

The Choices We Make *The Book of Obadiah*

Fairview Memorial Missionary Baptist Church Winter Bible Study 2018

Tuesday, February 20th, 2018

Scripture Lesson: Obadiah 1:1 - 21.

Introduction: Obadiah, perhaps a person by that name or an unnamed prophet for whom “Obadiah” (meaning “a servant of God or Jehovah”) is a title. Edom (Edom means red, Esau – means hairy) was a nation descended from Esau the twin brother of Jacob the patriarch of Israel. The baby boys had struggled in their mother’s womb (Genesis 25:21 – 26), and their conflict had continued for centuries. **It is important to note: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.” Psalms 9:17.**

The reason for the naming of Esau to Edom. After Edom took part in the Babylonian ransacking of Jerusalem, Obadiah passed down God’s judgment: “For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever” (1:10). Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible, consisting of one chapter and 21 verses. Obadiah displays God’s faithfulness to His people. The People of The One True God are always clearly on The Mind of God. **“Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.” Psalms 34:14 – 19.**

Keep in mind the prophecy in Genesis 12:3, concerning the nation of Israel/Abram’s seed of God’s promise from generations earlier: “I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” This would apply to any nation, including the brother of Jacob – Esau/Edom as he was under the proclamation of the prophecy of Obadiah.

- The same red pottage pours out in today’s societies... favoritism, jealousy, selling, marketing, trading, and peddling the Truth leads to more of the same, as we see here in Genesis 25:27 - 33. **“And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.”**

Noted from B. H. Carroll: “There are several important lessons in this book for us:

1. There is the lesson of the family feud, which is usually the most bitter and the most difficult to settle. Let us remember the lesson(s) of Jacob and Esau.
2. There is a lesson of the dangers of pride and arrogance. Truly, ‘pride goeth before a fall’ *Proverbs 16:18*: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
3. There is the lesson of false confidence. No one is secure against the law of retribution (rewards for the deeds we have done). The **clefts of Petra (appears to have been the principle stronghold for safety, when Edom came under attack)** may be too difficult for man to scale, but nothing can withstand God.

4. There is the lesson of God's method of dealing out his wrath. *'Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all'* (see footnote below ****Wikiquotes**). Edom received what he had given. **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."** Galatians 6:7
5. There is a lesson of hope in a dark hour. God's plan and purpose are not accomplished in a day, but He will see to it that no prophecy shall fail. Let Israel of today learn the lesson of patient, persistent pursuit of God's plan for her, and His glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

Continued Thoughts from RGS:

- The Seven Should Not's: Verses 12 – 14. (God is very specific in charges against the wicked.)

 1. But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; (Is this the way a Brother should be treated?)
 2. Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; (It's one thing to participate in the destruction, but it is awful to rejoice over what they are going through, even if it is justified. We need to pray for each other...)
 3. Neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. (God says, you should not have gloated and rejoiced over your Brother Jacob, the day Israel's' misfortune came and made Judah a stranger. The Southern Kingdom of Judah consisted of 2 tribes (Judah and Benjamin).)
 4. Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people (God's Chosen People) in the day of their calamity; (We should be very careful, as we could be the next to fall prey to the wicked one.)
 5. 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; (We should look to the Lord from where all blessings flow, instead of partaking in the spoils of the enemies of God.)
 6. Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; (God knows those of His, and He will remember those who stand in the way of His Children.)
 7. Neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. (God also knows those of His that have been delivered up, that would have escaped.) Romans 12:19, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

 - Obadiah shows God's faithfulness to His people. Who are the people of God today? The People of God today are The Saved who reciprocate a faithfulness to Our Faithful God. "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me." Psalms 101:6.
 - What is similar to Edom, the Church, and Our Society? "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!" Isaiah 30:1 – 2.
 - DELIVERANCE will Come! "Upon mount Zion shall be deliverance." (1:17). Read Isaiah 63:1 – 6.

Conclusion: What shall we do? Read Malachi 3:13 – 18; 4:1 – 3. Serve God with gladness!

Sited sources:

- King James Version Bible
- Young's analytical concordance to the Bible
- B.H. Carroll AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE
- ****Wikiquotes*** Meaning: Justice maybe slow but it will come eventually. Background: The earliest known use of this expression is by 3rd century Greek philosopher Sextus Empiricus, who wrote 'The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind small.' Sextus Empiricus lived in the early 3rd century AD, possibly late 2nd century. He was a physician and philosopher who is thought to have lived mainly in Alexandria and Athens. Retribution. (Sinngedichte III, 2, 24, published c. 1654, translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow). Compare: "God's mill grinds slow, but sure", George Herbert. Jacula Prudentum. Sextus Empiricus is the first writer who has presented the whole of the adage cited by Plutarch in his treatise "Concerning such whom God is slow to punish".