

Lessons Old Testament
Prophets Could Give
to America Today

Obadiah

Introduction

- Obadiah is the shortest Old Testament book.
- The prophecy was delivered after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.
- The prophecy begins with the vision of God given to Obadiah.
- Then God himself addresses Edom directly in verses 2–16.
- Verses 17–21 deal with Israel and establishment of God's kingdom on earth.
- Edom will be judged, but the book ends (19-21) with the promise of the kingdom of God.

Obadiah

Edom Humbled (1-9)

- God through His prophet begins to address Edom.
- Edom is insignificant among the nations and is actually despised.
- The Edomites lived in an inaccessible location which gave them a false hope of invulnerability.
- (vs. 3) The pride of their heart deceived them: a warning against pride.
- Just as Esau pursued Jacob, so Edom did violence against Jacob.
- (vs. 4) Therefore, God says “I will bring you down.”

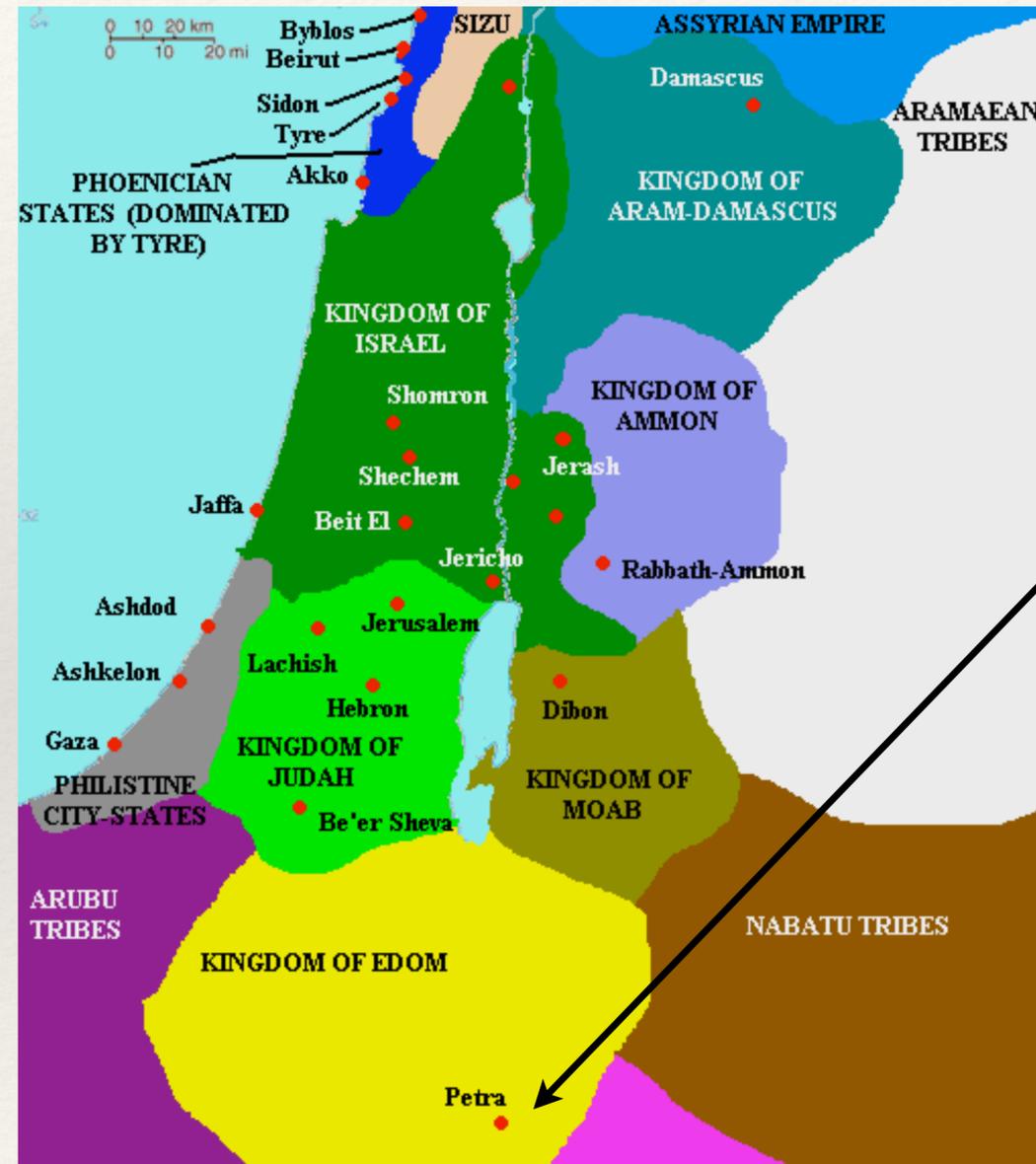
Edom Humbled (1-9)

