

II. *Your Brother's Keeper*

12-Dec-06 Obadiah vv. 10-21

Theme: Edom is condemned by their sin of unbrotherliness toward Judah; through Jesus Christ comes deliverance, holiness, and inheritance.

Key Verses: Obadiah vv. 17, 21 ¹⁷But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.... ²¹Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

Review

Last week we began our brief two-week study of the little book of Obadiah. The theme of the book is "the doom of Edom." Although the prophecy is against this brother nation of Israel, Obadiah gives it to Judah as both an encouragement and a warning. God's people are to be encouraged that God is the sovereign Lord of history who will judge sin and punish evil-doers.

In this case, judgment is to fall upon the nation of Edom because of their sins. The first sin given in the book is the sin of *pride*. In verses 2-9, Obadiah lists four different sources of Edom's pride and self-sufficiency: 1) their position; 2) their possessions; 3) their partners; and 4) their perception. However, in each and every case, Obadiah dismisses these strengths of Edom, demonstrating that they are 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.

Even though Obadiah encourages God people by describing the judgment to come upon their enemy Edom, the prophet's message also serves as a warning for the people of Judah not to presume upon their covenant privileges. To do so would be to fall prey to the same sin as doomed Edom – pride. Instead, God's people are to humble themselves before God:

¹⁴If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Jesus Christ demonstrated the ultimate example of humility, becoming obedient to the will of the Father, even to the point of death on the cross for the sins of His people. We are called to have this same mind of Christ, the mind of humility that puts others above ourselves.

Introduction

In Obadiah's short prophecy, the doom of Edom is sealed by two sins. The first sin of Edom was pride (vv. 2-9), an internal attitude that was based on their self-centered assessment of their own strengths. The pride of Edom left no room for consideration of God or of others, especially their brother nation, Israel. This first sin leads directly to the second – the sin of "unbrotherliness." Although Edom and Israel were sibling nations, descended from the twins Esau and Jacob, Edom did not treat Israel as a brother. Verses 10-14 describe the "unbrotherliness" of Edom towards Judah in the day of Jerusalem's distress. In their pride, they were more than willing to see Judah humiliated, afflicted, and destroyed. Because Edom treated Judah like an enemy instead of a brother, God was going to cut off the descendants of Esau from the face of the earth.

The final section of Obadiah's prophecy (vv. 15-21) expands the scope of the judgment on Edom by considering the two-fold aspect of the Day of the LORD. When the LORD comes in

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judgment, He will not only judge Edom, but also all the nations who rejoice in evil against the people of God and rage in vain against the LORD and His anointed (*cp.* Ps. 2:1-2). But there is more to the Day of the LORD than simply judging the nations – God will also deliver His people. The book of Obadiah ends with a glorious vision of the consequences of God’s salvation for His people – a picture of the Church age and of the eternal kingdom to come.

Exposition

A. The Unbrotherliness of Edom (vv. 10-14)

1. Unbrotherliness (vv. 10-11)

a. “Violence Against Your Brother” (v. 10)

Obadiah summarizes the judgment against Edom for the sin of pride in verse 9: they will be “cut off by slaughter.” As Obadiah begins to describe the second sin in his indictment of Edom, he tells us up front that the penalty is the same:

¹⁰For violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever (Obadiah v. 10).

To be “cut off” is to be excommunicated from the presence of God. This is a common penalty in the Old Testament. If an Israelite were cut off, it meant he could no longer participate in the worship services at the Tabernacle or Temple. He could not bring a substitutionary sacrifice to atone for his sins. The one who is unclean, the one who is unholy, the one who is covered in shame and sin, is the one who is separated or “cut off” from the presence of God (*cp.* Lev. 22:3).

For the Israelite, the good news was that with repentance, the excommunicated one could be restored to cleanness and fellowship and communion with God. However, that is not the scenario that Obadiah envisions for Edom. Their “cutting off” is not temporary; it is not reversible. The day is coming, says Obadiah, when God will once and for all cut off Edom from His presence forever. They have had many opportunities to repent, to confess their pride and unbrotherliness, but it will be too late. God’s judgment is coming, and Edom will be cut off forever, never to come into the presence of God.

