

I. *The Doom of Edom*

03-Dec-06 Obadiah vv. 1-9

Theme: Human strength is no match for the divine sovereignty and power of God; pride goes before destruction, therefore humble yourselves before the LORD.

Key Verses: Obadiah vv. 3-4 ³“The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; you who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to the ground?’ ⁴Though you ascend as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,” says the LORD.

Introduction

Welcome to the latest installment of the “Minor Prophets.” Four years ago, I was in a bit of a pinch because I suddenly had an opening to teach a Sunday school class only about one month before the class started. Palmer Robertson had recently visited the church for our Theology Conference, and he and his family stayed at our house. Perhaps receiving some inspiration from his visit, I decided to teach a class based on his commentary on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. I so enjoyed my study of these little books that I decided to do some more studies in the so-called “Minor Prophets.” So, three years ago I taught the first book of The Twelve, Hosea; two years ago I covered the next two Minor Prophets – Joel and Amos; and last winter we studied Micah and Haggai.

The prophets we will be studying this quarter are Obadiah, Jonah, and Malachi. Each one of these books has a different focus for a different audience in a different time period. Malachi, written after the Babylonian exile, is aimed at reforming and refining the covenant people of God. The story of Jonah, which takes place during the glory days of the northern kingdom of Israel, describes the repentance of Nineveh, the enemy of God’s people. And little Obadiah, written in an unknown time period, has as its theme the doom of Edom, the brother nation of Israel. Thus, in this short 13-week quarter, we will see God addressing His people, their brothers (Edom), and their enemies (Nineveh).

Obadiah is not only the shortest book in the Old Testament, it is also one of the least studied. We will devote two weeks to this little book. In contrast, the story of Jonah is one of the best known in the entire Bible. While we could spend a whole quarter on Jonah, “wading” through all the material written about this short story, we will limit our study to four weeks. That leaves seven weeks for Malachi – a book that is especially pertinent to the church, because it addresses the failures of God’s people in every generation and urges us to reform our worship and refine our character.

Exposition

A. Introduction to the Book of Obadiah (v. 1)

1. Message of Obadiah

So, without further adieu, let us begin our latest installment in the Minor Prophets by considering the book of Obadiah. Although the subject of Obadiah is the doom of Edom, the audience is the nation of Judah (the church). This focus outside of Israel is not unusual; many other prophets also pronounced oracles against the nations (*cp.* Isaiah 13-23, Jeremiah 46-51, Ezekiel 25-32; Amos 1:1-2:3; Nahum; Zephaniah 2:4-15). In virtually every case, the audience for these oracles

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was the people of God. Only in the unique case of Jonah did the prophet of God travel to his target audience and proclaim God's word of judgment directly to them.

As we consider the message of this often overlooked book, we need to realize that the "doom of Edom" was preached to Israel, not Edom. Why? Let me offer you two reasons: 1) as encouragement; and 2) as a warning. This message would have been an encouragement to Israel. The nation of Edom had been a thorn in the flesh over the years. Obadiah describes their sins, especially their "unbrotherliness" towards Israel. God's people could be encouraged because Obadiah was telling them that Edom would reap what they had sown. God's justice would prevail, Edom would be punished, and Israel would be delivered. Obadiah affirms that the human strength of Edom is no match for the divine sovereignty and power of God. The book ends with a glorious picture of victorious Israel, triumphant at last. Thus, we can see that little Obadiah's message of doom to Edom was designed to encourage Israel.

However, Obadiah also stands as a warning to Israel. The nation of Edom was descended from Jacob's twin Esau. These nations were brothers. Esau was born into the covenant family, a son of Isaac and a grandson of the great patriarch, Abraham – the father of faith. Esau had all the benefits of a covenant home, and yet he spurned them. Esau was a man of earthly appetites who regarded spiritual blessings so inconsequential that he sold his birthright for a bowl of stew! The attitude of Edom described by Obadiah reflects the pride of self-reliant Esau who showed disdain for the privileges of God's covenant. Obadiah catalogues the sins of Edom as a reminder that Israel can fall as well. If the descendants of Esau the grandson of Abraham can fail, what does that mean about the descendants of Abraham's other grandson Jacob? Israel is not to presume upon her position in the covenant with God. To do so is to repeat the sin of Esau. Presumption and pride go before a fall. Unless Israel obediently humbles herself before God, she is in danger of judgment for the same kinds of sin as Edom.

