

## OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF OBADIAH

### INTRODUCTION

*“Pride goes before a fall.”* – the universal principle of cause and effect  
*“What goes around comes around.”* – the boomerang effect of poetic justice

These two familiar sayings summarize the prophetic burden of the prophet Obadiah. His brief message of 21 verses, the shortest book in the OT, pronounces God’s judgment on Israel’s brother nation of Edom – capping a bitter rivalry between the descendants of Jacob and of Esau. Little is known about Obadiah. He seems to be a resident of the southern kingdom of Judah but probably not from either the kingly or priestly heritage. His name means either “*Servant of Jehovah*” or “*Worshiper of Jehovah*”.

### BIBLICAL BACKGROUND:

Let’s begin with the history of the nation of Edom which is about to reap the consequences of her betrayal and malicious conduct toward her blood relatives. Interestingly, this is the only biblical book written strictly to an audience of Gentile unbelievers.

Yet its denunciation of pride and arrogance and false security certainly resonates with us today.

**John Stott:** At every stage in our Christian development and in every sphere of our Christian discipleship, **Pride is our greatest enemy and Humility our greatest friend.**

Illustration: The Lord impressed this upon me when I was only in elementary school . . .

### 1. Origins of Edom

- **Ancestry:**

The nation of **Edom** traces its ancestry to **Esau**, the twin brother of **Jacob (Israel)** (**Genesis 25:19–34; 36:1**).

*“And the LORD said to [Rebekah], ‘Two nations are in your womb; And two peoples shall be separated from your body; And one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger.’”* (**Gen. 25:23**) So this conflict began in the womb

- Esau’s descendants settled in the rugged hill country of **Seir**, south of the Dead Sea.
- The name “Edom” means “**red**”, recalling both Esau’s reddish appearance at birth and the red stew for which he sold his birthright.

*“Esau despised his birthright”* (**Gen. 25:34**)

- **Territory:**

Edom occupied a mountainous region stretching from the **Wadi Zered** to the **Gulf of Aqaba** (modern-day southern Jordan).

- Its chief city was **Bozrah**, later **Petra**, famous for its rock-hewn dwellings and defensive terrain.

- The **King's Highway**, a major trade route, passed through Edom, giving the nation economic and strategic importance.



## **2. Early Relations Between Edom and Israel**

Though related by blood, Edom and Israel experienced **persistent hostility** throughout biblical history.

### **a. The Patriarchal Period**

- The enmity began with **Jacob and Esau's conflict** over the birthright and blessing -- Remember how the crafty Jacob with the help of his mother was able to gain the blessing from his dying father Isaac:  
*"May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you."*(**Genesis 27:29**).

When Esau came into his father afterwards, he was bitterly disappointed that his father had little left to give him:

*"Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, 'Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, And away from the dew of heaven from above. <sup>40</sup> And by*

*your sword you shall live, And your brother you shall serve; But it shall come about when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck.*<sup>41</sup> *So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, 'The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.'*" (**Gen. 27:39-41**)

- Although the brothers later reconciled (**Genesis 33**), tension continued between their descendants.

## **b. The Exodus Period**

- When Israel journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, they requested passage through Edom via the King's Highway (**Numbers 20:14-21**).
- Edom refused and came out with an army, forcing Israel to detour around their territory.
  - This act became symbolic of Edom's **brotherly betrayal** and was long remembered in Israel's collective memory.

## **3. The Monarchical Period**

### **a. Under Saul and David**

- King **Saul** fought against Edom (**1 Samuel 14:47**).
- **David** subdued Edom and placed garrisons there (**2 Samuel 8:13-14; 1 Kings 11:15-16**).
  - This marked a period of Israelite control over Edom.

