

**Text: Obadiah (entire book)**

*1The 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 1-21)*

### God's Sovereignty

This book is the shortest in the Old Testament, and yet is full of great truths which are further revealed when this book is cross-referenced with the other Scriptures. The overarching truth that I want to address first is that God, in His sovereignty, rules over the affairs of men. The vision given to Obadiah discusses the overthrow and punishment of some nations, and the chastisement but eventual vindication of His chosen people, Judah. While some might think that such treatment of nations and peoples demonstrates capriciousness on His part, the reality is that God's orchestration of human events is both purposeful and righteous, with its ultimate aim being, as in all things, His glory.

**24"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; 26and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, (Acts 17:24-26)**

**10So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" 11Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." (John 19:10-11)**

**1Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. 2Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. (Romans 13:1-2)**

**11"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." (Revelation 4:11)**

**37And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' 38"This is the great and foremost commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38)**

Transgressors Punished for Sin

The Book of Obadiah refers specifically to the sins of Edom and the punishment thereof, but much of the same can be said for the punishment due to all disobedient persons and nations. We see several specific sins discussed on the part of the people of Edom. Foremost among these is pride, which is in many ways a beginning point from which further sins spring. The Edomites believed themselves to be invincible, a trait that belongs solely to God. In this way, their self-veneration became a form of idolatry. Even when their self-love failed, however, they trusted in other nations allied with them for their protection, rather than submitting to the true God. Their trust of their allies also proved to be a part of their undoing—those that place ultimate trust in men rather than God also engage in idolatry, and ultimately trust in evil and deceitful mankind will always be betrayed. Finally, the people of Edom set themselves in opposition to God's Chosen Nation, the people of Israel. While God sometimes uses the enemies of His People as a means of chastising His Elect, ultimately those that stand in opposition to God's People and His Law are overthrown, both temporally and eternally. Those who through their sinfulness stand willfully in opposition to the Creator will suffer eternal death because of their rebellion.

**4**The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! **5**"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **6**When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. (Genesis 3:4-6)

**18**Pride goes before destruction,  
And a haughty spirit before stumbling.  
**19**It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly  
Than to divide the spoil with the proud. (Proverbs 16:18-19)

**5**You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for **GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.** **6**Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, **7**casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. (1 Peter 5:5-7)

**2**"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **3**"You shall have no other gods before Me. **4**"You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. **5**"You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, **6**but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:2-6)

**30**"The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?' **31**"While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, **32**and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.' **33**"Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. **34**"But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever;

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
And His kingdom endures from generation to generation.  
**35**"All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,  
But He does according to His will in the host of heaven  
And among the inhabitants of earth;  
And no one can ward off His hand  
Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

**36**"At that time my reason returned to me And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. **37**"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride." (Daniel 4:30-37)

**3**Do not trust in princes,  
In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. (Psalm 146:3)

**25**The fear of man brings a snare,  
But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.  
**26**Many seek the ruler's favor,  
But justice for man comes from the LORD. (Proverbs 29:25-26)

**1**Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help  
And rely on horses,  
And trust in chariots because they are many  
And in horsemen because they are very strong,  
But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!  
**2**Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster  
And does not retract His words,  
But will arise against the house of evildoers  
And against the help of the workers of iniquity.  
**3**Now the Egyptians are men and not God,  
And their horses are flesh and not spirit;  
So the LORD will stretch out His hand,  
And he who helps will stumble  
And he who is helped will fall,  
And all of them will come to an end together. (Isaiah 31:1-3)

**5**Thus says the LORD,  
"Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind  
And makes flesh his strength,  
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

**6**"For he will be like a bush in the desert  
And will not see when prosperity comes,  
But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,  
A land of salt without inhabitant.

**7**"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD  
And whose trust is the LORD.

**8**"For he will be like a tree planted by the water,  
That extends its roots by a stream  
And will not fear when the heat comes;  
But its leaves will be green,  
And it will not be anxious in a year of drought  
Nor cease to yield fruit. (Jeremiah 17:5-8)

**8**It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
Than to trust in man.

**9**It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
Than to trust in princes.

**10**All nations surrounded me;  
In the name of the LORD I will surely cut them off.

**11**They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me;  
In the name of the LORD I will surely cut them off.

**12**They surrounded me like bees;  
They were extinguished as a fire of thorns;  
In the name of the LORD I will surely cut them off. (Psalm 118:8-12)

