

# Old Testament Survey

## Obadiah

### ***Theme of Obadiah***

The theme of Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament, is a prophecy of doom on the nation of Edom for its treatment of Israel.

### ***General Outline of Obadiah***

- I. The Coming Destruction of Edom - Obadiah 1-9
  - A. The downfall of impregnable Sela - Obadiah 1-4
  - B. The city to be plundered, devastated, and forsaken - Obadiah 5-9
- II. Cause of Edom's Judgment: Her Malice Against Israel - Obadiah 10-14
- III. The Coming Day of the Lord - Obadiah 15-21
  - A. Impending judgment upon Edom and the rest of the heathen - Obadiah 15-16
  - B. Future deliverance of Israel - Obadiah 17-20
  - C. Ultimate Messianic kingdom - Obadiah 21

### ***Time of Composition***

1. Some scholars place the writing of Obadiah immediately after the fall of Jerusalem. Others place its writing during the reign of Ahaz (742-728 B.C.) to picture his defeats at the hands of the Edomites and Philistines.

*The problem with this is there was no spoiling of Jerusalem during these defeats as implied by Obadiah 11.*

2. Evangelical scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries place its writing during the reign of Jehoram (848-841 B.C.).

*This is more likely as according to 2 Chronicles 21:16-17 we find that the Arabians and Philistines came up against Jehoram and spoiled Jerusalem, carrying away all of the royal family except Jehoahaz. It is likely that the Edomites participated as well in this campaign, if not overtly, at least as bystanders watching the plunder and looting. This would explain Obadiah 11.*

3. The attempt to date the writing of Obadiah during the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. runs into difficulty with the apparent usage by Jeremiah of Obadiah 1-9 (Jeremiah 49:7-22).

*By analyzing these two passages it is evident that Jeremiah borrowed from Obadiah and not vice-versa.*

4. Some try to use Obadiah 20 to substantiate a large deportation and captivity of Israelites as a result of the Babylonian captivity.

*However, the word used, galut, could also refer to the captivity of individuals and not necessarily the entire nation. See Amos 1:9 for an example of this usage.*

5. Some scholars attempt to split Obadiah into multiple sources.

*This is based on the liberal hermeneutic which denies the existence of predictive prophecy in the Bible. Any reference to future events in the prophetic books must have been written after the events described.*

***The Accuracy of Obadiah's Prophecy***

1. Malachi 1:3-5 infers that the Edomites by his time had been driven out from Sela and Mt. Seir.
2. Secular sources inform us that during the reign of Darius I (522-485 B.C.) the Nabateans had driven the Edomites out of their lands and into the desert south of Judea.
3. By the time of the New Testament, the land formerly occupied by the Edomites had passed into the hands of the Idumeans from which Herod the Great descended.