Obadiah stands in the long Biblical tradition of declaring the fates of the two lines of humanity: the godly line and the ungodly line. As Robertson points out, "Jacob the 'supplanter,' the latter-born twin, embodies the principle of God's undeserved, unmerited grace in His work of redemption. Esau the firstborn represents the part of humanity that persists in rebellion against God." This distinction of the two lines of humanity in terms of Jacob and Esau is continued by the prophet Malachi, who plainly states: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau I have hated" (Mal. 1:2b-3a). The descendants of Jacob may often have felt like God's love was far from them, but that was due to their own sinfulness. God was chastening them for their sins as a parent disciplines a wayward child. God's attitude towards Edom was clearly different – judgment and destruction awaited them for rejecting the LORD.

Thus we can see that Obadiah, like all the Old Testament prophets, serves as a beacon of both encouragement and warning. If God's people sin and rebel, they will ultimately be destroyed like the Edomites. However, if they humble themselves and persevere, they will be delivered and live in peace because "the kingdom shall be the LORD's" (Ob. v. 21).

2. Edom

To understand the prophecy of Obadiah we need to know a bit about the nation of Edom. As I have already mentioned, the nation of Edom was descended from Esau, the twin brother of Jacob or Israel. After selling his birthright to his brother (Gen. 25:29-34) and losing his father Isaac's blessing (Gen. 27:30-40), Esau moved to the land of Seir (Gen. 32:3; 36:6-8) where he settled

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with his family. It was in this location that the descendants of Esau grew into the nation of Edom.

Edom was located south and east of the Dead Sea, stretching down to the Gulf of Aqaba. For the most part, this land was rugged and mountainous, although a major caravan route, the King's Highway, passed through this area. The main towns of Edom were Teman, Bozrah, and Sela (later called Petra). James Boice describes the land of Edom in this way:

The real importance of Edom was due to two factors. First it was situated along the great trade route between Syria and Egypt and could profit from this trade. Trade brought business and the inhabitants grew rich on tolls extracted from the many caravans. The second factor was Edom's natural strength and security. The central area is characterized by red sandstone cliffs that rise to heights of more than 5,000 feet above sea level. These are easily fortified. As a result of having made their home within this natural fortress, the people of Edom were free to wage war and levy tribute on others while themselves being relatively free of outside interference.

There is a long record of animosity between the nation of Edom and their brother, the nation of Israel. As the Israelites prepared to enter the land of Canaan after forty years in the wilderness, they attempted to pass through Edom along the King's Highway. Even though Moses offered to pay for their passage, the Edomites refused to allow Israel pass through their territory (Num. 20:14-21). Thus, Israel had to detour around Edom. During this detour, the people became discouraged and suffered the outbreak of fiery serpents as punishment from God (Num. 21:4-9).

Later on, when the Israelites were established in the land of Canaan, frequent conflict arose between the two brother nations. Saul (1050-1010 BC) fought against Edom (1 Sam. 14:47), and David (1010-970 BC) conquered Edom (2 Sam. 8:13-14; 1 Ki. 11:15-16). Solomon (970-931 BC) established a port at Ezion Geber (Elath) on the Red Sea in Edom and built a fleet of ship there (1 Ki. 9:26-28).

The animosity continued even after the kingdom of God's people split after the death of Solomon. A confederation of Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites revolted against Jehoshaphat (873-848 BC) of Judah (2 Chr. 20:1-2), but they were defeated by the LORD who heard the prayers and praise of His people (2 Chr. 20:20-24). The Edomites were more successful against the next king of Judah, Jehoram (853-841 BC). During Jehoram's reign the Edomites revolted against Judah and were successful in gaining their independence (2 Ki. 8:20-22; 2 Chr. 21:8-10). About fifty years later during the reign of Amaziah (797-767 BC), Edom was defeated in a bloody war and the capital city of Sela was captured. (2 Ki. 14:7; 2 Chr. 25:11-12). Edom finally won her final independence from Judah during the reign of Ahaz (743-715 BC), attacking Judah and taking captives (2 Chr. 28:17).

