

OBADIAH

Good evening, Church, it is such a joy to be here with you tonight.

Tonight, we will embark on one of the most obscure books in all of the Bible, the Book of Obadiah.

We have been committed to working through the entire Old Testament as a Church here on Wednesday Nights, and we don't want to skip anything...

On Sunday, we will review the New Testament books.

I believe we will very soon have completed the entire Bible...

We have a few announcements before we get into the Word tonight.

Ladies, for the women's event Saturday, there are only a couple of spots left, so if you have not signed up yet, you don't want to wait much longer... the event is almost sold out.

You can call the office tomorrow to secure your spot.

The marriage dinner will have the same issue it does every year, so don't wait until the last minute to sign up.

It will reach capacity, and we will need to create a waitlist.

It is going to be a blessed night...

We will be starting a marriage Bible study. It will be announced the night of the marriage dinner.

The dinner will be on February 13th at 6 pm.

We have a dear friend, Pastor John Milhouse, coming out to share that night...

The last announcement is that we have a mission trip to Ukraine coming up, and spots are filling up quickly.

We have limited spots for this trip due to the mission scope and planned activities.

We are flying into Poland and driving into Ukraine with our missionaries, Vitaliy and his wife, Natalia, in two vans, so seating is limited.

I am impressed by the sign-ups so far, and Gen-Z is represented strongly. If any other adults besides Chuck Crew and me would like to come, that would be great.

That will be a lot young people and us in a war zone, and we might need some level-headed wisdom as we do ministry...

But the Lord knows...

Lastly, a group of us leaves next Tuesday for Israel. Things are getting a little dicey geopolitically, so keep us in your prayers if you would.

In fact, let's pray right now...

In our Daily Manna reading from the One Year Bible, we read on Sunday how one of the greatest family feuds in history began.

It was a drama that began between brothers.

They actually started their struggle in the womb of Rebekah, Isaac's wife, who was told...

Gen 25:23 "Two nations *are* in your womb,

Two peoples shall be separated from your body;
One people shall be stronger than the other,
And the older shall serve the younger."

The quarrel between the brothers would be seen early in life...

The younger Jacob would be cooking a stew one day, the mama's boy he was.

Esau, the oldest, was a manly man, outside hunting all day in the field.

He came in, and he was not just hungry, but famished.

That stew smelt so good to him that it was roasting on the fire.

Something I try to teach my kids every day, we are family, let's share.

I made up this point system in our family...

It makes no sense: the points get you nothing, but the kids love earning them...

They get family points for doing things for one another...

This morning, there was one pancake stick left in the freezer, and three kids wanted it. Freedom said, "Dad, hurry and cook it for me, because Lola will want it, but I also want a bowl of cereal."

Daisy came out rubbing her eyes. She said, "If there is only one left, you can give it to Lola; I will have the cereal."

So, Daisy got the family points this morning... the only problem is, when they ask me how much each of them has... I have to make up a number because I don't keep track.

But now and again, I take them out for Ice Cream, and we cash in whatever amount of family points they have... and they all go back to zero...

They love getting those family points... some system I made up... that means nothing...

Jacob, making that stew, should have just given his hungry brother some; he would have earned major family points.

Instead, he tricked his brother Esau by swapping his stew for his birthright as the firstborn.

Now, if Esau valued spiritual things, the blessings from God as much as he did fleshly things, and a full belly, he would have said “no thanks.”

But he did not...

He lived according to his physical, not his spiritual, drive.

There is, of course, a chance that Esau never took the whole encounter seriously.

Jacob was just his younger brother, after all.

Maybe he thought he would push him around and take it when he needed it.

Esau never thought that his little brother would one day have enough courage and wit to outsmart their father.

But Jacob, with the help of his mother, would one day do the unthinkable: he would dress up to look like the hairy Esau, pretending to be the older, mature man...

And Isaac, being weak, blind, and feeble, would be fooled...

He would bless the younger son rather than Esau, the older son.

Even after the ruse was revealed, Isaac refused to bless Esau; he would not undo what he had done.

By faith, Isaac understood that this was all God's doing, and he trusted the outcome.

In this family dispute, both brothers were at fault.

Jacob was a deceiver, and Esau was carnal and could not see the bigger picture.

Later on, Jacob would admit his error, but Esau never would.

Esau would continue in his pride, becoming increasingly bitter, and the bitterness would grow.

Heb. 12:17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

Esau was so sorry for his loss, but he remained too bitter over his brother's double-cross that he would never admit that he had any fault in the matter.

