

OBADIAH

Chapter 1

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:1]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The vision of Obadiah.** The same, say some, that hid the Lord's prophets, and fed them by fifty in a cave, when sought for to the slaughter by wicked Jezebel, **1 Kings 18:4**, whereupon himself also received a prophet's reward; that is (saith Lyra), was endued with the spirit of prophecy. Jerome addeth, that he was buried at Samaria (called afterwards Sebaste, by Herod, in honour of Augustus), and that there his sepulchre was yet to be seen. The Rabbis say, that this Obadiah was that widow's husband whom Elisha relieved by multiplying her oil, **2 Kings 4:6**. Others (with more show of reason) conjecture that this was that Obadiah mentioned **2 Chronicles 34:12**, a faithful Levite, set by Josiah to oversee the artificers, who repaired the temple in the eighteenth year of his reign; and so was contemporary to Ezekiel and Jeremiah, with whom also he consenteth in many passages, **Jeremiah 49; Ezekiel 25**: and besides, he maketh mention of the Babylonish captivity, and the Edomites' cruelty to the Jews at that time, **Psalms 137:7**. But let him be who he will (for where the Scripture hath no tongue we need not find ears; but may well content ourselves with a learned ignorance), his doctrine he entitleth not a burden, because he concludeth it comfortably, but a vision, which is more general; it being his scope to comfort the people of God, that were under great affliction.

Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom. If Obadiah were himself an Edomite, but a proselyte to the Church (as some Rabbis have reported him), his vision should have taken the better with his cruel countrymen, to bring them to repentance. But whether he were or not, they should have observed his authority: and that his doctrine came *cum privilegio*, and that it was the Lord God, the *Tremend Trinunus*, that spake by him; and that he was, according to his name, a servant of the most high God, which showed unto them the way of salvation, **Acts 16:17**. *Sed surdo fabulam*: the Edomites were so fleshed in blood, and such inveterate enemies to the Church, that there was little good to be done upon them. Howsoever, to leave them without excuse, and, if possible, to rouse them out of their security, he saith,

We have heard a rumour from the Lord. We, that is, I and my fellow prophets (who are *a secretis* to the Lord, **Amos 3:7**), have heard for a certainty that the Edomites are devoted to destruction. And that this was no vain rumour, but accordingly accomplished, see **Jeremiah 25:9, 21; Malachi 1:3**.

And an ambassador is sent among the heathen. A herald at arms, sent by Nebuchadnezzar, say some, to stir up his Chaldeans against the Edomites: others make this ambassador to be Christ, or a created angel, or a Divine instinct, or lastly, the prophets. Whosoever he is, he doth his work very vigorously.

Arise ye, saith he, and let us rise up against her in battle. Let us join our forces, and do our utmost against Idumea. After this sort also shall God's warriors stir up themselves one day and one another against the Romish Edomites, those pseudo-christians, anti-christians, when God shall once put into their hearts to hate that old withered whore of Babylon, to "make her desolate and naked, to eat her flesh, and burn her with fire," **Revelation 17:16, 17**. The alarm was long since given them (not unlike this in the text) by Francis Petrarch, in these words, *Babylon altera, nempe propinquior atque recentior, adhuc star: cito itidem casura; si essetis viri*. There yet standeth a nearer and newer Babylon than that of old; but it should not stand long were you but men. "Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle." The Jews at this day call the hierarchy of Rome the wicked kingdom of Edom; and for Dumah, **Isaiah 21:11**, they read *Roma*, by a very easy but willing mistake. See Dr Taylor's Sermon, called The Romish Edomite. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Behold, I have made thee small among**

