

"THE PRIDE OF THINE HEART HATH DECEIVED THEE..."

OBADIAH 3

PRIDE BEFORE THE FALL

A VERSE-BY-VERSE
COMMENTARY ON OBADIAH

THE DAY
OF THE LORD
IS NEAR UPON
ALL THE NATIONS.
AS THOU HAST DONE,
IT SHALL BE DONE
UNTO THEE.

OBADIAH 15

GOD HUMBLER
THE PROUD,
JUDGES THE NATIONS,
AND REIGNS
FOREVERMORE.

AN EXPOSITION OF GOD'S JUSTICE, MERCY,
AND THE ULTIMATE VICTORY OF HIS KINGDOM

DR. PAUL CRAWFORD

THE CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY SERIES

PRIDE BEFORE THE FALL

A VERSE-BY-VERSE
COMMENTARY ON OBADIAH

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By Dr. Paul Crawford

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Introduction to the Book of Obadiah

The Book of Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament, consisting of just 21 verses.

Despite its brevity, it carries a powerful and timeless message of divine justice, focusing on the themes of pride, betrayal, judgment, and restoration.

The prophecy speaks directly to the nation of Edom for its actions against Israel, while also delivering a broader message about the sovereignty of God over all nations and the ultimate triumph of His kingdom.

1. The Prophet Obadiah: Identity and Background Little is known about Obadiah, whose name means "Servant of the Lord" or "Worshiper of Yahweh."

The Bible does not provide details about his lineage, occupation, or the exact time of his prophetic ministry.

Unlike major prophets, Obadiah's role is specific and focused: to deliver a message of judgment against Edom.

Various theories place his prophecy either around the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. or during earlier conflicts between Edom and Judah.

Regardless of the exact date, Obadiah's words resonate with a clear and timeless call to justice.

2. Historical Context: Edom and Israel's Conflict Edom, the nation descended from Esau (Jacob's brother), held a long-standing rivalry with Israel, descended from Jacob.

The hostility between the two nations can be traced back to the sibling conflict recorded in Genesis (Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-45).

Throughout their history, Edom frequently acted against Israel, either through direct aggression or by taking advantage of Israel's vulnerable moments.

Key historical events that set the stage for Obadiah's prophecy include:

- Edom's refusal to aid Israel during the Exodus (Numbers 20:14-21).
- Ongoing conflicts between the two nations during the reigns of various kings, such as Saul, David, and Jehoshaphat (1 Samuel 14:47; 2 Samuel 8:13-14).
- Edom's rejoicing over the fall of Jerusalem and aiding in its destruction (likely 586 B.C., when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem).

Obadiah's prophecy addresses Edom's betrayal during one such critical moment, condemning its actions as not only treacherous but also offensive to God's covenant with Israel.

3. Themes and Message of the Book

1. Divine Judgment on Pride Obadiah's central message is a rebuke of Edom's pride and arrogance.

Edom's geographical position in the mountains gave it a false sense of invincibility (Obadiah 1:3-4).

However, Obadiah declares that no nation, regardless of its strength or location, can escape God's judgment when it acts in defiance of His will.

Pride, as seen in Edom, is a recurring sin condemned throughout Scripture (Proverbs 16:18; James 4:6).

2. Betrayal and Brotherly Treachery Edom's sin is magnified by its familial relationship with Israel.

As descendants of Esau, Edom should have been a protective brother to Israel, but instead, they acted as enemies (Obadiah 1:10-14).

This betrayal symbolizes the broader human failure to uphold justice and compassion, especially toward those with whom one shares a bond.

3. The Day of the Lord Obadiah extends the concept of judgment beyond Edom to all nations (Obadiah 1:15-16).

The "Day of the Lord" is a recurring prophetic theme that signifies God's decisive intervention in history to judge sin and establish righteousness.

Edom's judgment serves as a foreshadowing of the ultimate judgment that will come upon all nations.

4. Hope and Restoration for Israel Though the book primarily focuses on judgment, it ends with a note of hope.

Obadiah promises that Israel will be restored, that God's people will reclaim their land, and that the Lord's kingdom will be established (Obadiah 1:17-21).

This restoration reflects God's faithfulness to His covenant promises.

4. Structure and Literary Features The Book of Obadiah is structured in two main sections:

1. Verses 1-16: The pronouncement of judgment against Edom.

2. Verses 17-21: The promise of deliverance and the establishment of God's kingdom.

Obadiah's style is poetic and vivid, using metaphors such as eagles' nests, thieves, and fire to convey the certainty and completeness of Edom's downfall.

His prophecy is concise but impactful, embodying the prophetic tradition of speaking truth to power and calling for accountability.

5. Relevance and Application Today

Obadiah's message transcends its historical context, offering timeless lessons for readers today:

- **Warning Against Pride:** Nations and individuals alike are reminded that pride leads to downfall, and no one is beyond the reach of God's justice.
- **Call for Compassion and Justice:**

The betrayal of Edom highlights the importance of showing kindness and support, especially to those in need.

- Hope in God's Sovereignty:

The promise that "the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obadiah 1:21) assures believers that God's justice will ultimately prevail, and His kingdom will be established forever.

In summary, the Book of Obadiah stands as a powerful testament to God's justice and faithfulness.

It warns against the dangers of pride, calls for accountability in relationships, and offers hope for the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom.

Though brief, its message is profound, echoing throughout history as a reminder of God's unwavering commitment to righteousness and His people.

Preface

The book of Obadiah is often overlooked. Consisting of only twenty-one verses, it is the shortest book in the Old Testament, yet it contains one of the most powerful messages found in all of Scripture.

