

## The Book of Obadiah.

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The shortest book of the Bible is the Book of Obadiah, consisting of one chapter, which contains twenty-one verses, and occupying one page. Indeed it is so brief that many church members are not aware of the fact that there is any such book, and many more who do not know what is its aim, object or purpose.

Little, if anything authentic, is known concerning the writer, or as to the date of his prophecy. A Hebrew tradition declares him to have been the Obadiah of Ahab's court, a mighty man in the palace of the infamous king, but there are no proofs to support this tradition. In regard to the date of this prophecy there is also doubt, although the eleventh verse would indicate that it was in the neighborhood of 600 years before Christ, because the captivity spoken of would seem to be the captivity of Nebuchadnezzar which occurred in the year 588.

We find the prophecy of Obadiah to be directed against Edom. The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom. It may not be presumptuous to speak a word concerning Edom, for it is not a difficult matter to find professed Christians who have no idea from whence Edom spring or her relations to Israel. Everyone, however, is familiar with the incident in the family of Isaac, when Esau sold his birthright to his brother Jacob for a mess of pottage, and from this we derived the name Edom, meaning red. God gave Esau a possession in the land of Mount Seir, directly south of the dead sea and an extremely mountainous region. Here it was that Jacob sent messengers to Esau because of his fear that Esau would be angry with him and would destroy both his family and himself. While the meeting between the brothers was a friendly one, yet there was bitterness in the heart of Esau which became instilled into his descendants so that they became bitter enemies of Israel, for when Israel was on the march from Egypt to the land of Canaan an attempt was made to pass through the land of Edom, and Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom instructed to address the king as follows: "Thus saith thy brother Israel, a very conciliatory message, bringing forcibly to the mind of the king of Edom the fact that Israel and Edom were of the same descent, in reality brothers. After dwelling while upon the condition of Israel in Egypt and their miraculous escape, and their journey, till they arrived at Kadesh, the uttermost border of Edom, he comes to the request that he would make for Israel. "Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country; we will not pass through thy fields or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of thy wells; we will go by the king's highway; we will not turn to the right hand or to the left, until we have passed thy borders." This reminder of brotherly ties, and assurance of utmost carefulness in passing through the land of Edom did not incline the king of Edom to grant their request, and he very plainly says to Israel, "Thou shalt not pass by me lest I come against thee with the sword." Then Israel replied that she would go by the highway, and would pay for whatever food and water might be required; but the reply of the king of Edom was the same, so Israel turned away from the land of Edom and from that day forward the bitterness of the strife between the two nations continued to increase. Edom prospered and became a nation of great power which was constantly exercised against Israel, so that Edom was looked upon by Israel as her greatest enemy, against whom her mightiest forces were every arrayed.

As we take the history of Israel and Edom into consideration we can understand how the wrath of God should be expressed against Edom through prophetic utterance, and a careful study of the prophecy will also reveal the fact that this prophecy against Edom, is a type of the wrath of God against all the enemies of Israel. Although they appear great and in strong fortresses, yet will they be brought low, and shorn of their power.

The vision of Obadiah concerning Edom. A rumor is heard of the Lord, a bitter translation, an order from the Lord. It is his counsel and decree and command, an ambassador, that is, a messenger, a herald to the heathen bidding the heathen to rise up against Edom, is a type of the wrath of God to the world. All along nations that knew not God have played their part in the working out of the purposes and plans of God, just as any one who will take the trouble to trace the history of Edom will find that heathen nations were used to bring about the fulfillment of the prophecy of Obadiah.

Now, Edom in her mountain strongholds considered herself unassailable; but the prophet uttering the words of God, says, "I have made thee small among the heathen; thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, who shall bring me down to the ground. Though thou shalt exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." God would bring them down, the hidden things of Esau would be made known. The shame of his sold birthright would become the shame of the na-

tion. Their fortresses and strong towers and mountain fastnesses would prove to be of no avail against the power of the Lord God Almighty. We read between the lines God's message to the sinner. It may be a source of wonder to us oftentimes that sin seemingly appears to be mighty in power and of invincible strength. The discouraged and disheartened Christian often stands ready to give over every effort, believing that it is impossible to accomplish anything, when God's miraculous power is manifested, and sin, though exalted as the eagle, is brought low.

The prophet continues, "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever." Edom had not only rejoiced over the afflictions of Israel; but as the prophet plainly declares had assisted the enemies of Israel, for when they entered the gates of Jerusalem, and cast lots for the spoil of the city, Edom was there as one of them, no doubt ready to benefit by the spoliation of the city, when she should have remembered her relationship to Israel. There should have been pity instead of rejecting an instant and ready assistance instead of helping the enemy of Israel. The prophet declares that the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen; as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head. It is easy to make the application to all the enemies of Christianity, and especially to those who have been born and brought up in the light and knowledge of the goodness of God, and who ought to be strong and earnest supporters of the church of God; but who are constantly arraying themselves with the enemies of the church, rejoicing in the churches' afflictions, and glorying in the churches' overthrow, all such will appear before God as the heathen and shall be cut off from His favor and presence for ever and evermore.

For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, and as we have it in the New Testament, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." They would be as the heathen in the sight of God and would suffer the same condemnation at his hands. Let no one boast of his own greatness or strength, his ability; but let his best be in the God of Hosts who is able to overcome all things.