The sin I am calling “unbrotherliness” (after Boice) is described by Obadiah as “violence against your brother.” Of course, the root of the unbrotherliness between Edom and Israel goes all the way back to the original strife between the brothers Esau and Jacob. This tension continued to grow as the descendants of the twins became nations. Even though Moses exhorted the Israelites, “You shall not abhor an Edomite, for his is your brother” (Dt. 23:7a), the enmity continued on both sides. This was a family feud that had been going on for generations!

However, the original sin of unbrotherliness goes back even further, all the way to Cain and Abel (*cp.* Gen. 4:1-15). The very first two brothers both brought sacrifices to God. Abel brought a blood sacrifice—a lamb of the flock—while Cain brought produce of the land. God accepted Abel’s offering, because it was an appropriate sacrifice that pictured the atonement to come in Jesus Christ. God rejected Cain’s sacrifice because it represented the fruit of his labors and the works of his own hands. Even back in the earliest days of redemptive history, it was clear that the only way to approach God was through the death of a substitute, not self-righteous works.

Although God warned Cain to get his act together, rather than offer an appropriate sacrifice Cain decided to “sacrifice” his brother. In the ultimate act of unbrotherliness, Cain committed fratricide and murdered Abel in cold blood. After the original sin of Adam, God had asked

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Adam (who was hiding), “Where are you?” (Gen. 3:9). In the case of Cain, God asks a similar question, “Where is your brother?” (Gen. 4:9a). Of course God already knew the answers to His questions, but the responses are revealing. Adam confesses his nakedness and shame, but Cain brazenly replies: “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9b).

“Am I my brother’s keeper?” That is the question of Cain. And although God does not answer Cain’s question directly, the answer is obvious: Yes! Cain had a responsibility to love his brother, to protect his brother, to care for his brother’s safety and well-being. A humble, God-fearing attitude leads to care and concern for your brother, for your fellow Christian, for your fellow man (*cp.* Phil. 2:3-4).

However, Cain was proud, arrogant, self-centered, and jealous of his brother. He did not look out for the interests of Abel; he was only concerned about himself. Cain did not esteem Abel better than himself; instead, in a fit of jealous rage he committed violence against his brother. Cain’s actions were driven by selfishness, conceit, and pride. He is the prototype of unbrotherliness in the Scriptures. The proud nation of Edom walked in the footsteps of Cain and was condemned for the same sin – unbrotherliness, the sin of violence against a brother.

b. “In the Day” (v. 11)

In verse 11, Obadiah turns from the general charge of unbrotherliness to a specific example. It seems that Obadiah is describing an actual, historical incident – the sack of Jerusalem by invading armies. In context, Obadiah is most likely referring to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 by a coalition army led by Babylon:

¹¹In the day that you stood on the other side— in the day that strangers carried captive his forces, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem— even you were as one of them (Obadiah v. 11).

Obadiah introduces this calamity by the phrase “in the day.” This phrase is used twice in verse 11 to introduce the subject of Edom’s involvement in the destruction of Jerusalem. It is used seven more times in verse 12-14 to demonstrate how Edom was involved. The term “day” is a key concept in the book of Obadiah. The main idea is a reference to judgment or destruction. In verses 11-14, the repetition of the phrase “in the day” hammers home the destruction that fell upon Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem in 586 BC. According to verses 12-14, that day was a day of “captivity,” “destruction,” “distress,” and “calamity.”

These central verses of Obadiah concern the day of destruction that came upon Judah. However, the word “day” is used twice more by Obadiah to bookend this central section. In verse 8, Obadiah speaks of “that day” in which the LORD will destroy Edom. And in verse 15, we have the phrase “the day of the LORD” which also speaks of the coming destruction of Edom and the rest of the sinful nations of the world. Just as the day of judgment fell on sinful Judah, so another day of judgment is coming against Edom.

What did Edom do to Judah “in the day” of her affliction? In one sense, they did nothing at all: “you stood on the other side.” The NIV, NASB, and ESV versions translate this phrase as “you stood aloof.” Edom knew what was going on, saw a brother in need, and did nothing. Jesus condemns this very attitude in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37). In the story, the priest and the Levite passed by their neighbor in need and didn’t lift a finger to help. They didn’t want to get involved. It was too much trouble and they were too busy with their own

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affairs. Oh, they looked, they saw their neighbor in need, but they chose not to help. Like Cain, they wanted no part of being their brother's keeper.

