

Obadiah — Does God Have Enemies?

November 17, 2024

Good morning. Today, we begin a new series on the minor prophets. As we usually do during the Christmas season, Pastor Jordan and I will rotate between campuses. That way, he will have a chance to stay in contact with us, and I can stay in contact with the Spencer campus. We will also rotate Pastor Stephen and Pastor Brayden into the teaching series.

There are twelve minor prophets in the Old Testament. The books of the minor prophet range in length from one to 14 chapters in length. In this series, we will cover one minor prophet a week, no matter the length of their book. I have the first message in the series, and I get to preach the shortest book in the Old Testament. It is the book of Obadiah. In Hebrew, it is only 291 words.

It is a small book with a big question: Does God have enemies? If so, what do they look like? What will happen to God's enemies? Today, the way people talk, you might think God doesn't have enemies. We talk as if everyone is going to heaven as if everyone is good. If we open the Bible, we find that is not the case. God definitely has enemies, and he fights against them. He will destroy them.

Who are enemies of God? How can I avoid becoming one? These are important questions. Obadiah gives us a good answer with a chilling description of God's enemies and what will be their end.

This small book of only 21 verses. It is divided into four parts.

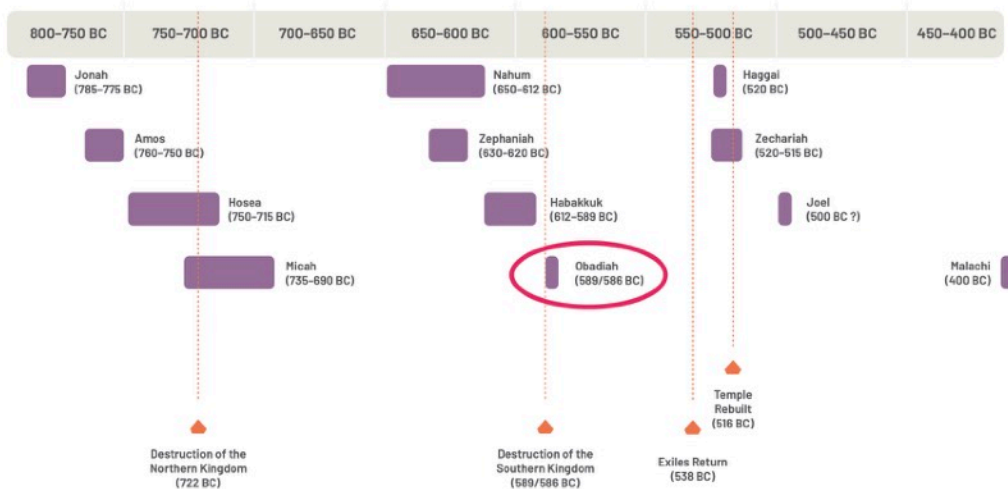
- Verses 1-9 describe how God will judge the Edomites.
- Verses 10-14 explain why God will judge the Edomites.

- Verses 15-16 expand God’s judgment from Edom to other nations
- Verses 17-21 describe the ultimate triumph of God’s people and kingdom.

Background

The Old Testament has several books written by prophets. Four of them are called major prophets: Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Daniel. Another 12 are smaller. They are called minor prophets. As I mentioned last week, the difference between the major and minor prophets is not the significance of what they wrote but the length of what they wrote. Saint Augustine probably named the shorter prophetic books minor prophets in the fourth century. Since then, the name stuck.

The minor prophets wrote over a roughly 400-year period, from 800 BC to 400 BC. Pastor Jordan put together a timeline of the minor prophets. This will help us know when the minor prophets wrote and what was happening as they wrote.



I will not spend much time on this timeline today. We will come back to it each week in the series. For now, I circled Obadiah so you know when it was

written. The big event at that time was the destruction of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, which took place around 586 B.C. Obadiah wrote immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Knowing that Obadiah wrote in the aftermath of that tragedy will bring the book into focus.

