



Daily Verse and Comment

Obadiah 1:10-14

(10) For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. (11) In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. (12) But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. (13) Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity; (14) Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

King James Version

Obadiah 10 had named the Edomites' great sin: "violence against your brother Jacob." The four subsequent verses tick off a number of illustrations of the Edomites' violence toward Israel, providing an expanded description of their transgression.

The prophet's first example (in verse 11), the only one requiring explanation, is that they "stood on the other side." This Hebraism indicates they "stood aloof," a description of their haughtiness. God is emphasizing their attitude here. Literally, the phrase reads, "stood from in front of them," a roundabout way of saying that the Edomites considered themselves too good to stand *with* them. In other words, because of their pride, they stood off to the side or in front of them, effectively separating themselves from their brother.

Their action reflected their hearts, saying, in effect, "Do not confuse us with them!" It indicates an attitude of great superiority, of haughty pride and separation. Thus, instead of standing with Israel in her defense, they stood aside and let the enemy do what it would. [Edom](#) did not behave as a brother nation should have. Even had the Edomites not been directly engaged in the hostilities against Israel, this act alone reveals that their loyalties were solidly with Israel's enemy.

The New King James Version poorly translates verses 12-14, rendering them in the past tense, when the Hebrew text relates this story in the future tense. The difference in tense transforms a castigating historical narrative into a more appropriate and stern warning against future activity:

But do not gloat over the day of your brother in the day of his misfortune; do not rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their ruin; do not boast in the day of distress. Do not enter the gate of My people in the day of their calamity; do not gloat over his disaster in the day of his calamity; do not loot his wealth in the day of his calamity. Do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his fugitives; do not hand over his survivors in the day of distress.
(English Standard Version)

Specifically, what is the day of Israel's calamity? [Jeremiah 30:5-7](#) provides the answer:

For thus says the LORD: "We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of [peace](#). Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it."

Jesus also spoke about this distressing day in His Olivet Prophecy:

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of [the world](#) until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. ([Matthew 24: 21-22](#))

"The time of Jacob's trouble," more commonly known as "the Great Tribulation," is a period of intense hardship and war for the people of Israel. It is generally thought that it will last three and a half years ([Daniel 7:25](#); [12:7](#); [Revelation 11:2](#); [12:14](#); [13:5](#)), until [Jesus Christ](#) returns in power to defeat the Beast and his armies and to rule all nations ([Revelation 19:11-21](#)). According to Jesus' description, it is a time of global holocaust; if God did not intervene, all life on earth would cease!

The warnings in [Obadiah 12-14](#) are directed toward the Edomites alive when that day arrives, perhaps not very long from now. We may have seen a precursor of the fulfillment of this prophecy, when, on and after September 11, 2001, television news programs broadcast images of Palestinians gloating and dancing in the streets in the West Bank, giving out candy, and shrieking in giddy celebration. Such a scene is likely to happen again when the Great Tribulation fully comes upon the [nations of Israel](#).

At that time, the people of Edom may not have a great deal of power over the nations of Israel, and the prophecies do not indicate that they will. Today, their strength is limited to suicidal terrorist attacks, but they still have the ability to mock, to pillage, and to take advantage of any sign of weakness. God says in [Obadiah 6-9](#) that He will remove their wealth, their [wisdom](#), and their courage, but they will still be able to gloat when they see Israel fall.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[All About Edom \(Part Five\): Obadiah and God's Judgment](#)

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