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2026 Annual Theme: Hope in Motion

BIBLE STUDY

July 1, 2026

July 2026 Theme: Potential turned into Progress

Lesson Subject : “The Minor Prophets” *Unit One: Obadiah*
Obadiah 1:1-3 (Key verse: vs.3)

Topics

- ❖ Scripture Reference
- ❖ Reflection Questions
- ❖ Outline
- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ Background and Context
- ❖ Key Themes
- ❖ Explore the Text
- ❖ Check for understanding
- ❖ Life Application

Scripture Reference: Obadiah 1:1-3 New American Standard Bible 2020)

¹ 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?’

Reflection Questions

Question 1: Have you ever experienced Betrayal? How did you respond?

Question 2: Who or What do you use as a guide to acknowledge the need for reconciliation or spiritually healthy separation.

The Book of Obadiah Outlined

The Prophetic Encounter vs. 1-2

- A. The Lord Speaks
- B. The Messenger conveys the oracle
- C. The Prophecy to the Nations

Retribution that dismantles Arrogance vs. 3-6

- A. Arrogance is despised by God
- B. Arrogance is deceptive
- C. Arrogance leads to a downfall

Betrayal Personified in Edom vs. 6-14

- A. Harvest of Hard times
- B. Halting of Evil Habits
- C. Helpers that cause Harm to the righteous

God is in Control vs. 15-21

- A. Edom/ Esau does not have the Final Word
- B. Differentiating Mount Edom (Hatred) from Mount Zion (Holy)
- C. Purification from Providence (Jacob will be a Fire)
- D. The Lord's Rulership

Introductory/ Contextual Clues

Minor Prophets? Why is the terminology Minor prophets frequently used among those in Sunday school or in the Worship setting during the ministering of the word of God? This collection of writings has been labeled as the Book of the Twelve from Hosea to Malachi. The English name that we have given them is the minor prophets, the Twelve, the Twelve prophets, and the book of the Twelve. These Names reflect ancient traditions that these writings were transmitted on a single scroll and counted as a single unit. Jerome's Introduction to the book of the Twelve in the Vulgate states, "The Twelve Prophets are one book," the interpreter of this sacred text should endorse this type of thinking which allows them to view the minor prophets holistically.

There are appropriate comparisons and contrasts that we need to consider when we study the *Major Prophets vs Minor prophets*. The title Minor Prophets does not mean that these sacred documents lack significance compared to the major prophets. These writings (Minor prophets) present less material than the Major prophets in their writings, but this does not lessen the impact of their writings! It is the Word of God! **2 Timothy 3:16**

Understanding Obadiah/ Background and Context

Obadiah This is the **Smallest book in the OT** (Old Testament) with a single chapter and twenty-one verses. The book of Obadiah echoes many other prophetic texts in terms of **words, phrases** and **motifs**. One of the major phrases in Obadiah is "*the Day of the Lord.*" **Obadiah 1:15**. The importance of Obadiah's book positioning intertextually is that it forms a bridge between the previous books of Joel and Amos and the following books of Jonah and Nahum.

The prophecy of Obadiah was delivered sometime between 587 and 538 B.C. during the exile of Judah into Babylonia, it is directed against the nation of Edom. The forbear of the Edomites was Esau, the brother of Jacob. **Gen. 25:29-34**. Just as the relationship of Jacob and Esau had tremendous tension so did the relations between the Edomites and Judah.

Obadiah is the only book in the OT whose primary subject matter concerns a foreign nation.

Key themes in Obadiah:

- Divine Retribution- God is involved in human events **Gen.12:1-3**
- Kinship Solidarity- Familial relationship **Gen 25:23**
- Yahweh's Kingship- Mount Zion will rule. The kingdom belongs to Yahweh. **Obadiah 1:21**

Obadiah Up close: Obadiah is known as the *unknown prophet*. Only the name of the prophet is given nothing is said about his time, town, profession or even the name of his father. Obadiah derives from the participial from *abad* it means one who worships/ serves Yahweh. According to the LXX *Abdias* and Vulgate *Abdia* to the Hebrew noun form *ebed* meaning **servant of Yahweh**. Obadiah prophetic figure whose name means slave/ servant of Yah, Yahweh the Lord.