Let's open the book and begin our study.

The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom... Obadiah 1 (ESV)

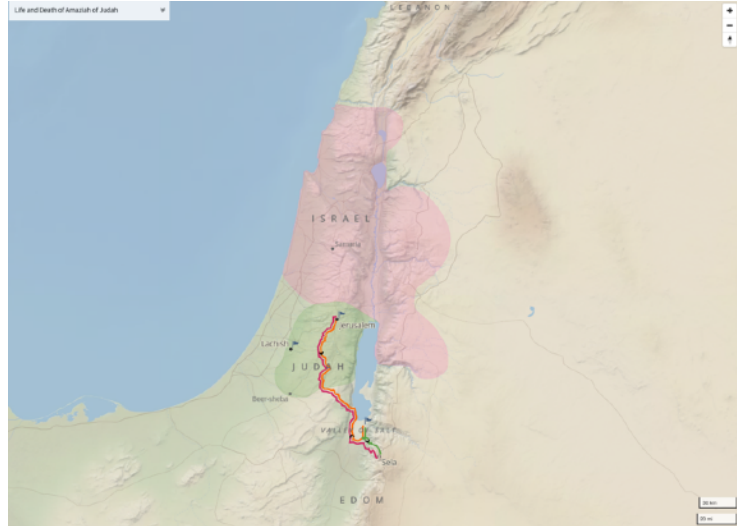
Let's stop here. As soon as we begin, we are hit with two important questions. Who is Obadiah, and who are the Edomites?

Who is Obadiah?

The answer is that we don't know much about him. Unlike other prophets, in the introduction of his book, he does not tell us who was the king at the time he wrote or about his father and family. He just plops on the scene. Hello, my name is Obadiah! While we don't know much about Obadiah, the man, we know what he gave us. It is a vision from God. Obadiah did not write his words, opinions, or wishful thinking. Obadiah's words are directly from God about the Edomites.

As I mentioned, Obadiah wrote this book shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, around 586 B.C. Three hundred years before this, Israel was a united country under King David and his son, King Solomon. Solomon's heavy taxes and workload on the people led to the people requesting a lighter workload under Solomon's son, King Rehoboam. King Rehoboam was young and foolish. Instead of lightening the people's workload, he promised to increase the workload. That led to a civil war where the 10 tribes in the north separated themselves. They declared a man named Jeroboam to be their king.

That left only two Southern tribes, Benjamin and Judah, for the Southern Kingdom. They were known as Judah. From that point forward, Israel was a divided nation, a weakened nation.



It didn't take long for the northern kingdom to leave God. They went apostate, following the culture around them instead of the true God of the universe. As a result, God brought the Assyrians against them. They were taken into captivity by Assyria around 722 B.C. Judah, the Southern Kingdom, didn't learn from the Northern Kingdom's mistakes. They also walked away from God. God was exceedingly patient with them, calling them to repentance. Eventually, because of their persistent sin, God sent the Babylonians to conquer them and take them into exile.

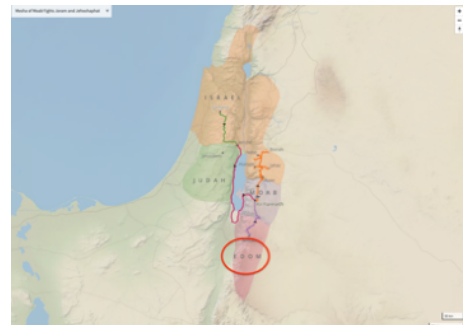
Obadiah wrote this brief book in the aftermath of the Babylonian invasion and the conquering of Jerusalem. While we often talk about Babylon conquering the Southern Kingdom of Judah as one event, it was three. The first time King Nebuchadnezzar of the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom was in 606 BC. Nebuchadnezzar was gracious. They only took the land's elite to Babylon, especially the most promising young men. This was when Daniel and his three friends were taken captive to Babylon, which we read about