### **b. Under Solomon and the Divided Kingdom**

- Under **Solomon**, Edom remained subject but **revolted** later in his reign (**1 Kings 11:14-22**).
- In the days of **Jehoram of Judah** (ca. 850 BC), Edom successfully revolted and regained independence (**2 Kings 8:20-22**).  
*"In [Jehoram's - son of Jehoshaphat] days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves.<sup>21</sup> Then Joram crossed over to Zair, and all his chariots with him. And it came about that he arose by night and struck the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; but [Jehoram's] army fled to their tents.<sup>22</sup> So Edom revolted against Judah to this day."*

In terms of dating the book of Obadiah, this conflict is key. **Vs 10-14** of Obadiah describe a significant invasion of Judah by foreign forces. Some commentators take that event to be much later – 586 BC – when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Jerusalem. But for a number of reasons I prefer this earlier incident back in **850 BC**. **2 Chron. 21:16** – 3 nation alliance of Edomites, Philistines and Arabians

### **c. Subsequent Hostility**

- Edom often joined other nations against Judah.
- Prophets like **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos**, and **Obadiah** denounced Edom for violence and arrogance toward their brother nation.

Application: Have you ever been betrayed by someone close to you? The pain of betrayal runs deeper when it comes from family. Obadiah tells the story of a **family feud** that never healed — and a God who will not forget when wrong is done to His covenant people.

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### **OVERVIEW:**

The origin and history of the nation of Edom and its opposition to Israel must be understood as background to God's declaration of judgment. Obadiah's vision combines what will take place in the near term with reference to Edom for her pride and arrogance with the eschatological judgment and destruction of all the godless nations in preparation for the glorious restoration of Israel. The establishment of God's eternal kingdom will **turn the tables** once and for all on the arrogance and false security of Edom.

### **STRUCTURE:**

2 Major Sections in the Book:

- I. (:1-14) THE EXTINCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF EDOM**
  - A. (:1-9) Pride Goes Before a Fall – The Delusion of Pride
    - (:1) Introduction
    - 1. (:2-3) Folly of Arrogance and False Security
    - 2. (:4-9) Finality of Certain and Complete Destruction
  - B. (:10-14) What Goes Around Comes Around – The Deceit of Betrayal
    - 1. (:10) Their Brotherly Treachery
    - 2. (:11-12) Their Boastful Triumph
    - 3. (:13-14) Their Brutal Treatment
- II. (:15-21) THE EXALTATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**
  - A. (:15-16) Certainty of the Day of the Lord
    - 1. (:15a) Universal Accountability
    - 2. (:15b-16) Unavoidable Justice
  - B. (:17-18) Contrasting Destinies between Edom and Israel (Flesh and Spirit)
  - C. (:19-21) Climax of God's Plan for His People and His Kingdom
    - 1. (:19-20) Ultimate Restoration of God's People and Land
    - 2. (:21) Universal Reign of the Lord

Condemnation vs. Consolation

Ruin of Edom vs. Restoration of Israel

**Big Idea**: Self Righteous Piling On by Arrogant Boasters is Doomed to Destruction by the God Who Fulfills His Promise of a Righteous Kingdom

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### **I. (:1-14) THE EXTINCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF EDOM**

- A. (:1-9) Pride Goes Before a Fall – The Delusion of Pride
  - (:1) Introduction

The Prophet = Obadiah

The Target = Edom

The Judgment = Coalition of nations conspiring to attack Edom

**Richard Coggins:** Those nations will wage war against Edom, supposing that they are doing so at their own whim and for their own advantage. In fact, their decision is not their own but the LORD'S. Just as in **Isa. 10:5–15** Assyria was no more than the rod in Yahweh's hand, though supposing that its own power had brought it victory, so here the nations are pictured as being under the control of Israel's God.

### 1.(:2-3) Folly of Arrogance and False Security

#### a. Destiny Described

##### 1) Reduced to Smallness

*"Behold I will make you small among the nations."*

**Leslie Allen:** The first word *hinnēh*, traditionally rendered “*behold*,” is designed to arrest the hearers and focus their attention on God's coming involvement in the affairs of men. The verb is a **prophetic perfect**: God's deed is as good as done, and the fate of Edom is sealed. Their destiny is to be one of utter **insignificance**. It will be all the more shocking to the Edomites because they have been the victims of **self-deception**. They shrug off any suggestion of invasion and defeat with a confident denial, thinking themselves safe in their rocky bastion.