He found no place for repentance... meaning he never found repentance... He could never shake his own resentment.

The unfortunate tragedy here in this story, and this happens in many families, and many stories...

The bitterness and resentment continued into their offspring and their descendants.

The descendants of Esau would be known as the Edomites for centuries, and Jacob's offspring would become Israel.

And their fight would travel with them through the ages.

It became a major border dispute that lasted for thousands of years.

Our prophet tonight, Obadiah, was sent by God to confront the nation of Edom.

He is given a short, to-the-point message.

God speaks through him about their sin and the behavior that sin produced in their lives.

God will bring a final verdict on this feud between the brothers, and he will judge the sons of Esau.

In the first 16 verses, He will reveal the destruction of Edom, and in the last 5 verses, He will deal with the deliverance of Zion.

We see here why the last twelve books of the Old Testament are called the Minor Prophets.

It is not because they are less critical, but because of the size of the books; Obadiah is only 21 verses.

It is the shortest book in the Old Testament, but it has a mighty Word.

The Major Prophets, Major in size...

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel have an average of 46 chapters...

But all the prophets are equally essential, and their writings are inspired.

The prophet Obadiah will start with a vision, being from the southern Kingdom of Judah.

Something interesting to consider, all the nations around Edom and Judah worshipped idols, which were worshipped with Canaanite sexual worship...

But Judah and Edom alone resisted the idolatry.

Judah worshipped Yahweh at the Temple, whereas the Edomites were Atheists.

They were hardworking people... we know this from archaeological discoveries: they found cities carved into cliffs south of the Dead Sea.

The Rock City of Petra is probably the most famous of their work.

They were proud men; they did not worship gods because they felt they could achieve whatever they

wanted in life on their own, through their own initiative and innovation.

They could defend themselves.

They were like their first father, Esau, who saw more value in the sustenance of a bowl of stew than in the blessing of God.

They were a proud people who saw no need for God in their lives...

Sounds like many in our own culture today...

Let's get into our text, verse 1...

The Coming Judgment on Edom

1 The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom

(We have heard a report from the LORD ,

And a messenger has been sent among the nations,

saying,

"Arise, and let us rise up against her for battle"):

2 "Behold, I will make you small among the nations;

You shall be greatly despised.

3 The pride of your heart has deceived you,
You who dwell in the clefts of the rock,
Whose habitation is high;
You who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down
to the ground?'

4 Though you ascend *as* high as the eagle,
And though you set your nest among the stars,
From there I will bring you down," says the LORD .

And here is God's problem with the Edomites, and really with many today.

They were proud.

They had gotten too big for their britches.

God warns that he will make them small among the nations.

He will raise an army to confront the Edomites.

There is something really incredible about starting small in life, in ministry, and coming up through the struggle.

I was talking to a Pastor last night, really late...

I was driving home from ministry and on the phone...

And the Pastor is about to hand off his pretty successful ministry, one that was built up over the years, through much sacrifice and toil, from hard times, to very, very prosperous times...

The worry is what will happen to a man who is given such a prosperous, big, financially well-off thing without having to go through the squeeze and the trial of it all...

Will pride set in, will he become too big for his britches... to high and mighty... overlord kind of thing...

I don't know...

I am grateful I don't know... and I was not tested like that...

I had a different path... and we had to go through the path of faith... the squeeze... and the tears...

We had to watch God do the impossible over the years...

And what that does to a man... it correctly positions his heart... he can never really get too big... because he can never stand back and say, "Look what I did!"

No, we saw God do it, every step of the way... we could never take credit for it...

But here, the prophet tells Edom, "The pride of your heart has deceived you."

Edom thought he was untouchable...

But God tells him, "You are going down."

The Edomites saw themselves as a soaring eagle, high above all danger, but God saw them as a lame duck.

Those of you joining me next week to Israel will see the land of Edom by the Dead Sea...

Edom's formidable capital was Petra... for an invading army to reach the city, it had to pass through a narrow passageway, and the military could only march a few men wide.

War chariots were out of the question.

So the Edomites would pick off their enemy in the passageway below.

Petra was seemingly impossible to break through to reach for an attack.

Of course, this would make anyone proud... They were so proud, they did not think they needed God.

The Bible tells us,

**Ps 14:1 The fool has said in his heart,
"There is no God."**

The reality is, to live apart from God, or as our own god, is beyond arrogance; it is foolishness.