in the book Daniel. Instead of living peacefully under Nebuchadnezzar's rule, Israel was causing trouble. As a result, Nebuchadnezzar came a second time in 597 BC to conquer them again. This time, he took their king and other top leaders to Babylon, in addition to more wealth. The people of Judah still refused to learn their lesson. They kept causing trouble. Nebuchadnezzar returned a third time in 589 BC. This time, he took off the gloves. It would be bad. It was a three-year siege. He burned the buildings to the ground, including the temple. He didn't just take the best people captive to Babylon; he took everyone to Babylon and those who were left. The only people he left were the poorest in the land who were not worth taking. The devastation of Nebuchadnezzar's third invasion, where he flattened the city of Jerusalem to the ground, was of mind-boggling proportions. The nation was crushed. Thousands upon thousands were killed. It was a time of national grief.

Right after this, Obadiah wrote his book. His book is about what the Edomites did to the Israelites during and after the Babylonian invasion. It is also about how God would treat the Edomites because of what they did. What will God do to his enemies?

Who are the Edomites?

They were relatives of the Jews. In Genesis, Isaac had twin sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob had twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel. Esau's line led a people called the Edomites. Esau and Edom come from the same Hebrew word



meaning red. The Edomites settled in the mountainous region to the southeast of Israel. This area is about 100 miles long and 30 miles wide, with mountain peaks up to 3,500 feet high surrounded by deep valleys. This area is rocky and desolate. It has an other-worldly appearance.

Today, it is modern-day Jordan.

The movie *Martian*, starring Matt Damon, was filmed here because of the desolation and red sandstone that make the place look like Mars.



The capital city of Edom was Sela, which later became known as Petra.

Since building materials were scarce in the rock desert, people carved their homes into the rock.

Here is an elaborate one in Sela. You will



recognize

it because this is where the movie *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* was filmed. It is the biblical land of the Edomites.



While the Edomites lived in a rock desert, they were wealthy. A trade route called the king's highway passed through their territory. There wasn't a good way around it, so the Edomites took advantage of that and made good money from tolls.

The problem Obadiah addresses in his brief book is that when Israel was being destroyed by the Babylonians, the Edomites helped the Babylonians destroy Israel. They celebrated when the Israelites — their blood brothers — were slaughtered. This made God angry. What the Edomites did to the Israelites was so bad that multiple Old Testament prophets talked about the Edomite betrayal.

Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said, "Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!" Psalm 137:7 (ESV)

"Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance on them,... (God will destroy them) Ezekiel 25:12 (ESV)

Because you cherished perpetual enmity and gave over the people of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment,... (God will destroy them) Ezekiel 35:5 (ESV)

I have two sons. When they were teenagers, there was a lot of testosterone in the house. Both of them wanted to be the alpha male in the house. They fought like brothers do. Sometimes, it was rough. One time Cindy called me home from the office. She thought they were going to kill each other. Brothers at home fight. But when they left the home, if anybody messed with one of them, you messed with both of them. They stuck together and had one another's back. That is what brothers do. That is how brothers are supposed to act.

That should have been what happened between the Israelites and the Edomites. They may fight between them, but when a foreign invader comes into the country, they are brothers. They should stop fighting together and stick together. That is not what happened. Instead, the Edomites fought against their

flesh and blood and aided in the Israelite's demise instead of coming to their rescue. They celebrated their blood brother's demise when they should have come to Israel's rescue. As a result, God is angry. The Edomites became his enemies. He will destroy them.

Let's dive into the text and see how the story unfolds.

How will God judge the Edomites?

...We have heard a report from the LORD, and a messenger has been sent among the nations: "Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!" Obadiah 1 (ESV)

Obadiah has a vision from the Lord. God sent his messenger among the nations to raise them for battle against the Edomites. Who is the messenger that God sent to raise the nations around Edom to destroy her in battle? We don't know. I don't think this was a human messenger. Most likely, this was an angelic messenger who would work in the hearts of the kings of the nations around Edom to turn against Edomites and plan to conquer them.

Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be utterly despised. Obadiah 2 (ESV)

At the time Obadiah wrote, Edom was a mighty nation—a superpower in the ancient world. God would devastate them. Instead of standing proudly over other nations, they would be reduced to penniless weaklings. Jeremiah prophesied the same thing about them.

For behold, I will make you small among the nations, despised among mankind. Jeremiah 49:15 (ESV)

The destruction of the Edomite nation seemed unlikely. They were known for being unconquerable people because they lived high in the mountains, with homes dug into the rock face or they were inside rock fortresses. Who can

conquer a people who live high in the mountains, whose homes are guarded by unassailable cliffs? Who can conquer a people who live behind rock walls?

This sense of invincibility gave the Edomites a smug or prideful attitude about themselves.

The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, “Who will bring me down to the ground?” Obadiah 3 (ESV)

Why was God going to destroy the Edomites? Here was the root cause. They were prideful. They were smug and arrogant. The Edomites were self-reliant. They depended on the security of their seemingly unassailable position in the clefts



of the rock for their security. The Edomites lived as bees honeycombed into the mountainsides. Their cities were built so high, and the rocks they were built in were so steep that they were considered impossible to conquer. “Who can bring us to the ground?” they pridefully boasted as they lived in their lofty fortifications.

Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the LORD. Obadiah 4 (ESV)

God says it doesn't matter how high in the air you live. You could be as high as the soaring eagle. You could make your home among the stars; it doesn't matter. I have determined to destroy you and bring you down. If God has decreed your end, nothing can protect you. This is why the most important thing we can have is a right relationship with God. We don't want to become one of God's

enemies, like the Edomites. If we are one of God's enemies, it doesn't matter how much protection we have; nothing can save us.

If thieves came to you, if plunderers came by night— how you have been destroyed!— would they not steal only enough for themselves? If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? How Esau has been pillaged, his treasures sought out! Obadiah 5–6 (ESV)

Now, Obadiah described how complete will be God's destruction of the mighty Edomite nation. He compares their destruction to thieves and grape harvesters. Thieves, when they break in, they steal only what they can carry, then run into the night. They leave the rest behind. Grape harvesters don't take every grape. They drop grapes. They miss grapes. They always leave something behind. When God is done destroying the Edomites, it will be different. Their impregnable mountain cities will be so completely ransacked the invaders will leave nothing behind. They will wipe every last bit of their civilization off the face of the earth.

In the middle of speaking this prophecy, Obadiah was so overwhelmed by this thought he paused and said, "How you have been destroyed!"

The first thing to know about the Edomites is they lived in impregnable fortresses in the mountains, and they were proud of it. They were overconfident in it. The second thing to remember about the Edomites is they were wealthy. In the holes and caves, they dug in the rock mountains, they hid their vast treasure. All of it would be found. All of it would be taken away. Jeremiah also writes about the Edomite hiding places where their treasure was stored getting discovered and their treasure taken away.

But I have stripped Esau bare; I have uncovered his hiding places, and he is not able to conceal himself. His children are destroyed, and his brothers, and his neighbors; and he is no more. Jeremiah 49:10 (ESV)

In the next verse, Obadiah prophetically describes how the impregnable rock fortresses of the Edomites will be conquered.

All your allies have driven you to your border; those at peace with you have deceived you; they have prevailed against you; those who eat your bread have set a trap beneath you— you have no understanding. Obadiah 7 (ESV)

The Edomites enjoyed friendly relationships with the nations around them. They had military agreements similar to those we have with NATO in Europe. At the advice of their neighbors, the Edomites will have their military leave their rock fortresses in the cliffs to fight their enemies at their borders. According to the wisdom of their neighbors, this will be a wise decision. In truth, it will be a bad decision. It will leave the Edomite cities, which held vast treasures, completely unprotected. It will be a trap for the Allies. The Edomite's allies will trick them, track them, and destroy them. The sneak attack of the Edomite's allies will reduce them from a mighty nation to a small, penniless nation.

