

Two Year Bible Trek  
Week 70  
Obadiah; Psalms 82, 83

**Key Concepts:** Similarly to Ezekiel and portions of Jeremiah, Obadiah declares that some of the neighboring nations will be punished for their roles in Judah's destruction and that Judah will be restored.

**Stories:** Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament and is divided into three sections. The first section concerns the indictment of Edom, the second the judgment of the nations and the third the restoration of Judah. The two Psalms deal with God's judgment over the nations and a prayer for deliverance from oppressing nations.

**Brief Summary:** Obadiah can be seen as a short summary of some of the previous larger prophetic works that we have read. As mentioned above it contains the three basic elements of the story of God's people post exile. The first is that specific nations that opposed Judah will be dealt with. In this case we are looking at Edom. Edom comes in for specific mention because according to Genesis the Edomites and the Israelites are related. Therefore brothers are to treat each other with kindness. Edom has not done so. Edom has violated the covenant by seizing land and goods following the Babylonian invasion. Even though Edom is supposed to have many wise men, it has not shown that wisdom.

The second part of the post-exile prophecies concerns the judgment of all nations. "For the day of the Lord is near upon all the nations. As you have done so it will be done to you, your deeds shall return upon your own head." While Edom is in for particular punishment, none of the nations that have harmed Judah will be able to escape. This is one of the great truisms of the scriptures...what goes around comes around. No one is able to escape the consequences of their actions.

The third portion of Obadiah concerns the restoration of Judah. "But in Mount Zion there will be those who escape, and it shall be holy. The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." A portion of this restoration will be that the people of Israel will once again possess the lands taken from them. "...they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. The exiles in Halah, who are of the people of Israel, shall possess Phoenicia as far as Zarephath." In other words God will restore the land to God's people. The last verse however is a reminder that all of this belongs to God.

Psalms 82 takes the view that the world is run by a large council of gods, of which the God of Israel is the head. The other gods have judged unjustly and thus the God of Israel must judge them. God declares that the rest of the gods must "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." The final declaration is that even though they are gods and sons of the Most High, they will die like men because they are not faithful to God's desire for creation.

Psalms 83 is a prayer for national deliverance. The situation is dire. The enemies of Israel, including Edom, Moab, Gebal, Ammon, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria have all conspired to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. "They say, 'Come let us wipe them out as a nation; let the name of Israel be remembered no more.'" The writer of the Psalm asks that God destroy those who had tried to destroy Judah. "Oh my God make them like the whirling dust, like chaff before the wind...let them perish in disgrace." The Psalm concludes with a request that all God's enemies know that God is Lord of the earth.

1. Why do you think that Obadiah was kept as part of the canon?
2. What do you think of the image of a council of gods?
3. Have there been times when you would have prayed a Psalm like Psalm 83?