

**The Lies We Listen To  
Redefining Terms Doesn't Change Truth  
Obadiah 5 – 14**

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We are in the book of Obadiah. As we learned last time, the book is about Edom and judgment that is coming to that nation. But it is also a picture of what living in the world can do to a believer to include why it is important not to be bitter or allow bitterness to control you. Edom is the poster child for that. Edom is also “to be considered as a type of the enemies of Christ and his kingdom, and especially of the Roman antichrist.” (Gill 1810, 524)

Edom is an example of what doing life in the flesh rather than the spirit looks like. They listened to lies and redefined terms making their lifestyle more acceptable, and so do we. It is also prophecy. We will pick it up in verse 5 with the beginning of the second message to Edom.

As we have seen in the first message, even though Edom felt they were living in an impregnable fortress (Obadiah 3), God pointed out that He would be the one taking them down (Obadiah 4). There is no fortress than can hide anyone from God or protect them from Him, no matter how much you lie to yourself about it.

For those of us who are believers, we need to pay even more attention to what it is that Obadiah is saying. We too are also fighting against the world and the flesh. We are fighting from the position of having already achieved the victory through Jesus Christ, but there is that problem of still being in the world but not of it. Peace in this battle is not possible until we either go home to be with the Lord or He comes to take us to be with Him in the rapture and we are glorified. Until then, sanctification continues.

Jesus has provided us His completed work on the cross and then walked out of the grave. By going to prepare a place for us (John 14:1 – 3), He makes a way for us (John 16:7 – 11) to each be filled with the Holy Spirit when we place our trust in Him. He has already achieved the victory for us. We fight from that position and in the Spirit, we have victory (Galatians 2:20).

But it is possible to grieve the Spirit and allow the flesh power (Ephesians 4:30 – 31) over us. For those who have drifted or simply do not know Him. Ignorance is bliss. Or so we would think.

Many today think that if they simply ignore God or deny His existence, then He will ignore them. That is their fortress. That is not the case, it is another lie of the enemy. Ignorance is not bliss. The reality is the reverse of that.

Isaiah 47:10–11.

“You felt secure in your wickedness. ‘No one sees me,’ you said. But your ‘wisdom’ and ‘knowledge’ have led you astray, and you said, ‘I am the only one, and there is no other.’ So disaster will overtake you, and you won’t be able to charm it away. Calamity will fall upon you, and you won’t be able to buy your way out. A catastrophe will strike you suddenly, one for which you are not prepared.” (NLT)

Psalms 53:4–5

“‘Don’t they know?’ God asks. ‘Are these evildoers ignorant? They live by robbing my people, and they never pray to me.’ But then they will be terrified, as they have never been before, for God will scatter the bones of the enemies of his people. God has rejected them, and so Israel will totally defeat them.” (GNB)

God is speaking of spiritual ignorance here. The world has plenty of knowledge in other matters but if you do not know spiritual things, God says you are ignorant. (Butler 2014, 23)

Ouch. “Although the message focuses on Edom, the promised judgment is applicable to all unbelieving nations of the world. All unbelieving nations and peoples will drink the cup of God’s wrath in the day of His terrifying judgment (vv. 15–16). Thus throughout the message, Edom represents all who reject the LORD and mistreat other people, especially God’s true followers.” Listening to lies from the enemy, ourselves, and others is not a recipe for life much less a successful eternity. (Leadership Ministries Worldwide 2008, 161)

Peace with God is possible. But it is not achieved by denying His existence, ignoring Him or ignoring what Jesus achieved on the cross.

The simple fact that you are listening to me is enough to show there is still hope for you. He is not ignoring you, He is instead, reaching out to you.

For us a believers, life in the Spirit is not sustained by living for self and ignoring the fact that He has the expectation that we will be faithful followers who obediently follow Him. He did create us after all, and He also paid a severe price to make the path to Him available.

Luke 6:46–49

“‘Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I tell you? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house.’” (NRSV)

For those of us who know Him, come back. Repent.

1 John 1:9–10

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” (NKJV)

If you don't know Him, then let me introduce you to how simple it is to come to Jesus.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

With that, we come to the second message from YAHWEH to Edom.

The second message begins with rhetorical questions, and He uses two images as a comparative, thieves and robbers.

