

THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE

THE MINOR PROPHETS:

THE PROPHECY OF OBADIAH

REV. CHARLES R. BIGGS

The Kingdom of God will come! The Kingdom of God will overthrow all foreign kings and their nations. The Kingdom of God will eventually manifest itself! We should keep this in mind as the people of God especially when it seems that the nations rage against God, His Anointed One, and His Kingdom people, and the nations seem to find success in their power and strength and false religions.

The Prophecy of Obadiah is short; it is in fact the shortest book in the Old Testament with only 21 verses! There is an old saying that “good things come in small packages” (That’s what my mother told me anyway!). Unfortunately, the good things of Obadiah’s small prophetic package have not always been obvious in the history of Christian interpretation of this book. The Latin translator Jerome wrote memorably about Obadiah when he said *quanto brevius est, tanto difficilium* or “It is as difficult as it is brief” (*An Introduction to the Old Testament*, Dillard and Longman, pg. 385).

Although Obadiah’s prophecy has been hard to interpret throughout history, and has often been avoided because teachers and preachers could not find a relevant application to their congregations based on a book that told of a nation called Edom’s punishment and judgment. Yet as obscure as the prophecy may seem at first, it ends on a clear and powerful note that help us to interpret the entire book:

“...And the kingdom shall be the LORD’s” – v. 21b

What is a key verse for interpreting Obadiah’s prophecy? (1) A key verse for interpreting Obadiah’s prophecy is v. 21b.

This truth is revealed more clearly in Revelation 11:15:

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

The Prophecy of Obadiah could be summarized by the Apostle Peter’s teaching in his first letter to the elect exiled churches (cf. 1:1 ff):

ESV 1 Peter 5:10-11: And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Before we see how the Kingdom of God shall be fully revealed further in the New Testament, let us go back in redemptive-history to better understand the larger context of Obadiah's prophecy.

“Redemptive-Historical Back Story” (2) What is the redemptive-historical back story to Obadiah?

The story of Obadiah and his prophecy begins in the womb of the Matriarch of Israel Rebekah, Isaac's wife. In order to understand Obadiah's prophecy, we should travel narratively back to the Book of Genesis with the story of Isaac and Rebekah and their two sons **Jacob and Esau**. Two nations were in Rebekah's womb; Israel is Jacob and Edom is Esau:

ESV Genesis 25:23 And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger."

Later in Esau's life, he sold his birthright for some red stew [אֶדְוִיָּה *adj. red -- ruddy, red, of man*] to his brother Jacob. We are taught in Genesis 25:30:

ESV Genesis 25:30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.)

“Therefore his name was called “Edom” (*adom* in Hebrew); Edom is derived from the Semitic root meaning “red” or “ruddy”. As recipient of the patriarchal blessing, Esau was told that his people “Edom” shall serve Jacob and live by the sword, but will try to break free from service to Jacob because of restless pride:

ESV Genesis 27:39-40: Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: "Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, and away from the dew of heaven on high. ⁴⁰ By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you grow restless you shall break his yoke from your neck."

God showed grace to the Edomites and protected them throughout biblical history because Esau was Isaac's son, even preventing the Israelites from taking their territory in the conquest under Joshua. Moses wrote:

ESV Deuteronomy 2:2-6: Then the LORD said to me, ³ 'You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough. Turn northward ⁴ and command the people, "You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful. ⁵ Do not contend with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession. ⁶ You shall purchase food from them for money, that you may eat, and you shall also buy water of them for money, that you may drink.

When Israel tried to pass through the Edomite land after the Exodus, the Edomites prevented their passage and assaulted them:

ESV Numbers 20:20-21: But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against them with a large army and with a strong force. ²¹ Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory, so Israel turned away from him.

The Prophet Balaam predicted that Edom would one day be conquered:

ESV Numbers 24:18 Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly.

The warfare between the two nations that began in Rebekah's womb worked itself between Jacob and Esau (and their hatred for each other) and throughout redemptive-history there was ongoing hatred and animosity between Israel and Edom. There was constant fraternal hatred between the two peoples. Later in redemptive history, Edom revolted against the Kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 8:20-22) and thus "broke loose" from Jacob (cf. Gen, 27:40).

