**Obadiah**

**Chapter 1**

**1 The vision of Obadiah. This is what the Sovereign LORD says about Edom—**

**We have heard a message from the LORD: An envoy was sent to the nations to say, “Rise, and let us go against her for battle”— 2 “See, I will make you small among the nations; you will be utterly despised. 3 The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rocks and make your home on the heights, you who say to yourself, ‘Who can bring me down to the ground?’ 4 Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,” declares the LORD. 5 “If thieves came to you, if robbers in the night— Oh, what a disaster awaits you— would they not steal only as much as they wanted? If grape pickers came to you, would they not leave a few grapes?**

**6 But how Esau will be ransacked, his hidden treasures pillaged! 7 All your allies will force you to the border; your friends will deceive and overpower you; those who eat your bread will set a trap for you, but you will not detect it. 8 “In that day,” declares the LORD, “will I not destroy the wise men of Edom, men of understanding in the mountains of Esau? 9 Your warriors, O Teman, will be terrified, and everyone in Esau’s mountains will be cut down in the slaughter.**

**10 Because of the violence against your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame; you will be destroyed forever. 11 On the day you stood aloof while strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them. 12 You should not look down on your brother in the day of his misfortune, nor rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their destruction, nor boast so much in the day of their trouble. 13 You should not march through the gates of my people in the day of their disaster,**

**nor look down on them in their calamity in the day of their disaster, nor seize their wealth in the day of their disaster. 14 You should not wait at the crossroads to cut down their fugitives, nor hand over their survivors in the day of their trouble. 15 “The day of the LORD is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head. 16 Just as you drank on my holy hill, so all the nations will drink continually; they will drink and drink and be as if they had never been. and be as if they had never been. 17 But on Mount Zion will be deliverance; it will be holy, and the house of Jacob will possess its inheritance. 18 The house of Jacob will be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame;**

**the house of Esau will be stubble, and they will set it on fire and consume it.**

**There will be no survivors from the house of Esau.” The LORD has spoken. 19 People from the Negev will occupy the mountains of Esau, and people from the foothills will possess the land of the Philistines. They will occupy the fields of Ephraim and Samaria, and Benjamin will possess Gilead. 20 This company of Israelite exiles who are in Canaan will possess the land as far as Zarephath;**

**the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will possess the towns of the Negev. 21 Deliverers will go up on Mount Zion to govern the mountains of Esau.**

**And the kingdom will be the LORD’s.**

Of the author of this book, the shortest in the Old Testament, very little is known. It appears from his book that Obadiah ("servant of Jehovah") was a member of the southern kingdom, and it may be right to identify him with the man of the same name who lived under Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat. This would place him in the first half of the ninth century before Christ, an assumption which receives some further support by the fact that both Joel (chap. 2, 32; 3, 2. 3. 7. 14. 17) and Jeremiah (chap. 49, 7-16) evidently refer to the prophecy of Obadiah. (Kretzmann)

The vision of Obadiah contains a severe arraignment of the Edomites for their traditional enmity against the people of God, on account of which he announces the divine judgment upon Idumea. After a further paragraph, in which the justice of this punishment upon Edom is established, the book closes with a promise of the restoration of Judah, a prediction which finds its complete fulfillment in the victories of the Church of Christ in the Messianic period. It is clear that the judgment upon Edom is intended as a type of the punishment upon all the enemies of the Lord, .and that the fulfillment of the kingdom of the Messiah are the basic thoughts of the vision. 1) (Kretzmann)

**1**.*vision.* Commonly used in the OT to designate a revelation from God. (CSB)

 LORD SAYS – This message against an enemy of Israel carried God’s authority and was not a matter of Obadiah’s wishful thinking. (TLSB)

 ABOUT EDOM – It was located in and around the Seir mountain range south of the Salt Sea and east of the Great Rift Valley, it was 110 miles long and 30 miles wide, SE of Judah. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, Jacob’s brother. God gave Jacob a new name, Israel, and his descendants because the nation of Israel. Edom had been hostile toward Israel for centuries. (TLSB)