- (vs. 5) Talks about thieves, plunderers, and grape gatherers who leave something behind.
- The judgment that God will bring upon Edom will be total: not like a thief or a grape gatherer who leave something (steal only enough, gleanings).
- (vs. 7) “All your allies have driven you to your border.”
- The Edomites will have nowhere to turn.
- They do not understand that all their former allies have turned against them.

Edom Humbled (1-9)

- (vs. 9) - Teman was a grandson of Esau.
- It was also the chief city in Edom (cultural and military center where the intellectual and military elite gathered).
- God is not impressed with their city or their culture.

Edom and Petra

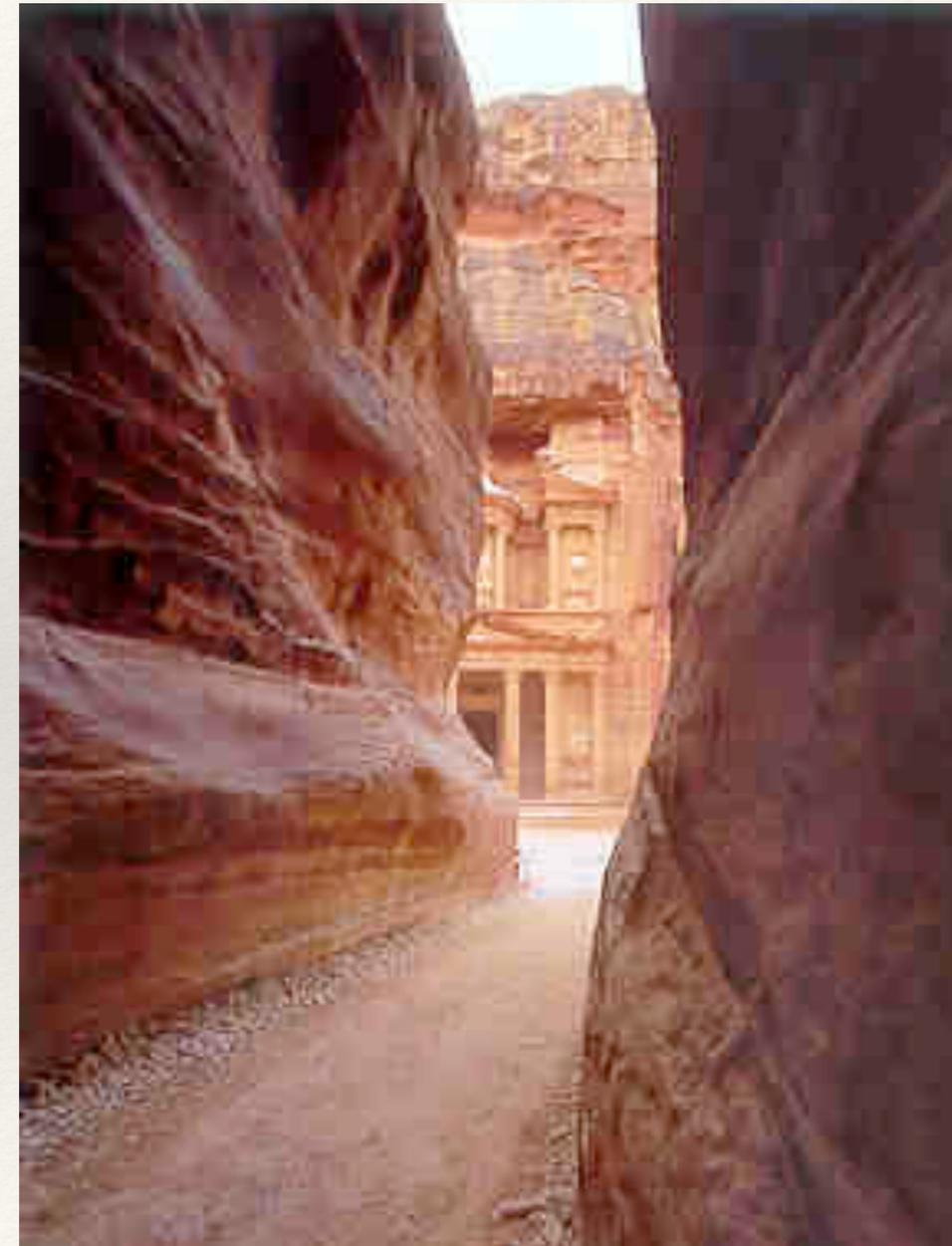


Edom and Petra

- This region was known as Seir.
- Petra was the Greek name (or from the Arabic word “batara” which means to cut).
- Petra was cut into the stone walls and protected by the walls.



Edom and Petra



Edomites

- Edomites were warlike - fought with their neighbors (Gen. 27:40; Deut. 2:12).
- Edomites were idolatrous - worshipped other gods (2 Chron. 25:14).
- Edomites were arrogant (Jer. 49:16-18).
- Edomites were vindictive - would often torment Israel (Ezek. 25:12-14).

Edomites and Moses

- The Amalekites attacked Moses and the children of Israel at Rephidim (Ex. 17:8-10).
- They attacked “the hindmost, all that were feeble behind” (Deut. 25:18).
- King of Petra threatened to come against Moses with the sword (Num. 20:14-21).

Edomites and Israel

- Four hundred years later, the Edomites were still fighting Israel (1 Samuel 14).
- After another two hundred years, during the reign of Jehoshaphat of Judah, the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites joined forces to utterly destroy every Jew in the land.
- God caused these enemies to kill each other in the Kidron Valley (2 Chron. 20:23).

Edomites and Idumeans

- Prior to the New Testament, the Edomites still were subversive to Israel.
- Idumea is the Greek version of the Hebrew name “Edom.” The Idumeans were conquered by the Jews and forced to be circumcised.
