

IN &
OUT®

*Spare Your
People,
Lord*

A STUDY OF
OBADIAH AND JOEL

IN AND OUT®

KINGS AND PROPHETS SERIES

Course 4

SPARE YOUR PEOPLE, LORD

A STUDY OF OBADIAH AND JOEL

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THE PROPHETS TO THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

God knows our frame; we are but dust. Yet He promises us that we won't be tempted beyond our ability. He has given us His Word—of power, life, and blessing to those who trust and obey.

Before Israel had a king, God set the standards and He warned what would happen if His people did not listen. In Deuteronomy 17, kings were warned not to multiply wives so that their hearts would not turn away from God.

Solomon did not listen and the consequences were disastrous. His many wives from other countries brought idols with them and “Solomon held fast to these in love.” The one called “beloved of the Lord, the builder of God's holy temple,” turned away from God and toward the gods of his wives. His heart was no longer totally devoted to the Lord his God as the heart of David his father had been. As prophesied, the Lord tore the kingdom in two, giving ten tribes into the hands of Jeroboam, Solomon's servant.

Solomon's death marked the end of an era (the monarchy). The stage for Israel's division and moral decline was set. Jeroboam took the throne of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) while Rehoboam, Solomon's son, became the king of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) with Jerusalem as its capital.

To secure the loyalty of his people and keep them from going to Jerusalem three times a year to celebrate the seven annual feasts, Jeroboam fashioned two golden calves (putting them in Dan and Bethel), instituted new feasts, and consecrated priests not from the tribe of Levi.

From there it was all downhill for Israel. The people played the harlot with their many idols. Eventually Judah followed her sister's ways.

God could not remain silent. He raised up prophets to warn His people of the dire consequences of abandoning His ways. Among them were Obadiah and Joel. Each had a unique message for a particular audience at a particular time that would reach into the millennia.

As you will learn when you study Amos, God does nothing without revealing His secret counsel to His servants, the prophets.

His message to the kings and nations of old is no less relevant today. He still calls out to us—to nations and to individuals. Let His Word illumine your circumstances, pierce your heart, shape your thinking, and impel you toward a life of true worship.

If you have wandered from His love, strayed from the path of obedience, been wooed away from worshipping God in spirit and truth, then hear His call to return to Him. Your heavenly Father waits with open arms. May His message find its mark in your heart.

Obadiah

OBADIAH

No One Will Bring Me Down!

Have you ever watched arrogant people who say in their heart, “No one will ever bring me down”?

Can individuals or nations say that, live as they want, and not be brought down?

It’s a question we need to answer, because there are many today who are arrogant of heart.

TAKING IT IN

Obadiah is only one chapter, yet because of its significance, we are going to devote an entire week to study it. Enjoy the leisure! By the way, if you didn’t read the introduction to this course, “The Prophets to the Kings of Israel and Judah,” please take a moment to read it. It will put you into context.

Since you are about to sit at the feet of your Creator and treasure His every word, you’ll want to begin with prayer, asking Him to do His cleansing work in you through the washing of the water of His Word. “*Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity, and revive me in Your ways*” (Psalm 119:37).

1. Let’s begin by observing Obadiah.
 - a. Read Obadiah using the Observation Worksheet in the Appendix and mark references to *Edom* in red (Genesis 25:25, 30). Include synonyms used for Edom such as *Esau* and *Temán* (a city in Edom) and pronouns.
 - b. Now let’s see what Obadiah tells us about Edom. List what you learn about Edom.

- c. What other individuals and groups did you observe?
- d. Now, read Obadiah again and mark the following. For marking suggestions, see the back cover of your workbook.
- 1) *the nations* (including synonyms and pronouns)
 - 2) *Jacob* (including *Judah, Israel*, synonyms and pronouns)
 - 3) *the day of the Lord*
 - 4) other references to time
 - 5) geographical locations (don't miss references to God's holy mountain)

e. Now list what you learned from the text about:

The Nations	Jacob

f. You marked *Jacob (Israel, Judah)* and the *nations*. “The nations” refers to Gentiles, nations other than Israel. Now let’s locate Edom and Israel on the map at the end of this lesson.

2. Through careful observation, you saw that Edom was to be judged because of its violence to its brother, Jacob.

Before we go on in Obadiah, we want to make sure you understand who Edom is and its relationship to Israel. Read the following passages and summarize what you learn about Edom. While this might be a review for you, remember, review is part of the learning process, so approach the Scriptures with a humble spirit, asking God to teach you what He wants you to learn from examples of how He deals with people.

a. Genesis 25:20-34

b. Genesis 27:1-46

c. Genesis 36:1-9

d. Numbers 20:14-21

e. 1 Chronicles 18:9-13

f. 1 Kings 22:45-47

g. 2 Kings 8:16-22

h. Romans 9:10-13

i. Hebrews 12:15-17

3. Let's look at Obadiah 1-14 in more detail.

a. According to verses 8 and 9, what is going to happen on "that day"?

b. Verses 10-11 tell you why this is going to happen. What reason is given?

c. Now, what is happening in verses 12-14? Reason through the text from verses 8 through 14.

d. God tells Edom that his arrogance of heart has deceived him. According to Obadiah, how did Edom behave arrogantly?

e. In light of what you observed in this short prophecy, what do you think the central theme or message is? Record it on the "Obadiah at a Glance" chart, located in the Appendix.

