

I. Obadiah

a. Purpose: We will look at the authorship, purpose and other aspects of the book of Obadiah so we would be more familiar with this part of the Bible and yearn to study it for ourselves.

b. Authorship

i. About Obadiah

1. There is at least twelve people name Obadiah in the Bible.¹
2. The book itself does not include much information about Obadiah, nor the date and place of the book being written.²
3. The name Obadiah means “Servant of Yahweh.”³
4. Obadiah seems to be from Judah given his concern for its capital Jerusalem in **Obadiah 11** and **Obadiah 20**.
5. Dating the book of when Obadiah was written is debated.
 - a. Two popular view:⁴
 - i. It was written during the reign of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat (848-841 B.C.) as accounted in **2 Kings 8:20–22** and **2 Chronicles 21:8–20**.
 - ii. It was written soon after Jerusalem’s destruction by Babylon in 586 BC.
 - b. Most liberals hold second view while conservatives are split between the two views.⁵
 - c. Best view seems to be that Obadiah was written soon after Jerusalem’s destruction by Babylon in 586 BC.
 - d. This view seems as the best explanation of **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.*”
 - i. Note the destruction here is of Jerusalem.
 - ii. The destruction described is great with wealth being carried off.
 - iii. Also the destruction that happened to Jerusalem must have been very great given the harsh judgment against Edom. Thus this makes it more likely to have taken place during the historic destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

ii. Reasons why it is written by Obadiah

1. Reason 1 why it is by Obadiah: It was to Obadiah that the Word of God came to in this book: “*The vision of Obadiah.*” (**Obadiah 1:1a**)
2. Reason 2 why it is by Amos: Jewish religion tradition

¹ Walter Baker, “Obadiah” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1453.

² Andrew Hill, “Obadiah” in *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 620.

³ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 156.

⁴ Walter Baker, “Obadiah” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1453.

⁵ Walter Baker, “Obadiah” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1453.

- a. Talmudic tradition (*b. Sanh. 39b*) identifies the prophet Obadiah with penning the book of Obadiah.⁶
 - b. One must note though that there are discussion of which Obadiah it was; but certainly it was penned by someone name Obadiah.
- c. Purpose
 - i. The book of Obadiah is about Edom’s judgment and Israel’s restoration.
 - ii. According to Mark Rooker: “The book of Obadiah is a condemnation of Edom for her evil treatment of Judah during the time of Judah's greatest crisis, the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonian empire.”⁷
 - iii. According to Walter Kaiser: “Obadiah’s message was a prophecy against Israel’s eastern neighbor, Edom, who was descended from Esau.”⁸
 - iv. According to Andrew Hill: “The purpose of the book of Obadiah is to pronounce divine judgment against the nation of Edom for their role in assisting the Babylonians in the conquest of Judah, and to announce the future restoration of the people of Israel.”⁹
- d. Structure
 - i. Two point outline¹⁰
 1. Judgment of Edom (1:1-18)
 2. Restoration of Israel (1:19-21)
 - ii. Three point outline¹¹
 1. Edom Will Be Destroyed (1:1-9)
 2. Edom's Violence against Judah (1:10-14)
 3. The Destruction of Edom and the Restoration of Israel in the Day of the Lord (1:15-21)
- e. Closer look at Obadiah
 - i. This is the shortest book in the Old Testament with 21 verses.¹²
 - ii. About Edom
 1. It is a country located on the southeastern shore of the Dead Sea.¹³
 2. Sometimes it is also called Seir as indicated in **Genesis 32:3; 36:20–21,30; Numbers 24:18.**¹⁴
 3. The father of the Edomites was Esau and the battle between Israel and Edom goes back to their forefathers who were twin brothers

⁶ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15487-15489.

⁷ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15562-15564.

⁸ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 156.

⁹ Andrew Hill, “Ezekiel” in *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 619.

¹⁰ Richard Mayhue, *Ordination Practicum Syllabus* (Sun Valley, California: Self-Published for The Master’s Seminary), 83.

¹¹ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15570-15572.

¹² Walter Baker, “Obadiah” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1453.

¹³ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15490-15491.

¹⁴ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 15491.

Esau and Jacob in which they were already fighting in the womb as seen in [Genesis 25:21-27](#).

