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Biblica Study Notes

Obadiah 1:1-21

The prophet Obadiah announced messages of judgement against Edom. These were like the messages of judgement against Edom recorded in Jeremiah 49. Obadiah explained why God would bring judgement against Edom. The Edomites were proud. They believed that their strength and wisdom kept them safe. This showed that they didn't respect God's authority as the Lord and King. Their pride also showed that they didn't respect God's authority over the people of Judah.

God chose to make a covenant with the people from the family line of Jacob. The Edomites were their relatives. Yet people from Esau's and Jacob's family lines didn't live in peace with one another. That had been the case for hundreds of years. The Edomites made it clear that they didn't respect God or his choices. They made this clear when Jerusalem was attacked.

God allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed by Babylonian armies in 586 BC. That was how God brought judgement against the southern kingdom. The Edomites didn't respect that God was taking action against his people (God's people). Instead they took action and made the suffering of the southern kingdom worse. Obadiah explained many evil things that the Edomites did to the people of the southern kingdom. Other parts of the Bible show how the people of Jerusalem felt about that. Psalm 137 and Lamentations chapters 2 and 4 are examples.

Obadiah announced that God would destroy the Edomites because of their pride and evil deeds. Obadiah described that time of judgement as the day of the Lord. It was a time when God would judge not only Edom but also all nations. Obadiah described God's anger like a cup that the nations would drink from. The result of the judgement against the nations would be blessing for God's people. They would enjoy the covenant blessings. This included living safely in the land God had promised to Abraham's family line. It included the blessing of God's presence. That is what was meant by Zion being the holy mountain once again. God described this time of blessing as a kingdom that belonged to him.

Jews came to understand this message of hope as a prophecy for the future. It would be fulfilled when God sent the messiah. New Testament writers came to understand that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus announced that he brought the kingdom of God to earth.