##### 2) Relegated to Shame

*"You are greatly despised."*

#### b. Arrogance Denounced – Their Lofty Position due to Geography

*“The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,  
You who live in the clefts of the rock,  
In the loftiness of your dwelling place,”*

Pride always whispers, “**I'm untouchable**.” Whether it's an ancient nation or a modern man, pride blinds us to our dependence on God.

### Definition of Arrogance:

- Attitude of superiority manifested in an overbearing manner or in presumptuous claims or assertions.
- **Offensive attitude of superiority** shown especially by excessively confident or rudely dismissive behavior.
- Someone once boasted: “If I only had a little humility I would be perfect”
- “A man wrapped up in himself makes a very small bundle”
- “None are so empty as those who are full of themselves”
- “Pride must die in you, or nothing of heaven can live in you.” – **Andrew Murray**

**David Guzik:** The Edomites boasted in **their natural defenses**. The ancient city of Petra - once the capital city of Edom, known as Sela - had amazing defenses. It is a city carved into the rock, accessible by a narrow canyon almost a mile long. At the end of the canyon there is a spectacular city carved in stone, and seemingly incapable of being conquered by any army.

**Thomas Constable:** The outstanding mark of Edom's national character was **pride**. The Hebrew word for pride (*zadon*) comes from a verb meaning to boil up (*zid*). It pictures pride as water that boils up under pressure in a cooking pot. Similarly the proud person is like a bubble that thrusts itself up but is **hollow**. Interestingly, the same Hebrew word occurs three times in the account of Esau, the father of the Edomites, squandering his birthright (**Gen. 25:27-34**).

c. False Security and Pride Exposed

*“Who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to earth?’”*

**Daniel Epp-Tiessen:** Obadiah places words into Edom’s mouth to characterize it as smug and naive. Readers familiar with prophetic literature know that God does not listen passively to such arrogance. . . . Because God alone is exalted, human self-exaltation encroaches on divine turf and merits judgment. Human haughtiness is also problematic because of its practical consequences. An exalted sense of national pride and self-sufficiency can inspire nations to commit atrocities against others. They care only about their own interests and never imagine that they are accountable to a higher power who stands behind the moral order of the universe.

2.(:4-9) Finality of Certain and Complete Destruction

a. (:4) Promise of Certain Destruction Despite False Security

*“‘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.”*

**Daniel Epp-Tiessen:** God mocks Edom’s arrogant sense of invincibility by evoking the exaggerated image of an eagle soaring so high that it can build its nest among the stars (**v. 4**). God declares that no location is so distant or secure as to prevent him from dragging Edom to the ground, exactly what Edom has just boasted no one can do. Edom’s punishment will fit its crime.

**Mark Dever:** Pride flatters us; tells us things we want to believe about ourselves. We are so easily deceived.

Those things that we trust in to give meaning and significance to our life will prove to be totally inadequate to defend us against the judgment of God. When God decides to judge a rebellious nation, no Department of Homeland Security can protect it.

For every rise of a great empire throughout world history there is an accompanying decline. Only certainty is that having power will not last.

b. (:5-6) Promise of Complete Destruction

1) (:5) Two Contrasts Illuminating Only Limited Destruction

a) Thieves at Night

*“If thieves came to you, If robbers by night-- O how you will be ruined!—  
Would they not steal only until they had enough?”*

b) Grape Gatherers

*“If grape gatherers came to you, Would they not leave some gleanings?”*

2) (:6) Imagery of Complete Destruction

*“O how Esau will be ransacked, And his hidden treasures searched out!”*

**Anthony Gelston:** The whole of vv. 6–9 stresses the **finality** and **inescapability** of the judgment awaiting Edom. . . This ransack of Edom won’t work by half measures (v. 6). Its invaders will look in every corner of the land and take everything worth taking.

c. (:7) Treachery of Edom’s Allies

*“All the men allied with you Will send you forth to the border,  
And the men at peace with you Will deceive you and overpower you.  
They who eat your bread Will set an ambush for you.  
(There is no understanding in him.)”*

Edom boasts in her **wisdom**; but this deception by her allies catches her by surprise. This highlights the theme of **treachery** in Edom’s dealings with her blood relatives = the descendants of Jacob.

