

PRECEPT
UPON
PRECEPT

*Spare Your
People, Lord*

A STUDY OF OBADIAH AND JOEL

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

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994

Hebrew Word Study Tools

(The following is a list of helpful Hebrew Word Study Tools:)

HARRIS, R. LAIRD; ARCHER, GLEASON L. JR.; WALTKE, BRUCE K.

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980

ZODHIATES, SPIROS

The Complete Word Study Old Testament

Chattanooga, Tennessee: AMG Publishers, 1994

BAKER, WARREN; CARPENTER, EUGENE

The Complete Word Study Dictionary, Old Testament

Chattanooga, Tennessee: AMG Publishers, 2003

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

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 multiply 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 held fast 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 worshiping 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.

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 through 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)*.

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Newcomers Introduction

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 course on *How to Study Your Bible* or the one on *Studying and Leading Precept*. The latter session will not only teach you the basic skills and give you an opportunity to practice them, it will help 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” chart
“The Day of the Lord” chart
Observation Worksheet on Jeremiah 49:7-22
Cross-references
Word studies

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 away my eyes from looking at vanity, and revive me in Your ways”* (Psalm 119:37).
2. Read through 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 through Obadiah again, marking references to *Edom*. Include synonyms used for Edom such as *Esau* and *Temán* (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.

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Obadiah

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

1. 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 study to show yourself approved unto God, 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 1:1-14. According to verses 8 and 9, what is going to happen on "that day"?

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 on Jeremiah 49:7-22 in the Appendix. It's interesting to study this passage in the light of the timing of Obadiah's prophecy. Read Jeremiah 1:1-3 for the timing of Jeremiah's message. Then, as you read through 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 draws near on 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 on "The Day of the Lord" where 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).

Let's inaugurate this chart by recording 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?

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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 three 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 in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. But My righteous one shall live by faith...” (Hebrews 10:37-38a).

By faith—not arrogance of heart.

“May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie; but I shall meditate on Your precepts” (Psalm 119:78).

Press on, faithful one!

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Spare Your People, Lord
Obadiah



OBADIAH 1
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom—

We have heard a report from the LORD,

And an envoy has been sent among the nations *saying*,

“Arise and let us go against her for battle”—

2 “Behold, I will make you small among the nations;

You are greatly despised.

3 “The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,

You who live in the clefts of the rock,

In the loftiness of your dwelling place,

Who say in your heart,

‘Who will bring me down to earth?’

4 “Though you build high like the eagle,

Though you set your nest among the stars,

From there I will bring you down,” declares the LORD.

5 “If thieves came to you,

If robbers by night—

O how you will be ruined!—

Would they not steal *only* until they had enough?

If grape gatherers came to you,

Would they not leave *some* gleanings?

6 “O how Esau will be ransacked,

And his hidden treasures searched out!

7 “All the men allied with you

Will send you forth to the border,

And the men at peace with you

Will deceive you and overpower you.

They who eat your bread

Will set an ambush for you.

(There is no understanding in him.)

- 8 “Will I not on that day,” declares the LORD,
“Destroy wise men from Edom
And understanding from the mountain of Esau?”
- 9 “Then your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman,
So that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by
slaughter.
- 10 “Because of violence to your brother Jacob,
You will be covered *with* shame,
And you will 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 gate
And cast lots for Jerusalem—
You too were as one of them.
- 12 “Do not gloat over your brother’s day,
The day of his misfortune.
And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah
In the day of their destruction;
Yes, do not boast
In the day of *their* distress.
- 13 “Do not enter the gate of My people
In the day of their disaster.
Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity
In the day of their disaster.
And do not loot their wealth
In the day of their disaster.
- 14 “Do not stand at the fork of the road
To cut down their fugitives;
And do not imprison their survivors
In the day of their distress.

- 15 “For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations.
As you have done, it will be done to you.
Your dealings will return on your own head.
- 16 “Because just as you drank on My holy mountain,
All the nations will drink continually.
They will drink and swallow
And become as if they had never existed.
- 17 “But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape,
And it will be holy.
And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions.
- 18 “Then the house of Jacob will be a fire
And the house of Joseph a flame;
But the house of Esau *will be* as stubble.
And they will set them on fire and consume them,
So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau,”
For the LORD has spoken.
- 19 Then *those of* the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau,
And *those of* the Shephelah the Philistine *plain*;
Also, possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria,
And Benjamin *will possess* Gilead.
- 20 And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel,
Who are *among* the Canaanites as far as Zarephath,
And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
Will possess the cities of the Negev.
- 21 The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion
To judge the mountain of Esau,
And the kingdom will be the LORD’S.

OBADIAH AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Segment Divisions		Paragraph Themes
		Verses 1-9
		Verses 10-14
		Verses 15-21

JEREMIAH 49:7-22

- 7 Concerning Edom.
Thus says the LORD of hosts,
“Is there no longer any wisdom in Teman?
Has good counsel been lost to the prudent?
Has their wisdom decayed?
- 8 “Flee away, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Dedan,
For I will bring the disaster of Esau upon him
At the time I punish him.
- 9 “If grape gatherers came to you,
Would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves *came* by night,
They would destroy *only* until they had enough.
- 10 “But I have stripped Esau bare,
I have uncovered his hiding places
So that he will not be able to conceal himself;
His offspring has been destroyed along with his relatives
And his neighbors, and he is no more.
- 11 “Leave your orphans behind, I will keep *them* alive;
And let your widows trust in Me.”
- 12 For thus says the LORD, “Behold, those who were not sentenced to drink the cup will certainly drink *it*, and are you the one who will be completely acquitted? You will not be acquitted, but you will certainly drink *it*.
- 13 “For I have sworn by Myself,” declares the LORD, “that Bozrah will become an object of horror, a reproach, a ruin and a curse; and all its cities will become perpetual ruins.”
- 14 I have heard a message from the LORD,
And an envoy is sent among the nations, *saying*,
“Gather yourselves together and come against her,
And rise up for battle!”

- 15 “For behold, I have made you small among the nations,
Despised among men.
- 16 “As for the terror of you,
The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,
O you who live in the clefts of the rock,
Who occupy the height of the hill.
Though you make your nest as high as an eagle’s,
I will bring you down from there,” declares the LORD.
- 17 “Edom will become an object of horror; everyone who passes by it will
be horrified and will hiss at all its wounds.
- 18 “Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors,” says
the LORD, “no one will live there, nor will a son of man reside in it.
- 19 “Behold, one will come up like a lion from the thickets of the Jordan
against a perennially watered pasture; for in an instant I will make him
run away from it, and whoever is chosen I shall appoint over it. For
who is like Me, and who will summon Me *into court*? And who then is
the shepherd who can stand against Me?”
- 20 Therefore hear the plan of the LORD which He has planned against
Edom, and His purposes which He has purposed against the inhabitants
of Teman: surely they will drag them off, *even* the little ones of the
flock; surely He will make their pasture desolate because of them.
- 21 The earth has quaked at the noise of their downfall. There is an outcry!
The noise of it has been heard at the Red Sea.
- 22 Behold, He will mount up and swoop like an eagle and spread out His
wings against Bozrah; and the hearts of the mighty men of Edom in that
day will be like the heart of a woman in labor.

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