

# Obadiah & Jonah

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## **Introduction to Obadiah**

1. The Hebrew name for Obadiah means “servant of Yahweh” or “worshiper of Yahweh.”
2. Obadiah’s message is the shortest of the Old Testament prophets, only 21 verses long. It is a message against the nation of Edom (v. 1-9).
3. When Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C., the Edomites rejoiced over Israel’s downfall. They gloated over the people in distress. Like vultures they rushed to devour what the Babylonians had left of the nation of Israel. For this reason, Obadiah pronounces God’s judgment and curse upon Edom.
4. The time for the writing of Obadiah was right after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., probably in 585 B.C. This was right after Jerusalem was defeated and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2 Kings 24,25). During this time of the destruction of Jerusalem scripture gives numerous accounts of the Edomites gloating over the Jews (Ps. 137:7; Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 25:12-14, 35:5, 10-15, 36:5; Obadiah 12,13).

## **Outline of Obadiah**

1. Edom’s Punishment (v. 1-9)
2. Edom’s Sin (v. 10-14)
3. Guilt of the Nations (v. 15-16)
4. Judah’s Restoration (v. 17-21)

## **Message and Application of Obadiah**

1. God is not amused when people or nations mistreat, laugh at, gloat over, etc. his people (v.10-14). Hostility toward God’s family insures similar confrontation with God (v.15).
2. Are there any nations hostile to the people of God at this time? In what ways?
3. Do you know anyone that boast about not being like Christians; about not being active in the church or loyal to God; about not needing to be obedient to God’s commands; and about not needing to pray since God won’t help? The prophecy of Obadiah may be what they need.
4. God has said, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay” (Rom. 12:19). Let us therefore trust God to right all wrongs and determine to be patient with God’s justice system. God’s character will not allow our enemies ultimate victory. Our Father in heaven will defend us, his children.
5. The Jews faced a time of intense destruction and captivity, justly deserved, yet not without hope of restoration (v.17-21). Regardless of how bad it gets or what everyone else says, our God still saves his people. Even when the world is set on fire, the kingdom of God survives along with its children.
6. Reflect upon the Christ revealed by Obadiah: He is the judge of the nations (v.15-16), the Savior of his people (v.17-20), and the Head of the kingdom (v.21). Consider also the source of Obadiah’s authority (v.18).

## **Introduction to Jonah**

1. For what it is worth, the name Jonah is the Hebrew word for “dove.”
2. Jonah prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel who reigned from 782-753 B.C. (Jonah 1:1; 2 Kings 14:25). Thus, Jonah prophesied after the time of Elisha and before the time of Amos and Hosea.
3. He was commissioned by God to preach to the city of Nineveh (1:2; 3:2) a city located in present-day Iraq.
4. Is this story recorded in the book of Johan a myth? Consider 2 Kings 14:25; Matt. 12:39-41; Luke 11:29, 30.

## **Outline of Jonah**

1. Jonah’s first commission and flight from duty (1-2)
2. Jonah’s second commission and preaching at Nineveh (3)
3. Jonah’s anger and God’s mercy (4)

## **Message and Applications of Jonah**

1. Nineveh was a Gentile city of Assyria, northeast of where God’s people were located (1:1-2). It shows God’s concern not only for the Ninevites but for every ethnic group throughout the world (Matt. 28:29; Rev. 7:9, 10; 15:4). Since the book of Jonah is given to remind God’s people of his mission among the nations, what then are our responsibilities in God’s mission to the nations? (Consider 1 Pet. 2:9; Ps. 2:8; Matt. 6:10, 28:29.)
2. Jonah disobeys God and heads to Tarshish (1:3). Why would Jonah be so reluctant to preach to the Ninevites? In what ways must we guard against being like Jonah?
3. Jonah’s efforts to thwart God’s plan are futile (1:4-2:10). This whole experience is a powerful reminder of the sovereignty of God over every circumstance. Conditions never have to be “just right” for God to act.
4. What is meant by the term “vain idols” (2:8)? Salvation only comes from God (2:9).
5. Jonah’s proclamation produced the greatest revival of all time (3:1-10). What can man do to produce revival?
6. God uses a plant, a worm and a wind to teach Jonah about caring for people. The message forces us to evaluate our concern contrasted with God’s (4:9-11). Is our concern for physical comfort or lost souls? If our concern does not match God’s concern, our repentance is more of a problem than the repentance of Nineveh.