

The Minor Profits

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 0 0] The book of Obadiah is probably, well not probably, it is undoubtedly the shortest book in all of the Old Testament, comprises only one chapter, and I suspect that because of that, some have relegated it to a position of what they consider to be kind of unimportant.

But fellas, nothing in the scriptures is unimportant. Everything that is in the book is there because God wanted it there, and that automatically makes it important.

While it is true that there are some places in the Bible that are more inspiring to read than others, yet there is nothing in the Bible that is more inspired of God than anything else, because it all comes with inspiration from the Almighty, and it is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction, and righteousness, and all those good things that Paul reminded Timothy about.

So do not relegate Obadiah to a book of non-essentials because it is as essential as everything else that is in this book. It actually deals with a relationship that began with Jacob and Esau and the hatred that was generated between those two.

And I want to inject something here that maybe might explain a little bit. I don't know if it will or not. But as you read the story about Jacob and Esau and what is commonly referred to as a stolen blessing, which, as I've said in the past, I don't believe was stolen at all, nonetheless, it generated a huge family animosity between the sons Jacob and Esau, and so much so that when Jacob, with his family, with his two wives, Rachel and Leah and all his family, were returning from Laban's place, where he had been in servitude for 14 years for those two wives, he was scared to death because they were coming to the area of his brother Esau, and he was scared that Esau was still bearing that age-old grudge and that he and the men who were with him, which was considerable, were going to attack their company and maybe wipe them out.

[2 : 2 5] And he even strategically placed people in the caravan so that they might have an opportunity to flee if that were the case. And lo and behold, what we find was an exact opposite, that Esau actually entreated him rather kindly and kind of gave the impression, oh, let's let bygones be bygones.

And Jacob gave Esau all kinds of cattle and goods and everything in appreciation, and they kind of shook hands and went on their way, and it would appear, at least on the surface, that that old wound had been healed, and both of them were pretty much okay with the outcome.

And that's the way it appeared, at least between those two brothers. But the animosity that had arisen apparently was generated or continued with the descendants of them, and I don't know what kind of tales may have been told, but there was a powerful head of steam that had been built up over the years because what we're talking about now is going to be many, many years removed.

You see, Obadiah is hundreds and hundreds of years after the Jacob and Esau thing. This is way down the road, and that is all behind them. So all we've got in Obadiah that is referred to as Jacob and Esau isn't Jacob and Esau at all.

It's their descendants that are referred to as Jacob and Esau. They are talked about as individuals, but they aren't individuals. They are actually nations, descendants, numbering in the tens of thousands.

[4 : 15] And what we've got here is a time of, what shall I say, a time of boasting, a time of basking, basking in the adversity of your ancient relatives.

Rather than having any sympathy for them, they really ate it up that the children of Israel were being decimated like they were, and it was an attaboy, give it to them.

And they were relishing it, and God is not pleased. Let us read the text. The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom.

We have heard a report from the Lord, and an envoy has been sent among the nations, saying, Arise, and let us go against her for battle. Behold, I will make you small among the nations.

You are greatly despised. The arrogance of your heart has deceived you. Arrogance, arrogance is a chief product of a smug personality that is ignorant of its true position, and really thinks they have something to be proud of, when in fact they have nothing to be proud of.

[5 : 44] They've got something to be ashamed of. But arrogance, someone has said that arrogance is pride on steroids. It is, arrogance is a in-your-face kind of boasting when there is really nothing to boast about.

And he says, An envoy has been sent among the nations, saying, Arise, and let us go against her for battle. It's not talking about a woman. It's talking about a nation.

Behold, I will make you small among the nations. You are greatly despised. The arrogance of your heart has deceived you. You who live in the clefts of the rock, in the loftiness of your dwelling place, who say in your heart, who will bring me down to earth?

Well, they considered themselves impregnable because of the geographical position in which they were located. In other words, nobody can come against us.

Nobody can take us. We are impregnable. We are the ultimate. But you have been deceived by your own arrogance. You say, Who will bring me down to earth?

[6 : 59] Though you build high like the eagle, though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the Lord.

If thieves come to you, if robbers by night, oh, how you will be ruined. Would they not steal only until they've had enough? If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave some gleanings?

But what he's saying is, that's not going to be the case for you. It's going to be so complete, you're going to be stripped. Oh, how Esau will be ransacked.

Again, this is not the man. This is the descendants of the man. Much the same way that the Bible often refers to Jacob.

When it isn't talking about Jacob the individual at all. It's talking about the nation of Israel. You will recall, will you not, that Jacob's name was changed at the brook Jabbok.

