



The prophets Jeremiah, Obadiah, and Ezekiel all minister around the time of Jerusalem's destruction and when the people of Judah were being taken away into Babylonian exile.

Having just covered the book of Jeremiah over the course of the last five weeks, this week we tackle Obadiah; the shortest book in the Old Testament, just one chapter with 21 verses. What is also unique about Obadiah is that he does not preach directly to Israel or Judah, but instead addresses the nation of Edom (what is now Jordan) that judgment is coming because of its sin.

The nation of Edom was adjacent to Judah, located to the southeast. Israel and Edom had a long history... Back in the time of Moses, Edom would not give the Israelites permission to pass through their land as they journeyed from Egypt to the Promised Land. Later, Edom would often collaborate with Judah against the larger empires, but when the Babylonians invaded Judah, and Babylonian victory seemed inevitable, Edom switches sides and joins the Babylonians in plundering Judah. Due to Edom's betrayal, Obadiah prophesies that Edom will be destroyed for attacking Judah.

The Edomites lived in the rugged mountains which can provide a natural barrier, this gave them a false sense of security, believing their country was easy to defend and hard to attack. "You live in a rock fortress and make your home high in the mountains, who can ever reach us way up here?" you ask boastfully (v. 3). God's judgment on Edom is unique for there is no mention of any future restoration. Edom gets destroyed by Babylon in 553 BC and is never again restored. By contrast, Obadiah proclaims that Israel will be restored and will rule over the region once controlled by Edom (vs. 17-21).

This short book of Obadiah is a reminder that sin has consequences, and that God will ultimately judge all those who oppose Him. God's people, however, will be restored and the "Lord Himself will be King!" (v. 21). Many scholars make this connection to the book of Revelation when the Lord finally establishes His eternal Kingdom after His second coming.