older brother had hated and resented the younger brother, so did his descendents hate the descendents of his younger brother.

That is the historical background of the book of Obadiah. The parents were Isaac (the son of Abraham) and Rebekkah. The twin boys were Esau (the older) and Jacob (the younger). Jacob was later given the name Israel. The descendents of Jacob were the Jews and the descendents of Esau were called by various names – Edomites, Seir, Hor, Idumeans, and sometimes just Esau. The book of Obadiah is addressed primarily to the Edomites, though there are also passages referring to the Jews.

We know nothing about Obadiah. Everything we know about him from the book is found in **Obadiah 1:1a (NKJV)** “The vision of Obadiah.” There are references to a man named Obadiah in 1 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, but there is little evidence that any of these are the same Obadiah. The name means “servant of the Lord”, and was likely a common name and could have just been a description of the writer. Not only do we not know anything about Obadiah, we don’t really know when the book was written. Some scholars say it was written in the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC, but there seems to me to be more evidence for a later time – perhaps in the 6<sup>th</sup> century when Babylon defeated Judah.

#### Introduction: A Close Look at Pride

Obadiah is about more than a conflict going on for 1,000 – 1,500 years between the descendents of Esau and the descendents of Jacob; it is a book about pride and its devastating consequences. **Obadiah 1:3-4 (NKJV)** “<sup>3</sup> The pride of your heart has deceived you, *you* who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; *you* who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' <sup>4</sup> Though you

ascend *as high as the eagle*, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,' says the Lord." The descendants of Esau were a proud people. When we talk about the kind of pride that moves God to say, "I will bring you down", what are we talking about? In the Bible, pride is simply **living independently of God**. Pride usually involves an attitude of self-sufficiency, sometimes a sense of superiority, but always a "self" approach to life. Pride is summarized by the words of the defiant poet Ernest Henley (1849-1903), "I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul". When we begin to see pride as God sees it, we will never take it lightly again. A valuable study would be to take a concordance and just look up the words pride and proud. I counted 51 references to pride and 47 references to proud in the Bible. It is referred to many more times when the word itself isn't used. We see that pride had its origin in the devil himself. **Isaiah 14:13-14 (NKJV)** "<sup>13</sup> For you [Satan] have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; <sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'" **1 Timothy 3:6 (NKJV)** speaking of Elders or Overseers says, "not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil." **Proverbs 6:16-17 (NKJV)** speaks of things that the Lord hates and look at what is first on the list. "<sup>16</sup> These six *things* the Lord hates, yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him: <sup>17</sup> A proud look..." All strife or conflict has pride at its root. **Proverbs 13:10 (NKJV)** "By pride comes nothing but strife..." **Proverbs 16:5 (NKJV)** "Everyone proud in heart *is* an abomination to the Lord; *though they join* forces, none will go unpunished." Sometimes pride is very subtle and sometimes it is obvious, but it always has devastating consequences. **James 4:6 (NKJV)** says: "*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*" Since pride is the most devastating of sins, humility should be the most desired virtue. John Stott said, "At every stage of our Christian development, and in every sphere of our Christian discipleship, pride is our greatest enemy and humility our greatest friend" [John Stott, quoted in Mark Dever, *The Message of the Old Testament*, Page 754]. Constantly seek the Lord to reveal pride in your life. When He reveals it, do whatever it takes to root it out of your life.

In the book of Obadiah, we see that not only does pride lodge in human beings; it emanates from nations. Edom was a nation that was full of pride. They were self sufficient and saw no need of God. In the first point we will see where they put their trust, and it was not in God. **Proverbs 16:18 (NKJV)** is true of individuals and of nations. "Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." How can we keep from applying this to our own nation? We as a nation have forgotten God, dismissed God, and relegated Him to church buildings and He is even ignored in many of them. We are more concerned about offending those who justify their own sin than we are concerned about offending our holy God! Before we who are Christians begin to focus on the pride of our nation and its leaders, we need to deal with this hideous sin in our own lives.

