

Small Group Guide: The Book of Obadiah

God's Judgment and Faithfulness



OPENING PRAYER (5 minutes)

Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and help you understand His faithfulness in keeping His promises.

ICEBREAKER (10 minutes)

Question: Have you ever experienced a situation where pride led to a downfall—either in your own life or someone you observed? What did that teach you?

SERMON RECAP (5 minutes)

The book of Obadiah, though the shortest in the Old Testament, delivers a powerful message about God's judgment on Edom for their pride and cruelty toward Israel during Jerusalem's destruction. Their downfall serves as a foreshadowing of God's final judgment on all nations who oppose Him, while also demonstrating God's faithfulness to His promises and His people.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. **God always has the high ground** - No matter how secure we feel in our defenses, positions, or circumstances, God is sovereign over all.
2. **How we treat others matters to God** - Edom's cruelty toward their "brothers" (Israel) brought severe judgment.
3. **God keeps His promises** - Every prophecy about Edom came to pass historically, giving us confidence in God's future promises.
4. **Pride leads to destruction** - Edom's confidence in their natural defenses and geographical advantages blinded them to their need for God.
5. **God's judgment is both temporal and eternal** - Edom's destruction foreshadows the final Day of the Lord for all nations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Text (15 minutes)

1. **What made Edom feel so secure and proud?** How did their geography contribute to their attitude? (verses 3-4)
2. **What specific sins did Edom commit against Israel?** List them from verses 10-14. Which one stands out to you most and why?
3. **The sermon mentions that Edom and Israel were "brothers" (descendants of Esau and Jacob). How does this relationship make Edom's actions even worse?**

Personal Application (20 minutes)

4. **When have you been tempted to trust in your own "defenses" (abilities, resources, position) rather than in God?** What happened?
5. **Edom stood by and watched their brothers suffer. When have you been a bystander to someone else's pain when you could have helped?** What kept you from acting?
6. **Pride was Edom's downfall. What are some "high places" in your life where pride tends to take root?** (Career, relationships, achievements, knowledge, etc.)

7. **How does knowing that God keeps His promises—both for judgment and blessing—affect the way you live today?**

Going Deeper (15 minutes)

8. **The sermon explains how Edom's judgment foreshadows the Day of the Lord for all nations. What does this teach us about:**
- God's character?
 - The seriousness of sin?
 - The importance of being on God's side?
9. **Israel was promised deliverance and restoration (verses 17-21) even while Edom faced total destruction. What does this reveal about God's faithfulness to His covenant people?**
10. **How does the historical fulfillment of Obadiah's prophecy (Edom's complete destruction by 70 AD) strengthen your faith in:**
- The reliability of Scripture?
 - God's future promises about Christ's return?
 - God's justice?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Humility Check

- Identify one area where you've been trusting in your own strength or position rather than God
- Spend time in prayer each day surrendering that area to God's control
- Journal about what God reveals to you

Option 2: Be a Brother/Sister-Keeper

- Identify someone in your life who is going through difficulty
- Don't be a bystander—take concrete action to help them this week

- Reflect on how God might be calling you to show compassion regularly

Option 3: Promise Review

- Study 3-5 promises God has made in Scripture
 - Research how He has fulfilled promises historically
 - Write down how this strengthens your confidence in His unfulfilled promises
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GROUP PRAYER (10 minutes)

Pray together about:

1. **Confession:** Areas where pride has taken root in our hearts
 2. **Repentance:** Times we've been bystanders to others' suffering
 3. **Gratitude:** God's faithfulness in keeping His promises
 4. **Trust:** Surrendering our "high places" to God's sovereignty
 5. **Compassion:** Asking God to give us hearts that care for those who are suffering
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MEMORY VERSE

Obadiah 1:15 - "For 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."

BEFORE NEXT WEEK

- Read through Obadiah again on your own, asking God to reveal any pride or hard-heartedness in your life
 - Follow through on your chosen practical application
 - Be prepared to share what God taught you through this practice
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LEADER NOTES

- **Sensitive Topic Alert:** The destruction of an entire people group is difficult theology. Be prepared to discuss God's justice, mercy, and the seriousness of sin. Emphasize

that God's judgment is always righteous and that He offers salvation to all who turn to Him.