To think that we can get by in this life ourselves is a great deception that Satan uses in our lives.

There is no such thing as a person who has made it themselves.

It is by God's Grace we are who we are...

Do you ever notice those on the mountaintop one day, soaring on the peaks of fame and glory, how fast they can fall?

1 Cor. 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you.

Obadiah continues now, verses 5...

5 "If thieves had come to you,
If robbers by night —
Oh, how you will be cut off! —
Would they not have stolen till they had enough?
If grape-gatherers had come to you,
Would they not have left *some* gleanings?

6 "Oh, how Esau shall be searched out!
How his hidden treasures shall be sought after!

Now, when thieves come into a house, they usually only take the valuables.

Smart ones do anyway.

They want to get in and get out...

Who wants to get stuck carrying a big ol' dresser when the police arrive... no, you get the valuables, the jewelry, and the money, and you leave stuff behind.

I was never a thief... but we have had a few here break in, I have watched them on the camera...

They are not clever fellows... one guy just got too greedy... he would not leave the office... he kept grabbing more things... we don't leave anything

valuable out... so he was grabbing papers... he was obviously out of his mind... the police were coming...

He grabbed a computer screen... okay, that was probably the most valuable thing he caught, but then he kept stuffing papers in the trash can, to take with him, and he got so excited about those papers, he did that until the police arrived...

No, a clever thief gets the valuables, stays content with that, and leaves in a hurry... leaves some things behind, as the prophet suggests...

He uses the grape-gatherers here as an example: they always take the best grapes and leave some behind, but the nations coming to invade Edom will take it all. Even the hidden treasures will be sought after....

The area around Petra is vast and intricate, with a series of canyons and caves, so there would be no shortage of places to put those treasures, but they would all be found.

And their friends and allies will even betray them... Look now at verse 7...

7 All the men in your confederacy

Shall force you to the border;
The men at peace with you
Shall deceive you *and* prevail against you.
Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you.
No one is aware of it.

8 "Will I not in that day," says the LORD,
"Even destroy the wise *men* from Edom,
And understanding from the mountains of Esau?"

9 Then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be
dismayed,
To the end that everyone from the mountains of
Esau
May be cut off by slaughter.

My kids will say, "Dad, why are you going so hard?"

God seems to be going really hard on Edom here...

Why would He be judging them so severely? What
would warrant such a severe hand of judgment from
God Almighty upon this nation?

Well, I know for me, one thing as a dad that makes
me go hard on my kids, is when they are fierce
toward one another...

That awakens something in me, because we are family, and we ought to do better, know better, be better toward one another.

We see this is the reasoning here, look at verse 10...

Edom Mistreated His Brother

10 "For violence against your brother Jacob,
Shame shall cover you,
And you shall be cut off forever.

Now, I won't get thousands of years of watching my kids mistreat each other... so there is no saying what I would do if I were God...

But it took God a long time to get to this point with Edom.

He watched as Esau never got over his bitterness toward Jacob, and it spread to his children, and their descendants, and the hatred continued on and on.

Remember when the Israelites were coming out of Egypt, into the Promised Land, and through the Edomite territory.

The Edomites refused to let them pass and made Moses go around.

Throughout their history, Edom became an antagonist to the Jews.

Throughout the time of the Kings of Israel and Judah, there were great battles with Edom.

And the hatred went deep.

We just finished the Christmas season... and in that story, it is told that a wicked king ruled in Judea at the time: King Herod.

Remember, when the wise men from the East came to inquire about the King of the Jews, King Herod was envious and moved to eliminate the baby Jesus.

In fact, he ordered that all the infants under 2 years old in Bethlehem be killed.

But Herod was an impostor Jew, as he was only a convert.

He was actually one of the last Edomites... and still, that fight that started back in Rebekah's womb was still playing out that first Christmas season.

Look at verses 11 now...

11 In the day that you stood on the other side —
In the day that strangers carried captive his forces,

When foreigners entered his gates
And cast lots for Jerusalem —
Even you *were* as one of them.

Now, when invaders came into the Holy Land, it seems that Edom was always there to support their enemy.

It is not clear what Obadiah we have here in the Bible... there are actually a few.

I read that some think this may be a prophet who served when King Jehoram ruled, and that the Philistines and the Arabians attacked Jerusalem, and that Edom joined the fight.

But other scholars believe this was later on, when Babylon invaded and conquered Jerusalem, and Edom rejoiced.

