

Title:                               **OBADIAH**  
  “*Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*”  
Text:                               Obadiah 1:1-21  
Subject:                       *Jacob and Esau*  
Date:                             Tuesday Evening—November 25, 2003  
Tape #                            X-87b  
Readings: *Bob Poncer and Bob Duff*  
Introduction:

## **OBADIAH**

1. The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.
2. Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised.
3. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation *is* high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?
4. Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.
5. If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had

enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave *some* grapes?

6. How are *the things* of Esau searched out! *how* are his hidden things sought up!
7. All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee *even* to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, *and* prevailed against thee; *they that eat* thy bread have laid a wound under thee: *there is* none understanding in him.
8. Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise *men* out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?
9. And thy mighty *men*, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.
10. For *thy* violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.
11. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou *wast* as one of them.
12. But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children

of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldst thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

13. Thou shouldst not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldst not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid *hands* on their substance in the day of their calamity;
14. Neither shouldst thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.
15. For the day of the LORD *is* near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.
16. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, *so* shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.
17. But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.
18. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour

them; and there shall not be *any* remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

19. And *they of* the south shall possess the mount of Esau; and *they of* the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.
20. And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which *is* in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south.
21. And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

The book of Obadiah is the shortest Book in the Old Testament, just 21 verses. We read it in just a few minutes. At first glance, it appears to be nothing but a prophecy of doom against the ancient nation of Edom, which has long ago disappeared from history. Edom is a nation buried in the dust of the past. Yet, the fact that this little Book finds its place in the Book of God, and that fact alone tells us that its message is for us (Rom. 15:4).

(Rom 15:4) "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

There are 13 men in the Old Testament named Obadiah, but there is no indication that this Obadiah is the same as any of the others. His name means "servant of the Lord," or "worshipper of the Lord." Like a true servant and worshipper of God, Obadiah keeps himself in the background, in utter obscurity. He tells us absolutely nothing about himself. He simply steps onto the stage of history, delivers God's message, and steps down. In fact, it may be that Obadiah, rather than being his name, was simply a penname, a pseudonym, used to deliberately conceal anything at all about himself. His only purpose and intent as God's prophet was to deliver God's message. What a noble example his is to all who are responsible to speak to eternity bound sinners as God's messengers!

## **OUTLINE**

The outline of these 23 verses is very easy to follow.

- In verses 1-9 Obadiah declares God's judgment upon Edom. Though proud, thinking themselves secure and invincible, Edom was the object of God's determined wrath and must be destroyed.
- Verses 10-14 display the justice of that judgment. Edom was destroyed because of their proud and cruel treatment of God's people Israel.
- In verses 15 and 16 we see the result of God's judgment upon the proud nation. The Edomites were crushed by Nebuchadnezzar, and Iter by Cyrus who slaughtered them by the thousands, and finally

brought into oblivion by the Maccabees. By the time the Romans conquered Jerusalem, Edom was but a name in history.

- Then, in verses 17-21, the prophet of God speaks to Edom (the house of Esau) of the sure and certain salvation of Israel (“*the house of Jacob*”).

### **OBADIAH’S MESSAGE**

But what is Obadiah’s message to us? What is the meaning of this prophecy? What does the Spirit of God here teach us? Let’s read a few passages from the Inspired Volume, and it will become clear (Gen. 3:15; Mal. 1:2-5; Rom. 9:11-18). Remember, Edom is the whole house of Esau and Israel is the whole house of Jacob, his younger brother, the object of God’s everlasting love, mercy, and grace.

(Gen 3:15) "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

(Mal 1:2-5) "I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? *Was* not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, {3} And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. {4} Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they

shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. {5} And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel."

(Rom 9:11-18) "(For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) {12} It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. {13} As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. {14} What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. {15} For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. {16} So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. {17} For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. {18} Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth."

**Here is Obadiah's message.** — May God give us grace to learn it, rely upon it, and expect its fulfillment. Though the seed of the serpent hates, persecutes, and constantly bruises the heel of the woman's Seed, the Seed of the woman (Christ and his body the Church of God's elect), shall ultimately crush the serpent's head and his seed.

Let me show you seven things clearly set before us in this magnificent prophecy of Obadiah.

