

## The Book of Obadiah

<b>Introduction to Obadiah</b>	The Book of Obadiah is just 21 verses long in its entirety. That makes it the shortest book in the Old Testament and the second shortest book in the entire Bible. 3 John is the shortest.
<b>About the Book</b>	The Book is a series of divine judgment poems against the <i>people of Edom</i> . The people of Edom neighbored Israel and lived on the other side of the Dead Sea in what is today Jordan. As a result, to understanding Obadiah's message requires familiarity with who the Edomites were.
<b>The People of Edom</b>	The people of Edom were unique because they had a <i>shared ancestry</i> with the Israelites. They also belonged to the family of <u>Abraham</u> . Isaac, with his wife Rebecca, had two sons: Jacob and Esau. In the Book of Genesis, these brothers have a tense relationship that is always volatile. Jacob stole Esau's birth rite. As a result, Esau wants to kill him. Both brothers were renamed in the Book of Genesis as well. Jacob was renamed <i>Israel</i> and Esau was renamed <i>Edom</i> . Their descendants were the Israelites and the Edomites. These descendants replayed the volatile relationship of Jacob and Esau throughout their existence in the rest of the Old Testament. They still replay it today.
<b>The Biggest Problem with Edom in the Past</b>	Israel's biggest problem with Edom in the past relates to travel through the land on the way to the Promised Land. Edom <u>would not</u> let them pass through their land on the way to the Promised land.  <i>14 Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, saying: "This is what your brother Israel says: You know about all the hardships that have come on us. 15 Our ancestors went down into Egypt, and we lived there many years. The Egyptians mistreated us and our ancestors, 16 but when we cried out to the Lord, he heard our cry and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. "Now we are here at Kadesh, a town on the edge of your territory. 17 Please let us pass through your country. We will not go through any field or vineyard, or drink water from any well. We will travel along the King's Highway and not turn to the right or to the left until we have passed through your territory." 18 But Edom answered: "You may not pass through here; if you try, we will march out and attack you with the sword." 19 The Israelites replied: "We will go along the main road, and if we or our livestock drink any of your water, we will pay for it. We only want to pass through on foot—nothing else." 20 Again they answered: "You may not pass through." Then Edom came out against them with a large and powerful army. 21 Since Edom refused to let them go through their territory, Israel turned away from them. (Num 14:14-21)</i>
<b>The Biggest Problem with Edom in Obadiah's Day</b>	When the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem, the Edomites took advantage of their "brother's" misfortune by plundering other cities in Judah that the Babylonians had left alone. Instead of helping their "brother," they added to their misery. To make matters worse, when people were being led away from Jerusalem into captivity in Babylon, the Edomites were waiting on roads in their territory to cut them down while in route.
<b>The Main Theme of Obadiah</b>	The name "Obadiah" means "worshipper of Yahweh." God sent Obadiah to preach to the Edomites a simple message: They thought they could mock, steal from, and harm God's chosen people: the Israelites, their "brothers." They were wrong.
<b>The Big Idea</b>	Do not lift up your hand against the Lord's anointed. You were supposed to be your brother's keeper. Because you did, judgment is coming for you, Edom.
<b>The Hope in Obadiah</b>	Obadiah promises redemption, but not to the Edomites, the people he writes to. Instead, he says redemption will come to the very people they persecuted: the people of Judah.

### Obadiah's Message

<b>V1-14</b>	<b>Your Pride, Edom, Led You to Mistreat God's People and Is the Reason for God's Judgment</b>
<p>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, let us go against her for battle"—<sup>2</sup> "See, I will make you small among the nations; you will be utterly despised. <sup>3</sup> The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rocks<sup>[a]</sup> and make your home on the heights, you who say to yourself, Who can bring me down to the ground?' <sup>4</sup> Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," declares the Lord. <sup>5</sup> "If thieves came</p>	

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? <sup>6</sup> But how Esau will be ransacked, his hidden treasures pillaged! <sup>7</sup> 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,<sup>[b]</sup> but you will not detect it. <sup>8</sup> “In that day,” declares the Lord, “will I not destroy the wise men of Edom, those of understanding in the mountains of Esau? <sup>9</sup> Your warriors, Teman, will be terrified, and everyone in Esau’s mountains will be cut down in the slaughter. <sup>10</sup> Because of the violence against your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame; you will be destroyed forever. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> You should not gloat over 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. <sup>13</sup> You should not march through the gates of my people in the day of their disaster, nor gloat over them in their calamity in the day of their disaster, nor seize their wealth in the day of their disaster. <sup>14</sup> You should not wait at the crossroads to cut down their fugitives nor hand over their survivors in the day of their trouble.

<b>What Obadiah Means</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Literally - The area of Edom is an area that is high. It looks like mountains in the desert. And God told them they were going to be brought down.</li> <li>2. Metaphorically – The Edomites thought they were superior to their brothers. They were “high above” them and God was going to bring them down.</li> <li>3. Obadiah saw both of these as prideful acts. It was pride that caused Edom not just to stand idly by when the Babylonians were destroying Jerusalem, but to join in and participate.</li> <li>4. As a result, God will bring Edom down. As they have done to God’s people, so it will be done to them</li> </ol>
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<b>V15-16</b>	<b>And Other Nations That Act Like You Will Suffer the Same Fate as You, Edom</b>
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<sup>15</sup> “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. <sup>16</sup> 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.

<b>What Obadiah Means</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All prideful nations that act like Edom will face God’s judgment in the same way. They will be brought down.</li> <li>2. God’s judgment on Edom is therefore a blueprint for how other nations are judged for lifting their hands against the Lord’s anointed.</li> <li>3. It’s played out in history and will continue to.</li> </ol>
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<b>V17-21</b>	<b>What Good Will Happen After God’s Judgment of the Nations (a remarkable prophecy)</b>
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<sup>17</sup> But on Mount Zion will be deliverance; it will be holy, and Jacob will possess his inheritance. <sup>18</sup> Jacob will be a fire and Joseph a flame; Esau will be stubble, and they will set him on fire and destroy him. There will be no survivors from Esau.” The Lord has spoken. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> This company of Israelite exiles who are in Canaan will possess the land as far as Zarephath; the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sephara will possess the towns of the Negev. <sup>21</sup> Deliverers will go up on<sup>[c]</sup> Mount Zion to govern the mountains of Esau. And the kingdom will be the Lord’s.

<b>What Obadiah Means</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Like the rest of the prophets, Obadiah ends with a message of hope and with a message about what God will do as an act of grace.</li> <li>2. Israel/Judah will return to their land (17-20)</li> <li>3. It will set the stage for the New Covenant, for Jesus and his disciples (21)</li> </ol>
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<b>The Biggest Takeaway</b>
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The word “Edom” and “Humanity/Mankind” come from the same Hebrew root: *adam*. Consequently, Edom’s downfall is an example of the human condition. And the good news at the end of the book about restoration by grace alone is what God will do/has done about the human condition through Christ, our Lord.