You'll see on the chart a place to record the themes of the three paragraphs of Obadiah. Determining the main idea in each paragraph and recording it on the chart will help you crystallize the content of the book and recall its message.

If you have an *NISB*, there is an *At a Glance* chart for each of the sixty-six books of the Bible. If you complete each one, you'll have a summary table for quick reference in the future.

4. Obadiah verse 15 states that "the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations."

We have provided a chart in the Appendix, "The Day of the Lord," on which you can record what you learn from Obadiah about the day of the Lord.

5. What does God promise Israel in verses 17-21? How does "but" connect verses 17-21 to 15-16?

6. Now, think through what you observed from the text. Does it seem there is still a future judgment for Esau/Edom?

1. You've seen the arrogance of Edom. Now let's think about application for today.

a. What do you learn from the following about arrogance and the company it keeps?

1) Romans 1:28-32

2) 2 Timothy 3:1-7

b. From all you have seen, how do you define arrogance from God's perspective?

2. Now let's apply some more of what we've learned about Edom.

a. Considering Esau/Edom's relationship to Jacob/Israel and Genesis 12:2-3, what kind of relationship to Israel pleases God?

b. How do you view Israel? What is your attitude toward this nation? Why?

3. Finally, Beloved, what fundamental truths of Obadiah do you need to remember and live by?

“For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. But My righteous one shall live by faith . . . ” (Hebrews 10:37-38a).

By faith—not arrogance of heart.

“May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie; but I shall meditate on Your precepts” (Psalm 119:78).

Press on, faithful one!



OBADIAH

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom—

We have heard a report from the LORD,

And an envoy has been sent among the nations *saying*,

“Arise and let us go against her for battle”—

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

You are greatly despised.

3 “The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,

You who live in the clefts of the rock,

In the loftiness of your dwelling place,

Who say in your heart,

‘Who will bring me down to earth?’

4 “Though you build high like the eagle,

Though you set your nest among the stars,

From there I will bring you down,” declares the LORD.

5 “If thieves came to you,

If robbers by night—

O how you will be ruined!—

Would they not steal *only* until they had enough?

If grape gatherers came to you,

Would they not leave *some* gleanings?

6 “O how Esau will be ransacked,

And his hidden treasures searched out!

7 “All the men allied with you

Will send you forth to the border,

And the men at peace with you

Will deceive you and overpower you.

They who eat your bread

Will set an ambush for you.

(There is no understanding in him.)

- 8 “Will I not on that day,” declares the LORD,
“Destroy wise men from Edom
And understanding from the mountain of Esau?”
- 9 “Then your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman,
So that everyone may be cut off from the mountain
of Esau by slaughter.
- 10 “Because of violence to your brother Jacob,
You will be covered *with* shame,
And you will be cut off forever.
- 11 “On the day that you stood aloof,
On the day that strangers carried off his wealth,
And foreigners entered his gate
And cast lots for Jerusalem—
You too were as one of them.
- 12 “Do not gloat over your brother’s day,
The day of his misfortune.
And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah
In the day of their destruction;
Yes, do not boast
In the day of *their* distress.
- 13 “Do not enter the gate of My people
In the day of their disaster.
Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity
In the day of their disaster.
And do not loot their wealth
In the day of their disaster.

- 14 “Do not stand at the fork of the road
To cut down their fugitives;
And do not imprison their survivors
In the day of their distress.
- 15 “For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations.
As you have done, it will be done to you.
Your dealings will return on your own head.
- 16 “Because just as you drank on My holy mountain,
All the nations will drink continually.
They will drink and swallow
And become as if they had never existed.
- 17 “But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape,
And it will be holy.
And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions.
- 18 “Then the house of Jacob will be a fire
And the house of Joseph a flame;
But the house of Esau *will be* as stubble.
And they will set them on fire and consume them,
So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau,”
For the LORD has spoken.
- 19 Then *those of* the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau,
And *those of* the Shephelah the Philistine *plain*;
Also, possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria,
And Benjamin *will possess* Gilead.
- 20 And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel,
Who are *among* the Canaanites as far as Zarephath,
And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
Will possess the cities of the Negev.
- 21 The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion
To judge the mountain of Esau,
And the kingdom will be the LORD’S.

OBADIAH AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Segment Divisions		Paragraph Themes
		Verses 1-9
		Verses 10-14
		Verses 15-21

THE DAY OF THE LORD				
References	Purpose Why Does It Come?	What Happens? How Is It Described?	Who Is Involved?	Timing When Does It Occur?

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