

Introduction to Obadiah

The shortest Old Testament book

The history of Edom (Gen.36:8-9)

Esau

Mountains of “Seir”—the name of a Horite chief (Deut.2:12)

Capital: Sela (Petra)

Perennially hostile to Israel (e.g., Num.20:14-22)

Time of writing uncertain. A time when Edom had participated with others in the plunder of Jerusalem (vv.13-14; cf., Psalm137:7). Suggested options:

1. The reign of Jehoram, 850-843 BC (2 Chron.21:8, 16, 17; Amos 1:6)
2. The reign of Amaziah 803-775 BC (2 Chron.25:11, 12, 23, 24)
3. The reign of Ahaz 741-726 BC (2 Chron.28:16-21)
4. The reign of Zedekiah 597-586 BC (2 Chron.36:11-21)

The latter is the opinion of many conservative scholars.

Similarities (1-5) with Jeremiah 49:9, 14-16) may suggest similar time of writing (possibly slightly later, echoing Jeremiah), just as similarities between Micah 4 and Isaiah 2 reflect contemporary messengers.

Prediction:

1. Edom shall be “cut off forever” and be “as if it had never been” (vv.10, 16, 18) Mal.1:3-4
2. Judah will be saved (17, 19, 21)

Fulfillment:

1. In 582 BC, just four years after Jerusalem fell, the Babylonians also raided and desolated Edom. The region was then taken over by Nabatheans (Arabs).

Surviving Edomites dwelt four centuries in Southern Judea. One of the Maccabbean rulers, John Hyrcanus, subdued them in 126 BC, absorbing them into the Jewish State. Edomites eventually ceased to exist as a distinct race, the last of which were the Herodian Family, who were placed in control over Judah when the Romans conquered the region, in 63 BC..

2.

Features:

Hyperbole

“day”

theme of God’s sovereignty

Impregnable fortresses are no match for Yahweh

Poetic Justice: God settling scores “vengeance is mine!”

Outline

- I. Intro (1)
- II. Doom of Edom (2-15)
 - A. First oracle: Prideful false security (2-4)
 - B. Second oracle: Total depopulation (5-7)
 - C. Third oracle: The wise and the mighty destroyed (8-9)
 - D. Fourth Oracle: God’s complaint (10-15)
 1. You stood on the wrong side (10-11)
 2. Took delight in seeing Jacob plundered (12)
 3. Entered and plundered the city (13)
 4. Opposed and captures refugees (14)
- III. The tables turned (15-21)