Wednesday Morning Senior Adults Bible Study
Spring 2026

OBADIAH

April 15, 2026

THE BASICS

Author: Obadiah saw the vision behind this message (verse 1). His name means "servant/worshiper of the Lord".

Date: uncertain — The most likely date is during the Babylonian attacks on Jerusalem in 605-586 BC, the time of the prophets Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel.

• *Why this date? Obadiah's description of Edomites watching the enemy destruction of Jerusalem, gloating over the city, plundering it, and even joining in the violence against its people (verses 10-14, 16) matches other biblical descriptions of Edom's conduct when Jerusalem was attacked and conquered by the Babylonians:*

Ezekiel 35:5-6, *God speaking in reference to Edom's conduct at the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem and Judah:* "Because you harbored an ancient hostility and delivered the Israelites over to the sword at the time of their calamity, the time their punishment reached its climax, therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I will give you over to bloodshed and it will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you… You said, 'They have been laid waste and have ben given over to us to devour'… Because you rejoiced when the inheritance of Israel became desolate, that is how I will treat you. You will be desolate, Mount Seir, you and all of Edom. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

Psalm 137:7, *recalling the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians:* Remember, Lord, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. "Tear it down," they cried, "tear it down to its foundations!"

• *Obadiah 1-6 is very similar to Jeremiah 49:9-10, 49:14-16. Both prophets predict the fall of Edom.*

Background Information: Edom was the nation southeast of Israel. Jacob's brother Esau had settled there and his family grew to dominate the land (Genesis 36:8-9) so that Edom (from Esau) and Israel (from Esau's twin brother Jacob) are considered brother nations in the Bible (as in Obadiah 10). Edom lay in a dry, mountainous region. The mountains provided natural defenses against invaders. The Edomites gained their wealth primarily through trade.

PART 1: DOOM IS COMING! — verses 1-7

verses 1-2 — What doom did the Lord foretell would come upon Edom?

verses 3-4 — What features of their homeland gave Edom a false sense of security?

verse 7 — Where would Edom's allies force the Edomites to go?

• *In 553 BC, King Nabonidus of Babylon (ruled ca. 556-539) took over Edom, forcing its people across Edom's western border into the Negev (the extreme south of Israel). When Babylon conquered Jerusalem, the Edomites supported the Babylonians; but later these one-time allies turned against the Edomites.*

PART 2: WHY DOOM IS COMING — verses 8-14

List the 12 sins of Edom against God and his people described in these verses:

• verse 10 — _____ against his brother Jacob
• verse 11 — _____ _____ during the destruction
• verse 11 — they were like those who cast lots for (that is, looted) _____
• verse 12 — _____ over Jerusalem as it was destroyed, _____ over Judah's people, and _____ in the day of their trouble
• verse 13 — _____ through Jerusalem's gates as it was destroyed, _____ over Jerusalem, and seized Jerusalem's _____ during their disaster
• verse 14 — waited at the _____, then cut down their _____, then handed over their _____

Notice the repeated phrase, "in the day of their misfortune/destruction/trouble/disaster". What lesson should we take from God's concern over the *timing* of these sins of Edom?

PART 3: DOOM FOR EDOM, BUT RESTORATION FOR ISRAEL — verses 15-21

verse 15 — "The _____ of the _____ is near for all nations." What does this statement foretell for Edom?

verse 16 — What insult did Edom commit against God on his holy hill (Zion)?

verses 17-18 — What will happen to Jacob/Joseph (Israel)? What will happen to Esau (Edom)?

Verses 19-21 foretell the restoration of Israel to its ancestral homeland and its taking over of Edom. Who would end up governing "the mountains of Esau"?

• *After the Edomites were forced out of their land: "The surviving Edomites gradually settled in the Negev with the result that by the fourth century BC this territory was known as 'Edom's land' or 'Idumea.' During the period of Judah's resurgence under the Maccabees [100s BC], the Idumeans were defeated and several of their cities were taken (1 Macc 4:61; 5:3, 65; 2 Macc 10:15-23). Final subjugation of the area was accomplished by [Jewish king] John Hyrcanus I (135-104 BC), Edomite national identity thus coming to an end (Josephus Antiquities 13.9.1; 13.15.4)." — Richard D. Patterson, "Obadiah," in Patterson & Hill, Minor Prophets: Hosea-Malachi*

REFLECTION — What hope does Obadiah's message give to the Jews after the fall of Jerusalem? What kind of hope might it give to people God redeems from sin today?