4. When the Hebrews headed towards the Promise Land Edom refused them travel through their territory ([Numbers 20:14–21](#), [Judges 11:17–18](#)).¹⁵
 5. At one point David controlled Edom ([2 Samuel 8:13-14](#), [1 Kings 11:15-18](#)) but two centuries later they threw off Judah's control during the reign of Jehoram ([2 Kings 8:20-22](#)).¹⁶
 6. Later Edomites raided Judah and took captives during the reign of Ahaz ([2 Chronicles 28:17](#)).¹⁷
 7. The worst act of Edom against Israel was participating with the Babylonians with the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem
 - a. *“Remember, O Lord, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, “Raze it, raze it To its very foundation.””* ([Psalm 137:7](#))
 - i. This Psalm is a Babylonian exile Psalm; see [verse 1](#): *“By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down and wept, When we remembered Zion.”*
 - ii. Note here in [verse 7](#) that God is *“against the sons of Edom”*
 - iii. This is because of what happened in *“Jerusalem”*
 - iv. The Edomites said *“Raze it, raze it To its very foundation.”*
 - b. See also [Isaiah 34:5-17](#), [Lamentations 4:21–22](#), [Ezekiel 25:12-14](#), [35:1-15](#).¹⁸
- iii. Edom’s sin
 1. Pride
 - a. They have pride in their defensive capital makes them think no one can invade and defeat them ([v.3-4](#))
 - b. They have pride in their renowned wise men ([v.8](#)).
 - c. They have pride in their mighty warriors ([v.9](#)).
 2. Violence towards Israel: *““Because of violence to your brother Jacob, You will be covered with shame, And you will be cut off forever.”* ([v.10](#))
 - iv. Consequences for Edom
 1. No other nation in the Old Testament is mentioned more often concerning God’s judgment of a foreign nation (see [Isaiah 11:14](#), [34:5-17](#), [63:1-6](#), [Jeremiah 9:25-26](#), [25:17-26](#), [49:7-22](#),

¹⁵ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15495-15496.

¹⁶ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15497-15498.

¹⁷ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15499-15500.

¹⁸ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 15504.

Lamentations 4:21-22, Ezekiel 25:12-14, 35; Joel 3:19, Amos 1:11-12, 9:11-12, Malachi 1:4).¹⁹

2. Great Reversals in God's punishment of Edom²⁰
 - a. Edom set itself on high (v3-4a) yet Edom will be brought down (v. 4b).
 - b. Edom is arrogant in their hearts and have wise men (v.3, 8) yet God will allow Edom to be deceived (v.7)
 - c. Edom devastated Judah on the "day" (v.11-13) and Edom will also have a "day" of punishment (v.8, 15)
 - d. The mount of Esau will be cut off (v 8-9, 19) while the mount of Zion will be delivered (v.17, 21).
 - e. Jacob's wealth was stolen (v.11, 13) and Esau's wealth too will be stolen (v. 6)
 - f. Judah will have survivors (v.14, 17) but there will be no remnant for Esau (v.18)
3. What happened to Edom in history?
 - a. Raids on their land from Arab tribes during the fifth century BC eventually led to Arabs controlling Edom and in 312 BC they even established Petra as their capital city.²¹
 - b. Many Edomites then moved into the Negev desert of Judah, a move that gave rise to the name Idumea.²²
 - c. Later the Idumeans joined the Jews fighting against Rome in 70 AD and obliterated by Roman general Titus in which case the Idumeans faded into history.²³
- v. God's judgment in the Day of the Lord also will be upon the nations:
"For the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you." (Obadiah 15)
 1. Note here "all the nations" is mentioned.
 2. We see here the book goes from the specific judgment of God for Edom to universal judgment of other nations as well as application.
- vi. God's deliverance of Israel/
 1. Obadiah 17-18 describes God's grace upon the Jews and Mt. Zion.
 2. Obadiah 19-21 expands upon Obadiah 17-18 in describing God's grace upon the Jews and Mt. Zion. These details include:
 - a. Land that the Jews will inherit.
 - b. Also the statement "And the kingdom will be the Lord's" (v.21b)
- f. Place of this book in the Canon

¹⁹ Walter Baker, "Obadiah" in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1453.

²⁰ Modified from Mark Rooker, "The Book of Obadiah" in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15546-15561.

²¹ Mark Rooker, "The Book of Obadiah" in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15505-15506

²² Mark Rooker, "The Book of Obadiah" in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 15506-15507.

²³ Walter Baker, "Obadiah" in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1455.

- i. There is reference to Obadiah in the New Testament.²⁴
- ii. Obadiah connects back to Genesis: “Behold, I will make you small among the nations; You are greatly despised.” (Obadiah 2)
 1. God will make Edom “greatly despised”
 2. The word for “despised” is the same term used to describe Esau's disdain of his birthright in Gen 25:34.²⁵
 3. We thus see the consequences of Esau’s disdain of God as the head of his people.
- iii. Herod and King Jesus
 1. Herod the Great was an Idumaeen.
 2. Herod attempted to kill Jesus in Matthew 2:16.
 3. The final battle between “Jacob” and “Esau” resulted in Jesus’ victory.
 4. But that victory resulted in “the kingdom will be the Lord’s” (v.21b) and have included us in it as believers.

²⁴ Walter Baker, “Obadiah” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1453.

²⁵ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Obadiah” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 15657.

