

Outline of
Obadiah



Introduction

Writer

Obadiah. Obadiah means Servant of Jehovah. He is one of four prophets about whom we know absolutely nothing, except that he wrote prophecy. The other three prophets are Habakkuk, Haggai, and Malachi. Obadiah is like a ghostwriter — he is there, but we do not know him. He lived up to his name. A servant boasts of no genealogy, neither exploits nor experiences. Dr. Edward Pusey said, “God has willed that his name alone and this brief prophecy should be known to the world.”

Date

There is a great difference of opinion as to the date of this prophet. There are some who give the date of 887 B.C., which fixes the time during the reign of Jehoram and the bloody Athaliah (cp. 2 Kings 8:18 with 11:1-16). Dr. Pusey placed him during the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 17:7). If this is accurate, we have one isolated reference to Obadiah in history. Nevertheless, this name was as common in that day as the name John is today. Canon Farrar gave the date as 587 B.C. Dr. William Moorehead concurred in this, as he suggested that Obadiah was probably a contemporary of Jeremiah. The whole question seems to hinge on verse 11. Is this verse historical or prophetic? The natural interpretation is the historic one, which would give it the late date. Most likely it was written subsequent to the Babylonian captivity.

Features

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament — only twenty-one verses. But the brevity of the message does not render it less important or less significant for us today. Like the other Minor Prophets, the message is primary, it is pertinent, it is practical, and it is poignant. It is a message that can be geared into this day in which we are living. Obadiah tells us immediately, bluntly, and to the point, “Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom....” It is the prophecy of judgment against Edom.

Background

The Edomites were those who were descended from Esau, just as the Israelites are those who are descended from Jacob. The story of Esau and Jacob is that of twin brothers, sons of Isaac and Rebekah. They were not identical twins; actually they were opposites (see Genesis 25:24-34).

