

Obadiah

Breakdown

- The book of Obadiah is named for the prophet Obadiah (Hebrew for “servant of Yahweh”).
- Obadiah doesn’t specifically date his book, but it was most likely written in the first half of the Babylonian exile, after 586 B.C. (when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem) and before 553 B.C. (when Babylon attacked Edom).
- His book is the shortest of all the Old Testament books with only 21 verses making up the entire book.

Main Points

- Obadiah describes a vision that God revealed to him about the land of Edom, and it’s not good news for Edom. Israel has had a longstanding rivalry with the nation of Edom, but Edom had gone too far. When the Babylonians attacked Jerusalem and the temple of God, Edom was there – cheering on the Babylonians. Obadiah’s message was simple: no matter how safe they think they are, no matter how wise they think they are, Edom can’t get away with this. Through Obadiah, God declared destruction for the nation of Edom.
- Even in the process of proclaiming judgment on Edom, God also promised that salvation and restoration would come for His chosen people. His people would return to the holy city and the Lord Himself would be King forever.

Did you know?

- The vision God gave Obadiah was about one particular enemy of the Israelites – the nation of Edom. Who were the Edomites and why were they enemies of Israel? (Genesis 27)
- God declared that the Edomites would be completely destroyed because they had been deceived. How were they deceived?
- Edom would be wiped out completely because their allies would turn against them. What did God say their allies would do to them?
- God said the reason for Edom’s destruction was the violence they did to their close relatives in Israel. What did Edom do to Israel?
- Edom would have to suffer the same deeds they had done to Israel, but God even gave hope to the people of Edom. What would happen to the Edomites who repented and turned their hearts to God?
- God compared Israel to a raging fire and Edom to a field of dry stubble. What did God say would happen to Edom?

Further Thought

- The Edomites thought they couldn’t be defeated because of their rock fortresses high in the mountains, but they were deceived by their pride. What can we learn from their example?
- It appeared to the Israelites that Edom had won, but the Lord always prevails in the end. What does that teach us about our own lives?
- Even while declaring destruction for Edom, Obadiah reminded God’s people that He was faithful to keep His promises. What does that mean for us today?