Any possible threat from any human source is nothing when compared to what God promises to do. God is omnipotent, He is omnipresent, He is omniscient. He knows everything about us, the good, and the bad. He even knows what it is that motivates us and why we do what we do. And He knows this about Edom.

Obadiah 5

“If thieves came to you, If robbers by night— Oh how you will be ruined!— Would they not steal only until they had enough? If grape-pickers came to you, Would they not leave some gleanings?” (NASB 2020)

A thief or a robber tends not to take everything. They take what is of value and then leave what is not of value. They are fearful of discovery so only that which is of value is what they want. Something would be left if this was only a problem presented by a human enemy.

When they are satisfied with the property they have stolen, they stop. They take only that which they consider valuable for their purposes and then hurry away, leaving the rest behind. (Block 2017, 65)

When we allow the flesh to control us, we are allowing theft to take place. Satan is a thief. He wants to take the valuable from us making us ineffective for the Lord. Jesus makes this clear.

John 10:9–10

“I am the door. If anyone enters through me, he will be saved, and will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I have come so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.**” (NET 2nd ed.)

For Edom, for the world system, these are to be human attackers, but they are operating at the behest of YAHWEH.

The same principle applies to harvesters as well. Something will always be left.

When harvesting grapes to be turned to wine, those doing the harvesting don't take every bunch of grapes. Some are not ready yet, others may never be ready. Only the best is taken, and the rest is left. Edom, being located physically along the Kings Highway, was in a prime location for trade as well as the extraction of fees for passage from the Red Sea or Africa. They were on the main trade route, and they learned how to hide their treasures from the best.

I am always amazed that those who are living by the world's rules believe they can get away with it.

The secrets will be exposed. God is omniscient and when He chooses to expose, He does so better than any thief could ever do. He opens up everything, not just the valuable stuff.

Jeremiah 23:24

"Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the LORD." (NKJV)

Secret sin on Earth is open scandal in heaven. (Hebrews 4:13) (Anderson 2005, 78)

Obadiah 6

"Oh how Esau will be searched, And his hidden treasures searched out!" (NASB 2020)

The Lord points out to them that, awful as that kind of thing is, when he comes upon them in judgement it will be far worse: he will completely ransack everything that belongs to them, and there will be nothing left behind! In effect he says to them, 'I know where you have hidden your precious stones and metal because nothing can be hidden from my sight.' (Bentley 2000, 232)

The difference between a thief, robber or harvester versus what it is God is going to do is this, God will leave nothing behind. He also knows where the safe is located, and all of the offshore accounts. He intends to take everything leaving nothing.

Just as Edom had been involved in the plundering of Jerusalem, so they shall receive the same in judgement. "Here Edom is sentenced to experience for itself a similar plundering. As the prophetic corpus so often highlights (Miller 1982), the punishment fits the crime." (Raabe 2008, 144)

By the time God is done, nothing will be left. All worldly wealth, all worldly possessions, all would be stripped from the one who is the enemy of God's people.

For us today, this is a picture of a proud nation that is rich beyond any measure. This nation does what it wants to and has rejected God. They trust in their military, their fortresses, and their riches and resources. But we know a future day is coming.

Z

Zechariah 14:9

"And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one." (ESV)

Proverbs 22:8

"Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity, and the rod of his fury will fail." (ESV)

Isaiah 17:12-13

"Ah, the thunder of many peoples; they thunder like the thundering of the sea! Ah, the roar of nations; they roar like the roaring of mighty waters! The nations roar like the roaring of many waters, but he will

rebuke them, and they will flee far away, chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind and whirling dust before the storm.” (ESV)

It is also a picture of the fall of a proud individual. Every election cycle we see this take place in real time. A humbling of the proud. There is a satisfaction in us when that happens. That is because we are made in the image of God. He hates pride, even though we have a pride problem now and then, we still express satisfaction when someone who has been inordinately proud is taken down.