Within its brief prophecy, God reveals timeless truths concerning pride, justice, judgment, mercy, and the certainty of His sovereign rule over the nations. Though many believers can easily quote verses from Isaiah, Jeremiah, or the Psalms, few have taken the time to carefully study Obadiah. That is unfortunate, for this little book speaks with remarkable clarity to our generation.

We live in a world consumed with pride. Nations boast of their military power, governments trust in political alliances, businesses depend upon financial strength, and individuals place confidence in education, wealth, popularity, and self-reliance. Yet the central message of Obadiah reminds us that God opposes the proud and humbles those who exalt themselves. The nation of Edom believed its mountain fortresses made it untouchable. They thought no one could bring them down. God answered their arrogance with a simple declaration: "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle... thence will I bring thee down" (Obadiah 4).

History has repeatedly confirmed what Obadiah proclaimed centuries ago. Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall. Empires flourish and then disappear. Human pride is always temporary, but the kingdom of God is eternal. The same Lord who judged Edom still rules over every nation today. His justice has not diminished, His holiness has not changed, and His purposes cannot be thwarted.

This commentary was written with a simple goal: to help readers understand God's Word one verse at a time. Rather than rushing through this short prophecy, we will carefully examine each verse in its historical setting, explore its theological significance, and consider its practical application for our lives today. Although Obadiah was written nearly three thousand years ago, its message remains strikingly relevant. Pride still destroys lives. Bitterness still divides families. Nations still rebel against God. And believers still need the hope found in God's sovereign promises.

Throughout this commentary, I have sought to remain faithful to the text of Scripture. Whenever possible, historical background, cultural insights, Hebrew word studies, and cross-references to other

portions of God's Word have been included to enrich the reader's understanding. Yet my desire has never been merely to increase knowledge. The ultimate purpose of Bible study is not simply to fill the mind but to transform the heart. God's Word was given to change us into the image of Christ.

As you study Obadiah, I encourage you to do more than analyze the sins of Edom. Allow the Holy Spirit to examine your own heart. Pride is not merely the sin of ancient nations; it is the temptation of every human heart. We all struggle with self-sufficiency, selfish ambition, and the desire to receive glory that belongs to God alone. Obadiah reminds us that humility is not weakness—it is the pathway to God's blessing.

At the same time, this prophecy offers tremendous hope. Judgment is never God's final word for His covenant people. Obadiah concludes with one of the greatest declarations of victory in the Old Testament: "And the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obadiah 21). Those words remind us that despite the chaos of our world, God remains firmly seated upon His throne. Evil will not triumph forever. Christ will reign. His kingdom will be established, His justice will prevail, and His people will dwell securely in His presence.

It is my prayer that this commentary will deepen your love for God's Word, strengthen your confidence in His sovereignty, and encourage you to walk in humility before Him. Whether you are a pastor preparing sermons, a Sunday school teacher leading a Bible study, a student seeking a deeper understanding of Scripture, or a believer desiring to grow in your faith, may the Lord use these pages to draw you closer to Himself.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of joining you in this journey through one of the Bible's most profound prophetic books. May the God who humbled the proud, preserved His people, and reigns over all the earth receive all the glory.

Soli Deo Gloria—To God Alone Be the Glory.

Dr. Paul Crawford

Prologue

Long before the mighty empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome dominated the pages of history, two nations stood as bitter enemies. Their conflict did not begin over land, wealth, or political power. It began in a mother's womb.

Esau and Jacob were twin brothers, born to Isaac and Rebekah, yet from the very beginning they struggled against one another (Genesis 25:22–23). Though they shared the same parents, they chose vastly different paths. Jacob, though imperfect, became the father of the nation of Israel—the people through whom God would fulfill His covenant promises. Esau became the father of the Edomites, a nation that would harbor resentment toward Israel for centuries.

What began as a family dispute eventually became a national hatred.

Throughout Israel's history, Edom repeatedly opposed God's chosen people. They refused Israel passage through their land during the Exodus. They celebrated Judah's defeats. They formed alliances

with Israel's enemies. When Jerusalem fell under Babylonian attack, the Edomites did not rush to help their brothers. Instead, they rejoiced over Judah's destruction, plundered the city, captured fleeing survivors, and delivered many of them into the hands of their enemies.

Their actions revealed a deeper problem than political hostility.

The heart of Edom was filled with pride.

Protected by towering cliffs and seemingly impregnable mountain fortresses, the Edomites believed they were beyond the reach of every enemy. Their capital, hidden among the rocky heights, appeared invincible. Their military strength, strategic alliances, commercial success, and natural defenses convinced them that no nation could overthrow them.

But they underestimated one reality.

No fortress is high enough to escape the judgment of Almighty God.

Into this historical moment stepped an otherwise unknown prophet named Obadiah. Unlike Isaiah or Jeremiah, little is known about his life. Scripture records neither his hometown nor his family lineage. We know almost nothing about the man, yet we know everything about the God who called him.

His message was short.

His audience was specific.

His prophecy was unforgettable.

In only twenty-one verses, Obadiah proclaimed the certainty of God's judgment against pride and the assurance of God's ultimate victory. Every sentence declares that the Lord rules over nations, directs the course of history, and holds every person accountable for his actions. What appeared to be an insignificant prophecy has become one of the Bible's clearest demonstrations that God's justice never fails and His promises never fade.

Yet Obadiah is far more than an ancient judgment against a forgotten nation.

It is God's warning to every generation.

Pride still blinds hearts.

Bitterness still destroys relationships.

Violence still fills the earth.

People continue to trust in wealth, military power, political influence, technology, education, and personal achievement rather than in the Lord. Like Edom, humanity often believes it has built towers too strong to fall.