 *We*. Either (1) the editorial “we,” or (2) the prophet’s association of Israel with himself, or (3) other prophets’ pronouncements against Edom. In any case, the rest of the verse sets the stage for Obadiah’s prophetic message, which begins with v. 2. (CSB)

 message. Or “report.” An envoy had been sent to the nations, calling them to battle against Edom. Perhaps a conspiracy was under way between some of Edom’s allies (v. 7). Although Edom feels secure (trusting in her mountain fortresses and her wise men, vv. 2–4, 8–9), Obadiah announces God’s judgment on her for her hostility to Israel. (CSB)

**2**  *I will make you small*. Cf. the colloquial expression, “cut one down to size.” (CSB)

**3** PRIDE OF HEART…DECEIVED – The Hebrew text making this very emphatic: "Betrayed hath thee the pride of thine heart," upon which Edom depended. (Kretzmann)

 *rocks*. See NIV text note. Sela was the capital of Edom. Perhaps the later Petra (both Sela and Petra mean “rock” or “cliff”), this rugged site is located some 50 miles south of the southern end of the Dead Sea. See note on 2Ki 14:7. (CSB)

This led to complacency and a false sense of security. (TLSB)

**4**  *eagle.* A proud and regal bird, noted for strength, keenness of vision and power of flight. stars. Hyperbole for high, inaccessible places in the mountains. (CSB)

**5**  *If thieves* … *If grape pickers*. For a similar oracle against Edom see Jer 49:9. (CSB)

That is, if thieves entered thy dwellings, they would not have taken every thing; they would have laid hold on thy wealth; and carried off as much as they could escape with conveniently; if grape-gatherers entered thy vineyards, they would not have taken every bunch; some gleanings would have been left. But the Chaldeans have stripped thee bare; they have searched out all thy hidden things, verse 6, they have left thee nothing. Hour art thou cut off! Thou art totally and irretrievably ruined! The prophet speaks of this desolation as if it had already taken place. (ACC)

**6**  *hidden treasures*. The ancient Greek historian Diodorus Siculus indicates that the Edomites put their wealth—accumulated from trade—in vaults in the rocks. (CSB)

So that not one of its hiding-places would be unexplored by the foe. (Kretzmann)

**7**  TO THE BORDER – or, "To the border have they escorted thee, all thy confederates," that is, the allies, to whom Idumea sent for assistance, sent these ambassadors back, not wishing to be involved in the downfall of that nation. (Kretzmann)

 *set a trap for you*. However the Hebrew for this expression is understood (see NIV text note), it must indicate some act of treachery on the part of previously trusted close friends. Those who “eat bread with” are one’s com-panions (Latin cum, “with,” and panis, “bread”). See note on Ps 41:9. (CSB)

literally, "Thy bread have they placed as a snare," or "wound," under thee, that is, they broke their pledge of alliance to hospitality, treacherously leaving them in the lurch when they needed help most. (Kretzmann)

**8**  *In that day*. The day of Edom’s destruction; but the words also have an eschatological ring. Since in OT prophecy Edom was often emblematic of all the world powers hostile to God and his kingdom, her judgment anticipates God’s complete removal of all such opposition in that day. wise men. In whom Edom put so much confidence for her security (see Jer 49:7). Eliphaz, one of Job’s three friends, was a Temanite (see next note). (CSB)

 *Esau.* Another name for Edom (see Ge 36:1). (CSB)

**9**  *Teman*. A reference to all Edom, as in Jer 49:7, 20 (see also Am 1:12). Teman means “south,” and the name probably refers to Edom as the southland. Some, however, identify Teman with Tawilan, a site about three miles east of Petra. (CSB)

 CUT DOWN IN THE SLAUGHTER – It was the object of the Lord in taking away from them their wisdom and the use of their former power. When God decides to punish a nation, then all the cleverness of its most learned men, all the strength of its mightiest men, will be of no avail. (Kretzmann)

**10**  *your brother Jacob.* Edom’s violent crimes are all the more reprehensible because they were committed against the brother nation. (CSB)

