

SUMMARY

No human effort can save the guilty nation from God's destructive power. Rock fortresses, impregnable mountains, narrow mountain gorges, dependable allies and proud warriors cannot avail. When the Lord has decreed a nation's destruction nothing can change that except repentance.

Edom's crafts were to be baffled, her rich storehouse plundered, her power broken, her wise men killed, her pride humbled, and her name to be forgotten. Her national defense program couldn't save the nation. The consequences of Solomon's truth, that "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34) had caught up with the Edomites.

How badly the U.S. needs to learn that our national safety isn't found in our material possessions but rather in our moral professions. We are making the same mistake that Edom made hundreds of years before the birth of Christ. We try to find strength and comfort in our guns, nuclear weapons, submarines and lasers. These will not save a nation guilty of terrible sins. The enemy destroying America isn't without but within. It is the moral corruption in our society that plagues us.

We must remember that our hope is in God.

The Bible speaks a great deal about pride. It tells us that human pride goes before \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 16:18).

"A man's pride shall bring \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 29:23).

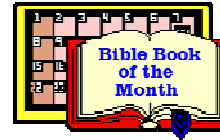
"When pride cometh, then cometh \_\_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 11:2).

"Therefore pride \_\_\_\_\_ them about as a \_\_\_\_\_"

(Psalms 73:6).

Obadiah told Edom, "The pride of thine heart \_\_\_\_\_ thee" (v.3). "Everyone that is proud in heart is an \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord" (Proverbs 16:5). "God resisteth the proud, but giveth \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_."

Many teams have lost the game when they became over-confident. Nations have fallen when they became over-confident. Pride leads to self-sufficiency and soon sees no place for God. Thus we begin to rule Him out of our schools and government and our daily life. But human pride is soon brought low by divine retribution.

**OBADIAH**

Lesson # 1

**EDOM'S PRIDE OF HEART****Introduction**

The book of Obadiah is not well known today, yet it contains powerful lessons for our day. It is the only one-chapter book in the Old Testament and contains only 21 verses.

The book can be outlined like this:

- I. The Doom of Edom, vs. 1-9
- II. The Denunciation of Edom, vs. 10-14
- III. The Destruction of Edom, vs. 15-16
- IV. The Deliverance of Jacob, vs. 17-21

The occasion of the book is some recent sack of Jerusalem by the Philistines and Arabians in which Edom had aided and abetted. She had encouraged Judah's foes, enjoyed Judah's fall, and enslaved Judah's fugitives. The book serves not only to warn Edom but to comfort Judah.

Verses 1-2. The conspiracy being planned against Edom in battle is God-sent. Edom is going to have to pay for her sins. The tense of verse two is sometimes called the "prophetic perfect" because the event is so sure to come to pass that it is already described in the "past" tense.

**BACKGROUND ON EDOM**

The Edomite people were a rough and tough group of mountain people. They lived in the desert-mountain region of Mt. Seir, reaching from south of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah. They carved great protective fortresses in the rock mountains and canyons. Their principle city was Sela (Hebrew), or Petra (Greek), which simply meant "The Rock" and was carved out of the side of the mountains. The rose-red, orange and yellow mountain walls made Petra a colorful stronghold.

**1. EDOM TRUSTED HER FORTIFICATIONS (v. 3-4)**

Nestled in the cliffs high above the plains they likened themselves to the eagle which made its nest in the heights of the mountains. The entrance into the city was through a narrow canyon more than a mile in length with vertical walls of six and seven hundred feet high and often not more than six to thirty feet apart. Here just a few men could hold off an

entire army. The Edomites thought their city was impregnable! They thought they would never be brought down!

Verses 3-4. Because of their smug, secure position they became filled with pride. The boasted, "who shall bring me down to the ground?" But the prophet said that their pride had deceived them! They thought that they could deal with their enemies; the powerful nations of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians. The only problem is that they were not now dealing with the powers of the world but with the power of God.

The destiny, doom, and deliverance of nations are in the hands of God; it is He who determines "their appointed seasons and bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). He alone has the power to build up or to debase and cast down.

[Q-1 If God decides to bring us down will our fortifications deter Him? Our fortifications are only good for how long? ]

## 2. EDOM TRUSTED IN HER TREASURES (v. 5-6)

At this time Edom was the center of caravan routes from Egypt to the north, and from the eastern deserts to the ports on the Mediterranean. She used the numerous caves in Petra as storehouses for the merchandise that was traded.

The prophet points to how thoroughly Edom would be ravaged (v.5) without anything left and how her treasures would be searched out and carried away (v.6).

A nation may have many treasures and natural resources which are blessings from God, but they can be depleted and the nation come to poverty.

[Q-2 How could this happen to America? ]

## 3. EDOM TRUSTED IN HER ALLIES AND FRIENDS (v.7)

The time would come when the confederates of Edom would expel her ambassadors. The nations that she had peace treaties with would deceive her and turn against her.

One of the greatest problems in the political world is trying to figure out who your "real" friends are. America is learning you can't buy friends.

[Q-3 Are these "national" lessons also true on the individual level? Illustrate or give examples of this truth, politically and individually. ]

Well, who can we trust? Where can we find friends that we can count on? In time of trouble, where can we go? Edom was deceived by trusting in human help who would desert her in time of need.

## 4. EDOM TRUSTED IN HER WISDOM AND WISE MEN (v.8)

The Edomites were known for their wisdom and cunning. At the time of Jesus' birth the land of Judea was ruled by Herod the Great who was of Edomite descent, and called Idumaeen. The Lord referred to the Herod who killed John the Baptist as "that Fox" (Luke 13:32) which was a reference to the wisdom and cunning the Idumaeans were noted for.

But the Lord says there would come a time when such wise men and wisdom would be destroyed among them, and they could not be counted on to bring Edom deliverance.

Aren't we also living in a time when we think our "wise men" and science, our wisdom and knowledge gives us an edge in the world?

[Q-4 What should we understand as God's warning to us from this?]

[Q-5 If we can't count on our "wisdom" and "learning," on what can we count? ]

## 5. EDOM TRUSTED IN HER "MIGHTY MEN" (warriors) (v.9)

In the final analysis Edom trusted that her mighty army of strong warriors would be able to defend her against any and every foe. Obadiah calls out that "Teman," one of the mighty cities of the Edomites, would be dismayed in seeing her mighty men slaughtered.

It appears that Edom thought she was prepared for any foe, and overlooked the truth that when God was ready to bring her down, He could. It didn't matter what size army or how brave they were, when the Lord is ready to chastise a nation He can do it!

[Q-6 Again, what is the obvious lesson we in the United States should learn from this truth? ]

[Q-7 Just how strong are we as a nation? What is our best source of defense? ]