



PRECEPT
UPON
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English Standard Version

*Spare Your
People,
Lord*

A STUDY OF
OBADIAH AND JOEL

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®
English Standard Version
KINGS AND PROPHETS SERIES
Course 4
SPARE YOUR PEOPLE, LORD
A STUDY OF OBADIAH AND JOEL

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—English Standard Version

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013

Hebrew Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

GAEBELIEN, FRANK E.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 4

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 1990

GARRET, D. A.

The New American Commentary, Volume 19A

Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997

KEIL, C. F.; DELITZSCH, F.

Commentary on the Old Testament

Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers Inc. 1996

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

Logos Bible Software

Powerful search engines and up to 4,000 electronic Bible study resources (commentaries, lexicons, Bible dictionaries, etc.) make it fast and easy to do simple and complex searches of multiple sources, then pull materials together for orderly presentation—excellent for word and topical studies based on English or original Hebrew and Greek.

Available at www.logos.com.



THE PROPHETS TO THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

God knows our frame; we are but dust. Yet He promises us that we won't be tempted beyond our ability. He has given us His Word—of power, life, and blessing to those who trust and obey.

Before Israel had a king, God set the standards and He warned what would happen if His people did not listen. In Deuteronomy 17, kings were warned not to acquire many wives so that their hearts would not turn away from God.

Solomon did not listen and the consequences were disastrous. His many wives from other countries brought idols with them and “Solomon clung to these in love.” The one called “beloved of the Lord, the builder of God's holy temple,” turned away from God and toward the gods of his wives. His heart was no longer totally devoted to the Lord his God as the heart of David his father had been. As prophesied, the Lord tore the kingdom in two, giving ten tribes into the hands of Jeroboam, Solomon's servant.

Solomon's death marked the end of an era (the monarchy). The stage for Israel's division and moral decline was set. Jeroboam took the throne of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) while Rehoboam, Solomon's son, became the king of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) with Jerusalem as its capital.

To secure the loyalty of his people and keep them from going to Jerusalem three times a year to celebrate the seven annual feasts, Jeroboam fashioned two golden calves (putting them in Dan and Bethel), instituted new feasts, and consecrated priests not from the tribe of Levi.

From there it was all downhill for Israel. The people played the harlot with their many idols. Eventually Judah followed her sister's ways.

God could not remain silent. He raised up prophets to warn His people of the dire consequences of abandoning His ways. Among them were Obadiah and Joel. Each had a unique message for a particular audience at a particular time that would reach into the millennia.

As you will learn when you study Amos, God does nothing without revealing His secret counsel to His servants, the prophets.

His message to the kings and nations of old is no less relevant today. He still calls out to us—to nations and to individuals. Let His Word illumine your circumstances, pierce your heart, shape your thinking, and impel you toward a life of true worship.

If you have wandered from His love, strayed from the path of obedience, been wooed away from worshipping God in spirit and truth, then hear His call to return to Him. Your heavenly Father waits with open arms. May His message find its mark in your heart.



NEWCOMERS TO PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT BIBLE STUDIES

Welcome to Precept Upon Precept Inductive Bible studies. We are excited that you will be studying with us! Inductive Bible study draws you into personal interaction with God and His Word, so that your beliefs are based on a prayerful observation and understanding of the Scriptures—truth that can transform your life. May the Lord bless you richly as you delve into the treasures of His Word.

The following will be helpful to you as you begin your studies:

Observing the Text

In these lessons, you will be asked to observe Scripture, marking key words or phrases in the particular passage you are observing. These key words or phrases will help unlock your understanding of the text.

For help on types of literature, read number 3 of the chapter “Getting the Big Picture,” in *How to Study Your Bible* by Kay Arthur, David Arthur, and Pete DeLacy.

For help on marking key words, read number 7 of the chapter “Getting the Big Picture,” in *How to Study Your Bible* or Step 3 in the section “How to Use the Inductive Study Approach” at the beginning of the *New Inductive Study Bible (NISB)*.

There are suggested markings for key words in the *NISB* on page *NISB-26* which you may find beneficial also, but in any case, devise a marking system that works best for you.

- You will find advantageous to keep your markings simple; colors and color combinations being the easiest as it does not put too many symbols on the page.
- When you have several things to mark, it is helpful to read the chapter more than once, marking a couple of words each time.

As you observe the text, you will also be asked to complete parts of an **At a Glance** chart. This chart provides space to list a theme for each chapter you study, as well as other main points concerning the book you are studying.

To learn how to do a word study, read chapter 5, “It’s All Greek to Me,” in *How to Study Your Bible*.