the heathen. That is, vile, despicable, and abject, as *Psalm 119:141*, "I am small and despised." Nothing is more ordinary than to "despise the day of small things," *Zechariah 4:10*. And whereas God is said to be *magnus in magnis, nec parvus in minimis*, much in the greater neither little in the least, he had always kept down these profane Edomites, shutting them up in Mount Seir, a craggy barren country (not unlike Ascre, Hesiod's country, Ἄσκη χεῖμα κακὴ θέρος ἀργλαεή, οὐδέποτε εἰλη, or Llandaff in Wales, which is said to be a place neither pleasant, fertile, nor safe), and not suffering them to attain to any fame or almost name among other nations. Were it not that they are mentioned in the Bible (and never there for any goodness either) it would hardly have been known that there ever had been such a people. Wherefore, then, should Edom be so intolerably insolent, as *Obadiah 1:3*? swell to such a height of pride, play such bloody, pranks, as he is here accused of? especially since God is taking a course to make him yet lesser and lower than yet he is, by those armies of his that are coming upon him, to stain the pride of all his glory, *Isaiah 23:9*. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee.** So as to make thee think thyself some great business when it's no such matter, and that thou canst secure thyself in thy strongholds from thy strongest enemies: but herein thy pride hath befooled thee, and put the same trick upon thee that the serpent did once upon the first woman, *Genesis 3:13* (the same word is there used as here), who complained, when she was in the transgression, *1 Timothy 2:14*, "The serpent hath deceived me." He is still the king of all the children of pride; and thereby cheateth them, ravisheth them of their right reason, and rendereth them the direct objects of God's hatred and heavy displeasure, *James 4:6*; he setteth himself in battle array against them, ἀντιτάσσεται. "Though his excellency, mount up to the heavens" (saith Zophar concerning the proud person, *Job 20:6*), "and his head reach unto the clouds; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?" There is a deceitfulness in sin, *Hebrews 3:13*, a lie in all these outward vanities, *Jonah 2:8*: they were never true to those that trusted in them. But the proud person "feedeth upon ashes": he feedeth himself with false hopes; "a deceived heart hath turned him aside," put him into a fool's paradise, "that he cannot deliver his soul," get out of his golden dreams, "nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" *Isaiah 44:20*. His case is not unlike that man's who, lying fast asleep upon the edge of a steep rock, dreams merrily of much happiness and safety; but upon the sudden starting for joy breaks his neck, and tumbles headlong into the bottom of the sea.

Thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock. In a rocky, mountainous country, as the Highlander in Scotland, out of the reach of my rod, as thou fondly fanciest; in Arabia Petraea, where thine enemies cannot come at thee, and where thou thinkest thyself no less safe and out of harm's way than Moses was, when God had put him into the cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand, *Exodus 33:22*; or Elias, when he stood in the mouth of the cave, *1 Kings 19:13*.

Whose habitation is high. Heb. his habitation is high; by a change of the person out of a holy disdain of Edom's pride and creature confidence, as if he were *extra iactum*, out of gunshot, above danger.

That saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down? (Atreus in Thyeste apud Senec.)

*"Aequalis astris gradior, et cunctos super
Altum superbo vertice attingens polum,
Demitto superos, summa votorum attigi, &c.
My roof receives me not, 'tis air I tread:
At every step I feel my advanced head
Knock out a star in heaven."*—(Ben Jonson.)

Such great swelling words of vanity speaks the proud man, 2 Peter 2:18; such big bubbles of words, sesquipedalia verba, words a foot and a half long. Who shall bring me down? who is the Lord? who is lord over us? &c. Such haughty expressions, such lofty language is a forerunner, a presage of imminent destruction, as here. A bulging wall is not far from a downfall. While the word ("Is not this great Babalyon," &c.) was yet in Nebuchadnezzar's mouth he was deprived of his kingdom and driven from men, Daniel 4:31. Megasthenes the Persian (an ancient writer) reporteth that the Chaldeans relate that Nebuchadnezzar, returning home laden with victories, fell mad, and being in a fanatic vein, foretold the destruction of Babalyon. Whether he foretold it or no it is sure he occasioned it, by confiding in it and by robbing both God of his glory, and his ancestors, the first founders, of their honour; for he only enlarged it, and built the palace entirely; and now he saith, "Who shall bring me down?" That will I, saith God, in the next words. Aesop being asked by Chilo (one of the seven wise men of Greece) what God was doing? answered, He bringeth down the proud and lifteth up the lowly. See the like Psalm 147:6. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle.** Or, as the Arabic text hath it, *ad aquilam*, hard by the eagle; couldst thou fly as high a pitch as that bird, which is said to soar out of sight, and build thy nest aloft, as he doth, on the highest mountains and tallest trees, that the serpent may not come at his young.