- **Historical Context:** Some may find the detailed history confusing. Consider having a simple timeline prepared showing: Babylonian exile → Persian period → Greek period → Hasmonean dynasty → Roman period → 70 AD destruction.
- **Gospel Connection:** While not explicitly in the sermon, connect this to the Gospel: We all deserve judgment like Edom, but God provided deliverance through Christ. Those who trust in Him will experience restoration like Israel, not destruction like Edom.

5-Day Devotional: God's Judgment, Mercy, and Faithfulness



Day 1: Pride Comes Before the Fall

Reading: Obadiah 1:1-4; Proverbs 16:18-19

Devotional: Edom's downfall began with pride. They trusted in their strategic location, their rocky fortresses, and their military advantage. They believed no one could touch them. Yet God declares, "Though you ascend as high as the eagle... from there I will bring you down."

How often do we place our security in earthly things—our careers, bank accounts, or reputations? True security is found only in humble dependence on God. Pride deceives us into thinking we're self-sufficient, but God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. Today, examine your heart. Where have you placed your confidence? Surrender your pride to God and find the safety that only comes from resting in His hands, not your own strength.

Day 2: The Sin of Indifference

Reading: Obadiah 1:10-14; Matthew 25:31-46

Devotional: Edom's greatest sin wasn't just violence—it was standing by and doing nothing. When their brothers faced destruction, they watched, mocked, and even participated in their suffering. They stood "on the other side" when they should have stood alongside them.

Jesus teaches that what we do—or fail to do—for "the least of these" we do to Him. Indifference to others' suffering is not neutrality; it's complicity. When we see injustice, persecution, or pain and turn away, we echo Edom's failure. God calls us to active compassion, to be our brother's keeper. Today, ask God to break your heart for what breaks His. Look for someone who needs help, encouragement, or advocacy—and don't just stand by.

3: God Keeps His Promises

Reading: Obadiah 1:15-18; 2 Peter 3:8-9

Devotional: Obadiah prophesied Edom's complete destruction—and history confirms it happened exactly as God said. The Edomites are no more, while Israel remains. This demonstrates a profound truth: God's word never fails.

Sometimes we grow weary waiting for God's promises. We wonder if He's forgotten, if His timing is off, or if His word still holds. But God operates outside our timeframes. What He speaks, He accomplishes—whether in seventy years or two thousand. His promise of Christ's return, of justice for the oppressed, of restoration for His people—all will come to pass. Take comfort today that the same God who fulfilled every prophecy about Edom will fulfill every promise He's made to you. His faithfulness spans generations.

Day 4: The Day of the Lord

Reading: Obadiah 1:15-16; Joel 2:28-32

Devotional: "The day of the Lord is near upon all nations." Edom's judgment foreshadowed a greater, final judgment coming for all who oppose God. This isn't meant to terrify believers but to remind us that God's justice is real and certain.

Yet alongside judgment, God offers deliverance: "On Mount Zion there shall be deliverance." For those in Christ, the Day of the Lord brings not condemnation but consummation—the fulfillment of all God's promises. We don't fear that day; we anticipate it. This reality should shape how we live now. Are we living with eternity in mind? Are we sharing the hope we have? Today, let the certainty of Christ's return motivate holy living and bold witness. The Day is coming—be ready.

Day 5: From Exile to Restoration

Reading: Obadiah 1:19-21; Ezekiel 36:24-28

Devotional: Obadiah ends with hope: Israel scattered will be regathered; land lost will be reclaimed; "the kingdom shall be the Lord's." This isn't just about geography—it's about God's redemptive pattern. He takes what's broken and restores it beyond its former glory.

Perhaps you feel like you're in exile—distant from God, your dreams destroyed, your purpose unclear. Remember: God specializes in restoration. He brought Israel back from Babylon. He preserved them through Roman destruction. He reestablished them in their land. The same God who fulfills national promises keeps personal ones. Your story isn't over. God is writing a restoration narrative in your life right now. Trust His timing. Believe His promises. The kingdom belongs to the Lord, and He reigns over your circumstances too.