**1**Now the LORD said to Abram,  
"Go forth from your country,  
And from your relatives  
And from your father's house,  
To the land which I will show you;  
**2**And I will make you a great nation,  
And I will bless you,  
And make your name great;  
And so you shall be a blessing;  
**3**And I will bless those who bless you,

**And the one who curses you I will curse  
And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." (Genesis 12:1-3)**

**1When Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times to seek omens but he set his face toward the wilderness. 2And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe; and the Spirit of God came upon him. 3He took up his discourse and said,**

**"The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,  
And the oracle of the man whose eye is opened;**

**4The oracle of him who hears the words of God,  
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,  
Falling down, yet having his eyes uncovered,**

**5How fair are your tents, O Jacob,  
Your dwellings, O Israel!**

**6"Like valleys that stretch out,  
Like gardens beside the river,  
Like aloes planted by the LORD,  
Like cedars beside the waters.**

**7"Water will flow from his buckets,  
And his seed will be by many waters,  
And his king shall be higher than Agag,  
And his kingdom shall be exalted.**

**8"God brings him out of Egypt,  
He is for him like the horns of the wild ox  
He will devour the nations who are his adversaries,  
And will crush their bones in pieces,  
And shatter them with his arrows.**

**9"He crouches, he lies down as a lion,  
And as a lion, who dares rouse him?  
Blessed is everyone who blesses you,  
And cursed is everyone who curses you." (Numbers 24:1-9)**

**9"The heart is more deceitful than all else  
And is desperately sick;  
Who can understand it?**

**10"I, the LORD, search the heart,  
I test the mind,  
Even to give to each man according to his ways,  
According to the results of his deeds. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)**

**23For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)**

**9Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10)**

**8"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)**

#### God's Chosen People Vindicated

In the final portion of the Book of Obadiah, we see blessing and vindication promised to God's Chosen People, Israel. This is not to say that the Israelites did not bear their share of punishment at times—they were often chastised, and God even used nations opposed to Him to accomplish this end. Ultimately, however, these nations were destroyed, and the nation of Israel has endured and will endure. As God's Chosen People under the New Covenant, Christians likewise are chastised when we sin. However, true believers will suffer only such temporal punishment as will increase our holiness, and will not be eternally condemned. This promise has been given to believers not because of any present or foreseen merit in them, but because it pleased God to elect some to eternal life by the redemption of their sin through Jesus, just as it pleased Him to choose Jacob's descendants as His special People rather than Esau's descendants.

11Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals, 12and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the LORD to anger. 13So they forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. 14The anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 15Wherever they went, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had spoken and as the LORD had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed. 16Then the LORD raised up judges who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them. (Judges 2:11-16)

8"Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. 9"I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. 10"I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, 11even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. 12"When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13"He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14"I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16"Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.'"" 17In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David. (2 Samuel 7:8-17)

4You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; 5and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,

"MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,  
NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;  
6FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,  
AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."

7It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 9Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? 10For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. 11All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. 12Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, 13and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed. 14Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:4-14)

3For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:3-7)

28And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. 31What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. 35Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36Just as it is written,

"FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG;

WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." 37But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:28-39)

**13**Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED." **14**What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! **15**For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION." **16**So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. **17**For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH." **18**So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. **19**You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" **20**On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? **21**Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? **22**What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? **23**And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, **24**even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. (Romans 9:13-24)

Many people regard this as a hard truth: Just as He accepted Jacob and rejected Esau, God has elected some to eternal salvation, while others will be left to suffer eternal punishment. These are not punished because they did not "accept Christ," but rather are simply left to the just punishment for their sin and rebellion against God. However, for those that are saved we rejoice in the fact that God has saved us, commuting the sentence of death for all those that believe in and submit to Him as the risen Savior and Lord.

The question that remains, then, is this: How can I know that I am among the elect of God? Do you feel sorrow for your sin, not only because of the punishment that it merits but because of the fact that it amounts to rebellion against the Sovereign Lord of the universe? Do you believe that Christ died to endure punishment for sins and rose again as the reigning Prophet, Priest, and King? Are you willing to repent of your sins and submit to Him in faith, love, and obedience? Then, do those things and be saved—the change of heart and working of faith needed to bring about those things is an indicator that God counts you as one of His! Confess Jesus Christ as Lord and as Savior. Throw yourself upon His mercy and trust Him for forgiveness, redemption, justification, sanctification, and eternal life. The Bible promises that all who **call upon the Name of the Lord will be saved!**

**8**For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; **9**not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

**9**that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10**for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. **11**For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." **12**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; **13**for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:9-13)