And though thou set thy nest among the stars. *i.e.* Upon such high hills as reach to the upper region of the air. Of Ithaca (Ulysses' country) the orator saith, that it was *in scopulis quasi nidus affixa*, set as a nest upon the rocks. And Paulus Aemilius, the Roman general, pulled down the castles at Athens, saying that they were *tyrannorum nidi* nests of despots; and our Henry VIII commanded the abbeys here to be demolished, saying that those crows' nests were to be destroyed, *ne iterum ad cohabitandum convolent*, that they might never breed again among us. Lucifer and his antitype Nebuchadnezzar spake of ascending into heaven, above the heights of the clouds, and of the setting their thrones above the stars of God, **Isaiah 14:13, 14.** See the like language, or bigger, from the prince of Tyre, **Ezekiel 28:2**, with the issue, much like this that here followeth.

Thence will I bring thee down. Down with a vengeance, as he did Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Edom, Attilas, Gensericus, Bajazet, &c. The Philistines flouted Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will show you a thing: that is, we will give you your payment before we part with you. They held it impossible to get up that sharp, steep, craggy rock where they kept garrison. But Jonathan clambered over that rock on his hands and feet, and put them to the rout, **1 Samuel 14:13.** An exploit of as great, or rather of greater valour, than that of Alexander the Great, for which he is so crowned and chronicled by Plutarch and Curtius. The story is this. Arimazes having garrisoned a very strong rock (held almost inaccessible, and to which there was but one only passage) in the Sogdian country, with thirty thousand men; and being sent unto by Alexander to yield up his stronghold, derided him, and asked whether Alexander could fly? whereunto Alexander returned this answer, I will make thee know ere thou art a night older that the Macedonians can fly. Hereupon he picked out three hundred of the boldest men he had, and by great promises prevailed with them the next night to climb up the back side of the rock to the top of it, which accordingly they did, and killing the guards, took the garrison, letting in Alexander, who nailed Arimazes to a cross.

Saith the Lord. Who will surely do it, how improbable or impossible soever you may judge it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night.** Or, what? have thieves come to thee? have robbers been here? O, sure it is worse than so with thee; they would never have made such clean work as they say, but have left somewhat

behind them; they would never have played the harpies ⁽¹⁾ in this sort, and taken all before them. Thus the neighbour nations stand wondering at this woeful desolation, and sarcastically insulting. Now to be mocked in misery is no small grief to the party. Thus the prophet pricks them by a rhetorical addubitation, the better to affect their minds with an effectual fear of no ordinary or easy calamity, but such as will be wonderful and incredible; so that they that hear of it will say,

How art thou cut off! Or, how silent art thou! what, did thine enemies set upon thee *per amica silentia lunae*? did they take thee napping that they shred thee thus? Have they dealt by thee as Sir Francis Drake in his travels did by the Spaniard, whom he found sleeping on the bank of a river with many wedges of gold lying by him; he never waked the man, but eased him of his charge: or rather as Epaminondas did by the watchman, whom he found fast asleep; he thrust him through with his sword; and being chid for so severe a fact, replied, *Talem eum reliqui, qualem inveni*, I left him but as I found him.