Edom's independence didn't last long. Although she was free of control from Judah, she quickly became a vassal state of Assyria in about 734 BC. Edom remained subjugated under Assyria and later Babylon, witnessing both the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC by Assyria and the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC at the hands of Babylon. The history of Edom in the following centuries is shrouded in mystery. Nomadic Nabataean Arabs moved into the region in the sixth to fourth centuries BC. By 312 BC, the capital of Sela or Petra was firmly controlled by the Nabataeans and the Edomites, now called Idumaeans, were displaced. The Idumaeans migrated westward into the southern Judean Negev desert. It is from the Idumaeans that Herod the Great arose to become "king of the Jews" at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ.

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Today, the region formerly known as Edom is controlled by the modern state of Jordan. While the nation of Israel still exists, the people of Edom are gone. Obadiah's prophecy of the destruction and desolation of Esau has happened; the doom of Edom has come to pass.

3. Prophet and Date

Who was the prophet Obadiah and when did he live? Unfortunately, we don't know the answer to either of these questions. The book starts with these words: "The vision of Obadiah" (Ob. v. 1a). That's all we get. No father, no hometown. Just a name, and a fairly common name in the Old Testament at that; at least twelve different individuals bear the name Obadiah, which means "servant/worshiper of the LORD." Apart from that, we know nothing else about the human author of this book.

Our estimate about the date of the prophecy has to come from internal clues within the book. In verses 10-14 Obadiah describes the sins of Edom against Judah when Jerusalem was invaded by foreign armies. This description limits the dating to only two possible historical possibilities: 1) the sack of Jerusalem by the Philistines and Arabs during the reign of Jehoram (853-841 BC); and 2) the destruction of Jerusalem by a coalition army led by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

These two possibilities lead to an early date around 850 BC or a late date about 585 BC for the book of Obadiah. First, let us consider the possibility of the early date, which would make Obadiah a contemporary of Elijah. 2 Chronicles 21 describes the reign of Jehoram, one of the wicked kings of Judah. Early in the chapter we have a description of the successful revolt of Edom against Judah:

⁸In his days Edom revolted against Judah's authority, and made a king over themselves.

⁹So Jehoram went out with his officers, and all his chariots with him. And he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots.

¹⁰Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah's authority to this day (2 Chronicles 21:8-10).

Later in the same passage, we have the account of the attack on Jerusalem ("the king's house"):

¹⁶Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabians who were near the Ethiopians. ¹⁷And they came up into Judah and invaded it, and carried away all the possessions that were found in the king's house, and also his sons and his wives, so that there was not a son left to him except Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons (2 Chronicles 21:16-18).

Although there is a juxtaposition of the revolt of Edom and the attack on Jerusalem by the Philistines and Arabs, Edom is not said to have played any role in this invasion. Thus, we are left with only the *possibility* but not certainty that Edom was involved in this event.

The Biblical record is clearer with respect to the involvement of Edom in the sack of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BC. The prophet Ezekiel condemns Edom for their violence against Judah (Ez. 25:12-14; 35:1-15). The most direct reference to Edom in this context is found in Psalm 137, the lament of the captives after the fall of Jerusalem:

⁷Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, "Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation!" (Psalm 137:7).

Another factor linking Obadiah to the fall of Jerusalem is the close correspondence between Obadiah and the oracle of Jeremiah regarding Edom (Jer. 49:7-22). Large sections of Jeremiah

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49 are virtually identical with Obadiah, or vice versa. It is not clear whether Jeremiah is quoting Obadiah, or the reverse, or if they are both utilizing a third source. However, from the scant Biblical clues we have, it seems to me that Obadiah is more likely a contemporary of Jeremiah than of Elijah. Thus, I would tend to date the book after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

4. Introduction to the Prophecy (v. 1)

Obadiah has a vision that comes from the Lord God. Like all of the Old Testament prophets, Obadiah does not bring his own message. Instead, he is a conduit through which Almighty God addresses His people. The obscurity of Obadiah the man is intended to focus our attention on the message of God, rather than the messenger.

