

OBADIAH
“Servant of Yahweh”

Edom

Edomites were direct descendants of Esau, Jacob’s twin brother. Animosity between these two brothers was constant and lasting. **Gen. 25:21-26; 25:27-34; 27:1-45**. Only for a short period of time had this relationship have been considered “civil”. **Gen. 33**. This animosity between them carried over to their descendants as well. When the descendants of Jacob (now known as the children of Israel) were travelling to their promised land, freed from the bondage of Egypt, they came to the borders of Edom. **Num. 20:14-21**. Seeking permission to pass thru their land, Edom refused them such passage and forced them to go around. The land of Edom and surrounding regions were very treacherous. High mountains, deep valleys were not very friendly to sojourners traveling amongst them. But Edom had a passage way thru all of this, that would make the journey much easier on the children of Israel. But access to this route was forbidden, and they were forced to travel a much more difficult way.

From this day on, their relationship to one another would be hostile. Edom had become Israel’s enemy. Many of the kings of Judah fought battles against the Edomites. King Saul (**1 Sam. 14:47**) King David (**2 Sam. 8:13,14**) King Solomon (**1 Kings 11:14**) King Amaziah (**2 Kings 14:7**).

When Judah and its capital city, Jerusalem, were being destroyed, Edom sat by and “cheered.” **Psalms 137:7** For their actions at this time, God was now pronouncing his judgment upon them. God remembered their wicked treatment of his children at the hands not only of the suppressing army, but by the Edomites nearby. Thus the book of Obadiah.

Date

Scholars seem to be divided on the date of this writing. Some consideration is made to a date around **845 B.C.** during the reign of Jehoram. Evidence for this date is found in **Jer. 49:7-13**. It seems Jeremiah is quoting Obadiah, in regards to the destruction of Edom. Jeremiah wrote his prophecy about 200 yrs. after Obadiah. Thus he could well be quoting from a previous prophet regarding a similar enemy. Also, by the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s (King of Babylon) destruction of Jerusalem (586 B.C.) the Edomites and Babylon were not on friendly terms either. To cheer their enemy on, knowing they were on the list of destruction as well by Babylon, just doesn’t seem right.

However there is evidence for the later date as well. (586 B.C.) In Obadiah **1:1** he uses the term “we,” we have heard a rumor from the Lord, we, meaning myself (Obadiah), and the other prophets, meaning Jeremiah, and even Ezekiel. All three of these prophets mention the destruction of Edom in their prophecies. **Ezek. 35:1-10** (Mt. Seir=Edom). Ezekiel prophesied from 593 B.C. to 571 B.C. during the time of Jeremiah as well. So did God give these 3 prophets the same message at the same time? Or did he give it to Obadiah 200 yrs. earlier, and they just copied from his declaration? Who is the “we” Obadiah is referring to then?

Questions remain, but either date will not hinder the message of this book. Edom is to be destroyed by the hand of God, for the reasons mentioned in this writing. God would not and could not overlook the treatment of his people by their hands. When their “brothers” were facing their darkest hour, they stood by and cheered and even helped their enemies. Shameless conduct in the sight of God, that demanded a stiff punishment.

VV1-9 The wickedness of Edom

- 1. How does Obadiah describe himself here? V1**
- 2. What is an ambassador?**
- 3. How is Edom described ? (KJV) v1**
- 4. What action is to be taken against Edom? V1**
- 5. How did Edom look to other nations? V2**
- 6. What problem existed among these people? V3 Why would they feel this way?**
- 7. What was God preparing to do to them? V4**
- 8. Explain the analogy Obadiah is making here, comparing the destruction of Edom with thieves and grape gatherers.**
- 9. What about Edom's allies, how much help would they be at this time?v7**
- 10. What about Edom's wise men, those who could offer wise counsel, what would happen to them? V8**

11. What about their mighty men, surely they could save them? V9

Vv10-16- The transgressions of Edom and their fate

12. Why was this destruction coming upon them, what did they do? List all the things they did.

13. What will be their fate?

Vv17-21- Israel's triumph

14. What will be happening with God's people at this time? V17

15. How complete will the destruction of Edom be?

16. What will happen to their land?

17. What lessons can WE learn from this prophecy and make application TODAY? List as many as you can find, and be prepared to discuss in class.