

Obadiah

The Authorship and Dating

Obadiah is recognized as the author the book that bears his name (1:1). The name Obadiah is used some twenty times throughout the Old Testament and only once in this prophecy itself. Nothing is known about this man, other than his association with Judah,¹ and any link to one of the other nineteen occurrences in the OT is futile.

Concerning the dating of Obadiah, speculation abounds. Two primary dates have been forwarded, 845 B.C. and 586 B.C.. With respect to the later date some believe that Obadiah 11-14 is representative of the Babylonian invasion in 586 B.C..² However, the statements in Obadiah describe a period of defeat without naming directly the conqueror. However, initial proposed date of 845 B.C., a time associated the reign of Jehoram, is proposed³ for the following reasons: 1) Obadiah names Edom and Philistia as Judah's enemies and not Babylon (19). This is in keeping with King Jehoram's late 9th century B.C. reign (2 Kings 8:20-22). 2) Obadiah indicates that Jews were deported to Zerephath and Sephard (845 B.C.) and not to Babylon (586 B.C.). 3) Joel 2:32 may also be a quote from Obadiah demanding writing before the 6th century. 4) There is evidence that Jeremiah may have borrowed from Obadiah in the early 6th century B.C. (Jer 49:7-22) demanding a previously noted writing. Given the evidence an 845 B.C. dating of Obadiah is most probable.

The Recipients

Obadiah gave this message to Judah concerning the coming Judgment of Edom.

The Purpose

The message of Obadiah served to give Judah encouragement by reminding them that God will avenge their suffering. The book also served a secondary purpose providing Edom with a stern warning concerning their sin and subsequent need for repentance.

The Message

The prophet's words open quickly into judgment describing the Lord's gathering of nations against Edom (1-2). The prophet further indicated that Edom's pride had left them out of touch with reality and completely vulnerable (3-6). Obadiah declared that confederate nations would deceive Edom and defeat them (7-9). The prophet then identified Edom's rejoicing over their brother's calamity as the specific reason for their coming judgment (10-16). The prophet explained that eventually the Hebrew nation would own the cities of Edom (17-21). Through this message the prophet warned the Edomites and encouraged the Hebrew people.

Theme

The Judgment of Edom

¹ Charles Dyer & Eugene Merrill, *Nelson's Old Testament Survey*, ed. Charles R. Swindoll & Roy B. Zuck(Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001). 765.

² Bill T. & Bryan T. Beyer Arnold, *Encountering the Old Testament*(Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). 452.

³ Gleason L. Jr. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*(Chicago: Moody Press, 1994). 332. Merrill. 766.

Outline of Obadiah

I. God will bring Judgment on the Descendents of Esau 1-16

A. The Announcement of Esau's Judgment 1-2

B. The Manner of Esau's Judgment 3-9

1. God will Judge their Pride 3-6
 - a. Esau will be deceived by their own pride 3
 - b. God will bring them Low 4
 - c. God will utterly destroy their treasures 5-6
2. God will Remove their Wise 7-9
 - a. Esau will be deceived by their allies 7
 - b. Esau will be deceived because God will remove their wise 8-9

C. The Reason for Esau's Judgment 10-16

1. God will Judge Esau because they saw violence against their brother and did nothing 10-11
2. God will Judge Esau because they spoke arrogantly during their brother's trouble 12.
3. God will Judge Esau because they profited at the expense of their brother 13-14
4. God will Judge Esau because He is going to judge all unrighteousness 15-16.

II. God will Bring Restoration to the Descendants of Jacob 17-21

A. God's Deliverer will empower Jacob to Conquer 17-18

B. God's Rulers will Govern all of Jacob's Enemies 19-21

Bibliography

Archer, Gleason L. Jr. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1994.

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