Interestingly, Obadiah's introductory formula to open his prophecy is interrupted by an "aside." The translators of the NKJV have indicated this digression by placing the second through fourth lines of the oracle within parentheses. While Obadiah is receiving revelation directly from God, he is also hearing news from a human messenger that corroborates the heavenly vision.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom
(We have heard a report from the LORD,
And a messenger has been sent among the nations, saying,
"Arise, and let us rise up against her for battle") (Obadiah v. 1).

The digression takes up the rest of verse 1. The actual oracle of God announced at the start of verse 1 does not actually begin until verse 2. Why does Obadiah "interrupt" himself before he even truly begins his prophecy? Perhaps it was the excitement of seeing the sovereign will of God being enacted in the affairs of men. Even as God is giving Obadiah an oracle of judgment against Edom, Obadiah can see the initial stages of fulfillment as the enemies of Edom gather against her in battle. What an encouragement this must have been to the prophet who had witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, to know that God would not let such wanton cruelty go unpunished!

B. The Pride of Edom (vv. 2-9)

The rest of Obadiah can be considered in three main sections. The first section in verses 2-9 describes the first sin of Edom to be condemned. This is the sin of *pride*. In the next section (vv. 10-14), Obadiah will describe the other great sin of Edom – unbrotherliness. In the final main section (vv. 15-21), Obadiah will describe the two consequences of the Day of the LORD: judgment on Edom and the nations; and the vindication and triumph of God's people.

In the rest of today's lesson, we will consider the first sin of Edom – pride. Obadiah describes four difference sources of pride for the Edomites: 1) position; 2) possessions; 3) partners; and 4) perception. In every instance, Obadiah shows how the divine power of the LORD easily overcomes the human strength of Edom. Ultimately, these verses show us the folly of self-reliance and thus drive us to humble submission before our LORD God.

The theme of this entire section is stated in verse 3: "the pride of your heart has deceived you." Pride is ultimately deceptive, because it is based on false assumptions. Pride is based on self-reliance, not on submission to God. The proud boast in their own achievements and leave God out of the picture. The proud make themselves their god, thus violating the First Commandment: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:3). Pride is such a seductive sin, because it is based on what we can *see* – our strengths, our accomplishments, our possessions. Our egos

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swell up and all thought of the source of those blessings – our heavenly Father – is pushed right out of our head. Listen to what the book of Proverbs says about pride:

¹³The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate (Proverbs 8:13).

⁵Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; though they join forces, none will go unpunished (Proverbs 16:5).

²³A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor (Proverbs 29:23).

1. Pride of Position (vv. 2-4)

The first source of Edom's pride was in their impregnable position:

³The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; you who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' (Obadiah v. 3).

Edom is said to "dwell in the clefts of the rock." The Hebrew word for rock is *selā*, the name of the capital city of Edom which was located on a high, rocky plateau. Later on in history, this same site would be called Petra, which is the Greek word for "rock." James Boice gives a vivid description of the Edomite fortress:

Due to her unique geographical situation, Edom was almost impregnable. The city of Petra is entered through a narrow winding gorge or canyon, called a *siq*. This is about a mile long and is in no place really wide. On the average it is about fifteen feet from towering wall to towering wall. There are many thousands of ornately carved caves in the walls. Magnificent buildings have been carved into the face of the rock. The city of Petra itself is a level valley of slightly less than one square mile surrounded by many mountains. There are homes, temples, and treasuries. In the mountains there are additional safe areas for defense. How impregnable it all seems! Experts say that because of the configurations of the *siq* through which Petra is entered, it would be possible for a dozen men to hold it against an army. Again, even if the *siq* were breached, it would be possible for the inhabitants to carry on a successful defense from the mountains.

If you have ever seen pictures of Petra (try *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*) then you will certainly agree that Edom had military strength through their unique position within their mountains. Their high habitation is matched by their high hearts. Their arrogance is captured by the rhetorically question: "Who will bring me down to the ground?" In their minds, the answer is "nobody." But they have not reckoned with God.