What is interesting is that the Edomites will not see this coming. They will foolishly follow the counsel of their allies and get tricked into their own destruction.

Did this happen? Yes. In the fourth century, their neighbors, the Nabateans, conquered them. They did not eliminate them as a nation, but they reduced them from a powerful nation to a small and penniless one, exactly what God said through Obadiah would happen.

There is great application in this. What God spoke through Obadiah prophetically was verified in history—it came true! This reminds us that the Bible is trustworthy.

You will not find that in other religious books. For example, take the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon claims to be on par with the Bible. It is completely different from the Bible. If you look at the Book of Mormon, it talks about a vast civilization that it claims existed in the Americas. It talks about coinages, mountains, and people that were supposedly here. The problem is none of it is verified in history or archaeology. It is all fantasy. The Bible is different. All of it is verified by history and archaeology, even what is spoken prophetically proved true in history.

Similar problems exist in the Quran and the Bhagavad Gita. They are philosophical, not historical. There is no opportunity for them to be wrong prophetically because they don't speak about the future. This is part of what proves the Bible true. It is connected with real-time and historical events we can verify and that are verified as true. We don't find that in the Book of Mormon, the Quran, or other religious texts.

Will I not on that day, declares the LORD, destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of Mount Esau? And your mighty men shall be dismayed, O Teman, so that every man from Mount Esau will be cut off by slaughter. Obadiah 8–9 (ESV)

The Edomites were not only known for their impregnable fortresses, military power, and riches but they were also known for their wisdom. How did their wise men, their military strategists, not see the ambush of their allies coming? How did they miss this? Obadiah tells us. God would turn the wisdom of

their wise men into foolishness, so they would make bad decisions that would lead to the country's ruin.

God still works this way today. God judges a nation by turning the wisdom of their wisest leaders into foolishness, so they make bad decisions. The wise men of Edom, who were legendary for their wisdom, because of God's judgment upon the nation, would make foolish decisions that would lead to its downfall. Nothing has changed in the way God works today.

It says your mighty men shall be dismayed "O Teman." Who is Teman? The Temanites were known as the wisest of the Edomite wise men. God will even turn the Temanites into fools so they make unwise decisions that will lead the country into peril. Jeremiah picks up on this same theme in his prophecy at this time.

Concerning Edom. Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Is wisdom no more in Teman? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished?" Jeremiah 49:7 (ESV)

Interestingly, in the book of Job, when Job's life fell apart and his three friends came to counsel him after his life fell apart, one of them was a Temanite, an Edomite wise man. This shows you the Temanites were famous Edomite wise men.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite,... Job 2:11 (ESV)

God decreed the destruction of the Edomites. They may be a mighty nation of impregnable fortresses, a people of great wealth, and known for their amazing wisdom, but when God decides to destroy them because they are his

enemies, the game is over. They will be wiped from the face of the earth into the dustbin of history.

The question is, “Why?” Why were the Edomites enemies of God? The next set of verses tell us the answer.

Why were the Edomites enemies of God?

Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever. Obadiah 10 (ESV)

When the Babylonians conquered Israel, it was because of how the Edomites treated their twin brother that God decided he was done with them. One clear application is that God is watching. He cares about how we treat people. How we treat people will impact our future. How a nation treats people will impact their future. In this case, it was how the Edomites treated the Israelites, their blood brothers, that turned them into enemies of God.

Brothers should not be enemies. They should stick together, not fight together. Look how God told the Israelites to treat the Edomites.

“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother...” Deuteronomy 23:7 (ESV)

The Edomites and the Israelites were to live in peace. Let’s look at what the Edomites did to the Israelites during the Babylonian invasion. Let’s begin in Ezekiel.

Because you cherished perpetual enmity and gave over the people of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment, therefore, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; because you did not hate bloodshed, therefore blood shall pursue you. Ezekiel 35:5–6 (ESV)

Let’s get into the details of what happened during the Babylonian invasion.

