

In the time the prophet spoke of, "saviors" would rise up and condemn the "captivity" of God's people and restore true worship and reverence for God. All such persons (including John the Baptist, and the apostles) were only types and replicas of "THE true Savior which is Christ the Lord."

The literal and immediate fulfillment of this paragraph came when the Edomites were crushed, defeated, and finally disappeared from the face of the earth. But the passage speaks prophetically to a farther reaching situation than the Edomites; they become a metaphor for all the enemies of the Lord. In the end, God and His people will be victorious.

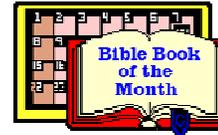
Obadiah's closing words, "The kingdom shall be the Lord's" becomes such a majestic statement that no earthly achievement could ever fulfill it. Only when we consider the resurrected Christ sitting on the right hand of God on the throne of David (Acts 2:31-36), and the gospel being preached to "every creature" is this promised fulfilled.

Nothing can exhaust Obadiah's statement without remembering what John said of the Gospel Age, that "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Revelation 11:15).

Some Lessons

1. Verse 15 illustrates "the echo principle" that our conduct returns in like kind to us.
2. The blessings promised by the Old Testament prophets find their ultimate fulfillment only in the Christian Age and the vast and wonderful spiritual blessings God has for his people today.
3. Real liberty is that freedom from sin and the bondage it brings. This has been a blessing made possible by our Saviour Jesus Christ.
4. Even in the message of the prophets of old is the indication that God's good news (the gospel) would be for all nations. We need to realize our part in the preaching of this message that is needed world wide.

Windell H. Gann --- Rogersville Church of Christ --- Sept. 1988 - Reprinted: April 26, 2007



OBADIAH

Lesson # 3

The Kingdom Shall Be the Lord's

Obadiah vs. 15-21

Introduction

The "brother" nation of Israel, the Edomites, had grown smug and self-sufficient in her hide-a-way in Mt. Seir. Her capital, Petra, had become a commercial and cultural center due to it's strategic location at the cross roads of the caravan routes.

In Verses 1-9 Obadiah indicts Edom for being lifted up with pride and deceiving herself that she could never be brought low. She trusted in her own: 1. Fortifications (v.3-4); 2. Treasures (v.5-6); 3. Allies (v.6); 4. Wise men (v.8); 5. Mighty men (warriors, v.9). She overlooked the fact that GOD could bring her low!

In Verses 10-14 the prophet condemns Edom's unbrotherly conduct when she rejoiced in the day of Jerusalem's distress and plundered her city after the enemy had captured it. She even caught the escaping fugitives and returned them to the hands of Jerusalem's captors! In today's lesson we will see how Edom was to be rewarded for all this.

DESTRUCTION OF ESAU

Verse 15

"For the day of the Lord upon all the nations is near;
As you have done, it shall be done to you;
Your reprisal shall return upon your own head."

The prophet now turns to speak further than just to Edom. Edom becomes a type of all ungodly behavior toward God's people. All the nations that have dealt falsely and deceitfully with the righteous have "the day of the Lord" waiting for them.

"The Day of the Lord" was the way the Old Testament prophets described a coming day of retribution upon the enemies of God's people. It was a judgment of their wicked behavior and a vindication of God's people. It serves as a type and forecast of the Final Judgment when all men will stand before God and receive what is due them for their acceptance or rejection of the Lord.

"The Day of the Lord" spoke of a time in historical affairs when God visited in judgment a nation or a city (or the world as in the great flood). Our own understanding of the final Day of Judgment is rooted in the teachings of Jesus himself and the apostles as taking place with the Lord's Second Coming.

[Q-1 What are some events in the Old Testament that might be considered as a "Day of the Lord" when he visited in judgment and retribution?]

[Q-2 What does 2 Corinthians 5:10 say to us in the Christian age regarding the final day of the Lord?]

[Q-3 From this verse, what is the basic rule of God's retribution?]

Verse 16. Edom becomes a type of the nations that are hostile to the Lord and so this becomes a parable, or figure for a much greater applications than just to Edom.

Drinking upon God's mountain is a metaphor of the wickedness of actions and their crimes against God. Because they gulped down wickedness, they must also drink the wine of God's wrath and they will pass from the roll of nations.

DELIVERANCE OF JACOB

Verses 17-18. There is far more in this than a mere prediction that Israel will succeed and prosper and that Edom shall be punished and destroyed. The exhaustive fulfillment of this prophecy must take one into the Messianic age and the faithful remnant which becomes the church, pure and holy, and possessing the rich and abundant mercies and blessings lavished upon God's people in the New Covenant.

Verses 19-20. More is involved than a return of the glory days of Israel when she subjugated the land of her enemies literally, but becomes a promise of the time when the heathen will be conquered by the gospel. The passage has the same thought as that in Isaiah 54:3, where it was said of Israel that their seed "should possess the Gentiles."

The captives mentioned in verse 20 refer not to those carried away by the Assyrians or the Babylonians, but those who were captives of sin and rebellion against God. It is here prophesied that at the time of the release of such sin-captives their possession of other nations will occur. And when was that?

The first sermon Jesus ever preached in his home town of Nazareth makes this passage clear:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor.
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

--Luke 4:18

Although Jesus did open the eyes of those physically blind, it was of the spiritually blind that he principally spoke. Likewise, the "captives" were those in captivity to sin. It is not recorded that Jesus ever got anybody out of jail, not even his friend John the Baptist!

[Q-4 What did Jesus tell John's messengers to report to John in Matthew 11:5?]

[Q-5 What did Jesus say of blindness and deafness in Matthew 13:15-17?]

[Q-6 What does Paul in Galatians 4:3 say living after the world does to one?]

The captives among the Canaanites were, and are those today, who worship sex, money, power, fame, etc. This brief prophecy is a promise of release of such captives from the pursuit of sin and debauchery, and the promise that those freed shall indeed take the world for the Lord.

Verse 21. Those that delivered the people out of the hands of the oppressors were called "saviors" or deliverers. The judges, for example, were called "saviours". After the return from the exile men like Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were called "saviors."