Their allies would betray them; their wise men would fail them; their mighty men would fall. God’s judgment would be complete and inescapable.

d. (:8-9) Destruction of the Wise and the Mighty

1) (:8) Destruction of the Wise

*“‘Will I not on that day,’ declares the LORD, ‘Destroy wise men from Edom  
And understanding from the mountain of Esau?’”*

2) (:9) Destruction of the Mighty

*“Then your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman,  
In order that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.”*

B.(:10-14) What Goes Around Comes Around – The Deceit of Betrayal

**J. Sidlow Baxter:** Here, in this particular prophecy about Edom, we are meant to learn emphatically that there is a principle of “**poetic justice**” operative in the Divine government of

the earth's peoples. This is the distinctive contribution of this Edom prophecy. Obadiah, let us remember it well, is the prophet of poetic justice.

See how this truth is amplified by the context.

- Edom had indulged in treachery against Judah (**verse 11, 12**); therefore Edom should perish through the treachery of confederates (**verse 7**).
- Edom had seized the chance to rob Judah (**verse 13**); therefore Edom should be robbed even till his hidden things, or treasure, were searched out (**verses 5, 6**).
- Edom had lifted the sword and shown violence against Judah (**verse 10**); therefore Edom should perish by slaughter (**verse 9**).
- Edom had sought the utter destruction of Judah (**verses 12-14**); therefore Edom should be utterly destroyed (**verses 10, 18**).
- Edom had even sought to hand over and dispossess the remnant of the invaded Jerusalem (**verse 14**); therefore, in the end, the remnant of Jacob should possess the land of Edom (**verse 19**).

Yes, poetic justice! – **the penalty corresponding to the iniquity** as one line of poetry corresponds to another!

**James Nogalski:** **Verses 10–14** continue the thought of **Obad 1–9** but shift from pronouncements of judgment to explicit accusations of the crimes of Edom against Judah (Jacob). The crimes include:

- violence against Jacob (**v. 10**);
- taking captives from Jerusalem when others attacked it (**v. 11**);
- rejoicing over Judah's misfortune (**v. 12**);
- entering Jerusalem (**v. 13**); and capturing Jerusalem's fugitives (**v. 14**).

#### 1.(:10) Their Brotherly Treachery -- Malice

##### a. The Offense

*"Because of violence to your brother Jacob,"*

Some offenses are deemed more egregious because we are acting with malice towards someone with whom we should have a loyal relationship – like a sibling or a spouse.

##### b. The Punishment: Shame and Elimination

*"You will be covered with shame,  
And you will be cut off forever."*

**David Baker:** Violent Edom, instead of being cloaked by its pride (**v. 3**), is now "*covered with shame*," just as the flood covered Noah's violent neighbors (**Gen. 7:19–20**) or as one might be wrapped in a garment (e.g., **Ex. 28:42; Deut. 22:12**). The ironic twist is that garments are used most commonly to cover one's shame (e.g., **Gen. 9:23; Hos. 2:9**; cf. **Gen. 3:7, 21**), but here it is shame that covers the nation. Shame is in contrast with **honor**, an external consideration of worth—an important concept in the Near East, including contemporary Arabic culture.



**Biblehub.com:** The phrase "*cut off forever*" indicates a complete and permanent destruction. This prophecy was fulfilled historically when Edom ceased to exist as a nation. The Edomites were eventually absorbed by surrounding peoples, and their identity was lost. This judgment reflects the biblical principle that those who oppose God's chosen people will face divine retribution (**Jeremiah 49:17-18**). The finality of being "*cut off*" underscores the seriousness of Edom's sin and serves as a warning to other nations. This also foreshadows the ultimate judgment against all who oppose God's kingdom, as seen in eschatological passages like **Revelation 19:11-21**.