On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them. Obadiah 11 (ESV)

When Babylon invaded Jerusalem, they just watched. They were indifferent. They did nothing to stop the slaughter or help their twin brother. They stood at a distance, grabbed the popcorn, and watched their relatives die for entertainment. No one helped. No one intervened. They were no different than the Babylonians, even though they were twin brothers.

But do not gloat over the day of your brother in the day of his misfortune; do not rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their ruin; do not boast in the day of distress. Obadiah 12 (ESV)

They didn't just watch. They gloated over Israel's demise. They watched people die with pleasure. They had no sadness or compassion as thousands were slaughtered, just joy as they watched the blood flow and heard the screams of dying men and women. This reminds me of when the Twin Towers fell in New York City. There were videos of Muslims in the streets of New Jersey dancing and celebrating. What are you doing? How can you celebrate the dead of fellow Americans?

The Psalmists write about how they cheered Nebuchadnezzar on as he burned building after building to the ground.

Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said, "Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!" Psalm 137:7 (ESV)

They celebrated the destruction and burning of the city to ashes. Who would like an Edomite as their neighbor? Nobody!

Do not enter the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; do not gloat over his disaster in the day of his calamity; do not loot his wealth in the day of his calamity. Obadiah 13 (ESV)

The Edomites did not simply watch the destruction of Jerusalem at a distance. They wanted to be part of it. When it was safe, as soon as the Babylonians left, they went into the city to see the dead bodies that filled the streets. They celebrated the slaughter. Whatever the Babylonians left behind, they took it for themselves, leaving the people of the city, who were already devastated, with absolutely nothing.

Ezekiel also talks about this.

therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Surely I have spoken in my hot jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who gave my land to themselves as a possession with wholehearted joy and utter contempt, that they might make its pasturelands a prey. Ezekiel 36:5 (ESV)

It gets worse.

Do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his fugitives; do not hand over his survivors in the day of distress. Obadiah 14 (ESV)

When Jews were running for their lives from the city, many of them ran south to the Edomites. After all, they were their relatives. They lived in impregnable fortresses. Surely, there, they could find protection from the Babylonians with them. Instead of welcoming them, the Edomites intercepted them in the narrow mountain passes. They killed them. They kept most Israelites alive, then they turned them over to the Babylonians to be deported or killed. This is a terrible way to treat your twin brother. God was not happy. This is how you become an enemy of God in a hurry.

Remember who the Edomites were fighting against the chosen people of God. God made a promise about what would happen to those who fought against his people and what would happen to those who blessed his people.

And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Genesis 12:2–3 (ESV)

When God began the nation of Israel, he said all who bless you, I will bless. Those who curse you, I will curse. This promise has proven true not just in biblical times but also in modern times. Those who line up against Israel end up meeting their demise.

God is loving. He is gracious. He is kind. But God also has enemies. Those who fight against his people become his enemies. We don't want to be an enemy of God.

God will judge all nations by what they have done.

In verses 15 and 16, we see that God's judgment is not limited to Edomites but will be against all nations.

For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head. Obadiah 15 (ESV)

This begins by talking about *the day of the Lord*. In the Old Testament, the Day of the Lord refers to God visiting nations to hand out his judgment against them for their sins. He usually does that by bringing another nation against them to conquer them. The phrase “the day of the Lord” is used throughout the Old Testament. We will run across it multiple times in this study.

The prophet Joel talks about a day of the Lord event that happened in his day. In Joel's day, the day of the Lord event that transpired was not God bringing in another nation to conquer Israel but God bringing an unprecedented plague of locusts against them to destroy their crops. In an agricultural economy, that was a disaster.

Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been before, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations... The land is like the garden of Eden before them, but behind them a desolate wilderness, and nothing escapes them. Joel 2:1–3 (ESV)

The day of the Lord could be a national disaster, like a plague of locusts that God uses to decimate a nation for their sin. It could be God using another nation to conquer and obliterate his people or a different nation as God did to the Edomites. There is an ultimate and final day of the Lord coming when Jesus will return. He will rescue his people, and he will carry out destruction against everyone else who opposes his people and Jesus, his king.