Proverbs 8:13

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.” (NKJV)

Then there is the love of money. Money itself is not evil, but when it becomes our god. “The Edomites undoubtedly trusted in uncertain riches. We can easily do the same, and become like the man in the parable. Money can become our idol, our substitute for God.” (Bridger 2010, 55)

Luke 12:18–21

“Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.” (NRSV)

Obadiah 7

“All the people allied with you Will send you to the border, And the people 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.)” (NASB 2020)

The people of Edom, even though isolated, knew they needed to be involved in diplomacy and just as nations do today, engaged in diplomacy with the surrounding nations. They had interlocking agreements with numerous nations. We see a sample in Psalm 83 which talks of a yet future military engagement.

Psalm 83:4–8

“They say, “Come on, let’s annihilate them so they are no longer a nation. Then the name of Israel will be remembered no more.” Yes, they devise a unified strategy; they form an alliance against you. It includes the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia and the inhabitants of Tyre. Even Assyria has allied with them, lending its strength to the descendants of Lot. (Selah)” (NET 2nd ed.)

This verse reveals a people who think they are secure, not only because of their superb natural defenses, but because of a virtual traffic in allies revealing a vast network of alliances. Because the people of Edom did not sufficiently understand the hearts of men and women, they did not foresee that these imagined allies would eventually prove untrue and betray them to their enemies. (Boice 2002, 239-240)

We live in a similar time today. We in the west think that diplomacy will work and those who sign documents do not lie.

Surely diplomacy must be given a chance. Nations will always stick to their agreements.

There are thousands living in Israel today, some descended from Esau, who recently believed a lie. They were told by the Arab nations in 1948 to leave your home while we defeat the Jews in Israel, then you can return. We will take care of you in the interim. But Israel won the war and those surrounding nations reneged on the taking care bit.

The present plight of the Palestinians is, in large part, the result of the failed Arab war against Israel, and therefore primarily the responsibility of the surrounding Arab nations. These Arab nations have done little to absorb and assimilate them into their lands, but have done much to use them as pawns against the developing nation of Israel. (Salus 2013, 98)

We forget who the true rulers of the world system are and that their rule is only temporary.

Ephesians 6:12

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Edom will be double crossed because they have aligned themselves with the enemy, and all the enemy wants is their and our destruction.

Jesus called it when talking with another group following the wrong guy.

John 8:44

“You people are from your father the devil, and you want to do what your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Even Israel will be misled during the Tribulation by a world leader who will promise to protect them and will even go as far as sign a seven-year deal with them to actively come to their aid. At the middle of the Treaty period, everything goes south as this world leader will miraculously survive an assassination attempt; he will then enter Israel and end all worship of YAHWEH and demand that he be worshipped (Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15 – 22, Mark 13:14 – 19).

For those in Edom, they thought they had peace deals and allies. But those who sit and eat with them are actually setting a trap. Edom will be deceived.

The downfall referred to here probably occurred in the late sixth or early fifth century B.C. when the Nabateans went to the Edomites who took them in for a banquet. Once welcomed inside Edomite territory, the Nabateans turned against their ally and killed the guards. (Baker 1985, 1456)

Why? Why do they allow themselves to be deceived like this? “There is no understanding,” no wisdom.

It seems best to understand the reference to wisdom or knowledge as further irony. Edom is about to be deceived, in spite of all her wisdom. Pride distorts reality and blinds to the truth. This is why Edom is so easily deceived by treacherous allies. (Burge and Hill 2012, 848)

Pride does that. When we believe our own press clippings, we begin to think we are too important for anything bad to happen to us. For example, there is a pride problem in our culture today. But we think everything is ok. Research disagrees.

“Three-quarters of Americans maintain that people are basically good, and less than half of all Americans believing in God or that the Bible is God’s true, relevant and reliable words to humanity,” Barna explained. “Consequently, Americans have become comfortable with the idea of being the arbiters of morality. In the same way that most Americans contend that there is no absolute moral truth, they now believe that there is no divine guidance required or even available to define right and wrong.” (Barna 2022)

Barna also noted that the task of defining morality has shifted from churches to the government.

“The research indicates that people are now more likely to take their moral cues from government laws and policies than from church teachings about biblical principles,” the researcher explained. “Americans have historically said that when they elect a president they are choosing a chief executive, not a pastor-



in-chief, but that distinction appears to be passé. One could reasonably argue that the nation's ideas about right and wrong are now more likely to come from the White House and the halls of Congress, than from our houses of worship. The laws of the land are replacing the laws of God in determining good and evil in America.” (Barna 2022) Deception.