## 2.(:11-12) Their Boastful Triumph – Aloofness and Gloating

### (:11) Aloofness

*“On the day that you stood aloof,  
On the day that strangers carried off his wealth,  
And foreigners entered his gate And cast lots for Jerusalem—  
You too were as one of them.”*

*“The one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it is sinning” (James 4:17).*

As a church we don't just care for our own congregation, but we export our love and care and concern for Christians around the world; that is why we encourage Pastor Harmon in his trip to the Philippines – not so much for any benefit to our church ... that's the opposite of what the Edomites did to God's people

Application: **Indifference** to suffering and injustice is complicity. When believers today see Israel or God's church attacked, we must not be neutral.

### (:12) Gloating

*“Do not gloat over your brother's day, The day of his misfortune.  
And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah In the day of their destruction;  
Yes, do not boast In the day of their distress.”*

**Ken Boa:** to look at with smug or malicious satisfaction; happens in sports all the time [**Vs. 12-13; Prov. 17:5; 24:17; Job 31:29; Ps. 35:15**] A malicious form of rejoicing; it broadcasts one's superiority over an opponent; root = sin of Pride; tends to devalue or despise the intrinsic God-given value of others; fails to acknowledge our own fragility and vulnerability – we could easily be the defeated one; rejoicing over victory is good and normal but guard your heart against gloating; only by grace of God that we take our next breath

**Biblehub.com:** The admonition against gloating highlights the moral and ethical expectations God has for nations and individuals. Gloating over another's misfortune is condemned throughout Scripture, as seen in **Proverbs 24:17-18**, which warns against rejoicing when an enemy falls. This phrase underscores the principle of empathy and compassion, even towards adversaries. Boasting in another's distress is portrayed as arrogance and pride . . . This attitude reflects a lack of understanding of God's justice and mercy.

Cf. taunting penalties in the NFL

### 3.(:13-14) Their Brutal Treatment – Exploitation / Looting / Ambushing

*“Do not enter the gate of My people In the day of their disaster.  
Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity In the day of their disaster.  
And do not loot their wealth In the day of their disaster.  
14 And do not stand at the fork of the road To cut down their fugitives;  
And do not imprison their survivors In the day of their distress.”*

Looting is a despicable crime. It often takes place in the midst of some natural disaster or as here, during wartime. You are taking advantage of the calamity others are experiencing. That is human nature at its lowest.

**Lloyd Ogilvie:** But the catalogue of the sins of the Edomites reaches a climax with the description of how they stood at the crossroads outside Jerusalem and captured the fleeing citizens of the city and turned them over to the invaders.

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## II.(:15-21) **THE EXALTATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

### A.(:15-16) Certainty of the Day of the Lord

#### 1.(:15a) Universal Accountability – God’s Universal Judgment Will Include All Nations

*“For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations.”*

**Richard Coggins:** The **major break** within the book of Obadiah occurs at this point. Though there are obvious thematic links between the two parts, there is also a marked new development away from the direct concern with contemporary Edom toward an **eschatological** picture of the destruction of “*all the nations*.”

**Biblehub.com:** The “*Day of the LORD*” is a recurring theme in the prophetic books, signifying a time of divine intervention, judgment, and salvation. In Obadiah, this day is imminent, not just for Edom, but for all nations. . . The phrase indicates a universal scope of God's judgment, extending beyond Israel's immediate neighbors to encompass all nations. This concept is echoed in other prophetic books such as **Joel 2:1** and **Zephaniah 1:14**, where the Day of the LORD is portrayed as a time of reckoning. The nearness of this day suggests urgency and the certainty of God's plans. In a broader theological context, it foreshadows the **final judgment** described in the New Testament, particularly in Revelation.

#### 2.(:15b-16) Unavoidable Justice – God’s Retributive Judgment Will Be Just

*“As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head. 16 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.”*

**Biblehub.com:** **They will drink and gulp it down--** This phrase intensifies the imagery of judgment. The act of “*gulping down*” suggests an overwhelming and forceful experience of God's wrath, leaving no room for escape or reprieve. It conveys the idea that the nations will fully experience the consequences of their actions against God and His people. This imagery is consistent with prophetic literature, where the cup of wrath is often depicted as being consumed fully, leaving nothing behind.