On the other hand, God considers Edom to be as guilty as the nation of Babylon which was responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem: "even you were as one of them." Through their tacit approval of what happened to Jerusalem, Edom shared in the guilt of that calamity. There are no casual bystanders in the spiritual conflict in which we fight. Either you are on the side of the Lord, or you are opposing Him. There is no neutral ground. By refusing to defend Judah, Edom chose to cast their lot in with the enemies of God's people. Thus they shared in the ultimate fate reserved for those who oppose God – to be cut off from God's presence forever.

2. *Slippery Slope (vv. 12-14)*

Having described the general sin of unbrotherliness in verse 10 and the context for this charge in verse 11, Obadiah gives seven specific examples of Edom's unbrotherly conduct toward Jerusalem in the day of its destruction, grouped into three stanzas. Each of the seven examples contain the phrase "in the day" to emphasize the guilt of Edom in the devastation of Jerusalem.

The intensity of Edom's complicity increases in each of the three stanzas. In the first stanza (v. 12), Edom remains at a distance while Obadiah describes their attitude toward the suffering of Judah. In the next stanza (v. 13), Edom moves closer to the scene of the crime by entering the city and joining in the looting of Jerusalem. Finally, the third stanza (v. 14) shows Edom's direct involvement in perpetrating cruelty and violence directly against the people of God. Edom has gone from unholy attitudes about the suffering of Judah, to peripheral involvement in the destruction of Jerusalem, to active collaboration with the enemy of God's people. Edom has gone down that slippery slope of sin that James describes:

¹⁴But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

¹⁵Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death (James 1:14-15).

There is a progression to sin. It starts out small and then it grows and grows. Ultimately, all sin starts in the mind as desire, as covetousness. Our attitudes reveal our sinful heart and nature even before we act upon the temptation. Cain sulked when his sacrifice was rejected while Abel's was accepted. Esau disdained the privileges of the covenant blessing that his brother Jacob desired. Edom stood aloof in the day of Jerusalem's destruction, but rejoiced to see it happen. What begins in the mind and is reflected in our attitudes then is worked out in our lives. The avalanche of sin begins with a small step, but it quickly grows out of control. Cain's envy of Abel leads to murder; Esau's rage leads to Jacob's exile; Edom's refusal to assist Judah leads to looting the city and abetting the enemy.

a. *Attitudes (v. 12)*

Edom's sin of unbrotherliness starts out small. The first stanza of this indictment concerns Edom's attitudes towards Judah:

¹²But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother

In the day of his captivity;

Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah

In the day of their destruction;

Nor should you have spoken proudly

In the day of distress (Obadiah v. 12).

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Just as Lot's lifting his eyes to view the good looking land around Sodom led to his choice to move toward Sodom (Gen. 13:10-11), so Edom's gazing upon the distress of Jerusalem led to their unbrotherly attitudes toward Judah. Bentley describes their attitudes this way:

Instead of sympathizing with their brothers, they gloated over their downfall. They actually rejoiced over the misfortune of the people of Judah. They looked down on their brothers. They were glad to demean them and boasted in the day of their trouble.

b. Actions – Indirect (v. 13)

But Edom was not merely content to jeer at Judah's misfortune and boast about their superiority to fallen Jerusalem. Like Lot, who was not content to pitch his tent near Sodom but was enticed to enter into that wicked city (*cp.* Gen. 13:12; 14:12), Edom wanted to get a closer look at the suffering of Jerusalem:

¹³You should not have entered the gate of My people
In the day of their calamity.
Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction
In the day of their calamity,
Nor laid hands on their substance
In the day of their calamity (Obadiah v. 13).

Perhaps Edom got caught up in a "mob mentality." They moved in closer to get a better look, eventually entering through the gates of the ruined city to gaze on the affliction caused by Babylon. But Edom was not satisfied simply to look. They wanted to touch as well. And touch they did. They began to lay their hands on the booty of the fallen city, joining in the looting after the fall of Jerusalem. Although they were not directly responsible for the calamity, they were now contributing to it. Edom has slid further down the slippery slope.

c. Actions – Direct (v. 14)

Finally, in verse 14, we see Edom taking an active role in the persecution of God's people:

¹⁴You should not have stood at the crossroads
To cut off those among them who escaped;
Nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained
In the day of distress (Obadiah v. 14).