The Book of Obadiah is a covenant lawsuit brought against Edom (the Edomites) for his violation of fraternal relations (cf. Amos 1:11-12). We have already heard of Amos' prophecy against Edom in 760s B.C.

ESV Amos 1:11 Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity, and his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.

Edom in addition to being called "Esau" (Deut. 2:4-5) is also called "Hor" (Numbers 20:23) and "Seir" (Gen. 32:3; 36:8-9, 20-21; Numbers 24:18) in the Bible. The land or country of Edom was located in the highlands and sandstone cliffs on the southeastern edge of the Dead Sea. Although the Edomites enjoyed a long time of prosperity and success by the time of the Prophet Malachi, the Edomite Kingdom was in ruins:

ESV Malachi 1:2-4: "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob³ but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert."⁴ If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the LORD of hosts says, "They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.'"

Obadiah's Prophetic Book is one of several Old Testament oracles against Edom (see Isaiah 21:11-12; 34:5-17; Jeremiah 49:7-22; Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35:1-15; Amos 1:11-12).

The larger story of redemptive history between Jacob and Esau is the story of the struggle between the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent; it is the tale of two cities: the City of God (Jacob) and the City of Man (Esau). The pride and arrogance of the Edomites against Israel is the same pride and arrogance of all the ungodly nations at the thought of God's rule and reign over his people.

Obadiah's prophecy against Edom is extremely relevant for us today for in it, God addresses in judgment a people who have no room for God in their thoughts and knowledge. More on this later...

Date of Obadiah What is the date of Obadiah's Prophecy? (3)

The date of Obadiah's prophecy is hard to determine. Unlike other prophetic books, the title of Obadiah's oracle in verse 1 (superscription) contains no information about the

time or place of its origin, nor any autobiographical date concerning the prophet himself. Some scholars have suggested that he wrote pre-exilic (latter part of the 9th century); some have suggested early exilic (about the middle of the 6th century); some have suggested postexilic (middle of the 5th century).

The earliest possible date would be the pre-exile time of King Jehoram (852-841 B.C.; cf. 2 Kings 8:17; 2 Chronicles 21:16ff) and the latest possible date would be mid-5th century B.C. (Malachi 1:3).

If the date of Obadiah is pre-exilic, then it probably was written during the time of King Jehoram; during his reign the Edomites rebelled against Israel (2 Kings 8:20-22; 2 Chronicles 21:8-10). Philistines and Arabs acting in league with the Edomites entered Jerusalem, plundering the palace and carried off the royal household (2 Chronicles 21:16-17). They also plundered the temple and sold the people into slavery (Joel 3:3,6; cf. Amos 1:6, 9).

It is also likely that Obadiah prophesied during the exile and was an eyewitness to the Fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 587 B.C. The Book seems to share the same prophetic predictions of exilic writings such as are found in some of the Psalms, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and Ezekiel:

ESV Psalm 137:7 Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said, "Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!"

ESV Ezekiel 25:12-14: "Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance on them,¹³ therefore thus says the Lord GOD, I will stretch out my hand against Edom and cut off from it man and beast. And I will make it desolate; from Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword.¹⁴ And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, declares the Lord GOD.

ESV Lamentations 4:18-22: They dogged our steps so that we could not walk in our streets; our end drew near; our days were numbered, for our end had come.¹⁹ Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles in the heavens; they chased us on the mountains; they lay in wait for us in the wilderness.²⁰ The breath of our nostrils, the LORD's anointed, was captured in their pits, of whom we said, "Under his shadow we shall live among the nations."²¹ Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, you who dwell in the land of Uz; but to you also the cup shall pass; you shall become drunk and strip yourself bare.²² The punishment of your iniquity, O daughter of Zion, is accomplished; he will keep you in exile no longer; but your iniquity, O daughter of Edom, he will punish; he will uncover your sins.

Although many good scholars have written about the date of Obadiah's prophecy, the truth is that it is just hard to know exactly when his prophecy took place. I lean toward either a pre-exilic or exilic date for his prophecy based on internal and external considerations. It seems best to take his prophecy against Edom as taking place during or right after the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. (see especially verses 11-14 that seems to speak of the Fall of Jerusalem).

Who was Obadiah? (4) He was simply a "servant of YHWH"

His prophecy begins simply with these words:

ESV Obadiah 1:1 The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom: We have heard a report from the LORD, and a messenger has been sent among the nations: "Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!"