Application: God's justice may seem **delayed**, but it is never **denied**. The same God who judged Edom will one day set all wrongs right.

B.(:17-18) Contrasting Destinies between Edom and Israel (Flesh and Spirit)

1. (:17) Deliverance and Holiness of Zion

*"But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, And it will be holy.  
And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions."*

This looks forward to the national salvation of ethnic Israel leading into the Millennial Kingdom (Rom. 11:26-27).

2. (:18) Destruction of House of Esau

*"Then the house of Jacob will be a fire And the house of Joseph a flame;  
But the house of Esau will be as stubble.  
And they will set them on fire and consume them,  
So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau,  
For the LORD has spoken."*

**Daniel Epp-Tiessen:** Another new element here is that Obadiah envisions a **reunion of the nation** that had split into Israel and Judah in 922 after the death of King Solomon. Because Joseph was the father of Ephraim and Manasseh (**Gen 48:1**), the names of the two largest tribes of northern Israel, house of Joseph designates the Northern Kingdom, whereas house of Jacob means Judah (cf. **Ps 77:15; Amos 5:6, 15; 6:6; Zech 10:6**). Obadiah envisions some type of revival of the Northern Kingdom, which had been destroyed by Assyria in 722, and a reunification with Judah, similar to what other prophetic texts portray (**Isa 11:12-14; Jer 3:18; 23:6; 30:3; 31:27, 31; Ezek 37:15-23; Hos 1:11; Zech 10:6**). The prophets value the unity of God's people. Neither political divisions nor the demise of the Northern Kingdom will stand in the way of God's restoring and reuniting the whole people of God.

C.(:19-21) Climax of God's Plan for His People and His Kingdom

1.(:19-20) Ultimate Restoration of God's People and Land

*"Then those of the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau,  
And those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain;  
Also, they will possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, And Benjamin 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."*

**Biblehub.com:** Those from the Negev will possess the mountains of Esau;

The Negev is a desert region in the southern part of Israel, historically inhabited by the tribe of Judah. The "*mountains of Esau*" refer to the territory of Edom, located southeast of the Dead Sea. This prophecy indicates a reversal of fortunes, where the Israelites,

specifically those from the Negev, will take possession of Edom's land. This reflects the broader biblical theme of God's justice and the eventual triumph of His people over their enemies. Historically, Edom and Israel had a contentious relationship, with Edom often opposing Israel. This prophecy underscores the ultimate sovereignty of God over the nations.

**those from the foothills will possess the land of the Philistines.**

The "*foothills*" or "*Shephelah*" is a region of low hills between the coastal plain and the central highlands of Israel. The Philistines were a significant adversary of Israel, residing in the coastal cities such as Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ashdod. This part of the prophecy suggests that the Israelites will expand their territory westward into the land of the Philistines. The Philistines are often depicted in the Bible as a symbol of opposition to God's people, and their defeat represents the triumph of God's kingdom. This also connects to the broader biblical narrative of Israel's conquest and settlement in the Promised Land.

**They will occupy the fields of Ephraim and Samaria,**

Ephraim and Samaria were central regions in the northern kingdom of Israel. This prophecy indicates a reunification and restoration of the land that was once divided and lost due to the Assyrian conquest. The mention of Ephraim and Samaria symbolizes the restoration of the northern tribes and the re-establishment of Israel's full territorial inheritance. This reflects the prophetic hope for the reunification of all Israel under God's rule, as seen in other prophetic books like Ezekiel and Isaiah.

**and Benjamin will possess Gilead.**

Benjamin was one of the tribes of Israel, located just north of Judah. Gilead, on the other hand, was a region east of the Jordan River, known for its balm and rugged terrain. This prophecy suggests an expansion of Benjamin's territory into Gilead, which was historically part of the territory of the tribes of Gad and Manasseh. This reflects the theme of restoration and expansion of Israel's borders, as well as the fulfillment of God's promises to the patriarchs regarding the land. The mention of Benjamin, a tribe known for its warriors, also highlights the strength and resilience of God's people in reclaiming their inheritance.