Ps 137:7 Remember, O LORD , against the sons of Edom
The day of Jerusalem,
Who said, “Raze *it*, raze *it*,
To its very foundation!”

Edom sat and watched and celebrated as Babylon cheered the Jews' destruction.

They wanted more destruction, as their bitterness increased.

There are records in the Apocrypha, in writings from after the fall of Babylon to Persia, when the Jews were about to return to Israel.

And a Jew named Zerubbabel reminds the king of Persia of this: “You also solemnly swore to rebuild the temple, which was burned down by the Edomites when Judea was devastated by the Chaldeans.”¹

And it does seem the Edomites helped the Babylonians set fire to God’s Temple.

We see the depth of Edom’s hatred here.

Then in verse 12 we read...

12 "But you should not have gazed on the day of
your brother

In the day of his captivity;

Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of
Judah

In the day of their destruction;

Nor should you have spoken proudly

¹ 1 Esdras 4:45 CEB

In the day of distress.

13 You should not have entered the gate of My people

In the day of their calamity.

Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction

In the day of their calamity,

Nor laid *hands* on their substance

In the day of their calamity.

14 You should not have stood at the crossroads

To cut off those among them who escaped;

Nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained

In the day of distress.

The Edomites took full advantage and arrested any of the fearful Israelites fleeing.

When the Jews were down, Edom kicked them lower.

Taking pleasure in someone's fall is a terrible place to be...

Our hearts are never in a good place when we see even someone who has done us harm getting what they might deserve.

The heart of a Christian is opposite this... this is the heart of Esau, the fleshly man...

Not the spiritual man.

Jesus said...

Luke 6:32-36 "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. **33** And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. **34** And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. **35** But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. **36** Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

This is our mandate... the way of the spiritual person... the way of the son or daughter of the Most High...

Matt 5:43-46 "You have heard that it was said, '*You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.*' **44** But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, **45** that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

We are assured this by our God...

Rom 12:19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" *says the Lord.*

And I have seen this played out in real life, in the life of God's children... and it is something to behold...

If things have been done to you unjustly, or you have been terribly hurt, or there are things done in your past that have left scars... commit them to the Lord, forgive that person...

If that person is still committed to a path of evil toward you... You cannot help that or them... or what will come upon them... you are only responsible for what God has called you to do...

You will never truly heal unless you get to that place of forgiving and letting go... and letting God handle them...

There is a chance that He may restore your relationship with that person... He may not... but He will mend your heart...

But whatever happens to them... you should never rejoice in their folly or destruction or calamity... pray that they too would find healing in the Lord... that they too would discover Grace... because the other side of that is not good... we don't pray that on our worst enemies.

Edom here should have had mercy on his fallen brother.

But instead, the nation rejoiced in its folly.

Seven times in three verses, God tells Edom, "You should not have..." God was super angry at Edom for the Cruelty that they showed Judah, and He would punish them now as a result.

Verse 15...

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.

16 For as you drank on My holy mountain,
So shall all the nations drink continually;
Yes, they shall drink, and swallow,
And they shall be as though they had never been.

God ends His message to Edom here by telling them that they will get what they have put out to others.

Since Edom showed no mercy toward Israel, Edom will get no mercy.

And eventually, the mighty Babylonian army would turn toward Edom.

Even later, 200 years after Babylon's assault, Alexander the Great would finish what Babylon could not do.

While the Jews would gain independence from the Greeks, Israel, under the Maccabean rule, would conquer and scatter the Edomites...

The Edomites effectively ceased to exist as a distinct people by the end of the 1st century AD, with their

cultural and genetic legacy absorbed into other groups.²

Obadiah said it shall be as though they had never been.

Meditate on the power of God's Word for a moment...

As it was spoken, so it is... That is the Power of God's Word Church...

An entire people group was wiped out for their disobedience and pride.

Edom was now finished... but the prophet would continue here... speaking now to the Jews...

Israel's Final Triumph

17 "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance,
And there shall be holiness;
The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

As Edom is assured of destruction, with no promises of hope here.

Israel is afforded just the opposite...

² <https://enduringword.com/rise-and-fall-of-the-edomites/>

God's people are promised here that they will possess their possessions.

That is a strange phrase, isn't it... they will possess something that is theirs already...

Sometimes we as Christians fail to possess all that is ours in Christ...

It is there for us to possess, but we lack the faith to take it for ourselves.

We think we are unworthy, we tell ourselves it is for others, better people, for those whose lives are more put together.