The name Obadiah [עבְד־יְהוָה] is the short form of the longer *obadya-hu* which include two Hebrew words: *ebed* [עבְד] and *YHWH* [יְהוָה] (servant and YHWH) which would mean that Obadiah's name communicated that he was the Servant of YHWH (or "One who serves YHWH"). This could be the Obadiah mentioned in Ahab's service who encountered Elijah in 1 Kings 18:3-16, but it is difficult to determine for sure (This is the witness of the *Babylonian Talmud* which identifies Obadiah as the steward of King Ahab). If he is the Obadiah spoken of in 1 Kings, he was the one who was described as revering the LORD from his youth (1 Kings 18:12) and honoring the prophetic word of God.

Obadiah was probably from the Southern Kingdom of Judah because of his particular focus on the Fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 587 B.C.

***Why is Obadiah's Prophecy or Oracle called a "vision"?* (5)**

Obadiah's (or oracle) prophecy is called a "vision" [חֵזוֹן] (Hebrew verb: *chozeh*- v. 1a) which doesn't mean that he necessarily saw what he wrote but that as a technical term in Hebrew simply means receiving a revelation-word from the mouth of God and serving as God's mouthpiece to the people.

"Vision" here means that he was a special revelation-receiver. This visionary experience is the result of divine inspiration that gave a perception and understanding of future events (cf. Isaiah 1:1; Nahum 1:1; Daniel 8:1). This Hebrew term *chozeh* translated "vision" connotes the authority and authenticity of the prophetic message.

Geerhardus Vos wrote: "Jehovah's approach to Israel is eminently the approach of speech; God gives Himself in the word of His mouth" (*Biblical Theology*, pg. 205).

Obadiah's call as prophet was to address the nations. As Moses addressed Pharaoh of Egypt, as Jeremiah was appointed as a prophet to the nations (Ex. 3:10; Jer. 1:5), so Obadiah was called to speak oracles or prophecies against a foreign nation, rather than specifically sent to Israel.

***Obadiah as a theologian; How is God particularly revealed in his character in his prophecy?* (6)**

God is sovereign Lord over all the nations. The God of Israel is not the god of a single nation, but his kingdom extends over heaven and all the earth. The power of His Word and the commands he speaks are not merely required of just Israel, but is the revelation of his Holy character and will for creation.

We notice the implication of the outworking of God's covenant with Abraham. God promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations, but for those who opposed Abraham and his seed, he would curse:

ESV Genesis 12:1-3: Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Edom's attack on Israel was more than the mere betrayal of a brother but was covenantally cosmic in its implications. Edom was striking against God's very plan to bless Jacob and believing Israel and this war began in Rebekah's womb.

God is just and although sinful mankind populates his world and sins against God their Creator in cosmic rebellion, yet one day righteousness will cover the face of the earth and God's will cause his justice to prevail when God's Kingdom is consummately manifested.

Obadiah was a literary master as was the Prophet Amos

Obadiah was one of the writing prophets of Israel. This means that he not only prophesied-preached, but wrote his sermons or prophecies out (In contrast to the non-writing prophets who prophesied and others collected their writings). The Book of Obadiah would have particularly been encouraging to Israel in exile. In exile, Israel was alienated from God, their temple, Jerusalem, the king, the priesthood, the land, and other covenant benefits.

The Book of Obadiah would have reminded those with true faith in Israel during the Exile that the kingdoms of this world would one day be the kingdoms of the LORD and His Christ.

Let us notice Obadiah's mastery of imagery in Edom's downfall (v. 4):

ESV Obadiah 1:4 Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the LORD.

Notice Obadiah's use of rhetorical repetition of "on the day"/ "the day"/ "do not..."/ "of misfortune...ruin...distress...calamity...calamity...calamity...distress..." (vv. 11-14):

***On the day that you stood aloof,
on the day that strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem,
you were like one of them.***

***¹² But do not gloat over the day of your brother in the day of his misfortune;
do not rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their ruin;
do not boast in the day of distress.***

***¹³ Do not enter the gate of my people in the day of their calamity;
do not gloat over his disaster in the day of his calamity;
do not loot his wealth in the day of his calamity.***

***¹⁴ Do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his fugitives;
do not hand over his survivors in the day of distress.***

How should we outline the Prophecy of Obadiah? (7)

A. Superscription (v. 1a)

- B. Oracles of judgment against Edom (vv. 1b-9)
- C. Reasons for Edom's Fall (vv. 10-14)
- D. The Day of the LORD for the nations (vv. 15-16)
- E. The glory of the LORD's Kingdom (vv. 17-20)

How is Obadiah's Prophecy in Covenant Lawsuit Form?