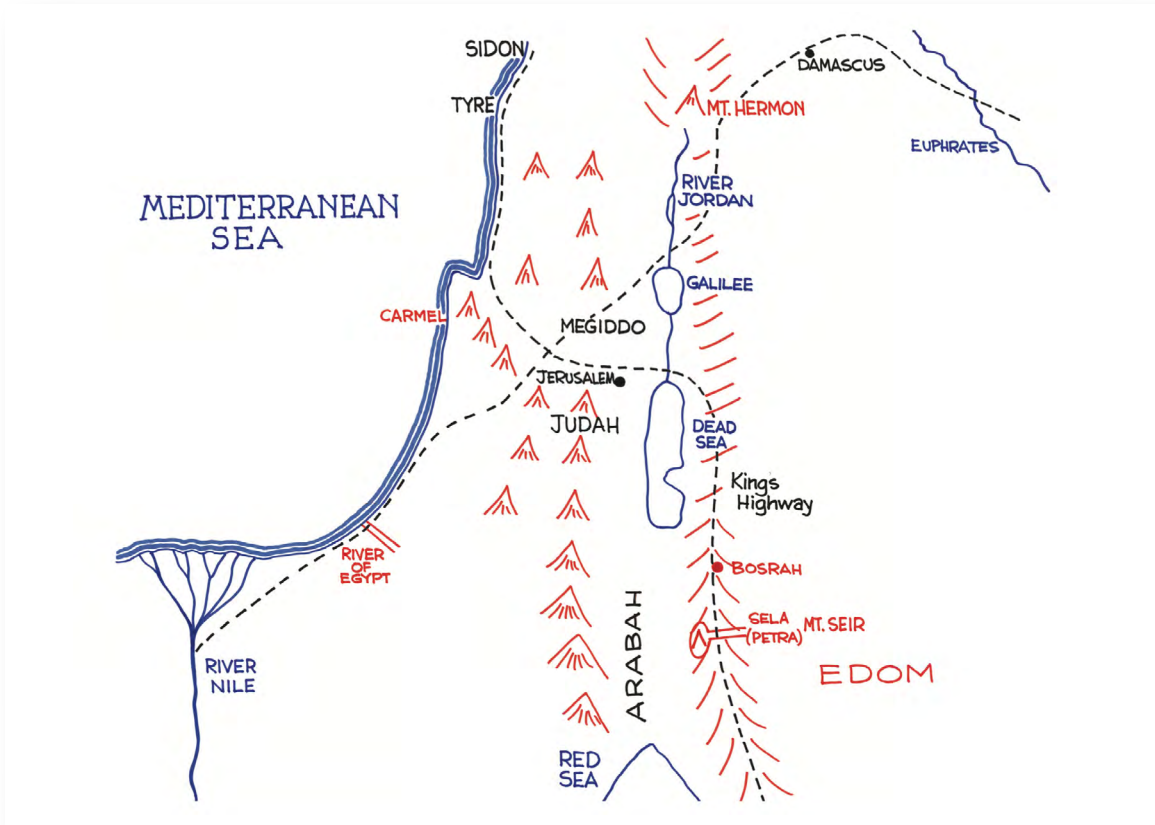
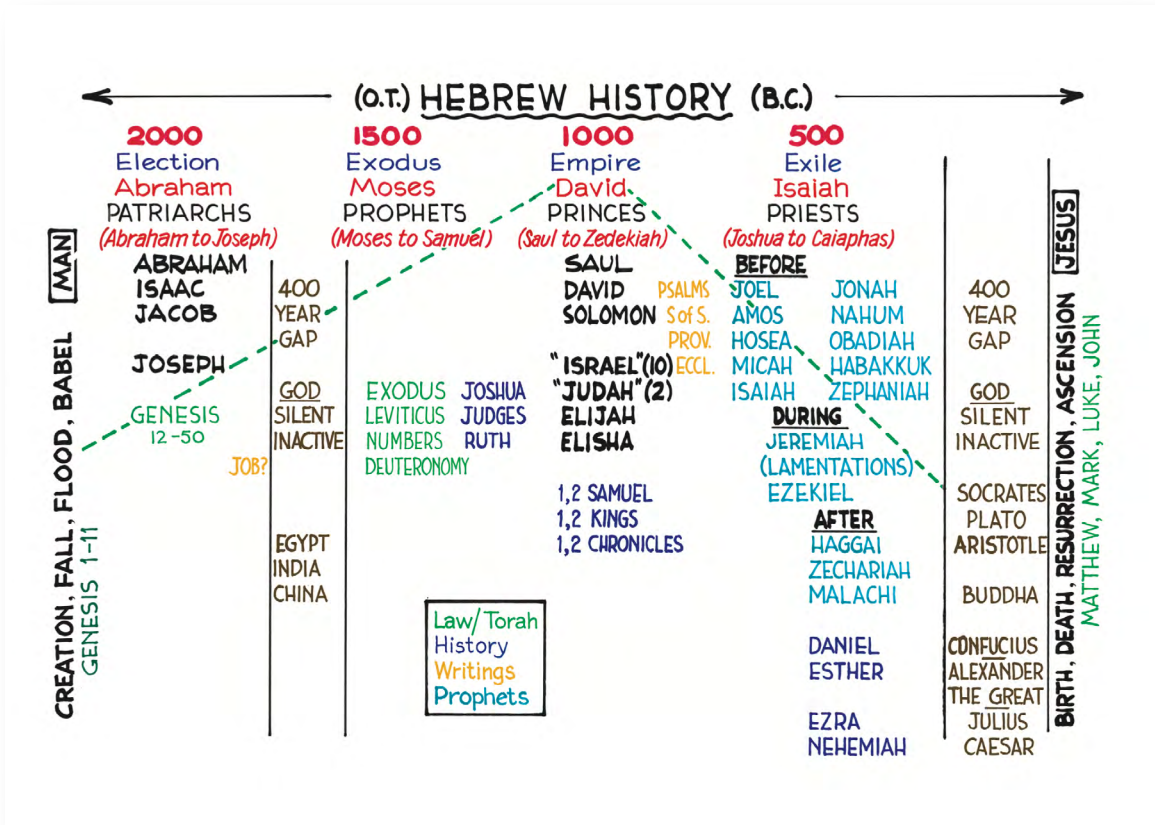
Esau despised his birthright. The man who had the birthright was in contact with God — he was the priest of his family, he was the man who had a covenant from God, the man who had a relationship with God. In effect Esau said, “I would rather have a bowl of soup than have a relationship with God.”

Having seen Esau in the first book of the Old Testament, look now at the last book of the Old Testament and read this strange language:

I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, In what way hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Saith the LORD; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau....(Malachi 1:2, 3)

This is a strange thing for God to say — “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau.” The explanation is in the little Book of Obadiah.