For help with your At a Glance chart, read numbers 9-11 of the chapter “Getting the Big Picture,” in *How to Study Your Bible* or Step 10 in the section “How to Use the Inductive Study Approach” at the beginning of the *New Inductive Study Bible (NISB)*.



When you have time, it would be beneficial for you to read the entire section on Observation, which is Part 1 in *How to Study Your Bible*. This will give you additional understanding of the principles of inductive Bible study.

We are so thankful you have joined us. You are about to begin a very exciting adventure that will help you discover truth for yourself as you have never done before. Just remember it takes time for these study skills to become “second” nature, but it will come with practice.

If you have any questions, call your Precept Leader for help. We are sure he/she will help you or connect you with another student who can. We also want to urge you to take our training workshops, which will teach you inductive study skills and give you an opportunity to practice them. There are also workshops to prepare you to lead Precept should God so direct. You can find out more about the training seminars by going online to www.precept.org.

Blessings, Beloved. Welcome to the Precept family.



Obadiah



OBADIAH

THIS LESSON
INCORPORATES

The following located in the Appendix:
Observation Worksheets on Obadiah
“Obadiah at a Glance”
“The Day of the Lord”
Observation Worksheet of Jeremiah 49:7-22
Cross-references
Word study

Have you ever watched arrogant people who say in their heart, “No one will ever bring me down”?

Can individuals or nations say that, live as they want, and not be brought down?

It’s a question we need to answer, because there are many today who are arrogant of heart.

DAY
ONE

Obadiah is only one chapter, yet because of its significance, we are going to devote an entire week to study it. Enjoy the leisure! By the way, if you didn’t read the introduction to this course, “The Prophets to the Kings of Israel and Judah,” please take a moment to read it. It will put you into context.

1. Since you are about to sit at the feet of your Creator and treasure His every word, you’ll want to begin with prayer, asking Him to do His cleansing work in you through the washing of the water of His Word. *“Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; give me life in your ways”* (Psalm 119:37).
2. Read Obadiah as many times as necessary using the Observation Worksheets in the Appendix in order to answer the following questions. Note the verses that give you the answers.
 - a. What kind of writing is this book? The book itself tells you; however, if you are not familiar with the types of literature that comprise the Word of God, the instructions for newcomers in the front of this book will tell you where to go for help. Then record your insights and give the reason for your answer.



- b. Who wrote this book?
 - c. To whom or about whom is this book?

 - d. What seems to be the general theme (subject) of this book?
3. Read Obadiah again, marking references to *Edom*. Include synonyms used for Edom such as *Esau* and *Teman* (a city in Edom) and pronouns. Genesis 25:25 and 30 suggest a color to mark Esau/Edom.
 4. Now let's see what Obadiah tells us about Edom. Like an investigator, examine every reference to Edom. See if it answers any of the 5 Ws and H about Edom: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

Examining the text this way will help you see what God wants you to know. In the following space, list what you learn about Edom. Listing observations helps you summarize and remember.



DAY
TWO

1. After prayer, read Obadiah again, looking for any other individuals and groups mentioned. Who are they? List them.

2. Now, read Obadiah and mark
 - a. *the nations* (including synonyms and pronouns)
 - b. *Jacob* (including *Judah, Israel*, synonyms and pronouns)
 - c. *the day of the LORD* (This needs to be marked in a distinctive way throughout your Bible since it's a very important prophetic time.)
 - d. other references to time
 - e. geographical locations (don't miss references to God's holy mountain)
3. Now list what you learned from the text about:

The Nations	Jacob



4. You marked *Jacob (Israel, Judah)* and the *nations*. “The nations” refers to Gentiles, nations other than Israel. Now let’s locate Edom and Israel on the map at the end of this lesson. Note the nation or nations who presently occupy these territories. Write their names below.

You’re off to a great start! We have prayed for you. We know that if you will be faithful and do your part in this study, God will enrich you in all knowledge and wisdom, giving you His worldview on the nations and their relationship to His elect nation.

DAY THREE

1. Through careful observation, you saw that Edom was to be judged because of its violence to its brother, Jacob.

Before we go on in Obadiah, we want to make sure you understand who Edom is and its relationship to Israel. Read the following passages and summarize what you learn about Edom. While this might be a review for you, remember, review is part of the learning process, so approach the Scriptures with a humble spirit, asking God to teach you what He wants you to learn from examples of how He deals with people.