Scripture tells a different story.

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee..." (Obadiah 3).

Those words echo across the centuries into our homes, churches, communities, and nations. They remind us that the greatest danger is not an enemy outside our walls but pride within our own hearts.

Yet Obadiah is not merely a book of judgment.

It is a book of hope.

The prophecy concludes with a glorious promise that reaches far beyond Edom and Israel. One day, every enemy of God will be defeated. His covenant people will experience complete restoration. His righteous King will reign forever.

"And the kingdom shall be the LORD'S." (Obadiah 21)

Those final words form the climax not only of Obadiah's prophecy but of the entire biblical story. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture points toward the day when Jesus Christ will return to establish His everlasting kingdom. Human kingdoms will fade. Earthly pride will be shattered. Sin will be judged. God's people will rejoice. The Lord alone will receive the glory.

As you begin this verse-by-verse journey through Obadiah, remember that this is not simply the study of an ancient prophecy. It is the study of the God who governs history, humbles the proud, defends His people, and faithfully accomplishes every promise He has made.

May these pages deepen your reverence for God's holiness, strengthen your confidence in His sovereignty, expose the subtle pride within your own heart, and fill you with hope as you await the day when every knee shall bow before King Jesus.

For indeed, now and forever,

"The kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

Introduction to Obadiah

The Vision of Obadiah: Edom's Pride, Edom's Crime, and the Day of the Lord

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament, a single chapter of twenty-one verses, yet it delivers one of the most focused prophetic messages in Scripture. The book opens simply, "The vision of Obadiah," with almost nothing revealed about the prophet himself beyond his name, which means "servant of the Lord." Its entire message is directed at a single target: Edom, the nation descended from Esau, twin brother of Jacob, whose ancient sibling rivalry echoes throughout the prophecy's language and imagery.

The first section of the book pronounces coming judgment on Edom for its pride. Edom occupied a naturally fortified, mountainous region with dwellings carved into high rock clefts, and its people had grown confident that their high, defensible position made them untouchable, saying in their hearts, "Who shall bring me down to the ground?" The Lord answers that pride directly, promising that even if Edom exalted itself like an eagle and set its nest among the stars, he would bring it down. Their allies would betray them, their wise men would fail them, and their mighty warriors would be dismayed, all because of violence done against their brother Jacob.

The heart of the book's accusation, in verses 10 through 14, spells out precisely what Edom did wrong: rather than aiding their kinsman nation of Judah when foreign armies invaded Jerusalem, Edom stood aloof, gloated over Judah's calamity, entered the city's gates to loot alongside the invaders, cut off

fleeing refugees at the crossroads, and handed over survivors to the enemy. Obadiah frames this not as ordinary geopolitical opportunism but as a fundamental betrayal of brotherhood, made worse by the fact that it targeted people in the depths of their distress.

The book closes with the announcement of “the day of the LORD,” a day of reckoning for all nations, not Edom alone, governed by a principle of exact retribution: “as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee.” Yet the book does not end in judgment alone. It turns toward restoration, promising deliverance and holiness on Mount Zion, the house of Jacob repossessing what was taken from it, and a sweeping final declaration that draws the whole vision to its climax: “the kingdom shall be the LORD’S.”

Opening Prayer

Lord God, as we open this short but sobering prophecy, humble our hearts before we even begin. Guard us from the pride of Edom, the false confidence that our own strength or position makes us untouchable to your correction.

Father, show us where we have stood by, like Edom, indifferent or even satisfied while others among our brothers and sisters suffered calamity. Give us hearts that grieve with those who grieve rather than hearts that gloat over the misfortune of others.

Lord, we know that the day of your reckoning comes for every nation and every heart, and that what we sow we will reap. Help us to walk in humility and mercy now, rather than face the exact measure of our own conduct returned to us.

And Father, we thank you that judgment is never your final word. Just as you promised deliverance and holiness on Mount Zion, let us hold fast to your promise of restoration, trusting that the kingdom belongs, and will always belong, to you alone. In Jesus's name we pray, Amen.

Section One: Obadiah 1:1-9

The Pride of Edom Brought Down

1 The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.

2 Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised.

3 The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?

4 Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

5 If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grapes?

6 How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up!

7 All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee: there is none understanding in him.

8 Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?

9 And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

The Context

Obadiah's vision opens with a report of coordinated judgment already set in motion: a rumor has gone out from the Lord, and an ambassador has summoned the nations to rise up against Edom in battle. The message that follows explains why. Edom occupied Seir, a region of steep, naturally fortified mountains southeast of the Dead Sea, with settlements built into rock clefts high above the surrounding terrain. This geography bred a specific kind of pride, captured in the taunt the Lord quotes back to them, "Who shall bring me down to the ground?" Their confidence was not merely in their strength but in the seeming impossibility of their location ever being reached.

The Lord's answer directly refutes that confidence.

Even if Edom exalted itself like an eagle nesting among the stars, the highest possible position imaginable, God declares he would still bring it down from there.

Verses 5-6 intensify the point through comparison: ordinary thieves take only what satisfies them, and grape gatherers customarily leave some gleanings behind, but the coming destruction of Edom would be so thorough that nothing would be left, every hidden thing sought out and exposed.

Verses 7-9 describe the specific mechanism of Edom's fall: betrayal from within its own alliances. The very nations at peace with Edom, the allies who shared bread with them, would turn and deceive them, prevailing against them at the very border they trusted for defense. Their famed wisdom, Edom was known in the ancient world for its sages, particularly associated with Teman, would fail them entirely, and their mighty warriors would be struck with dismay rather than courage, ensuring the slaughter would be complete.