In the prophecy of Amos, chapter 3 we notice the "covenant lawsuit form" written with four parts: 1) Introduction (of suzerain, king, plaintiff, judge-YHWH); 2) Introduction of Defendant and Historical Review of relationship (God and Israel); 3) Indictment; and 4) Judgment.

- (1) Title/Superscription/Introduction (v. 1a)
- (2) Defendant and Historical Review/Description of the Scene of Judgment (v. 1b)
- (3) Indictment/Speech by the Judge (Plaintiff- vv. 2-21)
- (4) Judgment/Sentence on the Nations (Defendant- vv. 15-16)
- (5) Promise of Restoration of God's Kingdom (vv. 17-21).

What is the message of Obadiah? (8)

As we have already considered the redemptive-historical "back story", we should understand Obadiah's message as primarily against Edom's pride, cruelty and hatred of their "brother" Jacob (Israel). The Edomites allied with Babylon to sack Jerusalem in 587 B.C.

ESV Obadiah 1:10 Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.

The Edomites proudly boasted in their power and in the helplessness of Judah in a time of great trouble:

ESV Obadiah 1:11-12: On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them. ¹² But do not gloat over the day of your brother in the day of his misfortune; do not rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their ruin; do not boast in the day of distress.

When Jerusalem was razed to the ground by the Babylonians, the Edomites rejoiced in their overthrow! The supposed end of Israel with the fall of Jerusalem was the realization of all their hopes and dreams- -the defeat of Israel, Jacob their brother. We must remember that Israel was God's special covenant people to reveal His Kingdom to all nations- -to fight against His Kingdom people was to fight against God Himself!

Yet Edom should not rejoice, because God will judge them for their sins and transgressions against Israel. God would destroy Esau and the Edomites:

ESV Obadiah 1:18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau stubble; they shall burn them and consume them, and there shall be no survivor for the house of Esau, for the LORD has spoken.

Despite what seemed to be the end of God's Kingdom in Israel, Obadiah prophesied encouragement to the people, telling them that YHWH will ultimately triumph and

righteousness will prevail over the wickedness of all the nations on the Day of the LORD. The Prophecy of Obadiah is against Edom, but the judgment of Edom expands to include the nations in verses 15-16:

ESV Obadiah 1:15-16: For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head.¹⁶ For as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so all the nations shall drink continually; they shall drink and swallow, and shall be as though they had never been.

What is the *lex talionis*? (9) It is the “eye for an eye” that is taught in Exodus 21:23, Leviticus 24:19ff and Deuteronomy 19:21; Read again Obadiah 1:15.

ESV Exodus 21:23-25: But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life,²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

This is the biblical idea of justice that teaches that the punishment for criminal acts will be exacted in a fashion commensurate with the misdeed; punishment for a crime must be equal to the crime. As Proverbs 26:27 teaches:

ESV Proverbs 26:27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and a stone will come back on him who starts it rolling.

ESV Psalm 7:15-16: He makes a pit, digging it out, and falls into the hole that he has made.¹⁶ His mischief returns upon his own head, and on his own skull his violence descends.

The notion that the crime punishes itself in v. 15 is part of the *lex talionis* in retributive justice from God: **“Your deeds will return upon your own head.”** The deeds of the Edomites shall be repaid by God’s retributive justice in a way equal to their crime. The Edomites will receive no mercy from God for shamelessly fighting against God and His Kingdom.

Israel was God’s temporal Kingdom manifestation and presence in the world. It should be remembered that Edom represents all the kingdoms of the world that seek proudly and great audacity to dethrone God and His Anointed One and seek to obliterate his Kingdom presence in this world. All the nations that boast in their greatness and power (and implied in their gloating over Israel’s defeat is gloating over the weakness of their God YHWH!). As Psalm 2 teaches us:

ESV Psalm 2:1-6: Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,³ “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.⁵ Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying,⁶ “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

The judgment against Edom is also a judgment against all nations and all kings that thwart the coming and realization of God’s Kingdom in this world.