1 Corinthians 3:18–20

**“No one should fool himself.** If anyone among you thinks that he is wise by this world's standards, he should become a fool, in order to be really wise. For what this world considers to be wisdom is nonsense in God's sight. As the scripture says, “God traps the wise in their cleverness”; and another scripture says, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are worthless.”” (GNB)

Again, deception is a thing. It is real. It is all around us and we can easily be sucked into the world system, which is all about deception, unless we are wearing our armor.

Ephesians 5:6–14

**“Let no one deceive you with empty words,** for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore **do not become partners with them;** for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light** (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. **Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.** For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, **it becomes visible,** for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”” (ESV)

You don't know you have a cockroach problem until you turn on the light and see them all running away.

They don't like the light.

Why is there this tension today with social media and politicians? Once again, it is a light problem.

Edom has a light problem.

Or, as we have put it, God has put Esau under a microscope, and God says, “Come, look. Look through the Word of God, and look at this man. I hate him. Why do I hate him? It is because of his pride of life. He has turned his back on Me and has declared his ability to live without Me.” That is the pride of life, my friend. (McGee 1997, 731)

The Targums make this crystal clear for us.

Obadiah 7

“All you allies have banished you beyond the frontier; your confederates have duped and overcome you; those who ate at your table have planted a snare under you; for there is no understanding in you!” (Cathcart, Maher and McNamara 1990, Obadiah 7)

The pride of life is a lie. The allure of the flesh is following after a lie.

God hates the world system; He hates the flesh, and He will eliminate it and all of those who have chosen to be enslaved by it.

Obadiah 8–9

““Will I not on that day,” declares the LORD, “Eliminate wise men from Edom, And understanding from the mountain of Esau? Then your warriors will be filled with terror, Teman, So that everyone will be eliminated from the mountain of Esau by murder.”” (NASB 2020)

Obadiah has heard YAHWEH speak in the Divine Council, and he now relates what YAHWEH said about how He is going to allow Edom to be deceived.

Edom had a reputation for wisdom.

Because of his communication with Babylon and Egypt and because of the information gleaned through the caravans going to and from Europe and India, Edom had gained an enviable reputation for wisdom. Now his wisdom will be withdrawn from him. The wise and powerful men of Teman will be dismayed, because the Lord purposed to slaughter every one in Edom. (Feinberg 1990, 127)

They should be able to see the duplicity of their allies, but they are blinded to it.

This secret weapon of bewilderment which causes incompetence is to be wielded against the Edomite troops. Teman, an important city of Edom, is here used poetically as a part for the whole. The nation's army, losing their sense of morale and esprit de corps, would flee in panic, easy victims for their pursuing foes. God's purpose is nothing less than the complete annihilation of Edom's forces. (Allen 1976, 153)

Edom will lose the ability to think clearly and make wise decisions based on facts as they have in the past. They are going to suffer because of their own stupidity.

How did they get here? Is this a problem today?

- A rejection of YAHWEH in favor of idols.
- Active hatred and persecution of God's people (Genesis 12:3).
- Failing to help God's people when they had the chance to do so.
- Pride in their own ability to make things happen.
- Yes.

1 Corinthians 1:20–30

“So then, where does that leave the wise? or the scholars? or the skilful debaters of this world? God has shown that this world's wisdom is foolishness! For God in his wisdom made it impossible for people to know him by means of their own wisdom. Instead, by means of the so-called “foolish” message we preach, God decided to save those who believe. Jews want miracles for proof, and Greeks look for wisdom. As for us, we proclaim the crucified Christ, a message that is offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles; but for those whom God has called, both Jews and Gentiles, this message is Christ, who is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For what seems to be God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and what seems to be God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Now remember what you were, my brothers and sisters, when God called you. From the human point of view few of you were wise or powerful or of high social standing. God purposely chose what the world considers nonsense in order to shame the wise, and he chose what the world considers weak in order to shame the powerful. He chose what the world looks down on and despises, and thinks is nothing, in order to destroy what the world thinks is important. This means that no one can boast in God's presence. But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus, and God has made Christ to be our wisdom. By him we are put right with God; we become God's holy people and are set free.” (GNB)

This brings up the question, why? Wisdom is to be removed; Edom is to be destroyed and their troops will turn tail and run. Why?