Plain American English

This is the vision Obadiah received. The Lord GOD says this about Edom: We've heard a report from the LORD, and a messenger has been sent to the nations, saying, get up, let's go to war against her. Look, I've made you small among the nations, and everyone looks down on you. Your own pride has fooled you, you who live up in the rock crevices, way up high, telling yourself, who could possibly bring me down? Even if you flew as high as an eagle and built your nest among the stars, I would still bring you down from there, says the LORD. If thieves broke in at night, wouldn't they only take what they wanted and leave the rest? If people came to pick your grapes, wouldn't they leave a few behind? But you'll be completely wiped out, everything of Esau's searched out and every hidden thing dragged into the open. All your allies will turn on you and push you right to the border. The very people who were at peace with you will deceive you and overpower you. The ones who ate at your table will set a trap under you, and you won't even see it coming, there's no understanding left in you. On that day, says the LORD, I will destroy the wise men of Edom and wipe out understanding from the mountain of

Esau. Your warriors, Teman, will be terrified, so that everyone on the mountain of Esau will be cut down.

Key Observations

The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock... that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?:

This signifies

Physical or Positional Security Can Breed a Dangerous Spiritual Delusion That Mistakes Inaccessibility to Human Enemies for Immunity from Divine Judgment.

Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD:

This signifies

No Height of Self-Exaltation, However Extreme the Image Employed, Places Anyone Beyond the Reach of God's Sovereign Judgment.

If thieves came to thee... would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grapes?:

This signifies

The Coming Judgment on Edom Is Deliberately Framed as More Thorough Than Even Ordinary Human Plundering, Which by Custom Leaves Something Behind.

The men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee:

This signifies

Edom's Downfall Would Come Not from Distant Enemies but from Betrayal Within Its Own Trusted Alliances, a Wound Inflicted by Those Closest to Them.

Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?:

This signifies

Even Renowned Human Wisdom Provides No Defense Against Judgment When God Himself Determines to Remove Understanding from a Proud Nation.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Security Rooted in Position Rather Than God Is False Security:

Edom trusted its rock fortress; many people today trust wealth, status, credentials, or reputation in the same way. This passage warns that no earthly position, however seemingly unassailable, substitutes for genuine humility before God.

2. Pride Distorts Self-Perception Before It Brings Destruction:

The text notes that pride “deceived” Edom, meaning it warped their ability to see their true situation accurately. Believers today should recognize that unchecked pride does not simply risk consequences later; it actively corrupts present judgment and discernment.

3. Trusted Relationships Can Become Sources of Betrayal When Character Is Compromised:

Edom's downfall came through its own allies. This is a sober reminder to examine not just the strength of one's alliances and friendships but their character, since misplaced trust in compromised relationships can become a source of harm rather than protection.

How This Relates to Today

This passage speaks powerfully to any individual, organization, or nation that has come to believe its own success or position places it beyond accountability. Whether in personal life, business, or national affairs, the temptation to say, in effect, “who shall bring me down,” remains a perennial danger, and Scripture consistently answers that no height of self-exaltation escapes the reach of God's justice.

The warning about betrayal from trusted allies also resonates in relational and organizational contexts today. Loyalty that appears solid in comfortable seasons is sometimes tested and found wanting in times of crisis. This passage encourages discernment about the character underlying relationships, not merely their appearance of closeness or mutual benefit during easy times.

Key Lesson:

No fortress of pride, however high or seemingly secure, places anyone beyond the reach of God's judgment, and misplaced confidence in one's own position often blinds a person to the very dangers, including betrayal from trusted allies, that will ultimately bring them down.

Section Two: Obadiah 1:10-14

Edom's Crime Against Its Brother Jacob

10 For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.

11 In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them.

12 But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

13 Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity;

14 Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

The Context

This section forms the accusatory heart of the book, spelling out with painful specificity exactly what Edom did to earn its coming judgment. The charge begins with a single word carrying immense weight: “violence against thy brother Jacob.” Edom's guilt is not measured merely as the sin of a hostile foreign power but as the betrayal of kinship, since Esau and Jacob were twin brothers, and their descendant nations shared this same familial bond that Edom chose to violate rather than honor.

Verse 11 describes Edom's posture during the actual invasion of Jerusalem, likely referring to an assault such as the Babylonian conquest of 586 BC or an earlier incursion: Edom “stood on the other side,” a bystander rather than a defender, while strangers carried off Judah's forces and foreigners entered the gates to cast lots over the city's plunder. The devastating indictment is that Edom, though not the invading army itself, was “as one of them,” complicit through passive alignment with the aggressors rather than loyalty to their kin.

Verses 12-14 escalate the charge from passive complicity to active participation, using a repeated structure of “thou shouldest not have” to catalog Edom's specific offenses: gloating over Judah's disaster, speaking proudly in their day of distress, entering the very gates of Jerusalem to loot alongside the invaders, laying hands on the people's possessions, standing at crossroads to cut down fleeing refugees, and handing over survivors to the enemy. Each clause functions almost like a legal indictment, methodically establishing that Edom's sin was neither accidental nor merely one of omission but a series of deliberate, opportunistic choices made at every stage of Judah's calamity.

Plain American English

Because of the violence you did against your brother Jacob, shame will cover you, and you will be wiped out forever. On the day strangers carried off his army, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots over Jerusalem, you were right there with them, just like one of them. But you shouldn't have gloated over your brother's day of disaster. You shouldn't have rejoiced over the people of Judah when they were being destroyed. You shouldn't have spoken so arrogantly on the day of their distress. You shouldn't have marched through the gate of my people on the day of their calamity. You shouldn't have stared at their suffering on the day of their calamity, or grabbed their possessions on the day of their calamity. You shouldn't have stood at the crossroads to cut down the ones trying to escape, and you shouldn't have handed over the survivors to the enemy in their day of distress.