We read about it in 2 Thessalonians.

...God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 2 Thessalonians 1:6–9 (ESV)

In the Bible, there are smaller *day of the Lord* events, when God carries out his wrath against either his people or against nations who oppose his people, but there is one great and final day of the Lord event coming, when Jesus returns to save us and to carry out his wrath against everyone who does not know God and follow Jesus.

For as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so all the nations shall drink continually; they shall drink and swallow, and shall be as though they had never been. Obadiah 16 (ESV)

When the Edomites went into Jerusalem and the streets were filled with blood and bodies, the Edomites didn't just celebrate the Israelite's demise. They

had a drinking party celebrating the death of Jerusalem in the streets of Jerusalem. God says, you will drink, but you will drink the cup of my wrath. Not just you, but all the nations who opposed my people. This is a reference to making a criminal drink poison to die a painful death. God says, when I am done, I will destroy you so completely; it will be as if they never existed when God is done with his enemies.

God and His people will win.

In the final verses of Obadiah, suddenly, things shift to a positive note. God's people were taken into captivity. God destroyed his own people and sent them into captivity for their sins. The Edomites celebrated as they thought their rival was finally done. That isn't what happened. While God disciplined them. He didn't give up on them. God was not done with them. God would restore them and give their land back to them. He will sustain them as a nation. 70 years after Nebuchadnezzar took the Israelites into captivity in Babylon, the Babylonians were conquered by Cyrus, the Persian. One of the first things Cyrus did was give a declaration that the Jews could return to their land. God came to the rescue of his people and sent them back home. God is still at work doing that. In 1948, they were given back their land and are still there today. Their land is not the original size of the boundaries given to them by God in the book of Genesis, but they still exist as a nation and have at least part of their land back, even today. Are any Edomites back? Absolutely not! God was committed to their destruction. Let's see how that happened.

But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape, and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions. Obadiah 17 (ESV)

Mt. Zion refers to the capital city of Jerusalem, which was on Mt. Zion. In this reference, it is a reference to the nation of Israel. They will be delivered. A remnant will escape the sword and return to the land triumphant. The Lord will come to the aid of his people.

As a result, God's people will again be holy. They will leave their life of sin and seek God again. The house of Jacob will not be denied any of their land. They will possess the land their father Abraham gave them.

The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau stubble; they shall burn them and consume them, and there shall be no survivor for the house of Esau, for the LORD has spoken. Obadiah 18 (ESV)

Earlier in Obadiah, we saw that God would diminish the Edomites from a large and powerful nation to a small, penniless one. That took place in the fourth century by the Nabateans.

Here, we find that later in history, the house of Jacob and Joseph will wipe them out of existence. The house of Jacob and Joseph is a reference to a reunited Israel that will one day not just return to the Promised Land but be an unstoppable power in the Promised Land that will destroy the Edomites once and for all, wiping them from the chronicles of history. Ezekiel, in his prophecy at this time, writes about the same thing.

And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, declares the Lord GOD. Ezekiel 25:14 (ESV)

Did this ever happen? Did a restored Israelites destroy the Edomite nation? Yes. You will not find it in biblical history, but you will find it in regular history. There is a 400-year time period between when the last Old Testament

book was written and the coming of Jesus. That is from 400 B.C. to 1 A.D. This prophecy was fulfilled in that period of time. In 167 B.C., a Jewish leader rose up by the name of Judas Maccabaeus. He rose up to defend Israel. He was good at his job. His nickname was “The Hammer.” He defeated the Edomites in the battle of Acrabattene. Forty years later, in 130 BC, John Hyrcanus, another Jewish leader, rose up and led the Israelites into battle. He subdued the Edomites to the point that they were so few in number that instead of remaining as a nation, those that were left absorbed into the nation of Israel. The Edomites, who at one time were a superpower, were wiped off the face of the earth. Just as God said, it would happen through Obadiah.