Edom is now actively aiding and abetting the Babylonians. As the citizens of Jerusalem fled the destruction of their city, the Edomites help capture them and turn them over to Babylon, like a dog catcher rounding up strays. The most significant person captured while fleeing Jerusalem was King Zedekiah himself, who attempted to escape by night in the direction of Jericho (2 Kings 25:4-5). No doubt other Jewish citizens, both prominent and insignificant, were also rounded up, aided by the roadblocks established by the Edomites.

Notice the progression: Edom has gone from being passive bystanders to active collaborators with the enemies of God's people. They have slid down the slippery slope of sin and God is now calling them to judgment, because they have failed to be their brother's keeper.

B. The Day of the LORD (vv. 15-21)

Having described the guilt of Edom in the day of Jerusalem's distress, Obadiah now turns his attention to the day of Edom's distress – the day of the LORD.

Minor Prophets: Obadiah, Jonah, Malachi

1. Judgment of the Nations (vv. 15-16)

a. *Day of the LORD (v. 15)*

¹⁵For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head (Obadiah v. 15).

The day of the LORD comes not only to Edom, but to all the nations of the world who oppose God and His people. The day of the LORD is frequently mentioned in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament (*e.g.* Is. 2:12; Joel 1:15; 2:31; Amos 5:18-20; Zeph. 1:7, 14; Zech 14:1; Mal. 4:5). What is this “day of the LORD”?

Like many topics in Old Testament prophecy, the concept of “the day of the LORD” has several layers. Essentially, it is referring to a time (or times) when God comes to inspect or judge His people or His enemies. When God draws near, it is a day of the LORD. Every Sabbath day, every Lord’s day, is thus in a sense a day of the LORD, because God draws near to His people to inspect them, forgive their sins, accept their worship, instruct them in His word, and send them forth into the world to live for Him.

Then there are specific times in history in which God acts decisively in judgment amongst the nations. The destruction of Jerusalem, described in verses 11-14, was a day of the LORD that came to God’s covenant people because of their wickedness, rebellion, and sin. The day of the LORD came to Babylon and other countries (*e.g.* Is. 13:6, 9; Jer. 46:10; Ez. 30:3; Joel 3:14) as God’s wrath was poured out upon these nations. Here, Obadiah is saying that the day of the LORD, the day of God’s judgment and wrath, is surely coming upon Edom for her sins, for her part in the destruction of Jerusalem. But at this point in his little prophecy, Obadiah no longer limits the scope of God’s judgment just to Edom. Instead, he reminds us through the example of Edom that all of the nations who do not fear or serve the LORD will be judged by Him.

Of course, there is also one last, decisive, ultimate day of the LORD when Jesus Christ shall return, history will end, and the living and dead judged. The New Testament refers to the second coming of Christ in judgment as “the day of the Lord” (1 Th. 5:2; 2 Pe. 3:10). The last judgment is the final “day of the LORD” in history. I believe that Obadiah is referring both to the day of the LORD in history when judgment comes upon Edom, as well as the final day of the LORD when Christ judges all nations. Obadiah’s message is simple: you reap what you sow – sin and rebellion have consequences – but the Judge of the earth is coming to make everything right.

b. *Drinking Judgment (v. 16)*

¹⁶For as you drank on My holy mountain, so shall all the nations drink continually; yes, they shall drink, and swallow, and they shall be as though they had never been (Obadiah v. 16).

The judgment on the day of the LORD is pictured as the nations drinking the bitter cup of God’s wrath. This image is a common portrayal of judgment in the Scriptures (*cp.* Ps. 75:7-8; Is. 51:22; Jer. 25:15, 17, 28; 49:12; Ez. 25:32; Hab. 2:16; Rev. 14:10).

