

Gleanings of Grace

Obadiah and Nahum 1

Lesson 37

Unlike other declarations by the prophets against the nations of Northern and Southern Israel, Obadiah and Nahum contain pronouncements of judgment against the nations of Edom and Assyria (particularly its capital city of Nineveh). These nations had brought much harm to God's people. God proclaimed through his prophets that those nations would not go without judgment for their deeds. With the judgments proclaimed against His enemies, God has some sweet encouragements and promises for His people. He always does.

OBSERVATION: Obadiah

1. Read Obadiah using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns/titles that refer to *LORD* and *Esau/Edom*.
Key Words: *LORD, Edom/Esau, words that relate to Israel*, captive/captivity, affliction, and distress/calamity*
Words that relate to Israel* (besides pronouns) are: *brother, children of Judah/Israel, house of Jacob/Joseph, Mount Zion, Benjamin, and Jerusalem*
3. The contrasting word *but* is used three times in Obadiah. Mark the words. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.

Background:

1. Edom is a nickname for Jacob's twin brother, Esau. Read the account of his birth and conflict with his brother Jacob in Genesis 25:19-34. Summarize the events.

2. What happened when Israel came out of Egypt and wanted to pass through the land of the Edomites to enter into the Promised Land? Numbers 20:14-21
3. 2 Kings 8:20-22 describes another incident regarding Israel and Edom. In the days of King Joram, *Edom revolted against Judah's authority*. What does verse 22 state about their relationship?
4. Once again, during the reign of King Ahaz, we read of conflict with Edom. What is revealed in 2 Chronicles 28:17.
5. Summarize how you perceive the relationship between Israel and Edom.

Read Obadiah 1-9 - The Coming Judgment on Edom

1. Obadiah begins with God's warning of not only battle, but defeat. Scan through verses 2-9 and list some of the calamities God would perform against Edom.
 2. Record the source of their *deception* from verse 3.
 - a. *Pride* does not stand alone. Read the following verses and record things that accompany *pride*.
Proverbs 11:2
Proverbs 13:10
Proverbs 16:18
 - b. Why do you think God warns us so often about *pride*?
 - c. What are some examples of behaviors and choices provoked by *pride*?
3. Review the verses in this section of Obadiah. What are some things the people of Edom seemed to look to as sources of security?
 - a. What are some things you tend to look to?

1.) The opposite of *pride* is humility. Define humility.

a.) Why do you think humility is sometimes viewed as a weakness?

b.) What is the strength of humility?

Read Obadiah 10-16 - Edom's Mistreatment of His Brother

1. These verses address Edom (Esau) and Israel (Jacob) as brothers. Using the verses in this section, list the *violence* that *Edom* committed against his *brother*.

2. Consider these actions as you compare them to actions or feelings we might have against someone today. What are some similarities?
 - a. What are your thoughts as you consider the delight we have at times felt at the distress of another.

3. Note the phrase in verse 15, *as you have done, it shall be done to you*. Reflect upon God's fairness as you read Ezekiel 35:15. In addition to fairness, what does God remind them at the end of the verse?
 - a. What weight should this truth hold when you begin to doubt God's fairness?

 - b. Take a moment to express your gratitude that you receive grace rather than fairness from the LORD.

Read Obadiah 17-21 - Israel's Triumph

1. This section of Obadiah begins with the contrasting word, *but*. Prior to these verses, God was announcing judgment for a nation that had caused harm to His people. What did God promise would happen for His people, Israel?

2. What are your thoughts when you consider the heart of God for His people?

3. This section of Obadiah ends with the phrase, *and the kingdom shall be the LORD's*. Share a few words or phrases that you are looking forward to experiencing in His *kingdom*.

OBSERVATION: Nahum 1

1. Read Nahum 1 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns/titles that refer to *LORD*.

Key Words: *LORD, affliction/afflict/afflicted, and wicked*

3. The contrasting words *but* and *yet* are used two times in Nahum 1. Mark the words. Choose one instance of their use and record what is being contrasted.

Background:

1. Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria. Approximately 100 years prior to the writing of Nahum, the prophet Jonah was called to speak to the people of Nineveh. After Jonah relented and vowed to obey the LORD, Jonah 3 describes what happened. Describe the process using Jonah 3:2,3-5,8-10.
2. God did relent *from the disaster He had said He would bring upon them* (Jonah 3:10). Yet, they returned to their evil ways. Although God used the Assyrians to take Northern Israel captive, He in no way was turning a blind eye to their abuses of His people. Thus, in Nahum, we again discover judgment pronounced. What did Zephaniah 2:13 declare?

Read Nahum 1:1-11 – The Destruction of Nineveh

1. Nahum begins his prophecy by considering the character of the God who brings judgment. Using verses 2,3, and 7, list a few of the characteristics of the LORD.
 - a. Describe your understanding of the *jealousy* of the LORD.