Their attitude is portrayed by the increasing height of position in verses 3-4. Although physically they are dwelling in the heights, metaphorically they are soaring with the eagles and seeking to ascend to the stars! Like the builders of the tower of Babel, they are not content with an earthly situation but seek to climb up to heaven itself (Gen. 11:4).

And just like the builders of Babel, the Edomites are in for a rude awakening. No matter how high their position is, no matter how impregnable their defenses are, no matter how isolated and difficult to reach their city is, God will find them. Although they may have been out of the reach of man, they were not out of the reach of God. Despite their high and exalted position, God still

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looks down upon them and scoffs at their self-sufficiency. God says that He will bring Edom down from their lofty perch (v. 4) and make them “small among the nations” (v. 2). They will go from great in their own minds to “greatly despised.” Truly “pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Pr. 16:18).

2. *Pride of Possessions (vv. 5-6)*

The second source of Edom’s pride was in their possessions. Their control of the King’s Highway had made them prosperous by extracting tolls from the merchant caravans. They also traded for many valuable goods, which they were able to store safely away in the many caverns which were in the surrounding mountains. Surely Edom enjoyed the good life, filled with all the available luxuries and delicacies that their world offered.

However, the trouble with treasure is that you have to keep it in order to enjoy it. One of the worries of the extremely wealthy is the loss of their riches. Some work so hard to prevent losing their fortune that they can hardly enjoy it. When money becomes your god, you become a slave to something that can never satisfy you. Edom was going to learn this lesson the hard way. God was going to make sure that their possessions would be stripped away, that their “hidden treasures” would be sought out and taken away from them (v. 6). Obadiah gives two different illustrations that make the same point:

⁶If thieves had come to you, if robbers by night—Oh, how you will be cut off!—would they not have stolen till they had enough? If grape-gatherers had come to you, would they not have left some gleanings? (Obadiah v. 5).

The first illustration is that of a gang of thieves breaking into and robbing your house. Thieves usually only take items of value that are of interest to them. They may even leave some valuables behind, because they don’t have the time, or the space, or the interest in them. Unless you are robbed by the Grinch, robbers usually will not take everything from your home.

The second illustration is that of a group of vineyard workers gathering in the grape harvest. This metaphor would have been apt, because the mountainous area of Edom would have provided a good location for planting grapevines. Although you might expect the grape-gatherers to collect all of the fruit on the vines, the law of God commanded some of the harvest to be left behind for others to glean (Dt. 24:21). It was this law that allowed Ruth to gather enough food to support herself and Naomi in their poverty (Ruth 2:1-3).

These two illustrations set up the contrast with what God is planning to do to Edom. Unlike the house robbers or grape-gatherers that leave something of value behind them, the destruction of Edom will be thorough and complete. Nothing will be left – Edom will be cleaned out and stripped of everything of value. In fact, Edom was going to look a lot like Who-ville after the Grinch had gone through it:

Then the last thing he took was the log for their fire!
Then he went up the chimney, himself, the old liar.
On their walls he left nothing but hooks and some wire.
And the one speck of food that he left in the house
Was a crumb that was even too small for a mouse.
Then he did the same thing to the other Whos' houses
Leaving crumbs much too small for the other Whos' mice!

—*How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss

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3. *Pride of Partners (v. 7)*

The third source of Edom's pride was in their partnerships. Not only did Edom have a strong natural defense system, they had an active network of international allies. They had made pacts with other nations around them. The one nation left out of this network was the one nation they should have had a natural partnership with – their brother nation Judah.

God had promised Abraham that He would “bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). Covenant blessings flowed through Abraham and those associated with him and his line, culminating in the promised Seed or Messiah. The smart thing for Edom to do would have been to make an alliance with Judah, for it was through the Davidic line of kings that the Messiah was going to come and bring blessing to the world.