It has a lot to do with lifestyle choices.

Obadiah 1:1–9 is paralleled remarkably in Jeremiah 49:7–22, so Jeremiah probably had Obadiah's prophecy before him as he wrote and ministered. (Guzik 2000, Ob 5-9)

Now we come to the why, the list of charges. As we read this, remember the time period that Obadiah is ministering in. This list is all predictive prophecy about 300 years in advance.



#### Obadiah 10–14

“Because of violence to your brother Jacob, Shame will cover you, And you will be eliminated forever. 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. Do not gloat over your brother’s day, The day of his misfortune. And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah On the day of their destruction; Yes, do not boast On the day of their distress. Do not enter the gate of My people On the day of their disaster. You indeed, do not gloat over their catastrophe On the day of their disaster. And do not lay a hand on their wealth On the day of their disaster. Do not stand at the crossroads To eliminate their survivors; And do not hand over their refugees On the day of their distress.” (NASB 2020)

The summary of what we have seen up to this point; God is the one who is going to do this.

Edom has serious physical natural fortifications. They had taken advantage of the terrain and as a result the defenses were impressive, but not a barrier to YAHWEH.

Edom has accumulated riches by being located right on the Kings Highway. All freight and goods moved through Edom. They were materially wealthy, but all that wealth will not buy them protection from YAHWEH.

They were wise and knew how to make the best use of their military might. But that too was going to be divinely removed from them.

Edom would be overrun. Her nation would be devastated, her people ravished, and her land denuded—well beyond normal limits. (Busenitz 2003, 259)

Obadiah makes it clear for us in the indictment, beginning in verse 10. First of all, this is a family matter and Edom has forgotten that simple fact. YAHWEH though made it a matter of law for the Jewish people.

#### Deuteronomy 23:7

“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a sojourner in his land.” (ESV)

But Edom didn’t look at it that way. They violated this familial tie.

Obadiah 10 “Because of violence to your brother Jacob, Shame will cover you, And you will be eliminated forever.” (NASB 2020)

The Hebrew word translated “shame” provides some insight. It is the word בִּישָׁה (busa(h)).

The primary meaning of this root is “to fall into disgrace, normally through failure, either of self or of an object of trust.” (Oswalt 1999, 97)

This term denotes the violation of expected group behavior. Edom and Israel were relatives. This demanded certain actions. (Uttley 2008, 17)

Then there is the Hebrew word for violence, חָמָס (hamas). “An act of aggression; especially involving physical contact...violence (state), a turbulent state resulting in injuries and destruction...wrongdoing n., activity that transgresses moral or civil law...malicious witness n., a witness who wishes evil against the person being testified against...” (Hoogendyk 2017)

This is something being done to both Kingdoms, the term “brother Jacob” is important in that it opens up what we see taking place in Israel today.

...hāmās may indeed have originally meant the misdeed that objectively burdens the land and disturbs its relationship and its inhabitants’ relationship to God, so that anyone who knows of it must appear as

plaintiff before the legal community in order to divert the consequences... (Jenni and Westermann 1997, 438)

This term being used here in Obadiah as a noun also may be a point of prophecy pointing to a future group of people.

Most of the time the word “ Hamas ” should just be translated “ violence. ” But there are a few Old Testament passages that speak of this “ violence ” being a group of people who are anti-Israel. For instance, this group seems to be headquartered in the ancient area of the Philistines. Today we call this area the Gaza Strip. (Johnson 2021)

In Amos 6, we see this word used again as a noun. Now we start putting the pieces together.

Amos 6:2–3

“ Pass over to Calneh, and see, and from there go to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are you better than these kingdoms? Or is their territory greater than your territory, O you who put far away the day of disaster and bring near the seat of violence? ” (ESV)

As we focus on the last part of verse 3, we see the invitation for the northern kingdom to compare themselves to a city state they know, Gath. We also see that there is a belief that judgment is far away, but we see this reference that by believing that brings near violence, hamas, again as a noun.