Source: Dr. John Vernon McGee (1904 – 1988), THRU THE BIBLE RADIO NETWORK



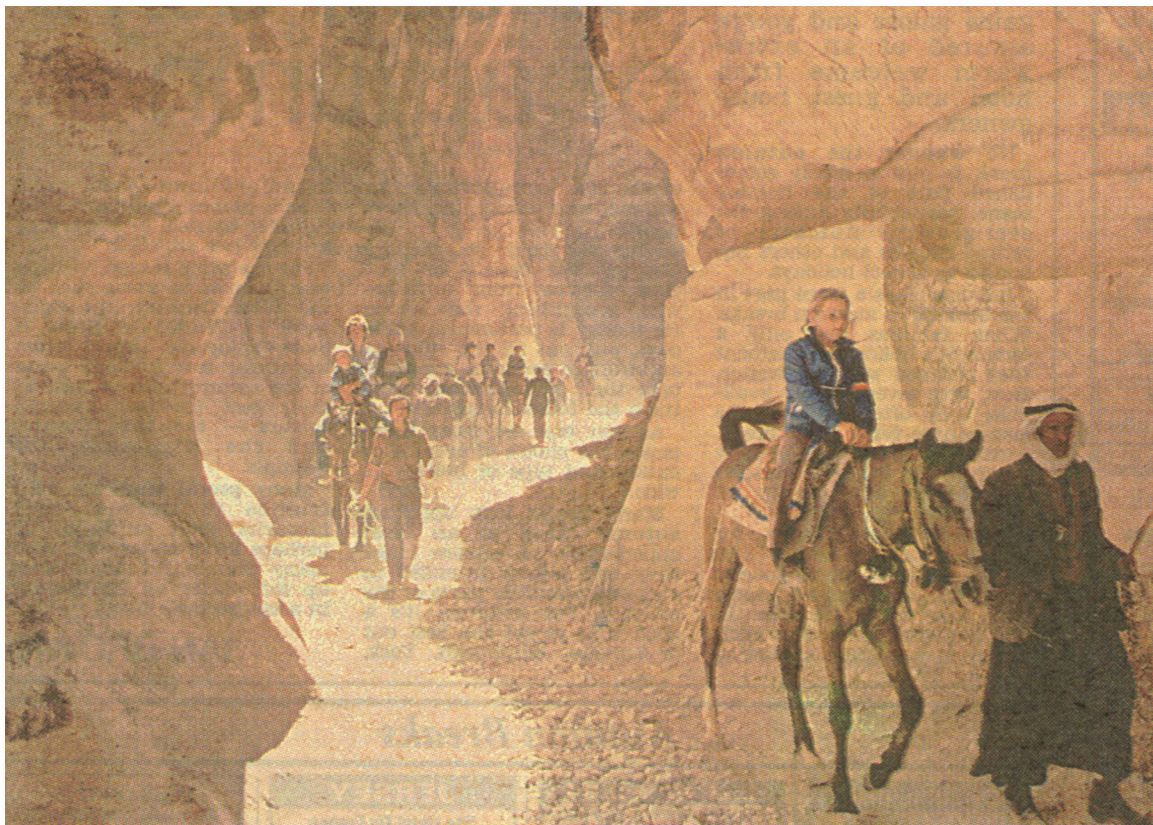
OUTLINE OF OBADIAH

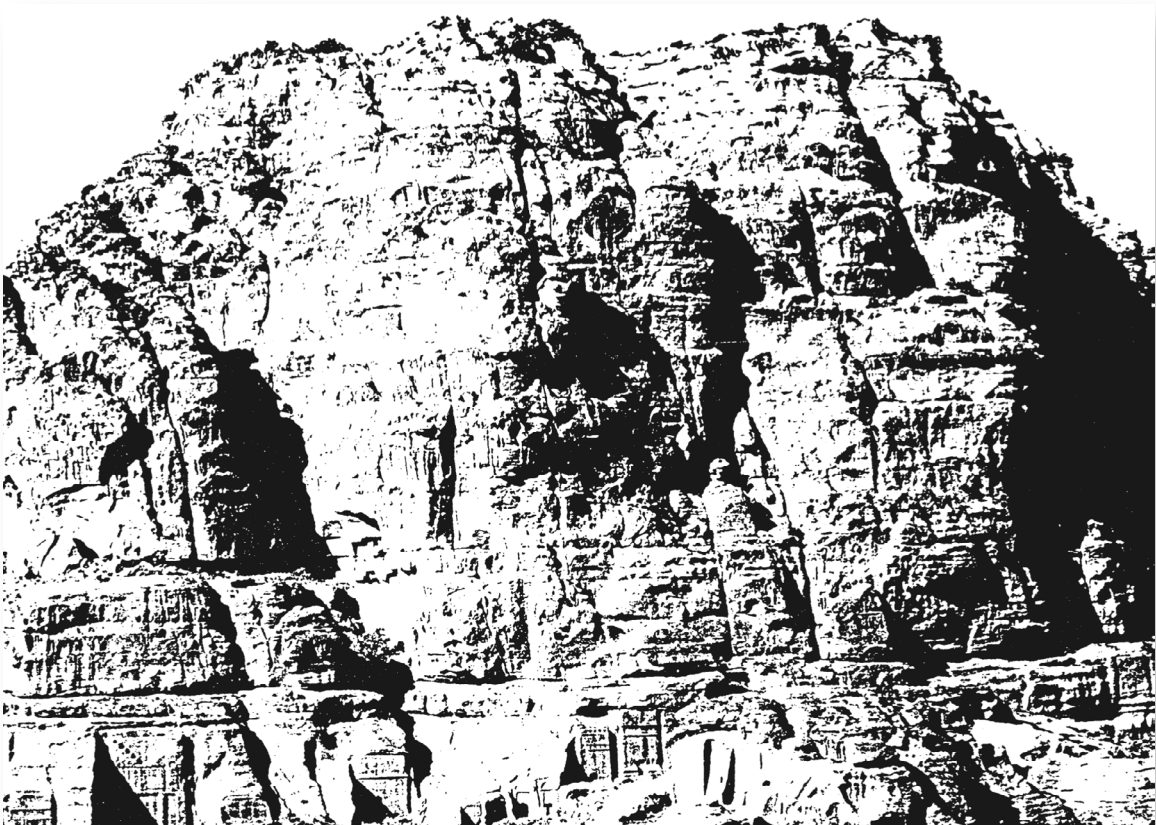
A. ONE NATION JUDGED (1-14)