**as far as Zarephath**

Zarephath was a Phoenician city located between Tyre and Sidon, in present-day Lebanon. Mentioned in **1 Kings 17:9**, it is where Elijah was sent during a drought. The inclusion of Zarephath highlights the extent of the territory to be reclaimed, extending beyond traditional Israelite borders, symbolizing a broader restoration and influence.

**2. (:21) Universal Reign of the Lord**

**a. Appointed Saviors to Deliver and Judge**

*"The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion  
To judge the mountain of Esau,"*

Probably divinely appointed human leaders who play a role in God's plan to restore Israel, judge its enemies (here Edom in particular) and establish the Millennial Kingdom.

b. Absolute Sovereignty of the Lord

*"And the kingdom will be the LORD's."*

**David Guzik:** This note of encouragement may be the central purpose for this prophecy of Obadiah. We wonder if it ever had much of a reading in the streets or palaces of Edom; but it certainly was received as welcome encouragement among the suffering people of God. Obadiah tells all God's people: "Don't worry about those who ignore your need, those who rejoice at your problems, those who take advantage of your crises, those join their hands with others in attacking you. I will take care of them."

**Biblehub.com:** This statement emphasizes the ultimate sovereignty of God over all nations and kingdoms. It reflects the biblical theme of God's eternal dominion and the establishment of His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. This echoes the prophetic visions found in **Daniel 2:44** and **Revelation 11:15**, where God's kingdom is depicted as everlasting and supreme over all earthly powers. The phrase underscores the fulfillment of God's promises to His people and the culmination of His redemptive plan. It points to the eschatological hope of a future where God's rule is fully realized, and His justice and peace reign supreme.

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### Summary – **Bruce Hurt**

Tracing the stages of Edom's decline is a valuable study.

- First, the prophet accused them of standing aloof (**Obadiah 1:11**). In every conflict between right and wrong, the person who remains neutral does much of the damage.
  - Second, they actually saw the destruction and distress of Jerusalem with their own eyes (**Obadiah 12**). What a terrible thing to refuse to help the Lord's people! In the present Jewish situation, we would do well to consider the fact that God's attitude has not changed toward His chosen people. Oh, I know that one may argue the craftiness of the Jews, pointing out that they are still supplanters. Even so, we must not join those who would condemn them. I fear for any nation that causes grief to Israel. [cp. **Ge 12:1-3**]
  - Third, the Edomites gloated when Israel fell (**Obadiah 1:12**).
  - Fourth, they spoke proudly; they had what we call the "pharisaical attitude." Edom stood by and said, "That's all right; they probably deserved it."
  - Fifth, not only were the Edomites guilty of wicked indifference, they eventually became actively involved in Israel's distress (**Obadiah 1:13**).
  - Sixth, Edom took advantage of Judah's trouble by plundering some of their wealth (**Obadiah 1:3**). Sin is never the sudden outburst of a moment. (Note carefully the steps these relatives of Israel had taken in their downfall.)
  - Seventh, they gave open assistance to the enemy (**Obadiah 1:14**). When the Israelites escaped and tried to flee, the Edomites cut them off from their defenses and handed them over to their pursuers.
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**Walter Baker:** The short Book of Obadiah presents a powerful message. It shows what happens to those who reject God's Word and His grace, rebelling in foolish pride. During Edom's prosperity many in Israel could have asked, "*Why do the wicked prosper?*" (cf. **Ps. 73:3**) But the voice of Obadiah comes thundering through the pages of the Old Testament, and echoed in the New: "*Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows*" (**Gal. 6:7**). Obadiah's words underscore the fact of God's justice. "*For we know Him who said, 'It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God'*" (**Heb. 10:30-31**).

One who responds in obedience to the grace of God has everything to gain, but a person who spurns His grace in pride has everything to lose.

Application for Today:

- Beware of pride -- it blinds, deceives, and destroys.
- Bless Israel -- for God's covenant still stands.
- Believe in God's plan -- Christ will return and reign in righteousness.