

**Sermon Series:** Minor Prophets

**Sermon title:** Book of Obadiah

**Scripture:** Obadiah verse 15

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

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We come today to the book of Obadiah.

Raise your hand if you ever heard a sermon on the book of Obadiah!

Now, raise your hand if you have ever read the book of Obadiah.

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament- only 21 verses.

Why did God give us this little book written by a prophet that we know almost nothing about?

We can only assume that there is something God wants us to know!

**Let's pray.**

Obadiah verse 1 says this, **“The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom.”**

Now from the very beginning we have something strange. This prophecy...this word is about Edom...it's for Edom and not for Israel. It's for a foreign nation not for God's people directly.

Well, we need to start off with a little history.

### **Who is Edom?**

We have our answer in the text itself in verse 6. **“How Esau has been pillaged, his treasures sought out!”**

So, Esau is Edom. Edom is Esau...the Edomites are the descendants of a man named Esau. Well you might ask, ‘Who is Esau?’

Abraham was called by God and is the father of the nation and people of Israel. Abraham had 2 sons. One named Ishmael, who is the father of the Arab people and Issac, from whom continued the line of the Jews. Issac had 2 sons, twins actually. One was named Esau who was the father of the Edomites and Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel) is the father of the 12 tribes of Israel. Esau is the brother of Israel and so the Edomites are the cousins of the Jews. Make sense?

The people of Edom settled south of the Dead Sea in a rocky area with high cliffs and a plataeu and you can still visit the ruins today. The fortresses of Edom are there in ruins and places like Petra (built by the Nabateans who conquered Edom) still exist in fine preservation. But no civilization is there today.

Edom had a long history of opposition against his brother Israel. It all began with Esau and Jacob but you remember

that Esau forgave Jacob. His descendants did not. They looked for revenge at every turn.

We see one of these instances in **Numbers 20:14-21**. God had delivered the Jews and brought them out of slavery in Egypt. And Moses was leading them back to the promised land. They sent a message to the king of Edom and said basically.., “Thus says your brother Israel. Let us pass through your land on the King’s Highway. We won’t drink your water or take anything. We just want to pass through.” The king of Edom said, “No way.” He even sent the army out after them. So, Edom had a good chance to bless Israel and didn’t. Instead the people of Edom cursed them.

But God had already said in **Genesis 12:1-2** to Abraham, **“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.**

Let’s look at Obadiah and see what God wants to say to them.

**[Read verses 1-9]**

Well, what did they do? Why is God speaking to Obadiah and judging them?

We see one clue in verse 3. God says the ‘pride of their heart has deceived them’. ‘Who will bring us down to the ground?’ So, they lived in high mountain fortresses and narrow cuts in the cliffs and those places were hard to conquer. They were ‘high and mighty’; prideful.

But we see another reason for God’s judgement on them in verses 10-14.

**[Read verses 10-14]**

So, Edom was prideful of heart and worse than that or we might say because of that....Edom treated the people of Israel badly. What did they do?

In 586 BC when Babylon attacked and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and all of Judah, Edom (Israel’s brother) did not only NOT come to help, but instead like vultures...fed off of the leftovers. They rejoiced and celebrated Israel’s defeat.

Look at **Psalm 137:7-9**

**Remember, O LORD against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said, “Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!” O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed, blessed shall he be who repays you with what you have done to us! Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock!**

And **Ezekiel 35:1-5**,

**“The word of the LORD came to me; Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir (Edom) and prophesy against it, and say to it, Thus says the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste. I will lay your cities waste, and you shall become a desolation, and you shall know that I am the LORD. Because you cherished perpetual enmity and gave over the people of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity.**

And verse 10...**Because you said, “These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will take possession of them’ – although the LORD was there.**

Verse 12, **“They are given us to devour”**

So, Edom had a great opportunity to bless Israel as they came out of Egypt and Edom had a great opportunity to help Israel when the Babylonians invaded. They instead rejected them, cursed them, made life hard for them, took their lands, laughed at them and even killed some of them. And they would answer to God.

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Now Edom here is an example and a warning. The example and the warning is this:

Nations of the earth take notice....**Be careful how you treat God's people.** You bless God's people and you'll be blessed. You dishonor God's people and you'll answer to God.

We see this in Obadiah. There's a major shift in verse 15 from Edom to ALL NATIONS.

**[Read verses 15]**

Throughout history and even around the world today, there have always been kings and nations that, out of their pride and unbelief, have opposed God's people; persecuted God's people.

**[Read Psalm 2]**

The LORD takes the treatment of his people very seriously. He says, "O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son."

*Translation:* Bow the knee to Jesus Christ and don't exalt yourself against God and his people. God will fight for his people.

The rest of Obadiah in verses 17-21 is saying simply this: GOD WILL WIN. That's a fact. The last words in Obadiah are, **"the Kingdom shall be the LORD's."**

Now, I think there's a very clear application for us today as a city and as a country. Edom is an example to us and a warning in 2 ways:

- (1) **A warning to all nations to treat the church of Jesus Christ (the true Israel) with care.** Bless the church, don't persecute it. Edom was a cousin to the south of Israel that treated God's people unfairly. We have a cousin to the north that needs to heed the example and the warning. **Be careful how you treat God's people.** Bless the church of Jesus Christ and you'll be blessed. Treat the church with dishonor and violence and you'll answer to her King. All nations are to heed this warning. Do you remember when Saul was persecuting the church and he met Jesus on the road to Damascus? What did Jesus say to him? **“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting ME?”** ME! YOU ARE DOING THIS TO ME. Jesus takes it personally when you treat his wife bad.
- (2) **A warning to every individual to choose which side their on.** If out of the pride of your heart you live a life rejecting God, you'll perish.

In Obadiah I also see some encouragement for us. What is it? Well, it's similar to the book of Revelation. In the end, Christ wins. In the end, we win. The kingdom shall be the LORD's. He shall reign forever and ever. All foes will be defeated. All who exalt themselves against God will be destroyed, even the devil. The nations rage but they plot

in vain against the LORD and his anointed one. That should give us comfort and peace. Even if the nations persecute us, we still win. Even if the governments of the world exalt themselves against Christ, in the end they are just a vapor. We will live forever in eternity.

So, we need not get stressed out too much about the times we read about or the things that are happening to the people of God around the world. It'll all be ok. It really will.

But let me leave you with some instruction from the Bible. How should WE act when we see these things? We can't control what kings do or what kingdoms do. What should our response be?

[Read 1 Peter 2:19-23]

[Read 1 Peter 4:12-19]

**Obadiah 15...**

**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.**

The only hope for the nations and the only hope for you friend is Jesus Christ. He died to purchase men and women for God. He rose from the dead and is alive and will come back to judge the world. Are you on his side?