- a. Genesis 25:20-34

- b. Genesis 27:1-46

- c. Genesis 28:1-9



d. Genesis 32:1-21; 33:1-20; 36:1-9

e. Numbers 20:14-21

f. Deuteronomy 2:1-8

g. Deuteronomy 2:12

h. 1 Chronicles 18:9-13

i. 1 Kings 11:14-17

j. 1 Kings 22:45-47

k. 2 Kings 8:16-22



l. Psalm 137:7

m. Romans 9:10-13

n. Hebrews 12:15-17

2. How do these cross-references compare or shed greater light on God's vision regarding Edom?

That's enough for today, Beloved. Aren't you awed by how the Word of God is put together and by what you can learn when you are willing to do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, handling His Word accurately? Remember, you are studying the very words of God! Every word of God is pure, as silver refined in a furnace seven times—the number of completion.

DAY FOUR

Thank you for wanting to know every book of the Bible for yourself. We rejoice over your desire and discipline. It's one thing to desire something, another to discipline yourself to make it happen.

1. Let's begin our day by reading Obadiah 1-14. According to verses 8 and 9, what is going to happen on "that day"?



b. Isaiah 10:12

c. Jeremiah 50:29-32

d. Zephaniah 2:8-11

e. Malachi 4:1-6

7. Now, let's move from nations to individuals. What do you learn from the following about pride and the company it keeps?

a. Romans 1:28-32

b. 2 Timothy 3:1-7

8. From all you have seen, how do you define pride from God's perspective?



DAY
FIVE

1. Obadiah 11 says *strangers* carried off Jacob's wealth and Edom stood aloof as *foreigners* entered Jerusalem's gates. There is some debate about when these things took place—commentators are divided. Some believe they occurred during the reign of Jehoram (853-841 B.C.) when the Philistines and the Arabs invaded Jerusalem. Others think they refer to the Babylonian captivity (605-586 B.C.), which would give a later date to Obadiah's prophecy.
2. We have included an Observation Worksheet of Jeremiah 49:7-22 in the Appendix. It's interesting to study this passage in light of the timing of Obadiah's prophecy. Read Jeremiah 1:1-3 for the timing of Jeremiah's message. Then, as you read Jeremiah 49:7-22, mark references to *Edom*, *cities* of Edom, *nations*, and the *Lord*. List everything you learn about Edom and note how these compare to descriptions in Obadiah.

3. Obadiah verse 15 states that "the day of the LORD IS near upon all the nations." The day of the Lord is a common subject in prophecy. If you make a list of all you learn about the day of the LORD from each book of the Bible (Old *and* New Testaments), you will have a thorough, enlightening, and valuable topical study.

We have provided a chart in the Appendix, "The Day of the Lord" on which you can record what you learn as you study with us book by book. (If you have a *New Inductive Study Bible (NISB)*, you'll find a chart after Revelation).

Record what you learn from Obadiah about the day of the Lord.

4. What does God promise Israel in verses 17-21? How does "but" connect verses 17-21 to 15-16?



5. Now, let's take a look at what God says about the futures of Edom and the nations that come against Israel. As you read each passage, record some brief notes.
- a. Ezekiel 35—Read the whole chapter and note references to the timing of this prophecy. Remember, Mount Seir is where the sons of Esau lived.

 - b. Numbers 24:15-19

 - c. Isaiah 11:12-14

 - d. Amos 9:11-12

 - e. Malachi 1:2-5

 - f. Revelation 19:13-16

 - g. Zechariah 14:16-19

Doesn't this make you want to say, "Hallelujah—even so, come, Lord Jesus, come!"



6. Now, think through what you observed from the text. Does it seem there is still a future judgment for Esau/Edom?

7. In light of what you studied in this short prophecy, what do you think the central theme or message is? Record it on the “Obadiah at a Glance” chart, located in the Appendix.

You’ll see on the chart a place to record the themes of the six paragraphs of Obadiah. Determining the main idea in each paragraph and recording it on the chart will help you crystallize the content of the book and recall its message.

If you have an *NISB*, there is an *At a Glance* chart for each of the sixty-six books of the Bible. If you complete each one, you’ll have a summary table for quick reference in the future.
8. Finally, Beloved, what fundamental truths of Obadiah do you need to remember and live by?

“For, ‘Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; but my righteous one shall live by faith . . . ’ ” (Hebrews 10:37-38a).

By faith—not pride of heart.

“Let the insolent be put to shame, because they have wronged me with falsehood; as for me, I will meditate on your precepts” (Psalm 119:78).

Press on, faithful one!





OBADIAH

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom:

We have heard a report from the LORD,

and a messenger has been sent among the nations:

“Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!”

2 Behold, I will make you small among the nations;
you shall be utterly despised.

3 The pride of your heart has deceived you,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,
in your lofty dwelling,
who say in your heart,

“Who will bring me down to the ground?”

4 Though you soar aloft like the eagle,
though your nest is set among the stars,
from there I will bring you down,
declares the LORD.