“The message of Obadiah was not directed toward a community of believers who lived in a wealth and worshippers who had relative comfort. The message of Obadiah was directed toward a community of believers whose world, both physically and theologically, had been radically overturned.”

Explore the Text/ Lessons from Obadiah:

- The **Vision of the Prophet** vs. 1
- The **Voice of Providence** vs.1b
- The **Vulnerability of the People** vs.3b

The Vision of the Prophet- vs.1 The Vision of Obadiah

The opening verse is marked by what is called a superscription. This superscription is a standardize formula or wording that gives validity to the words of the person speaking. Examples of this formula can be found in (Jonah 1:1, Hosea 1:1, and Isaiah 1:1 etc.) This superscription includes the method used to deliver the word of the Lord or Yahweh. Prophetic visions were used in this text. A vision was like a dream. These visions could come during the night or at any other time. The prophet received some type of revelatory act or ritualized form. A vision could also be misleading to the ears of the people because false prophets could use the language of vision to deceive the people. **Jeremiah 14:14, Numbers 12:6**

The vision was a sneak preview of the future concerning Divine activity. You knew the word was from God because the vision and the prophesy was fulfilled! This prophesy was either a blessing or a curse. A blessing in the sense that God is about to reverse the punishment that he has imposed upon his people or a curse when God has decided to bring his people vindication by overhauling their enemies. **Habakkuk 2:2**

The Voice of Providence- vs. 1b. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom-

There are two important elements that are presented here and those are First the **Ally of Judah**. They have Yahweh on their side. The term Adonai is used here. This is a generic term that is used because of the holiness of the name of God. During these biblical times it was common among the people that they could not speak God’s name. There was a reverence

of the name of the Lord so much so that they created a term in order to identify the Deity or God so that He would not be disrespected nor confused with another god. **Exodus 20:3-5**

The Second portion of this verse 1b-3c is the **Arrogance of Edom**. Edom geographical area south of the Dead Sea in biblical times. It was the home of the Edomite people, descendants of Esau son Isaac. The root word for Edom means “Red.” Moses equates the name to the stew Jacob offered Esau for his birthright. **Gen 25:30-34**. Edom in Obadiah is used as an image of a betrayer. Just as there was dissension during the times of twin brothers Jacob and Esau this was transpiring between Judah and Edom. The writer is painting a vivid picture of brotherly love. You can’t be any closer as brothers than sharing the same womb as twins, they had the same source of Life and yet betrayal was the choice of Edom just as it was in the days of Jacob and Esau.

Edom is presented as a sellout. They assisted Babylonian powers to carry their own brothers into exile. Even in this area of challenge God reveals that he is on the side of Judah.

Obadiah’s vision is a revelation from God, which is synonymous with “word of the Lord” and is a work of the Holy Spirit (Theodore) Those who are possessed by the demoniac pride, like Edomites are subject to humiliation, like the devil (Ephrem the Syrian)

The Vulnerability of the People- vs. 2-3 *I will make you small among the nations*

Obadiah shows here that the Edomites must be subjected to captivity because of their pride and the enmity they held against their brothers. (Ephrem the Syrian)

Vs.3 The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, In the loftiness of your dwelling places. The prophet speaks about the false assurance of Edom. This assurance is placed in places of protection. Thus it is stated that they are living in the cleft of the rock. There is a sense of the belief that they cannot be touched, that their ranks cannot be breached but God lets them know through the prophet that this thinking is only foolish pride.

In our world today there are those who believe that their money or their position protects them from the consequences of their foolish pride. What is Pride? “Undue confidence in and attention to one’s own skills, accomplishments, state, possessions, or position. Pride is easier to recognize in others than in oneself.” This oracle of Obadiah reminds us there is no place that is restricted from the Lord. Jerome stated that the pride of the heart has deceived you. This is directed against the heretics. **Proverbs 16:18 1 Peter 5:6.**

Check for Understanding

1. Are the Books of the Major Prophets considered to be more significant than the Minor Prophets?
2. Why was the Betrayal of Edom viewed as so terrible in the sight of the Lord?
3. What was the role of Arrogance in Obadiah? and what were the negative effects of arrogance according to the oracle of Obadiah?

Life Application

When is the last time you have checked your heart for pride or arrogance? Take time to pray and reflect **Today** on areas in your life that you can eliminate these vices from infecting your everyday choices!