Key Observations

For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever:

This signifies

Edom's Central Sin Is Named Specifically as Violence Against a Brother, Framing the Offense as a Betrayal of Kinship Rather Than Merely Ordinary Political Hostility.

In the day that thou stoodest on the other side... even thou wast as one of them:

This signifies

Passive Bystanding During Another's Calamity, Aligning Oneself with Those Who Cause Harm Simply by Standing Apart, Is Treated as Genuine Moral Complicity.

Thou shouldst not have looked on the day of thy brother... neither shouldst thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction:

This signifies

Taking Satisfaction in Another's Suffering, Even Without Directly Causing It, Constitutes a Serious Moral Failure Worthy of Explicit Condemnation.

Thou shouldst not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity... nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity:

This signifies

Opportunistic Exploitation of Someone Else's Disaster for Personal Gain Compounds the Original Wrong of Failing to Help.

Neither shouldst thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain:

This signifies

Actively Obstructing the Escape of the Vulnerable and Handing Over Survivors to Their Enemies Represents the Furthest Escalation of Edom's Betrayal, from Indifference to Active Harm.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Standing By During Someone Else's Crisis Is Not Moral Neutrality:

The passage insists that Edom's mere bystanding made them “as one of” the aggressors. Believers today are challenged to recognize that indifference in the face of others' suffering, particularly among those we share close bonds with, carries real moral weight rather than being a safe, neutral position.

2. Gloating Over Others' Misfortune Reveals a Serious Heart Problem:

The repeated prohibition against rejoicing over Judah's destruction addresses an attitude, not just an action. This calls believers today to examine their own hearts for satisfaction taken in a rival's, competitor's, or estranged relative's downfall, and to repent of it rather than excuse it as harmless feeling.

3. Exploiting Others' Vulnerability for Gain Compounds Guilt:

Edom's looting during Judah's calamity shows how opportunism during crisis multiplies wrongdoing. Believers today are called to protect and assist the vulnerable during hardship rather than seek personal advantage from their weakened state.

How This Relates to Today

This passage speaks directly to the temptation, in personal relationships, family conflicts, or broader social dynamics, to quietly enjoy or capitalize on the misfortune of someone we have complicated history with. Whether it is satisfaction at an estranged relative's setback, indifference toward a rival's crisis, or opportunistic gain during someone else's hardship, Obadiah's indictment of Edom exposes these responses as serious moral failures deserving repentance rather than casual dismissal.

It also challenges believers to actively defend and assist the vulnerable during crisis rather than remaining passive bystanders. In a world where news of disaster and suffering is constant, this passage calls for active compassion, refusing complicity through indifference, and resisting any temptation to exploit others' vulnerability, whether through opportunistic gain, gossip, or simply looking on without offering help.

Key Lesson: **Standing by silently during a brother's calamity, rejoicing in his downfall, or profiting from his vulnerability are not neutral acts but genuine betrayals that God holds accountable exactly as he would active violence.**

Section Three: Obadiah 1:15-21

The Day of the Lord and the Coming Kingdom

15 For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

16 For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

17 But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

18 And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it.

19 And they of the south shall possess the mount of Esau; and they of the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin shall possess Gilead.

20 And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south.

21 And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

The Context

The book's final section widens its scope from Edom alone to “all the heathen,” announcing that “the day of the LORD” is near, a recurring prophetic phrase referring to a decisive moment of divine judgment and reckoning. The governing principle stated here, “as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee,” establishes a law of exact retribution: the very treatment Edom dealt out to Judah would return upon its own head, and this same principle would extend to all nations who had oppressed God's people.

Verse 16 uses the image of drinking from a cup, likely referring to a cup of judgment or perhaps recalling drunken celebration over Jerusalem's fall, to describe how the nations who once drank in triumph on God's holy mountain would themselves be made to drink continually, swallowed up until it were as though they had never existed. This stark reversal sets up the sharp contrast that follows.

Against the destruction of Edom and the judged nations, verses 17-18 promise deliverance and holiness on Mount Zion, with the house of Jacob repossessing what had been taken from them. The imagery intensifies into fire and flame, the house of Jacob and house of Joseph consuming the house of Esau like stubble, leaving no survivors, a vivid picture of complete reversal from Edom's earlier participation in Judah's destruction. Verses 19-20 then describe territorial restoration in specific geographic detail, various regions and exiled communities of Israel possessing lands that had been lost, including the very mountain of Esau itself.

The book reaches its climactic conclusion in verse 21 with the arrival of “saviours,” deliverers who would go up on Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the sweeping final declaration that gathers the entire vision into a single sentence: “the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.” This closing statement transforms Obadiah from a narrow oracle against a single ancient nation into a declaration of ultimate divine sovereignty, pointing beyond Edom's fall to the certainty that all authority ultimately belongs to God alone.

Plain American English

The day of the LORD is coming soon for all the nations. Whatever you've done will be done right back to you, your actions will land on your own head. Just as you drank in celebration on my holy mountain, so all the nations will drink continually, they'll drink it all down until it's like they never existed. But on Mount Zion there will be deliverance, and it will be holy, and the house of Jacob will reclaim what belongs to them. The house of Jacob will become a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau will be like dry straw, they'll set it ablaze and burn it up completely, there won't be a single survivor left of the house of Esau, because the LORD has said it. People from the south will take over the mountain of Esau, people from the plains will take the Philistine territory, and they'll possess the fields of Ephraim and Samaria, and Benjamin will take Gilead. The exiles of Israel will possess Canaanite territory all the way to Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will possess the cities of the south. Deliverers will go up on Mount Zion to rule over the mountain of Esau, and the kingdom will belong to the LORD.