- 1. NATIONS DESTROY EDOM (1-9)**
- 2. EDOM DESPISED ISRAEL (10-14)**

B. ALL NATIONS JUDGED (15-21)

- 1. YAHWEH PUNISHES NATIONS (15-16)**
- 2. ISRAEL POSSESSES EDOM (17-21)**



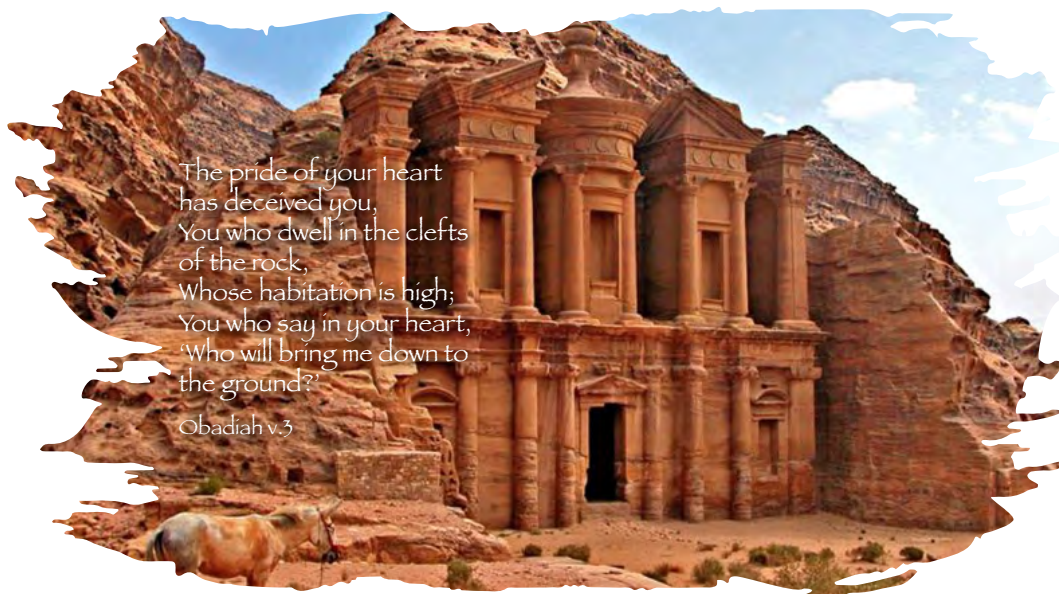


I. Edom

vv. 1-16

Destruction

- A. Charge against Edom, vv. 1-9
- B. Crime of Edom, vv. 10-14
- C. Catastrophe to Edom, vv. 15, 16 (Poetic justice — lex talionis — law of retaliation)



II. Israel

vv. 17-21

Restoration

- A. Condition of Israel, v. 17
- B. Calling of Israel, v. 18
- C. Consummation of all things, vv. 19-21 ("And the kingdom shall be the Lord's.")



Quiz on Obadiah

1. Obadiah's vision of God's judgement falls on one nation in particular. Which nation is this?

2. God speaks of the Edomites' pride, saying that they think of themselves as an eagle and make their nest where?

3. The Edomites and the Israelites were related because they were both descended from who?

4. Another town in Edom is named by Obadiah when he says that its men shall be dismayed. Which town is this?

5. Due to the Edomites' failure to help the people of Jerusalem in their hour of need God says that they shall be covered with what?

6. God condemns the Edomites for gloating, for entering Jerusalem, for looting and for capturing survivors of the disaster—and doing what to them?

7. God promises to punish the Edomites, particularly as they partook of drink where?

8. What punishment will be delivered to the Edomites?

9. Speaking of Edom's coming judgement, God says that they will be like stubble, destroyed by the what of Jacob and Joseph?

10. God, through Obadiah, describes how the lands shall one day be retaken by the Israelites. Which group of people will be given the land of Edom?

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