Jesus asks that the cup of God’s wrath be taken away from Him if possible; nevertheless, Jesus was willing to drink that cup in the place of sinners (Mt. 26:42; Lk. 22:42). Indeed, Christ has transformed that cup of wrath into a cup of blessing. We now drink of that cup in the Lord’s Supper. When partaken by faith in the work of Christ, the cup represents Christ’s blood, shed for the remission of our sins. When taken improperly, Paul says that we drink judgment upon

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ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28). Everyone must drink of the Lord's cup. You will either drink the cup of God's just wrath and be destroyed like Edom; or Christ drinks that cup for you and you will be saved by faith in His atoning sacrifice.

2. Deliverance of Israel (vv. 17-21)

In verse 17, Obadiah shifts his focus to the positive side of the day of the LORD. Although the day of the LORD comes as judgment to the enemies of God, it means blessing for the Church:

¹⁷But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions (Obadiah v. 17).

Obadiah sets up a deliberate contrast between two mountains. The first mountain is Mount Zion, or Jerusalem. It is the site of Edom's sin of unbrotherliness; they drank in the destruction of Jerusalem upon God's "holy mountain" (v. 16). But now it is to be the site of Israel's deliverance. The other mountain is Edom itself or Mount Seir as Edom is often referred to (*cp.* Gen. 36:8-9; Ez. 35:1-15). Even though Edom feels they are impregnable in their rugged fortresses, God will judge and destroy the inhabitants of the "mountains of Esau" (vv. 8, 9, 21).

These two mountains—Zion and Seir—picture for us the contrast between the two lines of people, the righteous and the unrighteous. The people of God find deliverance through Jesus Christ in Mount Zion, which the writer of Hebrews uses as a picture of the kingdom of God (Heb. 12:22-24). Those who reject Jesus Christ attempt to defy God from Mount Seir, the stronghold of human strength and works. The inhabitants of Mount Seir in every generation will find no consolation when the wrath of God falls on them. Only in Mount Zion is there salvation.

When the day of the Lord Jesus Christ comes, Obadiah says that He will usher in three blessings: 1) deliverance; 2) holiness; and 3) inheritance. The rest of the book of Obadiah describes these three blessings that come from the person and work of Jesus Christ.

a. *Holiness (v. 18)*

First, consider the holiness that Jesus Christ brings. If we are to stand in His presence, we must be made holy, because He is holy:

¹¹For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy (Leviticus 11:45).

God commands His people to be holy. If you are not holy, He will either purify you in the fire of His righteousness (*cp.* Dan. 12:10; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2-3), or He will consume you like fire burning up the stubble of the field (*cp.* Is. 5:24; 33:11; 47:14; Joel 2:5; Mal. 4:1; Mt. 3:12; Lk. 3:17). In verse 18, Obadiah combines these images of a holy fire in God's people with the destruction of the wicked nation of Edom:

¹⁸“The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame; but the house of Esau shall be stubble; they shall kindle them and devour them, and no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,” for the LORD has spoken (Obadiah v. 18).

Bentley points out how this prophecy is accomplished through the advent of Jesus:

We find this fulfilled in some measure in New Testament times. Jesus came to 'bring fire on the earth' (Luke 12:49). He was going to bring victory over Satan, sin and this world, by dying on the cross to take away the sins of His people and rising again for their justification.

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The holiness of Christ has come. He is actively purifying His church and purging it of sinful elements. We who are in the Lord are continuously becoming more conformed to His image (Rom. 8:29). Meanwhile, Christ is ruling all creation and judging the nations for their sin.

b. Inheritance (vv. 19-20)

In the second place, consider the inheritance we have in Jesus Christ. Verses 19-20 describe Israel “possessing their possessions”:

¹⁹The South shall possess the mountains of Esau, and the Lowland shall possess Philistia. They shall possess the fields of Ephraim and the fields of Samaria. Benjamin shall possess Gilead. ²⁰And the captives of this host of the children of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath. The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the South (Obadiah vv. 19-20).

Obadiah describes the territorial expansion of the nation of Israel to reclaim their ancient borders and beyond. This is a great promise of restoration, since the entire land had been lost in the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. The people of God had been exiled because of their disobedience, but Obadiah is confident that the captives will return from exile and be restored to their inheritance. No one knows exactly where “Sepharad” is, although some speculate it may be Sardis in Asia Minor. Regardless, the point is that God will regather His scattered people and restore them to their homeland.