## I. The Condemnation of Pride – The Doom of Edom (V1-9)

### A. The Certainty of Edom's Doom (V1-4)

Let me describe Edom for you. Edom wasn't a large country. It was located in what is today Jordan. It bordered Judah and was 20-30 miles wide and about 100 miles long. Its central area was marked by red sandstone cliffs that reached 5,000 feet above sea level. Scattered among the mountains were level areas with very rich soil. One of the main cities of Edom was Petra. This city was located in a naturally impregnable position that could only be reached by narrow winding paths through the rocks. Kathy and I had the privilege of visiting Petra a few months ago [Pictures point out verse 3 "you who dwell in the clefts of the rock"]. Petra was so secure that experts estimate that about a dozen heavily armed men could hold off a whole army.

Edom not only was secure, it was wealthy. Edom controlled the major trade routes and demanded tribute or taxes from all who traveled through their country. They were filled with self sufficiency in their security and in their material wealth. They were invincible! They had no need of God. We are going to see that when God chooses to judge a nation, their impenetrable fortresses are penetrated and their wealth is useless to save them. God was not impressed with their fortresses and their riches. Keep in mind that

every great power in history has fallen! Babylon was impenetrable but in the study of Daniel, we saw that the Persian armies entered under the walls where the river ran through the city. They diverted the river, walked under the massive walls, and took Babylon almost without a fight. The Great Wall of China was built to keep the enemy armies out. They were secure with their great wall that was almost 4,000 miles long, but one of their enemies bribed the gate keepers on the wall and got in. Have you heard of the famous Maginot Line between France and Germany? From 1929-1938, the French built a line of defensive fortifications along their border with Germany after the horrible first world war. It was under the direction of the French war minister Andre` Maginot. There were heavy guns, thick concrete, air conditioned living areas, recreation facilities, and even underground railways. The French were safe from any aggression from Germany. When the German army under Adolph Hitler began a military buildup the French thought they could just ignore it. They were safe because of the Maginot Line. However, when the Germans invaded, they went through Belgium and out flanked the Maginot Line making it virtually useless. It took 10 years to build and it took the Germans a few weeks to march around it.

Pride indeed goes before the fall in both individuals and nations. God hates pride because it forgets God and renders Him as irrelevant. That is why God always deals with pride. Look again at God's promise to pride filled, self-sufficient Edom in **Obadiah 1:4 (NKJV)** "“Though you ascend *as* high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,” says the Lord.” When God says “That’s it” all of man’s security and fortresses fall! Today, Petra is a tourist attraction – nothing more. What is your security in? What is it that you trust? Is your security in your job, your retirement account, your intelligence, your talents, or your investments? God can take them away instantly. Pride is living in self-sufficiency. God resists the proud – whether it is proud individuals or proud nations who forget God.

#### B. The Completeness of Edom’s Doom (V5-9)

God’s judgment against this proud people is going to be complete. If a thief breaks in your house, he doesn’t take everything. Harvesters don’t strip the vineyard of every single grape; they leave some for gleaning. However, when God judges Edom, she will be defenseless (V4), her allies whom she trusted in will betray her (V7), and her wisdom will prove useless (V8). Edom will be obliterated! There is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

## II. The Manifestation of Pride – The Denunciation of Edom (V10-14)

In these verses we will see even clearer what pride looks like. The pattern is a courtroom. God makes an accusation and then He backs it up with evidence.

#### A. Edom Encouraged Judah’s Foes (V10-11)

Ever since the Israelites came out of captivity in Egypt and Edom wouldn’t let them pass through their land, there had been a refusal to help their relatives the Israelites. Allow me to share a few instances of that. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Edom [called Mt. Seir] joined forces with Moab and Ammon to attack Jehoshaphat, but they were soundly defeated because Jehoshaphat trusted God (2 Chronicles 20:1-26). A few years later Edom successfully fought with King Jehoram (2 Chronicles 21:8-10). In the early 8<sup>th</sup> century the Edomites battled King Amaziah (2 Kings 14:7). In the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, they were at it again launching raids against King Ahaz. When the Babylonians defeated the southern kingdom of Israel in 587 BC, Edom was in collusion with them (**Psalms 137:7 (NKJV)** “Remember, O Lord, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, ‘Raze *it*, raze *it*, to its very foundation!’”). One of the telling signs of pride is rejoicing when someone else falls, especially an enemy. When others fall, it makes us look better. **Proverbs 17:5b (NKJV)** “He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.”

