

# Obadiah

Obadiah prophesies against Edom and all nations because of pride.

Obadiah  
Synthetic reading  
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The book of Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. It prophesies against Edom, a nation that enjoyed great strength, a large national ego, and a great sense of independence. However, Obadiah prophesied that they would lose all of these things that they put their pride in and that Edom would fall precipitously and perilously. Why would they fall? God said it was all because of the way that Edom responded when God's wrath and judgment fell upon the nation of Judah.

Although the children of Esau (Edom) are cousins to the children of Jacob, their relationship was as contentious as the sibling rivalry between Esau and Jacob. Unfortunately, this led the Edomites to look down upon, despise, and oppress the people of Judah when they were besieged by Babylon.

Instead of looking upon their cousins with compassion, the Edomites gloated and pillaged and looted and even apparently destroyed the lives of the survivors. However, this oppression of the children of Jacob by their cousins during their time of distress arrested the attention of the God of Justice. Obadiah declared that God will not only judge Edom but *all the nations* in the day of the Lord. Whenever any nation allows their rivalry to overrule their relationship or their conflict to negate their compassion so that they treat their opponents to oppression, then that nation's pride and self-centeredness and xenophobic behavior puts their entire nation in the crosshairs of the judgment of God.

This is particularly interesting because Proverbs 24:17-18 advises leaders not to rejoice when your enemy falls lest the Lord be displeased at our response to the stumbling of our enemy. Even when this enemy has deserved punishment from God, how we respond is also something that God pays close attention to and may affect how much of the deserved punishment our enemy actually receives.

In the end, God promised that the exiles would return and the tables would be turned. The Babylonian exiles would not only repossess the land but they would also rule over the cousins who oppressed them in their distress.