

**PREPARATION FOR LESSON:** read the 1 chapter**BACKGROUND****Author and Date:** written by Obadiah during the Babylonian exile in the 580's BC**Theme:** The destruction of Edom**Purposes:** to reveal the national destruction of Edom; Edom will be taken off the map  
to reveal the national return of Judah; Judah will be put back on the map  
to warn God's people about the danger of bitterness**Scripture background:** Jeremiah 49:7-22; Ezekiel 35:1-15; Psalm 136**OUTLINE**  
The destruction of Edom 1:1-16  
The restoration of Judah 1:17-21**HISTORICAL SETTING****Present Politics** 585 – 580 BC

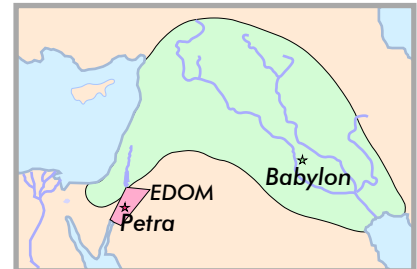
- *Babylon* controls the Middle East
- *Judah* has been destroyed as a nation; the people have been exiled to Babylon
- *Edom* is secure and prosperous in her land

She controls the southeastern crossroads of commerce that go thru her country - especially the King's Highway  
This allows her to collect tolls from every caravan and trader that uses the roads  
It gives her first choice of buying and selling; however the easiest is to ambush and rob them

Her capital of Petra (Sela) is safe from all attack

The only approach is thru a deep winding gorge more than a mile long, with massive cliffs that tower 300 feet high on either side. The gorge then narrows to just 6 feet wide. One or two people can easily defend the town from there. The gorge opens to a flat valley floor 1 mile by 3/4 mile. Petra itself is situated on the north side, on top of a large, shaggy cliff, giving it an eagle's nest view of the valley floor, 1000 feet below.  
Notice verses 3-4.

Her names: **Sela** - Hebrew for *rock/cliff*; **Mt. Seir** - Hebrew for *rough/shaggy*  
**Petra** - Greek for *rock/cliff*; **Edom** - Hebrew for *red*

**Past Events**

- **Genesis 25:24-26, 29-34; 27:1-41** Esau and Jacob were twin boys, born to Isaac and Rebecca  
Esau had the birthright: a double portion of the inheritance and responsibility for the clan physically and spiritually  
His descendants would inherit the Promised Land; his family would be the family line of Jesus  
Esau's other name was *Edom (Red)*; his descendants were the *Edomites* Gen. 36:43

When Esau rejected Yahweh God and Jacob followed God, the birthright needed to go to Jacob

Jacob legitimately bought it, but then used deceit to get his father's blessing that was also required

It was this deception that started a chain of events that lasted almost 2000 years

Jacob's other name was *Israel*; his descendants were the *Israelites* Gen. 36:31

- **Numbers 20:14, 17-21** 4-500 years after Jacob and Esau, the family feud had become a national feud  
Edom refused to let the Jews pass thru their land to get on the Kings Highway to the Promised Land
- **Psalm 137:7** 1200 years after Jacob and Esau  
A Jewish man, about to be exiled, sees and hears Edom's involvement in their national destruction  
From Babylon he writes a prayer asking God for justice - to punish Edom for her actions  
The book of Obadiah is God's response to that prayer; it is God's plans for Edom because of her injustice

**EXPLANATIONS****Why Edom is destroyed:** vss. 10-14

- Pride
- Violence against Judah: she was indifferent; gloated and rejoiced; looted; killed and captured Jews

**How Edom is destroyed by God** It will be ...

... made small, stripped of her possessions, betrayed by her allies, without strength and cunning,  
destroyed forever, treated as she treated Judah, without survivors, occupied by the Jews



**EXPLANATIONS:** *continued*

**How Edom is destroyed in history** over a period of 1000 years

538 BC - made small	Arab Nabateans drive many Edomites into southern Judah
450 BC - lost nation	All Edomites live either in southern Judah or Petra; no more control of King's Highway
312 BC - lost capital	Petra taken by the Nabateans and remains desolate forever; Edomites called Idumeans (Greek name)
125 BC - lost identity	Jewish leaders tell Edomites if they want to live on Jewish land, must live under Jewish laws
37 BC - continued conflict	Romans take control of area. They pick an Edomite to be puppet king over the Jews He is Herod the Great. His family continues thru Herod Antipas, Herod Agrippa I and II
70 AD - lost their lives	Edomites (Idumeans) killed along with the Jews by the Roman armies With the death of Herod Agrippa II in 100 AD, the evil dynasty comes to an end
663 AD - became extinct	Last of the Edomites are killed by the followers of Mohammed Edom is forgotten until the discovery of Petra in 1812 AD

**APPLICATION** *Watch out that no bitterness takes root among you...hurting many in their spiritual lives* Heb. 12:15 LB

**Bitterness** is unresolved anger.

**Anger** is a God-given emotion so we can respond to injustice, evil and things that are wrong (intentional sin against us).

We have all experienced deliberate wrong, evil or injustice that has hurt us deeply. It produces anger (*deep hurt*).

If we ignore, deny, excuse or "stuff" those feelings, it will affect our physical and mental health.

Unresolved anger will grow into a root of bitterness that will damage our spiritual lives.

It is why God has given us two kinds of personal forgiveness – one-sided and two-sided.

**Wrong concepts about forgiveness**

Forgiveness does not mean acceptance, overlooking, minimizing, forgetting, pretending nothing happened.

It does not require a close relationship, removal of consequences or acceptance of apologies that are manipulative.

**Two-sided forgiveness** After deliberate injustice, when both sides want to reconcile - *forgive as Christ forgave us*.

*Their part* - the guilty person (the one who caused the problem) has to admit their wrong and ask for our forgiveness.

*Our part* - we choose to no longer hold the injustice against them.

But, if the person is controlling or dangerous, we should not be friends or have a close relationship with them.

People with addictions use apologies for manipulation; their apologies are not genuine so we cannot accept them.

Even after forgiveness, we should hold people accountable and use the legal system when necessary.

When we are **intentionally** wronged, we are *not* to take the initiative – the guilty party must come to us.

(When we are **unintentionally** wronged, we take the initiative and go to them – Matthew 18).

**One-sided forgiveness** is to deal with deliberate injustice and **our** feelings when the other person will not admit it.

This is only possible if we have gotten away from the destructive person or situation and their influence.

- **Admit** to ourselves we need an apology, an admission of wrong or restitution. They owe it to us.

We can never be so spiritual to say wrong is right. There can be no healing if we cannot say they were wrong.

- **Accept** that we will never get the apology from them. They will never apologize or admit they were wrong.

- We **choose** to give up the right to **personally** get the apology or admission of wrong.

And then, the most important part of our healing and release...

- We **give** the injustice to God – we **ask Him** to collect the apology for us, either in this life or in eternity.

When the memory comes back to haunt us, picture the person kneeling before God, admitting their wrong.

Thank God for the justice **He** will get for you.

Because we know there will be an apology and justice in the future,  
we can let go of the person, event or memory.

**The book of Obadiah** is about bitterness and how it can destroy us as well as the people around us.

We can never escape deliberate injustice in this life.

But we **can** escape the root of bitterness, by using the provisions God has made for us.