 *covered with shame*. A striking expression since shame is usually associated with nakedness. (CSB)

**11** See Introduction: Date and Place of Writing. strangers … foreigners. These terms put in relief the sin of Edom: He did not act like a brother (v. 12) but was like one of the strangers. (CSB)

**12–14** A rebuke of Edom’s hostile actions. The eight rebukes in this section proceed from the general to the particular. See Eze 35:13 and Ps 137 for examples of Edom’s reactions to Judah’s misfortunes. (CSB)

**15**  *The day of the Lord is near for all nations.* If there was an eschatological glimmering in “in that day” (v. 8), it here becomes a strong ray. The day of the Lord brings judgment for the nations (including, but not limited to, Edom) and salvation for the house of Jacob. (CSB)

 *upon your own head*. The situation will be reversed in retribution for Edom’s hostility against God’s people detailed in vv. 11–14. Ezekiel’s denunciation of Edom (ch. 35) reflects a similar punishment-fits-the-crime principle. (CSB)

**16**  *Just as you drank*. As the Edomites profaned the holy mountain by carousing, so the nations will drink and drink. Their drinking, however, is that of the bitter potion of God’s judgment—which they will be compelled to keep on drinking. For drinking as punishment see Jer 25:15–16; 49:12. (CSB)

All enemies of the Lord and of His holy Church will eventually feel the heavy hand of His wrath on account of their hostility against that which He has ordained. (Kretzmann)

**17**  *But on Mount Zion will be deliverance*. Beginning with this verse the blessings on the house of Jacob are mentioned. Eschatological references are twofold: judgment on God’s enemies, blessing on God’s people. (CSB)

**18**  *Jacob … Joseph*. Previously it was stated that the Lord would destroy Edom, using other nations (v. 7); now it is to be done by God’s people. (CSB)

 *no survivors*. The final word to Esau is that his house (or nation) will be totally destroyed; there will be no Edomite survivors. Yet compare Am 9:12 with Ac 15:17 and see note on Am 9:12. (CSB)

**19**  *People … will occupy*. With Edom annihilated, others will occupy Edomite territory. Although not expressly identified, these are most likely the remnant of Israel referred to in the lines immediately following. (CSB)

 *Negev*. See note on Ge 12:9 – (The dry wasteland stretching southward from Beersheba.) (CSB)

 *Philistines*. See note on Ge 10:14 – (The Philistines themselves were a vigorous Indo-European maritime people who invaded Egypt early in the 12th century b.c. After being driven out, they migrated in large numbers to southwest Canaan, later extending their influence over most of the land. The Philistines of the patriarchal period (see 21:32, 34; 26:1, 8, 14–15, 18) no doubt had earlier settled in Canaan more peacefully and in smaller numbers.) (CSB)

 *Gilead.* See notes on Ge 31:21; SS 4:1 - A fertile region southeast of the Sea of Galilee.) (CSB)

**20** *Zarephath*. See note on 1Ki 17:9 – (A coastal town located between Tyre and Sidon in the territory ruled by Jezebel’s father Ethbaal (16:31). Elijah is commanded to go and reside in the heart of the very land from which the Baal worship now being promoted in Israel had come.) (CSB)

 *Sepharad*. Usually taken to refer to Sardis in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), though some think that Sparta (the city in Greece) might be meant. (CSB)

**21**  *Deliverers*. Having developed the theme of possessing lands around Zion, the prophet now turns to the center. The “deliverers” come from Mount Zion and rule over the mountains of Esau. Mount Zion is exalted over the mountains of Esau. The Messiah, the Deliverer par excellence, may ultimately be in view. (CSB)

 *the kingdom will be the Lord’s*. The conclusion of the prophecy—and the final outcome of history. The last book of the Bible echoes this theme (Rev 11:15). (CSB)

The entire paragraph evidently sets forth the marvelous deliverance of the people of the Lord from the oppression of all their enemies and their preservation in the Church of the Messiah, which, from being the Church Militant here in time, will merge into the Church Triumphant in eternity. (Kretzmann)