If the grape gatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grates? Surely they would, **Deuteronomy 24:21**; there would likely be a gleaning of grapes after the vintage is done, **Isaiah 24:13**, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough; four or five in the outmost fruitful branches, **Isaiah 17:6**. It is hard but some may escape out of the battle to bring the ill news. Edom's ruin therefore and desolation was most deplorable and irreparable, since none was left alone; but all, both men and means, raked and racemated.

⁽²⁾ **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 6. **[[@Bible:Obadiah 1:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}****How are the things of Esau searched out!**

Or, as Drusius reads it, How are the posterity of Esau searched out! the men to the slaughter, the wealth to the spoil! what cunning and daring soldiers were these to pry into every corner for prey, and to pull them out of every lurking hole, where they might have been circumvented and butchered, in those dark and narrow places: this shows surely that they were both armed and animated by God himself. Confer **Joel 2:6-9**, but especially **Jeremiah 49:10, 11**, where you have the full of that which is here but abridged; and therefore this verse hath not so much as an Athnach in it for distinction.

How are his hid things sought out! *i.e.* his treasures and jewels, which have their name in Hebrew from hiding, because men used to secret and secure them with utmost care and diligence. See **Matthew 13:44**; hence they are called treasures of darkness, **Isaiah 45:3**; see **Job 3:21**. Abundance of this was found at Constantinople, taken by the Turks; so that the soldiers divided it among themselves by hatfuls, wondering at their wealth, and deriding their folly, that possessing so much, they would bestow so little in defence of themselves and their country, lost by their tenacity and niggardice. And the same is reported of Heidelberg. This that is here threatened against Edom was accordingly executed in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, saith Josephus; Nebuchadnezzar, in the 23rd year of his reign, invading and wasting Idumea. Ill-gotten goods prosper not. Men rake together their riches, and know not who shall gather them, **Psalms 39:6**. But, "let no man go beyond and defraud another: for God is the avenger of all such," **1 Thessalonians 4:6**. They do best that renounce, with St Paul, those hidden things of dishonesty, **2 Corinthians 4:2**, not walking in craftiness, nor making haste to be rich; for treasures of wickedness profit not, **Proverbs 10:2**; and when God comes by his judgments to turn the bottom of the bag upwards, as Joseph's steward once did, all our secret thefts will out. See **Ecclesiastes 12:14**. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 7. **[[@Bible:Obadiah 1:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}****All the men of thy confederacy.** Which

¹ A rapacious, plundering, or grasping person; one that preys upon other ⒺD

² A salt of racemic acid. ⒺD

therefore should be true to thee, but prove treacherous; so vain it is to trust to that broken reed of carnal combinations. Many friends are like deep ponds, clear at the top and all muddy at the bottom; the causes they will be, but not the companions of calamity. Like they are, saith one, to crows which flock to a dead carcass, not to defend it, but to devour it; and no sooner have they bared the bones but they are gone. David complaineth of such, *Psalm 55:13-15*, and Jeremiah of his unkind countrymen of Anathoth, *Jeremiah 11:23*. But for Edom it was no great pity, considering their perfidy both to God (because they had transgressed the laws, moral and municipal, changed the ordinances, that is, the law of nations, and broken the everlasting covenant, that is, the law of nature, which is that light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world, *John 1:9*), and also to their brethren the Israelites, their extreme inhumanity, as it followeth, *Obadiah 1:10, 11*. They had therefore but their own measure meted again to them; as they had forgotten the brotherly covenant, *Amos 1:9, 11*, so they met with those that paid them home in their own coin; neither were they any more pitied than Haman, when the king frowned upon him, or Sejanus, when he fell into the displeasure of Tiberius; his friends showing themselves most passionate against him, saying, that if Caesar had clemency he ought to reserve it to men, and not cast it away upon monsters.

All brought thee even to the border. And there left thee at the worst; pretending to help thee, but betraying then indeed to the enemy, and helping to cast thee out of thy country, under a show of courtesy.