Key Observations

The day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head:

This signifies

Divine Justice Operates by a Principle of Exact Reciprocity, Extending Judgment Beyond Edom Alone to Every Nation That Has Oppressed God's People.

But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions:

This signifies

Judgment Upon the Wicked and Restoration of the Righteous Are Presented as Two Halves of a Single, Coherent Act of Divine Justice, Not Separate or Unrelated Events.

The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble... there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it:

This signifies

The Completeness of Edom's Coming Destruction Is Grounded Explicitly in the Certainty of God's Own Spoken Word, Not Merely Prophetic Prediction.

And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau:

This signifies

The Deliverance Envisioned Is Not Merely Political Restoration but a Divinely Appointed Act of Judgment Executed Through Chosen Deliverers.

And the kingdom shall be the LORD'S:

This signifies

The Entire Prophecy Culminates in a Single, Sweeping Declaration of Ultimate Divine Sovereignty That Transcends the Fate of Any One Ancient Nation.

What This Means for Us Today

1. God's Justice Is Reliable Even When Delayed:

Edom's judgment did not come immediately after its betrayal of Judah, yet Obadiah insists it is certain and near from God's perspective. Believers today facing injustice can trust that God's reckoning, though it may not be immediate, remains sure.

2. Sowing and Reaping Remains a Consistent Spiritual Principle:

The statement "as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee" echoes throughout Scripture as a consistent principle. This calls believers to examine their own treatment of others, particularly the vulnerable, knowing that the same measure they extend will ultimately be measured back to them.

3. Ultimate Hope Rests in God's Sovereignty, Not Present Circumstances:

The book's final declaration, that the kingdom belongs to the Lord, offers hope that transcends any single nation's rise or fall. Believers today can anchor their hope not in temporary political or personal victories but in the unshakeable certainty of God's ultimate reign.

How This Relates to Today

Obadiah's message speaks to anyone waiting for justice that has not yet arrived. The confident declaration that the day of the Lord is near, even when Edom's judgment came only after decades, reassures believers that delayed justice is not denied justice. This offers real comfort to those who have suffered betrayal or exploitation and long to see wrongs made right.

The book's climactic conclusion, that the kingdom belongs to the Lord, remains profoundly relevant in a world of shifting political power and competing claims to ultimate authority. Whatever kingdoms, movements, or powers rise and fall in any given era, Obadiah anchors the believer's hope in the unchanging truth that final sovereignty belongs to God alone, a truth that steadies the heart regardless of present circumstances.

Key Lesson: **God's justice operates on a reliable principle of reciprocity that guarantees no betrayal goes unanswered forever, and the book's final word, that the kingdom belongs to the Lord, anchors every believer's hope in his unshakeable sovereignty rather than in the shifting fortunes of any earthly power.**

Closing Prayer

Lord God, thank you for this short but powerful word through Obadiah. Guard us from the pride that convinces us we are beyond your reach, and from the indifference that stands by while our brothers and sisters suffer.

Forgive us for any time we have gloated over another's downfall, profited from someone's hardship, or failed to help when we had the ability to act. Give us hearts that grieve with the suffering rather than hearts that look away.

We thank you that your justice is certain, even when it seems delayed, and that no betrayal escapes your notice forever. Help us trust your timing rather than taking justice into our own hands. And Father, we rest in the truth that the kingdom is yours, now and always. Whatever rises or falls around us, keep our hope anchored in your unshakeable sovereignty. In Jesus's name we pray, Amen.

***Soli Deo Gloria
Glory to God Alone***

CONCLUSION:

The book of Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament, concludes with a powerful message of hope, divine justice, and the restoration of Israel.

Its conclusion centers on the sovereignty of God, His judgment against Edom, and the ultimate triumph of His people.

Below is a detailed examination of the conclusion:

1. The Lord's Judgment on Edom (Obadiah 15-16)

The final verses reiterate God's judgment on Edom, a nation closely related to Israel through Esau but historically hostile.

Edom is condemned for its pride, violence, and betrayal during Israel's suffering.

Obadiah proclaims a principle of divine retribution:

"As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head" (Obadiah 15).

This reflects the broader biblical theme that God's justice is precise and inescapable.

Edom's actions—gloating over Judah's misfortune and participating in its downfall—are mirrored in their own fate.

2. The Day of the Lord (Obadiah 15) The prophecy extends beyond Edom to encompass all nations.

"The Day of the Lord" symbolizes a time when God will judge all who have opposed His people.

It is a day of reckoning for the wicked and a day of vindication for the righteous.

The universal nature of this judgment signifies that no nation is beyond the reach of God's justice.

3. The Restoration of Israel (Obadiah 17-18) The conclusion shifts to a message of restoration and triumph for Israel:

"But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape, and it shall be holy; and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions" (Obadiah 17).

Mount Zion, a symbol of God's presence and His covenant with Israel, becomes the focal point of deliverance.

The remnant of Israel will not only be saved but will reclaim what was lost.

The imagery of fire consuming stubble (verse 18) illustrates the complete and final victory of Israel over Edom, emphasizing that the people of God will be agents of divine judgment.

4. The Kingdom Belongs to the Lord (Obadiah 19-21) The final verses offer a vision of an expansive restoration where Israel regains its territories. Regions like the Negev, Shephalah, and Gilead are mentioned, representing the full reclaiming of the promised land.

This territorial restoration symbolizes the fulfillment of God's covenant promises.

The book concludes with a climactic declaration:

"The kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obadiah 21).

