

Perhaps unsurprisingly I disagree. An exposition of Obadiah provides the basis for considering 3 subjects of great importance & urgency.

1. Obadiah forces us to identify our enemies. A vital aspect of spiritual maturity is having the right enemies, i.e. those that are enemies of God and not necessarily those we might personally cite
2. In [v17](#) we read about Mount Zion being a place of deliverance and holiness. The deliverance prophesied was the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. An exposition of all the dynamics of that deliverance is a precursor of an ultimate deliverance that would take place on the cross, through Christ's victory over Satan
3. The final theme of Obadiah is that judgment and punishment are God's prerogative – We surely need to understand this in our age?

Five 'life principles' in Obadiah:

1. Whatever you acquire outside of God's will, eventually turns to ashes [[v5-9](#)]
2. You reap what you sow, more than you sow, and later than you sow [[v10-14](#)]
3. God will ultimately judge the nations [[v1-14](#)]
4. God will ultimately restore His people [[v15-21](#)]
5. God is not only willing to help His people but He is able to do so [[v1](#) & [21](#)]

Conclusion

Obadiah may be short and somewhat buried in the 'Minor Prophets' but it remains God's word for us and in our current age with fears of terrorism, floods of refugees, financial uncertainty etc. This reminder that we too should: "**Be Encouraged.....**" remains as important today as when it was first delivered.....

Therefore: Be Encouraged!



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To glorify God and enjoy Him forever in Christ

Obadiah – An Overview

Advent 2015 "Be Encouraged....."

It has become something of a tradition in Trinity to use the Advent Season to consider one of the '**Minor Prophets**' and this is fitting as at Advent we '**look forward**' to the Second Coming of Christ before returning and '**looking back**' to the **Incarnation** at Christmas. This year we have a short two week Series on **Obadiah**

This story and the struggle recorded in Obadiah, began in the womb of Rebekah ([Genesis 25:22](#)) with Esau and Jacob and eventually erupted into a greater struggle between their descendants; the **Edomite's** and the **Israelites**

The oracles contained in Obadiah are a call to the people of Israel to: "**Be Encouraged.....**" Because God will ultimately judge the nations and restore His people in His peace

Background: Edom in time and space

Any attempt at reconstruction of this period would involve a lot of conjecture and secondary sources as documentation and

archaeological evidence is sparse so we will focus on what is known. The land known as **Edom** [also called Seir in [Genesis 32:3](#) and [Numbers 24:18](#)], lay south and east of the Dead Sea, straddling the Arabah rift valley, running south from the Sea of Galilee to the Gulf of Aqabah. A key position on the North to South trade routes.

From [Genesis 36](#) we learn that the Edomites descended from Esau [there is evidence of occupation prior to Esau]. The biblical record shows a continued, and often difficult relationship between the Edomites and the Israelites:

1. After the Exodus Israel was denied passage through Edom [Numbers 20:14-21](#); [Judges 11:17-18](#)
2. Shortly after, Balaam predicted Edom's conquest [Numbers 24:18](#)
3. Saul joined battle with Edom [1Samuel 14:47](#)
4. David conquered the area [2Samuel 8:13-14](#)
5. Solomon exploited the area in [1Kings 9:26-28](#) though not without opposition [1Kings 11:14-22](#)
6. In the ninth century a confederation of Edom, Moab and Ammon raided Judah during Jehoshaphat's reign [2Chronicles 20:1-2](#)
7. Edom had a more successful rebellion against Jehoram and enjoyed some 40 years free from Israelite domination [2Kings 8:20-22](#); [2Chronicles 21:8-10](#)
8. Judah under Amaziah retook Edom with terrible slaughter in the following century [2Kings 14:7](#); [2Chronicles 25:11-12](#)
9. Later during the reign of Ahaz, Edom raided Judah taking captives [2Chronicles 28:17](#) and set herself free, never to be subjugated by Israel again
10. However during the Assyrian period [734BC] Edom became a vassal of Assyria and subsequently Babylon. By around the fall of Jerusalem things become unclear but the Apocryphal book of [1Esdras 4:45](#) attributes the burning of the temple to Edom [see also [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)]

11. By the sixth century Edom had waned in any power and archaeological remains indicate towns being abandoned. By the end of this century and into the fourth, Arab influence was predominant. The Apocryphal book of [1Maccabees](#) makes some mention of this dispersion in [4:29](#) and [5:65](#)

Obadiah the Man and his Time

Obadiah is one of only two prophets that give us no contextual references [the other being Malachi]; without father or mother or even reference to a king. Obadiah is however a common enough name which means = *servant/worshipper of Yahweh*, so it probably was his name. There are thirteen '**Obadiah's**' mentioned in the Old Testament and efforts to tie the prophet to one or other of these are interesting excursions but unsubstantiated.

What we do know about Obadiah is that he was fearlessly faithful to Yahweh and Israel, passionately abhorred the enemy of Edom, and firmly believed in the ultimate judgment of Godless nations. His central conviction is that God's justice will triumph and be vindicated.

Date: With little available reference detail, dating Obadiah is largely speculative but a date of 587BC following the fall of Jerusalem seems to provide the best fit.

Obadiah the Book and its Message

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. It also is one of the most neglected books of the Bible in contemporary preaching and teaching - **Stuart Briscoe** was greeted by the following comment when he announced his commentary on Obadiah: *"I'm anxious to read what you will do with grim ol' Obadiah. Can't imagine preaching anything positive or creative out of that angry tirade. Obadiah is 'minor' not only in length, but also in any inspiration for discipleship today!"*