However, once again we see that in their pride, Edom chose to make worldly alliances rather than become partners with the people of God. They felt they could improve their situation by working against Judah rather than with them, contrary to the Abrahamic covenant! In a few verses, Obadiah will enumerate in great detail how Edom chose to harm Judah rather than help them during the sack and fall of Jerusalem. This “unbrotherliness” against Judah is condemned by Obadiah and is another reason for God's impending judgment to fall upon this nation.

Despite the outward security these alliances brought to Edom, ultimately they could not protect her. Obadiah describes the treachery of Edom's supposed partners:

⁷All the men in your confederacy shall force you to the border; the men at peace with you shall deceive you and prevail against you. Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you. No one is aware of it (Obadiah v. 7).

Obadiah paints a picture of shocking betrayal. Edom will be overwhelmed by houseguests who abuse the law of hospitality. In the ancient world, it would have been unthinkable to abuse the gift of hospitality by attacking the host. And yet, Obadiah says the unthinkable will happen. Although they can't conceive of it happening (“no one is aware of it”), God has ordained it as a fitting reward for Edom's treachery against her brother Judah.

David had also felt the betrayal of those close to him and the violation of hospitality (Ps. 41:9). Certainly he would have agreed with the Psalmist:

⁸It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. ⁹It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes (Psalm 118:8-9).

As Bentley puts it: “the only thing in which a nation [or individual] is ever truly secure is a humble and obedient relationship to God.”

4. *Pride of Perception (vv. 8-9)*

The fourth and final source of Edom's pride was in their perception. They were proud of their wisdom and understanding. Apparently, Edom was rich not only in material possessions, but in human knowledge as well. The learning and lore of the nations passed through the bazaars of Edom along with the caravan goods. Edom's reputation for wisdom had a long history. One of Job's counselors, Eliphaz, was from Teman in the land of Edom (Job 2:11; *cp.* Jer. 49:7). But as the counsel of Eliphaz illustrated, ultimately the understanding of Edom is unable to penetrate the inscrutable will of God.

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⁸“Will I not in that day,” says the LORD, “even destroy the wise men from Edom, and understanding from the mountains of Esau? ⁹Then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau may be cut off by slaughter” (Obadiah vv. 8-9).

The human wisdom apparently in view here is that of military strategy. When God fights against Edom, their understanding will fail and their warriors will be confused, disoriented, and ultimately destroyed. Just as their position and possessions and partners would fail to protect them, so also would their perception be unable to shield them from the enmity of God. Rather than depending on their own perception, the Edomites would have done well to have studied the writing of Solomon to understand how to achieve true wisdom:

²When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom (Proverbs 11:2).

Conclusion

In this first section of the book of Obadiah, the prophet has illustrated that the four-fold pride of Edom – pride in position, possessions, partners, and perception – is doomed to fail. Human strength is no match for the divine sovereignty and power of God. The doom of Edom is certain because it rests in the mighty hands of the LORD.

Although this message was written over 2500 years ago against a nation that no longer exists, it is still a very contemporary message for the church today, especially in our self-reliant American culture. In many ways, American Christians are tempted to be proud of the very same kinds of things as was ancient Edom. Reformed Christians must be especially wary of the fourth point of pride – perception or wisdom. Our emphasis on doctrine and knowledge is one of our great strengths, but it is also a potentially dangerous source of pride. We need to listen to the words of Paul when he warns us, “therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). Pride leads to destruction; therefore humble yourselves before the LORD.

¹⁸Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18).

³⁴Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34).

How do we humble ourselves before God and avoid this destructive sin of pride, this sin that led to the judgment of destruction against Edom? How do we avoid the sin of self-conceit, that puffed up mindset that thinks only of oneself and has no time for God? The apostle Paul gives us the answer. He tells us that we are to have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5) that seeks the will of the Father first. In His life on earth, Jesus demonstrated true humility by placing the needs of others ahead of Himself. It was this attitude that led Christ to the cross, the ultimate sacrifice of humility, as our sinless God died for sinful men. When we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and we put our neighbors ahead of ourselves, then we won’t ever have to worry about the sin of pride.

³Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others (Philippians 2:3-4).

Next week: Lesson 2 – Your Brother’s Keeper – Obadiah vv. 10-21

Close in Prayer.