

Easy-to-Read Version

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Obadiah

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. In just twenty-one verses, it delivers a message of both warning and hope.

The Edomites were neighbours of the Israelites. In fact, they both had the same ancestor, Abraham's son Isaac. So the Edomites and the Israelites were related. But Edom did not act like family when Judah suffered invasion by the Babylonian army in 586 BC. The people of Edom did not help Judah. They did not do what family members or neighbours should do. Instead, they laughed at the Israelites and stole from them. At a time when the people of Judah could not defend themselves, Edom caused them even more harm.

In this short book, Obadiah warns the Edomites that God will punish them. He says that God will destroy them because they hurt their neighbours instead of helping them. He tells them that in the future their land will belong to Judah. But Obadiah also gives hope to the people in Judah. He tells them that God will not abandon them but will defend them.

The book of Obadiah says that...

The Lord will punish Edom (1-9)

Edom was wrong to harm the people of Israel (10-14)

The Lord will destroy Israel's enemies (15-16)

Israel will get more land (17-21)

Edom Will Be Punished

1 This is the vision of Obadiah. This is what the Lord GOD says about Edom:

We heard a report from the LORD.
A messenger was sent to the nations.
He said, "Let's get ready and go to war against Edom."

The Lord Speaks to Edom

² "Listen, Edom! I will make you the weakest of nations.

People will consider you worth nothing!

³ Your pride has fooled you into feeling safe.

You live in those caves high on the cliff.

Your home is high in the hills.

So you say to yourself,

'No one can bring me to the ground.'

Edom Will Be Brought Low

⁴ "But even if you fly high like an eagle and put your nest among the stars, I will bring you down," says the LORD.

⁵ "If thieves come at night and rob you, they take only what they need.

If workers gather grapes in your vineyards,

they always leave some fruit on the vines.

But you, Edom, will have nothing left!

⁶ The enemy will search hard for Esau's hidden treasures,

and they will find them all.

⁷ All those who are your friends

will force you out of the land.

Those who were at peace with you

will trick you and defeat you.

Those who were your trusted companions

are planning a trap for you,

and you will not know it until it happens!

⁸ "On that day," says the LORD,

"I will destroy the wise people throughout Edom.

I will destroy all the clever people from the mountain of Esau.*

⁹ Teman, your brave soldiers will be afraid.

Everyone will be destroyed from the mountain of Esau.

Many people will be killed.

¹⁰ "You will be covered with shame because you were cruel to your brother Jacob.

So you will be destroyed completely.

¹¹ You joined the enemies of Israel. Strangers carried Israel's treasures away. Foreigners entered Israel's city gate and threw lots to divide Jerusalem between them.

You were with them, waiting to get your share.

¹² You should not have laughed[†] at your brother's trouble.

You should not have been happy when they destroyed Judah.

You should not have boasted while they were suffering.

¹³ You should not have entered the city gate of my people and laughed at their troubles.

You should not have taken their treasures at the time of their distress.

¹⁴ You should not have waited at the crossroads to kill those who were trying to escape. You should not have captured those who escaped alive.

¹⁵ The day of the LORD is coming soon to all the nations.

And the evil you did to others will happen to you.

The same bad things will fall down on your own head.

¹⁶ You spilled[‡] blood on my holy mountain,[¶]

so other nations will spill your blood.[§] You will be finished.

It will be as if you never existed.

¹⁷ "But there will be survivors on Mount Zion.

They will be my special people.

The descendants of Jacob will take back what belongs to them.

¹⁸ The people of Jacob will be like a fire. The people of Joseph will be like a flame. But the nation of Esau** will be like ashes.

The people of Judah will burn Edom, and they will destroy it.

Then there will be no survivors in the nation of Esau."

This will happen because the LORD said it would.

¹⁹ Then people from the Negev will live on the mountain of Esau, and people from the foothills will take the Philistine lands.

They will live in the land of Ephraim and Samaria.

Gilead will belong to Benjamin.

²⁰ The people from Israel who were taken from their homeland will take back the land of Canaan, all the way to Zarephath.

The people of Jerusalem who were taken as captives to Sepharad^{††}

***1:8 mountain of Esau** That is, Mount Seir in Edom.

[†]**1:12 laughed** Literally, "looked". Also in verse 13.

[‡]**1:16 spilled** Literally, "drank".

[¶]**1:16 holy mountain** Mount Zion, one of the mountains Jerusalem was built on. Also in verses 17,21.

[§]**1:16 spill your blood** Literally, "drink and swallow".

****1:18 nation of Esau** Literally, "the house of Esau".

^{††}**1:20 Sepharad** This is probably Sardis, the capital of the Kingdom of Lydia, in the area that is now Turkey.

will take back the cities of the Negev.

²¹ The winners[‡] will go up on Mount
Zion

to rule the people who live on Esau's
mountain.

And the kingdom will belong to the
LORD.

[‡]1:21 *winners* Or “saviours”. Those who led their people to victory in war.