- Most prominent Idumean family was that of Herod the Great. He was installed as king by the Romans, cruel man, ordered the murder of wives and children, ordered the death of all children under the age of two (to kill Jesus).
- Herod Antipas - had John the Baptist beheaded. He also ruled in the trial against Jesus (Luke 23:8-12).

Edom's Violence (10-14)

- (vs. 10) Because of their violence against Jacob, shame shall cover them.
- (vs. 11) Babylonians cast lots for Jerusalem - treated God's "holy mountain" like a commodity.
- The following verses spell out Edom's deeds of violence:
 - gloating over Judah's demise
 - looting the wealth
 - capturing fleeing fugitive and delivering them to slave trade

Day of the Lord (15-18)

- The day of the Lord is near - the deeds you have done will be done to you.
- Obadiah 12-14 is written in a series of 8 prohibitions in the form of “do not.”
- It is not too late to cease its hostility to Judah - reconciliation is still available.
- Obadiah assures the people of Judah that on the day of the Lord there will be hope for those in Zion.
- All of Israel, including the exiles will regain the full extent of the Promised Land - both west and east of the Jordan.

Five Lessons
from Obadiah

Lesson # 1

- God rules the world
- He is in control and turns the course of nations and history as He pleases.
- If this were not so, he could not promise Judah that He would cut off Edom and establish Jacob.
- Proverbs 21:1 - “The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.”

Lesson #2

- Pride is deceptive (vs. 3).
- Pride makes us think we are smart, independent, and invulnerable.
- Pride is a lie that distorts every area of thought and life.
- Jeremiah 49:16 - “The horror you inspire has deceived you, and the pride of your heart, you who live in the clefts of the rock, who hold the height of the hill. Though you make your nest as high as the eagle’s, I will bring you down from there, declares the Lord.”