[8 : 02] And his name was changed from Jacob to Israel. That's Jacob's new name. And Esau's new name here is Edom.

I will bring you down. Oh, how Esau will be ransacked and his hidden treasure searched out. All the men allied with you will send you forth to the border.

And the men at peace with you, those whom you think are your allies, will deceive you and overpower you. They who eat your bread will set an ambush for you.

This is the betrayal of those whom you think to be your allies. Will, he says, they will set an ambush for you. There is no understanding in him.

Will I not on that day, declares the Lord, destroy the wise men from Edom and understanding from the mountain of Esau.

[9 : 01] Then your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman. Teman is one of the principal cities in the town, in the area of Edom.

In order that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter. Because, and here's the reason, here's the rationale.

Because of violence to your brother Jacob. Now, be reminded guys, Jacob and Esau, both been dead and off the scene for hundreds of years.

These are the descendants we're talking about. You will be covered with shame, and you will be cut off forever. On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth, and foreigners entered his gate.

What's he talking about here? Excuse me. He's talking about the sacking and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

[10 : 09] And who is it that is relishing that and rejoicing in it? The Edomites. The descendants of Esau.

They are relishing the destruction of Jerusalem. The descendants of their distant brother Jacob. And they are just eating it up that the Babylonians are coming against Israel and destroying the city and carrying the people away.

They are loving it. In fact, some of them will even be participating in it. Let's just read on. Verse 11. On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth.

Who are they talking about? Who's wealth? His wealth. Who is the his? It's Israel. It's Jerusalem. And foreigners entered his gate.

Those foreigners are the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. This would be the 586 B.C. thing. You too were as one of them. You too were as one of them.

[11 : 21] Do not gloat over your brother's day. And again, he's talking about Israel and their day of reckoning. The day of his misfortune.

And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah. But they were. Judah Judah is the name of those two southern kingdoms.

Two southern tribes that remained in the Union. Judah is the larger. And Benjamin is the smaller. The smaller tribe. And be reminded guys that the city of Jerusalem is in the tribe of Benjamin.

Geographically. Belongs to Benjamin. And this is Jerusalem that is under siege that he is talking about. In the day of their destruction. Do not rejoice over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction.

Yes. Do not boast in the day of their distress. But that's exactly what they were doing. Do not gloat over your brother's day. The day of his fortune.

[12 : 32] Misfortune. Do not rejoice over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction. Do not boast in the day of their destruction. Do not enter the gate of my people.

people. But they were. That's exactly what they were doing. Now they obviously had formed some kind of a loose alliance with the army of Babylon.

so that they were in one way or another assisting them aiding them who knows what they maybe they were providing them with supplies or whatever was needed.

Anyway they were chumming with the Babylonians against their ancient people and their ancient relative the Israelites. Yes do not gloat over their calamity in the day of their disaster.

and do not loot their wealth in the day of their disaster. And that's exactly what they did. Do not stand at the fork of the road to cut down their fugitives.

[13 : 37] What's that all about? These are Jews who are attempting to escape the city of Jerusalem and get away from the siege that the Babylonians have brought against them.

These are people who are fleeing. You know as well as I do and we see this all the time. We see it on television almost every day where there are huge throngs of people who are fleeing from violence.

They are called fugitives. They are on the run. They are fleeing for their lives. We saw it in Iraq. We see it in Syria. We see it all over. Wherever the enemy comes in like a flood there is always a high death toll among civilians and they do what they can to escape the carnage and they get out they get pack up all the belongings they can put it on their back put it in a cart and they leave and you can see thousands and thousands of people on the run.

They are fugitives trying to get away trying to save their own lives. That's exactly what's happening here and this is what the text is talking about when he says standing at the fork of the road to cut down their fugitives and do not imprison their survivors in the day of their distress.