2. Reflect upon the simple phrase in verse 7, *the LORD is good*. Describe His *goodness*.
 - a. Why was it important to declare the *goodness* of the LORD before declaring His judgment?
3. Nahum also rehearsed the power of God. Using verses 3-6, describe His power.
4. In proclaiming the forthcoming judgment upon Nineveh, Nahum used several powerful words to describe the coming devastation. What were they?
 - a. Describe the kind of attitude you think of when you observe a refusal to repent in light of such warnings.

Read Nahum 1:12-15 – The Deliverance of Zion

1. Nahum 1:12 contains the word *though* two times referring to the false assumptions we can make. What two statements followed the word *though*?
 - a. In contrast to what might be expected, what did God declare?
 - 1.) What did David write about the LORD in Psalm 18:17?
 - a.) Ponder on the phrase, *for they were too strong for me*. What assurance do you glean from this?
 - 2.) Describe God's intentions for His people as expressed in Isaiah 60:18-20.
2. According to Nahum 1:13, what did God promise to do?
 - a. In what ways has the *yoke* of your enemy, Satan, been broken since you became a believer?

3. As Nahum shifts from the proclamation of bad news for Nineveh to the proclamation of good news for Israel, he writes a portion of the words written by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 52:7. Nahum's words were regarding relief from their enemy; Isaiah's words were regarding the reign of Jesus. What additional praiseworthy promises did Isaiah proclaim?
4. Nahum closed chapter 1 with an exhortation to God's people to not give up, but to continue in obedience. In what ways does obedience reflect that we are not giving up?

REVIEW: Obadiah and Nahum 1

1. Based on God's dealings with the Edomites, how can we expect Him to judge nations today that rebel against Him, dominate others, or trust in their own strength and possessions?
2. What are your thoughts when you consider God's judgment?
3. Ponder God's viewpoint of the proclamation of His *good tidings*. What *good tidings* do believers have to *bring*?

*Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And declare His works with rejoicing.
- Psalm 107:22*

Observation Worksheet

Obadiah 1

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, saying, "Arise, and let us rise up against her for battle"): ² "Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be greatly despised. ³ The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; you who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' ⁴ Though you ascend as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," says the LORD. ⁵ "If thieves had come to you, if robbers by night-- Oh, how you will be cut off!-- Would they not have stolen till they had enough? If grape-gatherers had come to you, would they not have left some gleanings? ⁶ "Oh, how Esau shall be searched out! How his hidden treasures shall be sought after! ⁷ All the men in your confederacy shall force you to the border; the men at peace with you shall deceive you and prevail against you. Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you. No one is aware of it. ⁸ "Will I not in that day," says the LORD, "even destroy the wise men from Edom, and understanding from the mountains of Esau? ⁹ Then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau may be cut off by slaughter. ¹⁰ "For violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever. ¹¹ In the day that you stood on the other side-- in the day that strangers carried captive his forces, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem-- even you were as one of them. ¹² But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother in the day of his captivity; nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; nor should you have spoken proudly in the day of distress. ¹³ You should not have entered the gate of My people in the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity. ¹⁴ You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped; nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained in the day of distress. ¹⁵ "For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head. ¹⁶ For as you drank on My holy mountain, so shall all the nations drink continually; yes, they shall drink, and swallow, and they shall be as though they had never been. ¹⁷ "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. ¹⁸ The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the

house of Joseph a flame; but the house of Esau shall be stubble; they shall kindle them and devour them, and no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau," for the LORD has spoken. ¹⁹ The South shall possess the mountains of Esau, and the Lowland shall possess Philistia. They shall possess the fields of Ephraim and the fields of Samaria. Benjamin shall possess Gilead. ²⁰ And the captives of this host of the children of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath. The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the South. ²¹ Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

Nahum 1

The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. ² God is jealous, and the LORD avenges; the LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies; ³ the LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked. The LORD has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet. ⁴ He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, and the flower of Lebanon wilts. ⁵ The mountains quake before Him, the hills melt, and the earth heaves at His presence, yes, the world and all who dwell in it. ⁶ Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. ⁷ The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him. ⁸ But with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place, and darkness will pursue His enemies. ⁹ What do you conspire against the LORD? He will make an utter end of it. Affliction will not rise up a second time. ¹⁰ For while tangled like thorns, and while drunken like drunkards, they shall be devoured like stubble fully dried. ¹¹ From you comes forth one who plots evil against the LORD, a wicked counselor. ¹² Thus says the LORD: "Though they are safe, and likewise many, yet in this manner they will be cut down when he passes through. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more; ¹³ for now I will break off his yoke from you, and burst your bonds apart." ¹⁴ The LORD has given a command concerning you: "Your name shall be perpetuated no longer. Out of the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the molded image. I will dig your grave, for you are vile." ¹⁵ Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; he is utterly cut off.