After the destruction of the enemies of the church then shall come the universal triumph of the church. "Upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and then shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." This part of the prophecy of Obadiah, has not as yet been fulfilled, for the history of the world prove conclusively that the conditions described have not as yet been met. Holiness shall be in the land and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions; but we are informed how this will be brought about. "The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stable, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord has spoken it." As I have stated the house of Esau represents all the enemies of the church of God, and they will be as stable when the house of Jacob becomes a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame. We imagine that the forces of evil are invincible because of their numbers, but it is not so. We look upon the mighty forces of evil and declare that they are all powerful, and yet we know that their leader is the greatest of cowards, for we learn from the Word of God that if we resist the devil he will flee from us. It does not matter what the numbers are that are back of him, all we have to do is to resist and he will flee. It is not true that the forces of evil are overwhelming in power, but it is true that the church of Jesus Christ is not on fire. When it does become a fire then evils are as stable readily consumed. Have we not seen this in a very imperfect way in revival services? Revivals that swept the community. Revivals against which all the forces of Satan were arrayed; but which were put to flight and completely defeated on every hand. Revivals into which men came scoffing and scorning, and with the intention of defeating the power of God, and they have gone out of the same meeting broken and humbled; nay, often praising God for removing blindness from their eyes, and revealing to them Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour. I do not suppose that there is a reader who has not seen a revival meeting in which the power of God was so visible and manifest that nothing was able to withstand; but I do not believe that any one has seen the limit of God's power. Surely in these latter days no one has seen the Pentecostal power, which changed a multitude in a day through one sermon, and yet a return of that time is not impossible. In fact when the house of Jacob becomes a fire and the house of Joseph a flame, then will the scenes of the day of Pentecost be repeated. Esau will be as stable and Jacob will possess his possessions. This plainly proves that Jacob has been thrust out of his possessions. The church ought to possess the world because it is her rightful possession, and when the day comes that the church is a fire, then she will possess, even the land which now the Philistines and the Ephraimites and the Samaritans and the Canaanites, even unto Zarepath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is Saphed.—Sel.

## Chicacole (1878).

It is our privilege to acknowledge the abundant mercy of our Heavenly Father throughout another year. We have been preserved in our ordinary health and strength for which we are grateful.

The comparative smallness of our field has given us satisfaction; but, as we still have well nigh three hundred thousand in our parish, we have no lack of work.

Our Sunday services at the station have probably been more largely attended than ever before. The Sunday School, averaging 88, under the superintendency of Miss Archibald, has had a prosperous year. The improvement of our young people in singing and in their grasp of Bible truth has given us great joy. The gospel meetings on Sunday evenings have often been of very great interest. One evening seven manifested by rising that they were loving the Lord.

### THE CHURCH.

It has been a year of harmony and one of encouraging spiritual progress. We are especially encouraged in regard to two of the members. Their highest desire appears to be holy in speech, thought and behaviour. The Holy Spirit is being granted to them in a special measure.

The church and congregation now supports two evangelists. They work under the direction of a committee of the church, the chairman of which conducts the monthly business meetings. That one of the grand objects of the existence of the church of Christ is the evangelization of the world, is being more clearly apprehended. The church has no pastor and needs none for the present. Eleven were baptized during the year.

### THE GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL.

After more than two years of service, Miss D'Silva left us for a government appointment early in December. We are pleased to testify to her professional skill, energy and love for her work and also to her kind and sympathetic treatment of her patients, among whom she is popular. The following is a summary of the work of eleven months:—New patients 285, repeats 528, total treatments 803. The average attendance of women and children in the morning was about 24. Upwards of 1000 treatments of men were given in the afternoons. In-patients, including five obstetric cases, numbered over 40, more than 70 operations were performed, 15 of which were dangerous to life.

### THE RECEIPTS.

amounted to \$516.94 as follows: Foreign Mission Board \$500, sale of medicine \$132.65, sale of other things \$10.44, rent of rooms \$2.85, donations from Europeans residing in India \$32.62, from people of other countries \$93.69, from natives of India \$4.69, from in-patients and others treated in hospital \$7.68 and from Miss D'Silva \$32.11.

### THE EXPENDITURES.

amounted to \$803.56 as follows: Support of staff \$431.63, medicines and instruments \$282.81, contingencies \$37.53, repairs of buildings and improvement of grounds \$28.15, and other expenses \$10.44. We close the year with a balance of \$123.75.

The hospital is fulfilling its great mission of helping the people to understand the compassion and love for the lost and the suffering that fills the heart of Jesus. Many of our patients are from distant villages. In several cases their free will offerings of gratitude for healing have touched our hearts. Mrs. Archibald conducted the daily morning services which were frequently fraught with great interest. Five women gave evidence of a change of heart. The hospital will be reopened as soon as a suitable lady apothecary can be secured. A lady doctor from home is urgently needed for the medical work of the mission.

### TOURING.

Seventy-eight days only were spent in this important work. Our chief centres were Pondur, Chikakapalam, Naraswampeta, Calingapatam and Jalmur. I was accompanied by from three to six native assistants, who worked nobly. The unusually large number of hearers and much of the special interest manifested was due to the use of the magic lantern. The attendance for six evenings in Calingapatam must have averaged well nigh 300. The preacher residing there testifies to a greater interest ever since in Christian teaching, and reports the receipt of 37 subscriptions to Christian papers for the new year. A teacher in a Hindu school near Jalmur gives undoubted evidence of conversion. His influence for good has already been felt by many and we trust that he will soon break caste and publicly profess his faith in baptism. A series of seven meetings was held in Pondur in September which was well attended by the educated and illiterate and we are assured that results will be manifested in due time.

### NATIVE HELPERS.

Their spirit on the whole has been commendable. Two have been added during the year—Messrs. Subraladu and D. V. Jaganadham. Both have done good work. We miss Mr. A. Narasimhamurthi from our Reading Room and the writing and translating he was accustomed to do here, but we heartily acquiesced in his heeding the call of Dr. McLaurin to be his assistant and are glad