But that is exactly what they were doing and what God is telling the Edomites is you are not going to get away with this. God is going to remember what you have done to your ancient brethren and judgment is going to come upon you and one of the principal ways it's going to be realized later on will be an economic disaster because as it had existed for hundreds of years this Petra and Edom the cities of which were Teman and Basra the principal cities they were right on the economic trade route between east and west and there were caravans coming through there constantly and it had an economic boom that was going on for decades here in this area and all God did was he moved the trade route and the caravans all bypassed this area and they became economically deprived hey we see some small semblance of this even even today how many businesses were put out of business in communities all across the United

[16 : 14] States when the interstate was put in and it bypassed certain areas and they almost dried up or had to make significant changes in order to survive and that's exactly what happened here only they were doing it with camels and mules and horses and all the rest and eventually that's what's going to take place in Edom and he says in verse 15 for the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations as you have done it will be done to you your dealings Edom your dealings will return on your own head because just as you drank on my holy mountain all the nations will drink continually they will drink and swallow and become as if they had never existed but on Mount Zion there will be those who escape

Mount Zion is where Jerusalem is located it is where the temple was built where the temple was built on Mount Zion there will be those who escape and it will be holy and the house of Jacob will possess their possessions then the house of Jacob it's not talking about a literal house not talking about a domicile or a residence it's talking about the clan the family in the same way the house of David is not talking about David but it's talking about all of his descendants and all who comprise that that configuration and this is what he means by the house of Jacob which is another name for Israel will possess their possessions the house of Joseph a flame but the house of Esau will be a stubble that is not good that is judgment come to visit and they will set them on fire and consume them and the them is referring to Esau in the verse previous so that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau for the

Lord has spoken and I'll tell you what fellas when the text says the Lord has spoken it's as good as done it is in the bank and over it so it is a time of refreshing and blessing that is going to happen for Israel ultimately despite the fact that they are brought to ruination and devastation under the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and remember God is bringing them against his own people for judgment and for discipline for their idolatry as his prophets all made very very clear particularly Jeremiah and others and then verse 19 then those of the Negev which is the desert will possess the mountain of Esau this is the low lands will own and possess the high lands and those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain and also they will possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria this is in the end time this is when Israel comes into its own during the millennial reign of Christ because that little narrow strip of land now that is called

Israel which I've reminded you before fellas if you went out in the parking lot and got in your car and drove from here to Columbus Ohio you have just driven across the whole state of Israel at its widest point that's how small it is and it's about 120 130 miles long lengthwise north and south very small and the territory that actually belongs to and will belong to Israel is so much larger than what is realized now in fact the way it is right now is that which was partitioned by the allies in World War I with the breakup of the old Ottoman Empire and that is by the way that is exactly what Erdogan and Turkey is trying to reestablish now is the borders and the old

Ottoman Empire that was so much more extensive than what Turkey is now and some think that he is trying to actually regain that they will possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria and Benjamin that's the smaller tribe right next to Judah will possess Gilead and the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel who are among the Canaanites as far as Zarephath and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will possess the cities of the Negev this is a huge expansion of territory and this Negev goes clear down into the desert to the desert to the south the deliverers will ascend go up of course if you're going to Mount Zion you always have to go up because of the elevation the deliverers will ascend

[22 : 01] Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau and the kingdom will be the Lord's God now none of this has been fulfilled none of this is a reality it is going to be and it is a future picture of the exaltation of the state of Israel despite the enemies of Babylon and Syria and all the others including those of Mount Seir God is going to have his people elevated in the end and this of course will be the result of Christ having returned Joe yes this is all millennial stuff here this is looking far far ahead Obadiah is describing what was taking place back then when he wrote this when he penned this but what we find in the latter verses he is saying and if you notice if you look at verse 18 then then then as opposed to the time that he was talking about and what was existing then and then he uses the word then again in verse 19 and that is to come all of that is going to take place and the exiles of

Jerusalem who are inseparable will possess the cities of the Negev but do they now no of course not but the time is coming when they will and it will be the result of the second coming and it will be glorious and God will have his day and Obadiah's fulfillment prophecy will come true like all of the others have or will and God will be vindicated and so will the nation of Israel any other comments or questions yeah Joe this is a strange question now okay but this Obadiah was the scripture used at a funeral I went to I was at a funeral and the preacher used this scripture of Obadiah why did he use that I can't recall at all now but it was a funeral I can't imagine either and he used Obadiah because I made note of it here and I made the points that he made out here the judgments all these judgments that's going to happen to him the only the only thing the only thing that I could suggest is that

Obadiah does picture a very bleak kind of thing a very negative kind of thing but that in the final analysis it is going to be an up thing not a down thing it's going to be a triumphant thing and maybe he was making a comparison between death and the disease that besets us now but is ultimately going to be turned into a victory I don't know if that's what he was getting at or not but I can think of a thousand other texts that I would use for a funeral as opposed to Obadiah but then you never know what's going on sometimes in the minds of preachers it probably seemed like a pretty good idea to him and maybe he did quite well with it I don't know but I've never heard that before never heard of a funeral preached out of Obadiah but then what do I know hey guys thank you for your kind attention