

One Chapter Wonders: Obadiah

Introduction to this Bible study (Pathways course description):

Singers or musical groups who have recorded only one recognizable song in their career are sometimes referred to as “one hit wonders.” In the Bible we might adjust and apply that phrase to those books of Scripture that consist of only a single chapter. There are five of them: Obadiah in the Old Testament, and Philemon, 2nd John, 3rd John, and Jude in the New Testament. While they may be short in length, like all of God’s Word, they are long in truth, and there is much we can learn from them. In this 6-week Bible study we will examine what God has to teach us through each of these “One Chapter Wonders.”

General Overview

- Obadiah: Who? What? When? Where?
- *The Bible Project*

The Backstory: Edom

- Historical background – Jacob and Esau
 - *Genesis 25:19 and continuing intermittently through 33:20*
- Location and topography of Edom
- Relationship to Israel: Bad blood
 - *Exodus 15:15,16*
 - *Numbers 20:14-21*
 - *Psalms 83:1-8*
 - *Psalms 137:7*
 - *Joel 3:18,19*
 - *Amos 1:11,12*
 - *Others...*
- Self-image
 - Proud
 - Impregnable
 - Strong
 - Wealthy
 - Wise (Eliphaz in the Book of Job was a Temanite)
- Parallel account: *Jeremiah 49:7-22*

A Closer Look: Verse by Verse Exposition

¹ The vision of **Obadiah**.

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”—

² “See, I will make you small among the nations;
you will be utterly despised.

³ The **pride** of your heart has deceived you,
you who live in the **clefts of the rocks**
and make your home on **the heights**,
you who **say to yourself**,

‘Who can bring me down to the ground?’

⁴ Though you soar like the eagle
and make your nest among the stars,
from there I will bring you down,”

declares the LORD.

⁵ “If thieves came 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?

⁶ But how Esau will be ransacked,
his hidden treasures pillaged!

⁷ 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,
but you will not detect it.

⁸ “**In that day**,” declares the LORD,
“will I not destroy **the wise men** of Edom,
those of understanding in the mountains of Esau?”

⁹ Your warriors, **Teman**, will be terrified,
and everyone in Esau’s mountains
will be cut down in the slaughter.

¹⁰ **Because of the violence against your brother Jacob,
you will be covered with shame;**

you will be destroyed forever.

¹¹ 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.

¹² **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.

¹³ **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.

¹⁴ **You should not** wait at the crossroads
to cut down their fugitives,
nor hand over their survivors
in the day of their trouble.

¹⁵ **"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.

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ **But on Mount Zion will be deliverance;**
it will be holy,
and Jacob will possess his inheritance.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ This company of Israelite exiles who are in Canaan
will possess the land as far as Zarephath;
the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
will possess the towns of the Negev.

²¹ **Deliverers** will go up on^q Mount Zion
to govern the mountains of Esau.
And **the kingdom will be the LORD's**.

Romans 15:4: What is God Teaching Us Through This One Chapter Wonder?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Related Issues, Applications and Discussion Items

1. *What is your first and/or general impression of Obadiah? When and under what personal conditions could you see yourself turning to it?*
2. *The subject of revenge. Can we pray for the destruction of and vengeance upon our enemies?*
3. *Related: How are we to understand Bible "imprecations" (e.g., the imprecatory Psalms)?*