Some commentators believe that the entire book of Obadiah is in one sense a commentary on Amos 9:12, a verse immediately preceding Obadiah in the canon of the Old Testament. Amos 9:12 says that a renewed and restored Israel will “possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name.” In context, Amos is talking about the expansion and growth of the Church by adding Gentiles, including Edomites! In Acts 15 at the Council of Jerusalem, James quotes Amos 9:11-12 to make the point that Gentiles of all nationalities are to be added to the church.

Thus, we can see that in a bigger sense, Obadiah is not merely talking about the restoration of a handful of Jews from captivity after 586 BC. Essentially, Obadiah is describing the advance of the Church throughout the kingdoms and nations of the world. The fire of God’s word passes through the world, purifying those who are added to the Church and burning up those destined for destruction. God’s fire extends throughout the earth to bring all those who believe into the kingdom of God. As the Church possesses our possessions, God’s kingdom grows. Ultimately, we will inherit the new heavens and the new earth, and we will possess the new creation for eternity with Christ Jesus.

c. Deliverance (v. 21)

Finally, Obadiah ends his short prophecy talking about the deliverance that Jesus Christ brings:

²¹Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD’s (Obadiah 21).

The word “saviors” also means “deliverers” or “judges.” Robertson comments:

That these saviors on Mount Zion perform the task of “judging” Mount Esau suggests something more than conquering or destroying Edom. They judge Mount Esau, which hints strongly at the possibility that their judging will involve saving activity. This saving aspect of judgeship is applied to seven of Israel’s judges in the book of Judges

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(3:9, 15, 21; 6:14, 10:1, 12:2, 13:5). In other words, Edom is the potential beneficiary of the judging by these saviors on Mount Zion.

Obadiah has told us in verse 17 that “on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance.” That deliverance or salvation comes through Jesus Christ. In verse 21, we see the impact of the gospel of Jesus Christ upon the nations, typified by Edom. The gospel comes to the mountains of Esau, judging them and bringing deliverance. Once again, the picture here is of the elect of Edom and all the nations being added to the kingdom of God, a kingdom that grows and expands until it fills the whole world (Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45).

Conclusion

Two thousand years ago, the day of the LORD came when Jesus Christ walked on the earth as a man. His first advent inaugurated the new covenant and brought the blessings of deliverance, holiness, and inheritance not only to the Jews, but to all the elect who would trust in Him for salvation. In his prophecy, Obadiah has described the two-fold effect of the day of the LORD – judgment upon the wicked, and restoration and salvation to the elect.

“On Mount Zion there shall be deliverance.” There is only one place to find the salvation that frees us from the judgment that comes on the day of the LORD. There is only one way to be cleansed of sins such as pride and unbrotherliness. There is only one name under heaven which can restore fallen sinners of every nation to a right relationship with the holy God. There is only one person who can make us holy, guarantee our heavenly inheritance, and reconcile us to God. When we come to Mount Zion for deliverance, we come to “Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant” (Heb. 12:22-24). Salvation is found only in Jesus Christ.

Ultimately, these blessings in Jesus Christ that Obadiah describes point beyond the Church age to the eternal kingdom to come. When Christ comes in His second advent on that final day of the LORD, He will usher in the new heavens and the new earth. Deliverance, holiness, and inheritance will be consummated in eternity.

To sum up this little book, the prophet Obadiah presents two ways or paths to take. The first path is the way of Edom, the example of Esau. In Obadiah, Edom represents the world and the world’s system of thinking and behavior. Pride and unbrotherliness are just two of the sins that condemn those in the world to suffer the “doom of Edom.” Bentley describes them in this way:

The people of this world ignore God and his ways. Like Edom of old, they are proud and arrogant. They care nothing for God, His people, or the things of God. As with Edom of old, God declares to all unbelieving people today, ‘You will be destroyed for ever.’

On the other hand, Jacob (or Israel or Judah) represents the people of God in every age who submit to God the Father and find salvation or deliverance through Jesus Christ the Son. They are made holy through the cleansing sacrifice of Jesus Christ. They are given an inheritance that will never fade. They are added to the kingdom of God and will live forever in the presence of the LORD. These are the ones who humble themselves and serve others – truly they are their brother’s keeper.

Next week: Lesson 3 – Jonah’s Disobedience – Jonah 1:1-16

Close in Prayer.