



Obadiah

Jesus Christ, Our Savior

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Meaning of the Name

The opening verses of prophetic books often contain some information about the time in which the prophet lived, an indication of his home town, and the name of his father. None of this is provided for Obadiah.

Even his exact name is a matter of debate. The Hebrew name means "worshiper of Yahweh." However, if read with different vowels it takes the meaning "servant of Yahweh."

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1

F-L-I-G-H-T

F – Little is known about the author of the book of Obadiah besides his name.

That Obadiah prophesied against the Edomites provides the only clue to when his book was written. Edom fell to Babylon in 553 BC, so Obadiah most likely recorded his prophecy before that date – typically thought to be anywhere between 840-553 BC.

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2

F-L-I-G-H-T

L – Obadiah's brief vision from the Lord was directed to Edom, also known as Esau (the brother of Jacob, son of Isaac). Obadiah warned against pride and retaliation against the Lord's chosen people, and also described how possessions and position will ultimately count for nothing on the day of the Lord.

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3

F-L-I-G-H-T

I

-God's Pronouncement Against
Israel's Rival (1-16)

-God's Promise of Israel's
Revival (17-21)

F-L-I-G-H-T

G – We can see redemption's scarlet thread in Obadiah by jumping ahead to NT times and comparing two very different kings. Herod was an Idumean-one of the remaining descendants of Edom. He nicknamed himself "the Great," but we know him primarily for killing babies in Bethlehem in a manic hunt for the Christ child. His successor, Herod Antipas, had John the Baptist beheaded.

F-L-I-G-H-T

G – executed for condemning Antipas's marriage to his former sister-in-law Herodias. He wasn't about to let the truth of God stand in the way of his own lust – much like the sinful Edomites of old. In sort, the Herod family motto could be summed up as, "What's in it for me?" Antipas faced off against the other king – the King of the Jews, Jesus Christ – taking part in the trial before his crucifixion.

F-L-I-G-H-T

G – But Jesus' motto was, "What's in it for you?" His philosophy centered on doing what was necessary to get you right with God. The Herods planned only for themselves – typical Edomite in their pride and arrogance. But Jesus has a future and a hope planned for you. Even the extremely brief book of Obadiah, so focused on God's judgment of an unrepentant nation, points us to this glorious king.

F-L-I-G-H-T

H – While there is some uncertainty about the exact time period during which Obadiah wrote his book, we do know that the Jews and the Edomites had a long history of animosity. The Jews traced their lineage back to Jacob, while the Edomites traced their lineage to Jacob’s estranged twin brother, Esau. Because God chose Jacob over Esau to carry on his promises, tension and mistrust festered between the two groups for centuries.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **Obadiah’s message reminds us that God will defeat his enemies and establish his kingdom.** He is the mighty savior, extending mercy and grace to his people Israel, whom he delivered from Edom and will redeem in the last days.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **Pride leads to destruction (Prov. 16:18).** Edom’s greatest sin was pride: the people thought their stronghold and reputation for wisdom would protect them as they fed their feud with Israel that stretched back all the way to Jacob and Esau. But God held Edom accountable – and will hold present nations and peoples accountable – for unrepentantly abusing and persecuting his people, whether that be Israel or the church.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **God protects his people because of who he is, not who we are.** In Obadiah we see God stand up for and protect his people even though they were sinners, idolaters, and adulterers. When you feel far from God, don’t soak in the mire of your failure – take a step back toward him. He will always be there. Our God is faithful to finish what he started in us, and our salvation is perfectly secure in him.