

Bible Snapshots



Obadiah – Prophet of Doom Author – Obadiah

Facts

- The name “Obadiah” means servant. The book is undated, but internal evidence seems to place the book near the final days of Jerusalem before being taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar around 597 BC (vss. 11, 12). If this is the date then he probably knew or new of Habakkuk and Ezekiel and was contemporary with Daniel and Jeremiah.
- Character of the book is prophetic. It is the shortest book in the Old Testament. There is one chapter, 21 verses and 670 words.
- The ministry of Obadiah was to the Edomites, with a promise of a future hope and revival for Israel. Edom’s (Petra) ruins were featured in the movie Indian Jones and last Crusade.

Contents

- The book foretells the dire consequences of a strained relationship between Israel and Edom. The Edomites were descendants of Esau and they seemed to never forgive Jacob cheating Esau out of the birthright. This grudge led to at least three sins. First, when Israel approached Canaan in the exodus they sought passage through their land, but were refused and offered possible war instead (Numbers 20:14-22; 21:4). Second, in the reign of Ahaz, when Judah was attacked by Pekah and Rezin, the Edomites invaded and carried off captives (2 Chronicles 28:17). There had been other small skirmishes as well (2 Chron. 21:8; 16, 17; 25:11-24). Finally, the Edomites rejoiced when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem (2 Chron. 36:17-20; Ps. 137:7)

Prophecy

- Edom shall be cut off forever (10). Four years after their rejoicing over the defeat of Jerusalem the Babylonians too conquered them. They never regained power, but only declined. The Maccabeans subdued them in 126 B.C. Then they were under Romans rule, but rose to take some power – the Herods were and Edomite family, hated by most Jews, which may also play into why Herod sought to kill Christ, “King of the Jews.” In AD 70 they are destroyed forever.
- Israel’s restoration (17-21). This was fulfilled when the Jews returned to their homeland and rebuilt the city and temple – ca. 597 B.C.

Archeology

The picture at the right stands as a warning against pride and how far man will fall when he goes against God and His people.

Key phrase / word / thought

- Retribution / The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions (17)

Key chapters/verse

- 1 / 1:15

Outline of the book of Obadiah

- The Doom of Edom (1-16)
 - The charge against Edom (1-9)
 - The crime of Edom (10-14)
 - The catastrophe of Edom (15, 16)
- The deliverance of Israel (17-21)
 - The triumph of Israel (17, 18)
 - The possession of Israel (19, 20)
 - The establishment of Israel (21)

