



# OBADIAH

Summer 2023 – Week 4



## Overview

The book of Obadiah is one of the shortest books in the Old Testament, consisting of only 21 verses. Despite its brevity, it carries a powerful message of judgment and hope, focusing on the nation of Edom and its impending downfall.

Obadiah, the author of the book, remains somewhat of a mystery as there are multiple individuals named Obadiah mentioned in the Bible. The book itself does not provide many details about the author's background or the specific time in which it was written. However, scholars generally place its composition around the 6th century BCE, during or after the Babylonian exile.

The central theme of the book of Obadiah is the divine judgment upon Edom, a neighboring nation of ancient Israel. Edom was descended from Esau, the twin brother of Jacob (Israel), and throughout history, the Edomites and Israelites maintained a complicated relationship. The book of Obadiah recounts the offenses committed by the Edomites against their brother nation and declares that God will bring retribution upon them.

The book begins with a vision that Obadiah received from the Lord, proclaiming the imminent destruction of Edom. The reasons for this impending judgment are their pride, arrogance, and participation in the plundering and destruction of Jerusalem. The Edomites not only gloated over Israel's misfortune but also lent their support to Israel's enemies, betraying their blood ties.

The prophecy of Obadiah includes vivid descriptions of the coming judgment. Edom's allies will turn against them, their wealth and fortresses will be pillaged, and they will be left desolate and humiliated. The Lord's punishment is portrayed as a just response to their actions and a fulfillment of divine justice.

However, the book of Obadiah also offers hope and restoration for the people of Israel. It declares that in the day of the Lord's judgment, Israel will be restored and their enemies, including Edom, will be no more. The final verses of the book promise that the kingdom will belong to the Lord, and the people of Israel will possess their rightful inheritance.

Although the book of Obadiah focuses primarily on Edom, it carries broader theological implications. It emphasizes God's sovereignty over the nations and His commitment to justice. It also serves as a reminder that God is aware of the actions of individuals and nations and will hold them accountable for their deeds.

## Reading Plan

### Read Obadiah 1:1-21

Every day for at least  
three days

- How does the book of Obadiah emphasize the importance of compassion and mercy towards others?
- How does the book of Obadiah encourage us to examine our attitudes towards wealth and material possessions?
- In what ways can the book of Obadiah inspire us to seek reconciliation and restoration in broken relationships?

# Bible Study

The book of Obadiah is a prophetic message that sheds light on the fate of the nation of Edom. In this three-part Bible study, you will explore the themes of justice, pride, and restoration found in Obadiah.

## Understanding the Historical Context

- Read Obadiah 1:1-9
- Who were the Edomites, and what was their relationship to the nation of Israel?
- Why did the Edomites become objects of divine judgment in Obadiah's prophecy?
- Obadiah describes the pride and arrogance of Edom. What specific examples does he provide?

## Consequences of Injustice and Pride

- Read Obadiah 1:10-16
- Obadiah accuses Edom of standing aloof and rejoicing in Israel's downfall. What does this reveal about their character?
- How does indifference to the suffering of others contribute to injustice in our world today?
- Obadiah speaks of the violence and betrayal committed by Edom against their brother nation. What are the consequences of such actions?
- Obadiah prophesies about the "day of the Lord" when all nations will be held accountable. What does this teach us about God's sovereignty and justice?

## Hope and Restoration

- Read Obadiah 1:17-21
- How does God's promise of restoration bring hope to the oppressed and downtrodden?
- How can this message of God's sovereignty and triumph bring comfort and assurance in times of uncertainty?
- How does the message of Obadiah challenge your own attitudes and behaviors toward justice, pride, and restoration?
- Are there areas in your life where you need to repent of pride, indifference, or injustice?
- How can you actively pursue justice and participate in God's work of restoration in your community?

# Key Themes

## Divine Judgment

The book focuses on the nation of Edom, a neighboring nation to Israel, and prophesies against them for their pride, violence, & mistreatment of Israel. God's judgment is depicted as inevitable & severe, emphasizing that no nation or people can escape the consequences of their actions.

## Pride and Humility

Obadiah highlights the destructive nature of pride and arrogance. Edom's downfall is attributed to their haughty attitude and self-exaltation. The book contrasts Edom's pride with God's sovereignty and reminds the readers that humility before God is essential.

## Retribution and Recompense

Edom is warned that they will experience the same violence and destruction they inflicted upon Israel. The principle of "an eye for an eye" is at work, showing that God ensures that justice is served and that wrongdoers face the consequences of their actions.

## God's Sovereignty

Despite Edom's power & arrogance, God is portrayed as the one who determines the fate of nations and orchestrates events according to His divine plan. The book encourages readers to trust in God's ultimate control and authority over the world.

## Restoration and Deliverance

Obadiah ends with a message of hope and restoration for Israel, promising that Israel will be restored and will possess their rightful inheritance. It foretells a future in which God's people will triumph over their enemies and experience God's blessings once again.