

## Obadiah – Notes

### [A] BACKGROUND DETAILS

#### (i) Edom and Judah; Esau and Jacob

- Edomites descended from Esau (Gen 25:30, Esau = Edom; Gen 36:9, ‘father of Edomites’). Here, Edom=Esau (vv 6, 8, 18, 19, 21); Judah=house of Jacob (vv 17, 18)
- territory – S and SE of Dead Sea (ruins of Petra = Sela (v 4)/ ‘rocks’ NIV?)
- Genesis 25:23 – prophetic word

#### (ii) Prophecies against the Nations

- See Isaiah 13-23; Jeremiah 46-51; Ezekiel 25-32 - encouragement and warning

### [B] EDOM WILL BE HUMBLER FOR ITS OVERWEENING PRIDE (vv 2-4)

- word-pictures from geography/ natural history of Edom (clefts, rocks, heights) highlight heart-attitude of Edomites (v3): self-confidence, superiority, pride: ‘Who can bring me down to the ground?’ – God can and will (v 4; v 2)!!
- lesson for each human, nation, church. ‘Pride comes before a fall’ (Proverbs 16:18).

### [C] JUDGEMENT THOROUGH; WITH SURPRISING EXECUTIONERS (vv 5-7)

#### (i) The thoroughness of the judgement which Edom will experience (vv 5-6).

#### (ii) the surprising identity of the executioners of that judgement (v 7).

- judgement worked out in realm of international politics (v 7) – then and now
- Edom’s ‘allies’ and ‘friends’ (v 7) work against them.
- ‘but you will not detect it’ - blindness of Edom? Hebrew has ‘no understanding in it/ him’ - ‘we don’t understand this!’; ‘this makes no sense!’
- ‘deceive’ (v 7); same word in v 3; and in Genesis 3:13 when the woman said to the Lord: ‘the serpent deceived me, and I ate’!

### [D] JUDGEMENT WILL FALL BECAUSE OF FAILURE TO EMBRACE GOD’S PEOPLE (vv 8-14)

#### (i) Reasons for the coming judgement on Edom.

- (v 10) ‘because of violence against your brother/ relative Jacob’ – throughout history, but especially at destruction of Jerusalem in 587/6 BC (vv 11-14). Edom (v 11) ‘stood aloof’; (v 12)

'looked down' on; 'rejoiced' over [see Ps 137:7]; sided with the Babylonians (v 13), turned fugitives over to Babylonians

**(a) the fact of Esau's relationship with Jacob**

- Deut 23:7f: Israelites not to 'abhor an Edomite' because 'he is your brother'; future generations of Edomites could 'enter the assembly of the Lord'. Edom scorned that.

**(b) the fact that Jacob is of the seed of Abraham, of the seed of the promise.**

- outworking of Genesis 12:3 promise: 'I will bless ... I will curse.' Whole of Genesis/ OT/ NT/ church history to be read in its light - still applies today: Russia; China; etc
- what of inter-church relationships? (v 11) 'you were like one of them' [i.e. enemies]!

**[E] THE JUDGMENT OF EDOM ANTICIPATES the FINAL JUDGEMENT (vv 15-21)**

- **Day of the Lord** (v 15) > Day of Judgement (NT) - day of both judgement and salvation; ultimate fulfilment of Genesis 12:3: 'I will bless ... I will curse.' For all nations.

**(i) Outworking of the Just Principle of *Lex Talionis* (vv 15-16)**

- *Lex talionis* - punishment fits the crime; 'boomerang effect of sin'; reap what we sow: (v 16) those drunk with victory celebrations over Judah, will drink 'cup of God's wrath'. Jer 25 – God's cup for all nations, including Judah (v 18). Isaiah 51:22f – taken from Jerusalem; given to 'tormentors'. Rev. 16:19 – Babylon [City of Man] drinks the cup.
- Zion, City of God doesn't drink because Jesus drank it for us: in Gethsemane (Matt 26:39, 42, 43) and on the cross

**(ii) Salvation for Zion (vv 17-21)**

- 'deliverance' (v 17); 'holy' (Ex 19:6) - set apart to God, reflecting his holiness; 1 John 3:2): 'we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.'
- 'The house of Jacob will possess its inheritance' – background in Joshua; 'possess' repeated in vv 19-20 – Promised Land theirs again
- Our inheritance: earth with rest of universe as environment (Gen 1); the new creation.
- Closing verse reminds of Rev 11:15: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever"; and we too 'will reign forever and ever' (Rev 22:6).