5 If thieves came to you,
if plunderers came by night—
how you have been destroyed!—
would they not steal only enough for themselves?

If grape gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?

6 How Esau has been pillaged,
his treasures sought out!



- 7 All your allies have driven you to your border;
those at peace with you have deceived you;
they have prevailed against you;
those who eat your bread have set a trap beneath you—
you have no understanding.
- 8 Will I not on that day, declares the LORD,
destroy the wise men out of Edom,
and understanding out of Mount Esau?
- 9 And your mighty men shall be dismayed, O Teman,
so that every man from Mount Esau will be cut off by slaughter.
- 10 Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob,
shame shall cover you,
and you shall be cut off forever.
- 11 On the day that you stood aloof,
on the day that strangers carried off his wealth
and foreigners entered his gates
and cast lots for Jerusalem,
you were like one of them.
- 12 But do not gloat over the day of your brother
in the day of his misfortune;
do not rejoice over the people of Judah
in the day of their ruin;
do not boast
in the day of distress.
- 13 Do not enter the gate of my people
in the day of their calamity;
do not gloat over his disaster
in the day of his calamity;
do not loot his wealth
in the day of his calamity.



- 14 Do not stand at the crossroads
to cut off his fugitives;
do not hand over his survivors
in the day of distress.
- 15 For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations.
As you have done, it shall be done to you;
your deeds shall return on your own head.
- 16 For as you have drunk on my holy mountain,
so all the nations shall drink continually;
they shall drink and swallow,
and shall be as though they had never been.
- 17 But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape,
and it shall be holy,
and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions.
- 18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
and the house of Joseph a flame,
and the house of Esau stubble;
they shall burn them and consume them,
and there shall be no survivor for the house of Esau,
for the LORD has spoken.
- 19 Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau,
and those of the Shephelah shall possess the land of the Philistines;
they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria,
and Benjamin shall possess Gilead.
- 20 The exiles of this host of the people of Israel
shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath,
and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
shall possess the cities of the Negeb.
- 21 Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion
to rule Mount Esau,
and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.



OBADIAH AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Segment Divisions		Paragraph Themes
		Verses 1-4
		Verses 5-7
		Verses 8-9
		Verses 10-14
		Verses 15-18
		Verses 19-21



JEREMIAH 49:7-22

7 Concerning Edom.

Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Is wisdom no more in Teman?
Has counsel perished from the prudent?
Has their wisdom vanished?

8 “Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Dedan!
For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
the time when I punish him.

9 “If grape-gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves came by night,
would they not destroy only enough for themselves?

10 “But I have stripped Esau bare;
I have uncovered his hiding places,
and he is not able to conceal himself.
His children are destroyed, and his brothers,
and his neighbors; and he is no more.

11 “Leave your fatherless children; I will keep them alive;
and let your widows trust in me.”

12 For thus says the LORD: “If those who did not deserve to drink the cup
must drink it, will you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished,
but you must drink.

13 “For I have sworn by myself, declares the LORD, that Bozrah shall
become a horror, a taunt, a waste, and a curse, and all her cities shall be
perpetual wastes.”

14 I have heard a message from the LORD,
and an envoy has been sent among the nations:
“Gather yourselves together and come against her,
and rise up for battle!



- 15 “For behold, I will make you small among the nations,
despised among mankind.
- 16 “The horror you inspire has deceived you,
and the pride of your heart,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,
who hold the height of the hill.
Though you make your nest as high as the eagle’s,
I will bring you down from there,
declares the LORD.
- 17 “Edom shall become a horror. Everyone who passes by it will be
horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters.
- 18 “As when Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities were
overthrown, says the LORD, no man shall dwell there, no man shall
sojourn in her.
- 19 “Behold, like a lion coming up from the jungle of the Jordan against a
perennial pasture, I will suddenly make him run away from her. And I
will appoint over her whomever I choose. For who is like me? Who will
summon me? What shepherd can stand before me?
- 20 “Therefore hear the plan that the LORD has made against Edom and the
purposes that he has formed against the inhabitants of Teman: Even the
little ones of the flock shall be dragged away. Surely their fold shall be
appalled at their fate.
- 21 “At the sound of their fall the earth shall tremble; the sound of their cry
shall be heard at the Red Sea.
- 22 “Behold, one shall mount up and fly swiftly like an eagle and spread his
wings against Bozrah, and the heart of the warriors of Edom shall be in
that day like the heart of a woman in her birth pains.”



THE DAY OF THE LORD	
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Purpose Why Does It Come?	
What Happens? How Is It Described?	
Who Is Involved?	
Timing When Does It Occur?	



THE DAY OF THE LORD		Timing When Does It Occur?	
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