The Israelites placed the final nail in the coffin of the Edomite nation. As I said earlier, biblical prophecy that proves true in history proves the Bible is trustworthy. This is how we can know the Bible is trustworthy in everything it says, not only some things it says. God’s word always proves true. You won’t find that in the Book of Mormon or the Quran.

Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau, and those of the Shephelah shall possess the land of the Philistines; they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria, and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. The exiles of this host of the people of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the Negeb. Obadiah 19–20 (ESV)

What is happening with all these strange names? Here is the message. Because God is large and in charge, he hasn’t given up on his people. He didn’t simply restore his people from captivity and give them back their land. He didn’t just use them to destroy the Edomites who tried to help annihilate them, but he

also gave them more land than they originally possessed. Each of these references is an extension of the land of Israel in a different direction.

Do you know what this teaches us? God doesn't give up on his people. God restores his people. Here we see that God is kind and gives us far more goodness than we deserve.

There is one final verse in this book. It gets even more exciting.

Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's. Obadiah 21 (ESV)

It talks about saviors. God will raise up deliverers or leaders who will lead his people and save them. These leaders will not just rule Israel but also rule Mount Esau. The land of the Edomites will be absorbed into the Israelites. Who are these people? We talked about them earlier. They were part of intertestamental history. Judas Maccabaeus and John Hyranus led Israel to astounding military victories against nations that tried to defeat them. They were used by God to snuff the Edomites out of existence.

Here is where it gets interesting. Obadiah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, ends his prophecy with these words. "The kingdom shall be the Lord's"

God will not just raise up saviors who will restore Israel as a nation and lead her to an enlarged territory through military victories. God will send a savior who will establish a kingdom that is the Lord's. That means it is a kingdom that will last forever. Do you know the name of the name of the savior that God raised up to establish a kingdom of the Lord? His name is Jesus.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21 (ESV)

Jesus came as another savior and deliverer that God raised. Jesus was not a savior sent by God to defeat the Edomite enemy. He came to defeat the greatest enemy of all, Satan, sin, and death. Jesus didn't just come only to be a savior for Jewish people. He came as a savior for all people. Anyone who turns to Jesus and asks Jesus to forgive their sins and be in charge of their life will be saved by Him.

In this world, everyone goes into one of two categories. They are either enemies of God, like the Edomites, who will ultimately be destroyed by God. As Obadiah said, God will judge all nations and give them the just punishment they deserve. The other option is that instead of being an enemy of God; you can be part of the people of God. God may discipline his people for their sins, like when he sent his people into exile in Babylon, but he will not destroy his people. He will not give up on his people. He is committed to saving his people, restoring his people, and giving them far more goodness than they deserve, if not in this life, for sure in the next.

The only question is, which camp are you in? Are you an enemy of God like the Edomite who will one day be destroyed by God, or are you part of his people who will be saved and restored?

The New Testament clearly defines the dividing line between these two groups. It all comes down to what you do with Jesus. If you reject him, you will remain an enemy of God who will be judged by what you have done and who is headed for destruction. If you trust in Jesus to forgive your sins and be in charge

of your life, you are adopted as a child of God. God is committed to saving and restoring you, not destroying you. Of this, we can be sure.

Conclusion

What did we learn?

1. God is large and in charge of history. He decides when nations will rise and fall. It doesn't matter how powerful, protected, wealthy, or wise they have become. If God commits to destroying them. They are done.
2. The choices we make in this life have a direct bearing on our earthly and eternal future. The sadistic celebration of the Edomites over the destruction of their Israelite brothers led to the end of their nation.
3. The Old Testament is filled with prophecy that is verified by history. When we see prophecy verified by history, it reminds us that all of God's Word is trustworthy.
4. God has enemies. God will destroy his enemies. We don't want to be one of them.



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