Lesson #3

- God hates pride (vs. 4).
- Proverbs 16:18 teaches that “pride goes before destruction.”
- Jesus teaches in Luke 16:15: “What is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”
- Isaiah 2:12 - “For the Lord of hosts has a day, against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low.”

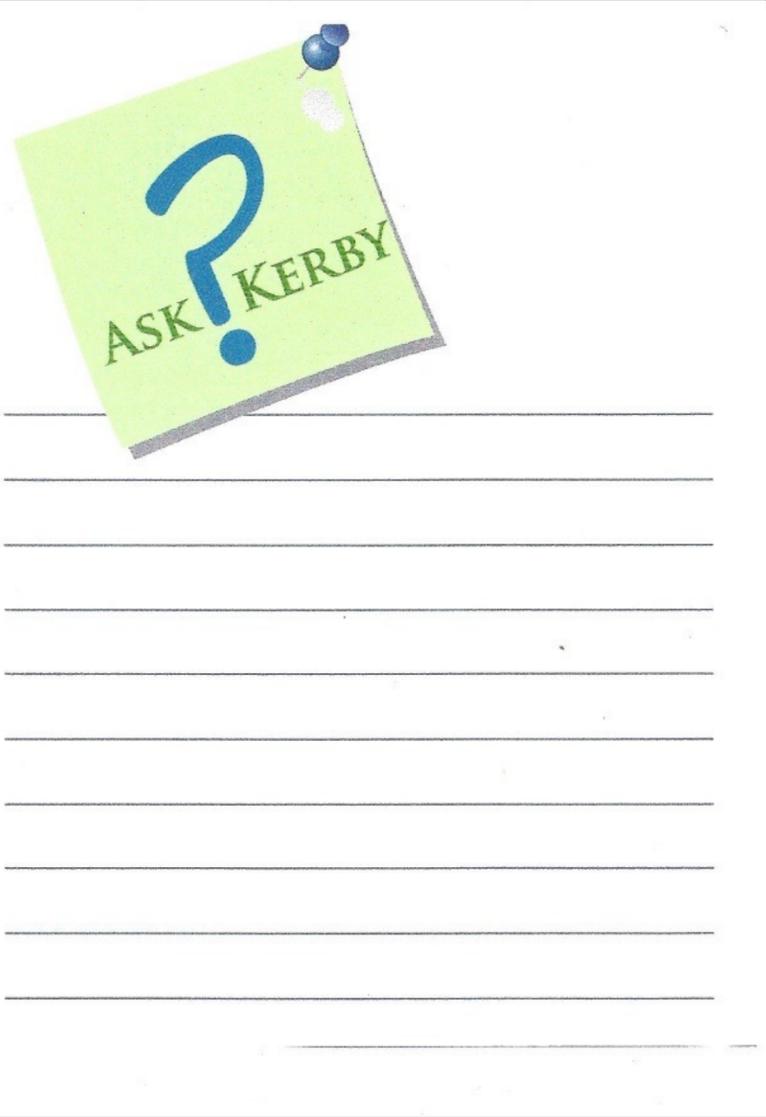
Lesson #4

- Proud nations reap what they sow.
- If we choose in our pride to live without God, then He will grant us our independence in the day of the Lord.
- He will not be our refuge or our righteousness in that day.
- Galatians 6:7 -“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”

Lesson #5

- God has made a way of escape.
- Those who flee from the sin of pride to the holiness of humility will find refuge on the day of the Lord.
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 - “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”
- Promise to the Jews in the future, and a promise to us today.

Ask Kerby



A graphic of a yellow sticky note with a blue question mark and the text "ASK KERBY" pinned to a white sheet of lined paper. The sticky note is tilted and has two blue pushpins at the top right corner. The lined paper has ten horizontal lines.

What does “camel through the eye of a needle” mean?