Ezekiel 7:7–11

“ Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come; the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting on the mountains. Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you, and spend my anger against you, and judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. And my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. I will punish you according to your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the LORD, who strikes. “ Behold, the day! Behold, it comes! Your doom has come; the rod has blossomed; pride has budded. Violence has grown up into a rod of wickedness. None of them shall remain, nor their abundance, nor their wealth; neither shall there be preeminence among them. ” (ESV)

In the midst of a prophecy dealing with judgement on the land of Israel, we see judgment being called down on the inhabitants of the land. Most assume this is about Israel, but we see “ violence, ” hamas, referenced again, and as a noun.

Is there something to this? There is more to come from Obadiah.

By the way, just as a reminder, “ Hamas is a Palestinian nationalist group that seeks to eliminate the nation of Israel, replacing it with an Islamic state. Hamas is an acronym for Ḥarakat al-Muqāwamah al-Islāmiyyah, which in English translates to “ Islamic Resistance Movement. ” ” (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

Here in Obadiah, the word is used as a noun, not a verb. The same occurs in Amos 6 and in Ezekiel 7. It sounds like we are talking about a group.

We know that Edom ceased to exist as a nation. We also know many were forced to become Jews by the sword. Where are they today?

Many are still in the middle east, possibly living in other nations or in Israel as part of the group known as Palestinians.

If we are still to see a war in the land as outlined in Psalm 83, the combatants who move against Israel include “ the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, Gebal and Ammon and Amalek,

Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; Asshur also has joined them; they are the strong arm of the children of Lot. Selah” (Psalm 83:6–8, ESV)

Is this about Edom? Yes. Is this also a prophecy about the future destruction of the world system at the end of the age? Yes. Does it also speak to events we see taking place in the middle east right now?

Yes.

What is the punishment for those who are involved in this hamas against all of Israel, the north and the south. They will be eliminated forever.

Has that happened yet?

This is something tied into an event yet to take place. The indictment continues with Obadiah prophesying what Edom will do when Babylon rolls in. Edom will become the laughingstock of all the surrounding nations. They believe they are a power, yet they really are nothing more than opportunistic criminals. Edom will lose their honor and prestige. Then here at the end of verse 10, we see they will cease to exist as a nation forever. Has that happened yet? Maybe.

Was this sentence of judgment fulfilled by the end of the first century AD, when the Romans overran Israel and Idumea? Or do the words of the prophet understand a more distant fulfillment? The Hebrew term forever [‘olam] often connotes the idea of eternity. However, it is not always so restricted, but may specify a long period of time, the exact length of which is determined by the context. The occasional statements regarding Edom in eschatological contexts (cf. Isa. 11:14; Dan 11:41; Joel 3:19 [4:19]; Amos 9:12) suggest that the author has the more distant future in view here. (Busenitz 2003, 261)

And again, we find ourselves looking at terms and language used by Obadiah and the multiple layers in this prophecy.

The charge is violence, now come the specifics.

Obadiah 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.” (NASB 2020)

The day being spoken of here is not the day of the Lord, but it the day, yet in the future for Edom as this prophecy is being made, where they can make a decision. That decision is to do nothing.

Even today, a decision to do nothing is still a decision and there is still accountability for it.

Even you, Edom, in your passive observation if not active involvement, are aligning yourself to be one of them, the enemies. (Wiseman, Alexander and Waltke 1988, 40)

As we engage in our daily battle with the world system, what kind of decision will we make today? Will we continue to engage and stand for the Lord, or is today a day off? I learned in the military there is no such thing as a day off while actively engaged with the enemy. The enemy perceives that to be a sign of weakness.

The world system, Edom, did nothing to protect those in Jerusalem. They remained neutral. Have you ever noticed, the world system does nothing to protect believers, but instead takes every opportunity to try and destroy believers.

The world system will “seek to maintain an image of religious neutrality but still propose legislation to control conservative Christians.” (Yancey and Williamson 2015, Kindle Locations 2012-2014)

Neutrality is no different than active engagement. For Edom, there were also a series of things they were doing actively to oppose the Jewish nation. The world does the same, it acts like it is neutral, but really it isn't and works continuously to suboptimize us and our ministries. Actively, publicly as well as secretly.

Ephesians 6:10–13

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” (NKJV)

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