Eph. 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

Right there for us to have, we have power, love, we can even have joy, peace in our lives, and wisdom found here in God's Word.

All the spiritual blessings are there, and they were purchased for you on the Cross at Calvary; you need to receive them and believe that they are for you...

Grab it, take hold of it, but by faith...

Faith is the way we take it...

Driving in this morning... In my prayer time, I said, multiple times, "Without faith it is impossible, he who comes to God must believe that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

Possess your possessions Church... they are there for the taking...

Don't be content to just come to Church to hear about the things of God, to sing songs about God, to talk about Him...

Come to this place, to have the desire to experience Him...

To rise... and take by faith all that God has for you and for your life...

He has given you gifts and a purpose... and He will give you power to live it out...

Don't let unworthiness or skepticism keep you out of all that God has for you...

Maybe it is outside voices... people are speaking negative doubts telling you that you are unworthy and not enough...

Let me tell you something... from the day my wife and I gave our lives to the Lord... we have had an abundance of those voices in our lives... still to this day...

I just told my pastor this....

And I have no doubt... If you took Jess and me from today... Having a Church now, people coming to that Church, which blows our minds... and you take us, and all that God has done in the last 21 years... and you set us in a room with all those same people...

Those who told us that God could never use people like us, that we would never be in the ministry, that we were nothings, nobodies, even with all that God has done...

I have no doubt, their assessment would not change one iota of us... because it has nothing to do with us...

We knew that all along... their assessments were accurate...

We just knew that if we reached out to Jesus... and possessed all the spiritual blessings He paid for and made available to us, anything was possible...

The same is true for your life... The saying "With God, anything is possible" is not just a cliché saying...

It is absolutely true...

If God can transform and reform two lost sinners like my wife and me... He can use anyone....

Now, the rest of Obadiah, the prophet, speaks about how Judah will burn brightly.

18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
And the house of Joseph a flame;
But the house of Esau *shall be* stubble;
They shall kindle them and devour them,
And no survivor shall *remain* of the house of Esau,"
For the LORD has spoken.

19 The South shall possess the mountains of Esau,
And the Lowland shall possess Philistia.
They shall possess the fields of Ephraim
And the fields of Samaria.
Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

20 And the captives of this host of the children of
Israel
Shall possess the land of the Canaanites
As far as Zarephath.

The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
Shall possess the cities of the South.

21 Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion
To judge the mountains of Esau,
And the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

Isaiah 16 is an interesting text to consider as it deals with Petra, perhaps in the Last Days, just before Jesus's Second Coming.

The Rock City will be used as a refuge for the Jews who will be fleeing into the wilderness from the Antichrist.

In the midst of God's judgments, those cliffs that failed to save Edom will be used to shelter the Jews.

In the end, we see the kingdom shall be the Lord's

It will not be Esau's or Jacob's in their century-long feud or fight.

Edom had to learn the hard way: pride is never a good way to live... in fact, it is a hard life...

It will break you as a child of God, especially...

You will find yourself at odds with Him, constantly fighting His will.

If he is calling you to forgive someone, or someones...

Believe it or not, Churches are not immune to tribal wars or factional fighting...

Before it gets too far... You can be the one to humble yourself... let it go, and forgive the person...

Church, we will annoy each other in the Body of Christ at times...

We will have misunderstandings...

We will even engage in big fights and have significant differences...

We will let little things become big things if we are not careful...

Pride divides the Work... it causes splits and harm... and it stops our advance on the enemy...

Obadiah challenged Edom to stop thinking too highly of himself.

Maybe it is a co-worker, your mom or dad, a sister or brother, but it is time to make amends...

Humble yourself, and be the one to make the first move...

Life is too short to live with bitterness.

If the problem is here in the Church, remember what Paul taught...

Rom 12:3-5 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. **4** For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, **5** so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

We are one body, and we are to be working together to glorify God with our individual gifts.

Pride comes before the fall, Church... Pride tears the Body apart...

Proverbs 16:18 Pride *goes* before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before a fall.

Church, Obadiah teaches us there are consequences for bitterness and unforgiveness.

Seek forgiveness, forgive, and Live, find authentic living...

It is time for some of you to let go, renounce that pride, for the sake of your marriage, your family, your relationships, your loneliness, and obey the Lord...

Call on Jesus tonight, and by faith, possess all that He has already given you, the spiritual blessings that are there for the taking...

Trust Jesus and be free tonight... be healed of that unforgiveness tonight...

Let's pray....