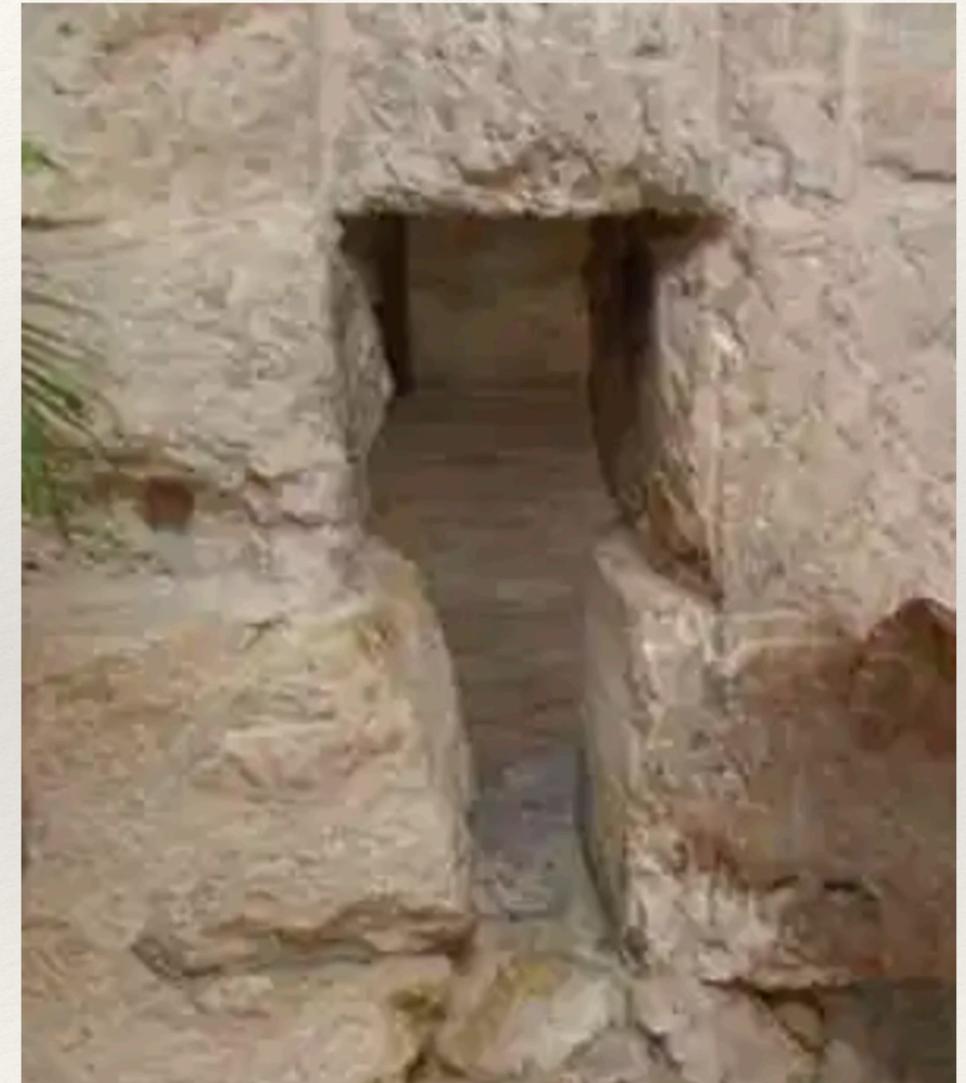
Camel and Needle

- It was common in Jewish literature to create a hyperbole with a large animal and a very small passage.
- We see something similar when Jesus illustrates faith by talking about something very small (a mustard seed) that grows to something very large (a mustard tree).



Camel and Needle

- Some pastors have taught that somewhere in the wall of Jerusalem is a narrow gate known as “eye of the needle” that was so small that a loaded animal could not pass through unless unloaded.
- There is no historical or archaeological evidence for this. The idea comes from the ninth-century commentary suggesting such a gate existed.



Camel and Needle

- A number of Bible commentators have noted that the Aramic word for “camel” is nearly identical to the word use for “rope.”
- Some believe that when the New Testament scrolls were translated into Greek, a error of transmission occurred.
- That would mean that the correct translation should be “rope through the eye of a needle.”
- But most manuscripts have “camel” not “rope.”

Camel and Needle

- Jesus was most likely using a common expression used at the time to underscore the spiritual situation of the wealthy.
- That has been the historic understanding of the phrase Jesus used.
- Often we notice that it is hard for people who are rich, powerful, and successful to humble themselves and accept Jesus Christ.