This statement encapsulates the overarching message: God's sovereignty will be fully established, and His reign will be recognized universally.

It points to an eschatological hope, where God's justice and peace prevail over the entire earth.

Conclusion Summary

The conclusion of Obadiah is a powerful affirmation of God's justice, the certainty of divine retribution, and the hope of restoration for His people.

It emphasizes that the ultimate triumph belongs to God, and His kingdom will be established in righteousness.

The book serves as both a warning to the oppressors and a reassurance to the faithful, highlighting that God's justice is sure, His mercy enduring, and His sovereignty absolute.

Epilogue

You have now reached the end of our journey through the book of Obadiah. Though this prophecy contains only twenty-one verses, its message reaches from the days of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the final establishment of God's eternal kingdom. It is a book that reminds us that no portion of Scripture is insignificant. Every word God has spoken is profitable, and every book of the Bible reveals His character, His purposes, and His plan of redemption.

As we close this study, one truth rises above all others:

God is sovereign.

He is sovereign over individuals.

He is sovereign over nations.

He is sovereign over history.

He is sovereign over the future.

The rise and fall of kingdoms are not accidents of history. The success of one nation and the collapse of another do not occur apart from God's providential hand. Obadiah reminds us that the Lord is not merely the God of Israel—He is the King of all creation. Every ruler answers to Him. Every nation stands accountable before Him. Every promise He has made will come to pass exactly as He has declared.

The story of Edom serves as a solemn warning to every generation. Their greatest enemy was not Babylon. It was not Judah. It was not political instability or economic decline.

Their greatest enemy was pride.

Pride convinced them they were secure.

Pride deceived them into believing they were untouchable.

Pride led them to rejoice over the suffering of others.

Pride caused them to oppose the very people God had chosen to bless.

In the end, pride brought them to ruin.

The warning could not be clearer. Pride remains one of the greatest dangers facing every human heart. It is often subtle, disguising itself as self-confidence, independence, ambition, or success. Yet Scripture consistently teaches that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6). The safest place any believer can live is in humble dependence upon the Lord.

Yet Obadiah is not merely a book about judgment.

It is also a book about hope.

The final verse lifts our eyes beyond Edom's destruction and beyond Israel's restoration to something infinitely greater:

"And the kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

Those six words summarize the entire message of the Bible.

From Genesis to Revelation, God is revealing His kingdom.

In Genesis, the promised Seed is announced.

In the Gospels, the King arrives.

At the cross, Christ defeats sin and death.

Through His resurrection, He secures eternal life for all who believe.

Today, He reigns from heaven as our risen Lord and Great High Priest.

One day, He will return in power and glory to establish His visible kingdom forever.

The kingdoms of this world will fade.

Political systems will disappear.

Military powers will crumble.

Economic empires will collapse.

Human achievements will pass away.

But the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ will never end.

This certainty gives believers hope in uncertain times. We live in a world filled with conflict, moral confusion, injustice, and suffering. Nations continue to rise against nations. Pride continues to dominate human hearts. Evil often appears to prosper. Yet Obadiah reminds us that appearances are temporary. God has already determined the final outcome of history.

The King wins.

That confidence should shape the way we live today. We are called to reject pride and embrace humility. We are called to trust God's justice rather than seek personal revenge. We are called to love our neighbors, serve the Lord faithfully, proclaim the gospel boldly, and await Christ's return with joyful expectation.

As you close this commentary, do not simply place it back on the shelf. Return often to the truths found in this remarkable prophecy. Read Obadiah again. Meditate upon its warnings. Rejoice in its promises. Let its message transform your thinking, deepen your worship, and strengthen your confidence in God's sovereign rule.

Most importantly, let Obadiah continually point you to Jesus Christ.

He is the humble King whom Edom never knew.

He is the righteous Judge before whom every nation will stand.

He is the faithful Savior who offers grace to all who repent and believe.

He is the coming King whose kingdom shall never be destroyed.

One day, every prophecy will be fulfilled.

Every wrong will be made right.

Every tear will be wiped away.

Every enemy will be defeated.

Every believer will stand in the presence of the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Until that glorious day, may we walk humbly with our God, faithfully proclaim His Word, and joyfully anticipate the fulfillment of His promises.

May the closing words of Obadiah remain forever written upon our hearts:

"And the kingdom shall be the LORD'S." (Obadiah 21)

To Him be all glory, honor, dominion, and praise forever.

Amen.

Dr. Paul Crawford

A Note from the Author

Dear Reader,

Thank you for choosing to spend time studying the Word of God with me. Of all the books I have had the privilege of writing, those that focus on the Scriptures are by far the most meaningful. Human opinions fade with time, but the Word of God "liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23). It is my sincere prayer that this commentary will not merely increase your knowledge of Obadiah but deepen your love for the Lord who inspired every word of this remarkable prophecy.

When most people think about the Old Testament, they naturally turn to well-known books such as Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, or Daniel. The Minor Prophets are often overlooked, and among them, Obadiah is perhaps the least studied. Because it consists of only twenty-one verses, many assume it has little to say to the modern believer.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The more I studied Obadiah, the more I became convinced that its message is desperately needed today. We live in an age where pride is often celebrated rather than condemned. Self-exaltation is rewarded. Humility is viewed as weakness. Nations boast of their strength, institutions trust in their achievements, and individuals frequently believe they have little need for God.

Yet the Lord's message through Obadiah remains unchanged.

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee..." (Obadiah 3).

Those words are not limited to ancient Edom. They speak to every generation and every human heart. Pride is the root from which so many other sins grow. It separates us from God, damages our relationships with others, blinds us to our need for grace, and causes us to trust in ourselves instead of the Lord. Before we point to Edom's failures, we must honestly examine our own hearts.