ESV Isaiah 34:1-2: Draw near, O nations, to hear, and give attention, O peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that fills it; the world, and all that comes from it.² For the LORD is enraged against all the nations, and furious against all their host; he has devoted them to destruction, has given them over for slaughter.

ESV Joel 3:19 "Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the people of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land."

Restoration of the Kingdom of God (10) How will the LORD's Kingdom be restored? (v. 21b)

Like other prophetic books, Obadiah's prophecy ends with hope and promise of the restoration of Israel for a remnant who believe (e.g. Joel 3:17-21; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 7:8-20). The LORD promises to those who believe His promises in Israel that His Kingdom would come again and be strongly and permanently established, and that it would expand beyond the borders of Judah and Jerusalem – ALL OF THE ENDS OF THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S!! (Exodus 9:29; Psalm 8:1; 2 Kings 19:15; Isaiah 66:1).

ESV Obadiah 1:19-21: Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau, and those of the Shephelah shall possess the land of the Philistines; they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria, and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. ²⁰ The exiles of this host of the people of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the Negeb. ²¹ Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

God is revealed as the Lord God *Adonai YHWH* [אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה] in verse 1 which means he is the Sovereign King who rules and reigns over all the nations. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, God is revealed as the Sovereign King who reigns over heaven and earth and that God will one day set up a kingdom on earth that will be eternal, never to be destroyed:

ESV Daniel 2:44-45: And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, ⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

ESV Daniel 7:13-14: I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Although the Israelites were suffering exile away from the presence of God the King and His covenantal rule and reign over their land, the hope that they had was that one day God's Kingdom would expand all over the world and he would reign over all the nations. The LORD God of Israel would one day vindicate his people and give them victory in the coming of His Kingdom. In their present state of exile this would have encouraged the hopes and prayers of a seemingly demoralized and defeated people.

In the present state of things in Israel (during Obadiah's time) Edom was proud and powerful, but they would one day be humbled to the dust in God's judgment against them; As Zion is presently disgraced and humbled, Zion will be exalted the LORD will reign from Zion over the nations.

How will God do this? When he powerfully subdues all of the nations and all resistance to his lordship as Creator and Redeemer is put down and destroyed! God's victory over Edom was typological of the larger judgment against all unbelieving nations. John Calvin writes of God's victory over the nations in his commentary on Obadiah:

"This then is what the Prophet means, when he promises to the Jews the heritage which they had lost (vv. 19-21); yes, God then enlarged the border of Judea. Hence, he shows that they should not only be restored to their former condition, but that the kingdom would be increased in splendor and wealth, when Christ should come."

It is interesting to note that the Edomites later became known as the *Idumeans*. An Idumean was ruling over Israel when Jesus Christ came to make the gospel of the Kingdom known:

ESV Luke 3:1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene...

ESV Mark 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Although Israel had still not experienced the glory of return and restoration from exile that Obadiah had promised in verses 19-21, and they were even ruled by an Idumean (Edomite) King, nevertheless, the Kingdom of God was dawning with the coming of Jesus Christ. This Idumean, Edomite King continued his warfare against God's Kingdom (which was another round of Jacob versus Esau for the title that began in Rebekah's womb). This Idumean, Edomite King sought to kill Jesus as soon as he received word that he had been born (as Esau sought to kill Jacob earlier in Redemptive-History):

ESV Matthew 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.

Jesus Christ came to reveal the consummation of God's Kingdom rule in Himself. Jesus was the long-anticipated, long-awaited Messiah King to rule over Israel and the nations. Although men gloated over and "wagged their heads" when the King was crucified in humility under Roman and Jewish power, God had the last laugh.

The LORD God raised up his king from the dead, and he ascended to enthronement glory at God's right hand.

Jesus can say "All authority in heaven and on the earth is mine" (Matthew 28:18-20). And the Church? His people, the newly reconstituted Israel who finds hope and restoration from exile in Jesus Christ, we suffer for him as his servants in this world. Yet, we confidently march as his people toward the day when all kingdoms shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and His Christ:

ESV Revelation 11:15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

In fact, not only will God reign over the world, God's people in Christ will reign with him.