1. *First*, learn this and rejoice — **The purpose of our God cannot be hindered, thwarted, or frustrated.**

Before ever they were born, the Lord God declared that Esau must ever serve Jacob, that the elder must serve the younger. And so it shall be until time is no more. As Moses declared that Ham must serve Shem and Japheth, God's Word regarding Jacob and Esau is but a declaration of God's purpose to assure the hearts of chosen, redeemed sinners that the reprobate of this world can do us no harm. They only serve the interests of our souls. Jannes and Jambres gave Moses a fit, withstanding him to the face at every turn; but they could proceed no further (Ex. 7:11; 2 Tim. 3:8-9). And those who oppose God's people in this world, those who abuse, mistreat, and persecute God's people in this world cannot hurt them. They only serve us.

2. *Second*, **we see in the Edomites and their history that the enmity of the seed of the serpent toward the Seed of the woman shall never cease so long as time stands.**

The enmity of Edom toward Israel, the enmity of Esau against his brother Jacob began long before Obadiah came on the scene. It began while the two boys were still in their mother's womb. It is an enmity manifest throughout history. It is the enmity Cain had for Abel,

the enmity of Babylon against Israel, the enmity of Herod against the incarnate Son of God, the enmity of the Judaizers against Paul, the enmity of the religious world against the Kingdom of God. It is a never ceasing, unabated, ever-increasing enmity. It is the enmity of the dragon of hell against the Woman of God's choice (Rev. 12).

What is that enmity? It is the vile, base, deep-seated hatred of all who proudly presume that they can be saved by their own works, saved without God, against all who are saved by free grace alone, trusting Christ alone, looking to him alone for redemption, righteousness and everlasting salvation. If any thinks this enmity is imaginary, let him read a page or two of history, or of this morning's paper!

3. *Third*, learn this — **That which destroys all who perish under the wrath of God is the self-deceiving pride of their own hearts.**

(Jer 17:9) "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

(Oba 1:3-4) "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation *is* high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? {4} Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD."

Edom represents all those vain men and women who, like Esau, despising Christ presume that they can go it alone, that they can ascend to heaven by their own will, their own works, and their own goodness. They hide themselves in what they think is an impregnable rock of morality, on a high hill of experience, and say, “All is well. I am secure. Who shall bring me down?”

4. *Fourth, let us be reminded once more of the far reaching influence of evil.*

Edom, the whole nation, followed the example of their father Esau. The whole nation followed their father straight to hell! None are ever saved by the examples of others; but multitudes perish forever by the examples of others!

5. *Fifth, Obadiah goes to great lengths in these few verses of Inspiration to show us that all who suffer the wrath and judgment of God perish under the just judgment of the Almighty because of their own sins (vv. 10-17).*

I cannot state emphatically enough that all things are exactly according to God’s purpose. The whole world is ruled and disposed of according to God’s everlasting love for Jacob and hatred of Esau (Rom. 9:11-24). Vessels of mercy are vessels of mercy and shall never be vessels of wrath. Vessels of wrath are vessels of wrath and shall never be vessels of mercy. Is that clear enough?

But let me state this with equal force — **No one goes to hell because of God's purpose.** Vessels of mercy are prepared by grace for glory. Vessels of wrath fit themselves for destruction. Men and women go to hell because of their own, obstinate, willful rebellion and unbelief. Esau is in hell today because he despised Christ, because he preferred the world to the Son of God, because he preferred a bowl of beans to gratify his flesh for a moment to God's eternal inheritance of grace. Edom perished for exactly the same reason. That nation perished because of her hatred of God and his people, as displayed in their conduct.

6. Now, let's read verses 17-21 again and rejoice to see once more that **the everlasting salvation of God's elect is a matter of absolute certainty.**

(Oba 1:17-21) "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. {18} And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be *any* remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken *it*. {19} And *they of* the south shall possess the mount of Esau; and *they of* the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead. {20} And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* unto Zarephath; and

the captivity of Jerusalem, which *is* in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south. {21} And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

Here, Obadiah, by the Spirit of prophecy, looks beyond the range of time to that last great day when Christ shall come again in his glory. In that day...

- There shall be holiness everywhere.
- The whole house of Jacob shall possess their God-given, divinely purchased, rightful possessions.
- Jacob shall be a fire and Esau shall be stubble before him (Ps. 137).

(Psa 137) "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. {2} We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. {3} For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion. {4} How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? {5} If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*. {6} If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. {7} Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze *it*, raze *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof. {8} O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

{9} Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones."

- The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God (Rev. 11:15).

7. *Seventh*, I send you home with this final word — **The only hope for proud sinners is him who is Jacob's Portion forever, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

What is your choice? Will you follow Esau to hell, choosing that which gratifies the flesh; or will you follow Jacob, choosing Christ for your everlasting portion?