#### B. Edom Enjoyed Judah’s Fall (V12-14)

Notice the progression of Edom’s evil pride. In verse 11, they stood by while Jerusalem was invaded and refused to help. In verse 12, they rejoiced over Judah’s captivity. In verse 13, they participated in the looting of Jerusalem after the Babylonians left with most of Judah in captivity. They were like looters after a hurricane! In verse 14, they set up roadblocks to catch the Jews who escaped. These desperate Jews went to their brothers the Edomites for help in their time of tragedy and the Edomites turned them back

over to the Babylonians. It continued on even after the book of Obadiah was written. Herod the Great was part Edomite and he killed all the boy babies in Bethlehem two years old and younger trying to wipe out the promised Messiah whom Herod saw as competition to his place of authority. Another Herod killed John the Baptist, and another one killed the Apostle James.

### III. The End of Pride – The Destruction of Edom (V15-21)

#### A. The Nearness of Edom’s Destruction (V15)

Obadiah says in no uncertain words that God will judge this vengeful, pride filled nation. The day of the Lord as it is used in verse 15 is the general sense of the word that refers to the judgment of God on a nation. From history, we know that this judgment came soon after the book of Obadiah was written. They gloated over Judah’s defeat by Babylon and even helped Babylon and then they suffered the same thing.

#### B. The Nature of Edom’s Destruction (V16-21)

God says to these proud people in **Obadiah 1:16b(NKJV)** “... shall be as though they had never been.” When Obadiah wrote this book, Judah had been soundly defeated and carried into captivity with no hope from a worldly perspective. Edom was on top of things looking good. They were secure and untouchable. They were close allies with the Babylonians – the most powerful nation at that time. In just a few years Babylon turned on the Edomites and forsook them. Later they were attacked over and over by the Arabs until the nation was finally dissolved. The Edomites were absorbed into other cultures. By the first century AD, some such as the Herodian dynasty could trace back some Edomites roots, today they no longer exist as a distinct people. How about Israel? In verses 17-21 Obadiah gave hope to the Jews that they would be delivered and repossess their land. Today, some 2,600 years later, the Jews are in their ancient land that God promised to Abraham and his descendents. They are the most powerful and stable nation in the Middle East. How many of you have ever met an Edomite? There are (as verse 18 says) no survivors that remain of the house of Esau.

### IV. Practical Application

#### A. Anti-Semitism Brings God’s Judgment

Let me define that word “Anti-Semitism” first. The Jews are sometimes called Semites which means they were descendents of Noah’s son Shem. The word anti-Semitic describes those who hate the Jews. God made a promise to Abram and his descendents when He called Abram to Himself. **Genesis 12:1-3 (NKJV)** “<sup>1</sup> Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’” I find nowhere that promise has been negated. Edom is “Exhibit A” of the truth of that promise. I am convinced that one of the reasons that is often overlooked as to why God has so obviously blessed America is because America has typically been the staunchest supporter of Israel of all the nations. The main reason that the terrorists hate us is because of our support of Israel. It scares me to see us removing ourselves from that.

#### B. Pride Comes Before a Fall

**Proverbs 16:18 (NKJV)** “Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” Remember that God states in Proverbs 6:16-17 that He hates pride. He says that He resists the proud in James 4:6. Pray for the humility of our nation that is manifested by our acknowledgement that we need God, we must have His favor to prosper. When we forget God, God will show us what we can do without Him. In your personal life, regularly go on “search and destroy” missions against this enemy called pride. Look for areas where you have become self-sufficient; look for patterns in your life where you no longer live in surrender to Him and dependent on Him. Confess and repent of pride. Remember Edom!