One of the greatest lessons I learned while preparing this commentary is that God's dealings with nations reflect His dealings with individuals. He opposes pride wherever He finds it, yet He delights in showing mercy to those who humble themselves before Him. His justice is perfect, His timing is flawless, and His grace is greater than we can fully comprehend.

As you read this commentary, I encourage you not to rush through it. Obadiah is a short book, but it deserves slow and careful meditation. Read each passage prayerfully. Look up the cross-references. Consider the historical background. Pay attention to the repeated themes of God's sovereignty, justice, covenant faithfulness, and coming kingdom. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal not only what the text meant to its original audience but also what He desires to teach you today.

This commentary has been written with several groups of readers in mind.

If you are a pastor, I hope these pages will assist you in faithfully preaching and teaching God's Word.

If you are a Sunday school teacher or Bible study leader, I pray this volume will provide historical insight, doctrinal depth, and practical application that will enrich your lessons.

If you are a Bible college student or seminary student, I trust this commentary will encourage you to handle the Scriptures carefully, allowing the biblical text to shape your theology rather than forcing your theology upon the text.

If you are a new believer, my prayer is that this study will help you discover the richness of God's Word and strengthen your confidence in its truth.

If you are simply a Christian who desires to know the Lord more deeply, I hope this book encourages you to spend more time in the Scriptures, for there is no greater investment you can make in your spiritual life.

Throughout this commentary, I have sought to follow a straightforward philosophy of Bible interpretation. My desire has been to explain what the text says, understand what it meant to its original audience, and faithfully apply its timeless truths to believers today. While I have benefited from the work of faithful scholars, pastors, and commentators through the centuries, every effort has been made to let Scripture interpret Scripture. God's Word is its own greatest commentary.

No commentary, regardless of who writes it, is inspired. The Bible alone is the infallible, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God. Therefore, I encourage you to test everything written in these pages against the Scriptures themselves. Like the noble Bereans in Acts 17:11, search the Scriptures daily to determine whether these things are so. If this commentary helps you spend more time in God's Word rather than less, then it has accomplished its purpose.

One of the recurring themes throughout my ministry has been the absolute sovereignty of God. Obadiah beautifully displays that truth. History is not random. The events of our world are not spiraling out of control. God remains seated upon His throne. He directs the affairs of nations, fulfills every promise, and accomplishes His perfect will. Even when evil seems to prevail, we can rest in the confidence that the Lord is working all things according to His divine purpose.

This truth has sustained believers throughout every generation, and it continues to provide hope today.

As I conclude this note, I want to encourage you with the final words of Obadiah:

"And the kingdom shall be the LORD'S." (Obadiah 21)

Those words are more than the conclusion of an ancient prophecy. They are the promise that anchors the Christian's hope. One day, Jesus Christ will return in power and glory. Every enemy will be defeated. Every injustice will be corrected. Every promise of God will be fulfilled. The kingdoms of this world will give way to the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior.

Until that day, let us remain faithful.

Study His Word.

Walk humbly before Him.

Proclaim the gospel boldly.

Serve Christ joyfully.

And never lose sight of the glorious future that awaits all who belong to Him.

Thank you for allowing me to accompany you on this journey through the book of Obadiah. It has been both an honor and a privilege. May the Lord richly bless you as you continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

To God alone be the glory.

In Christ,

Dr. Paul Crawford

Author, Crawford Bible Commentary Series

THE BIBLE WAY TO HEAVEN

1. Admit you are a sinner.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

No one is good enough to go to Heaven on his own merit.

No matter how much good we do, we still come short.

2. Realize the penalty for sin.

"For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23a)

Just as there are wages for good, there is punishment for wrong.

The penalty for our sin is eternal death in a place called Hell.

3. Believe that Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose again for you.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Romans 10:9)

4. Trust Christ alone as your Saviour.

"...But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23b)

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

Eternal life is a gift purchased by the blood of Jesus and offered freely to those who call upon Him by faith.

Anyone who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved forever.

Being saved is a one-time event.

Dr. Paul Crawford is more than just a Christian Author; His books are a source of inspiration and guidance on your spiritual journey. His books are created with a deep sense of faith and a desire to uplift and inspire all who read

PRIDE

BEFORE THE

FALL

A VERSE-BY-VERSE COMMENTARY ON OBADIAH

The book of Obadiah may be brief, but its message is eternal. In just twenty-one verses, God exposes the danger of pride, announces judgment on those who oppose His people, and declares the certainty of His ultimate victory. *Pride Before the Fall* takes you through every verse of this powerful prophecy, revealing the justice, holiness, and unwavering sovereignty of Almighty God.

IN THIS VERSE-BY-VERSE COMMENTARY, YOU WILL DISCOVER:

- ◆ The historical background of Edom and its conflict with Israel
- ◆ A detailed exposition of each verse in Obadiah
- ◆ Key Hebrew word studies and cross-references
- ◆ Powerful lessons on pride, judgment, and humility
- ◆ The hope of restoration and the promise of God's kingdom
- ◆ Practical applications for believers today

*“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.
Obadiah reminds us that no one escapes
the justice of the Lord—and no one is forgotten
by His mercy.”*

Whether you are a pastor, teacher, Bible student, or devoted believer, this commentary will deepen your understanding of God's Word and strengthen your faith in the One who reigns over all the earth.

AND THE KINGDOM SHALL BE THE LORD'S.

From the judgment of Edom to the triumph of Zion,
Obadiah points us to the day when Christ will return
and every knee shall bow before Him.

STUDY. TRUST. STAND HUMBLE. HOPE IN HIS KINGDOM.