ESV Revelation 22:5 And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Nations today may gloat and glory in their own power and security and false religions here in this world. Mankind might look at the weakness of the cross or the supposed weakness of meekness as Christian discipleship, but in the end God and His people will have the last laugh.

ESV 1 Peter 5:10-11: And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

In the end, we shall rule with Jesus Christ over all the nations when God's Kingdom shall extend over all the world in the New Creation!

What does the rest of Psalm 2:6-12 teach us (we looked at the first six verses, but what does the rest of the Psalm teach)?

⁵ Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, ⁶ "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." ⁷ I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." ¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

God has sworn on oath to set his King on Zion, my holy hill. God tells Jesus Christ His only begotten Son: "Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession" (v. 8).

The hope that Obadiah promised God's people who believe (the remnant) was that one day his Kingdom would be established upon the entire earth (far beyond the borders of Judah and Jerusalem). In fact, when Jesus sends his Apostles, he tells them to take the gospel of the Kingdom (the fact that it has now arrived in him) to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth (People of God rejoice! The United States is one of the places at the end of the earth from the standpoint perspective of Jesus sending apostle-disciples out from Jerusalem!).

God's Kingdom is being established presently through the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom. As men turn from their sins to the Living God through faith in Jesus Christ, men from every tribe, tongue, people and nation find hope and salvation and peace with God.

Although nations continue to rage against God, His Anointed One, as well as against those who are called by His Name, the day will come when the Kingdom of God will overthrow all sinful and rebellious nations and the people of God will rule with Christ; for this we must be patient, no matter how difficult the tribulation may seem (cf. John 16:33).

The promise of the restored land in Obadiah, and in the other prophetic books, reminds us to remember that the land served as a microcosmic type of the whole world. God reigned specially in the land of Jerusalem, or Zion and this tabernacling of God in the land is why the land of Israel was special typologically. In other words, where the Temple of God was, was where the special land was- -where is the Temple of God now? It is found in Christ? Where is the inheritance of the land found? It is found in Christ.

When Jesus Christ came in the fullness of the times, the dwelling of God or the tabernacling of God was not found merely in a geographical area or location, but found in Christ himself.

In other words, in Christ, the Kingdom of God, and all the riches and glory of God's Kingdom are found *in Him*. In Christ, we too experience the rule and reign of God and we are seated with Christ in the Heavenly places where Christ sits in enthroned glory at God's right hand on the Davidic throne.

In the New Testament, the authors understand more fully in light of the coming of Jesus Christ, that God's Kingdom is found in Jesus Christ and not in a mere geographical piece of land in the Middle East. As the New Testament authors teach, the land was a microscopic type of the God's rule and reign over the entire world.

In fact, Jesus when he quotes Psalm 37:11, he interprets what "the land" as the entire earth:

ESV Psalm 37:11 But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.

ESV Matthew 5:5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

When the Apostle Paul interprets the fifth commandment with a promise to the Gentile believers at Ephesus (who do not live in the Land of Israel incidentally but in Asia Minor!), he continues to speak of the promise of peace in the land that clearly implies that the land was a microcosmic type of the whole world or new creation:

ESV Ephesians 6:1-3: Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

The Apostle Paul also says clearly that God's promise to Abraham was to make him "heir of the world"- -not merely a piece of Middle Eastern oceanfront property!

^{ESV} **Romans 4:13** For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

The Author of the Book of Hebrews tells us that the city that believers seek is not earthly but a heavenly one (Heb. 13:14):

For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.¹⁵ Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

The full restoration and revelation of God's Kingdom is taking place presently in the building up of Christ's Church. Although the gates of hell will never prevail upon her, the Church experiences humility and suffering until the full revelation and consummation of Christ's Kingdom.

As the "Maranatha People" who cry out: "Come, Lord Jesus" we live as God's subjects as witnesses to His Kingdom in Christ by being faithful in reliance upon His grace as we await the full revelation of the Son of Man as King.

The restoration of God's people and his Kingdom began with the coming of Christ. Jew or Gentile can be part of this Kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ. The expansion of the Kingdom beyond the borders of Israel is happening all over the world as men repent and believe the good news of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Thanks be to God for his King! Kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in your way; blessed are all men who take refuge in him!

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