The men that were at peace with thee. Heb. the men of thy peace, the Ammonites, Moabites, and other neighbouring nations from whom thou fearedst no hurt; these to ingratiate with the king of the Chaldeans.

Have deceived thee. *Tuta frequensque via est per amici fallere nomen* (Ovid.). This made a certain heathen cry out, Friends, there is no friend to be found, φίλοι, οὐδεὶς φίλος (Socr.); and another to pray God to deliver him from his friends; for, as for his enemies, he could better beware of them.

They that eat thy bread. Heb. thy bread men, thy fellow commoners, *convictores et consalanei*, others' *amici*, they are seldom either satisfied or sure.

Have laid a wound under thee. The Hebrew word signifieth both a wound and a plaster; they would secretly wound them, lay a wound under them, and yet seem willing to bind up their wounds, and heal them by applying a plaster: such daubing there is in the world, *Fide, diffide. Cavebis autem si pavebis*.

There is none understanding in him. That is, in Edom, and this seemeth spoken by way of apostrophe to the Israelites, whose comfort is intended in this whole prophecy. It is as if it had been said, Edom holds himself wise, but will show himself a very sot, destitute of common sense; such as taketh not notice that these are the wounds with which he was wounded in the house of his friends: the wittol is either insensible of it or else well content with it, till he hath bought his wit, and begins to open his eyes but not till the pains of death are upon him, as it is said of the mole. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, &c.** Edom was famous for wisdom, as appeareth by Eliphaz the Temanite, and other of Job's friends who were Idumeans; and Rabshakeh could say that counsel and strength are of war, *Isaiah 36:5*; What a price did Agamemnon set upon Nestor and Darius upon Zophirus? Scipio did nothing without his Polybius, and ascribed most of his victories to his advice. "Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war," saith Solomon, *Proverbs 20:18*. *Romani sedendo vincunt* passed for a proverb of old. The Romans conquered by sitting in council; and Cyneas got more cities by his wisdom than Pyrebus by his puissance. But

"where no counsel is the people fall," **Proverbs 11:14**; and this was Edom's case in that day, that is, at that time when their confederates betrayed them to their enemy and desolation was at next door by God destroyed their wise men; he either cut them off or infatuated them. *Deus, quem destruit, demen tat.* When God intends to undo a man (say the Dutch) he first puts out his eyes, and befools him. Pliny saith of the eagle that, setting upon the hart, he lights upon his horns, and there flutters up and down, filling his eyes with dust borne in her feathers; that at last he may cast himself from a rock, and become a prey. God blindeth the understanding and expectoratheth the wisdom of those whom he designeth to destruction. "Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the wise counsellors of Pharaoh are become brutish, they have also seduced Egypt. The Lord hath mingled a spirit of perversities in the midst thereof," **Isaiah 19:11-14.**

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Verse 9. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And thy mighty men, O Teman.** Thy giants, thy champions, that dare to look death in the face upon great adventures in the field; these were now dismayed and dispirited; their courage was quailed, and even broken with fear, as the word signifieth; so that, as Saul, when the devil had preached his funeral, made haste and fell with the fulness of his stature all along on the earth, as being sore afraid, **1 Samuel 28:20**; so shall it be with the mighties of Teman, that is, of Edom, for Teman was nephew to Esau and son to Eliphaz, **Genesis 36:11**, and of him some city or part of the country took its denomination. The Chaldee and the Vulgate Latin take the word Teman appellatively, and render it thus, Thy mighty men shall perish from the South: or those that dwell to the southward of thy country, and so are more remote from the northern Chaldees; yet they shall no sooner hear of thy coming but they shall tremble and forget their prowess.

To the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter. Heb. every man, be he never so manly and magnanimous.

Of the mount of Esau. Of Idumea, which was mountainous, and therefore fitly called Seir; that is, rough and rugged.

May be cut off by slaughter. So that they shall live by fame only, and hardly that.

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Verse 10. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For thy violence against thy brother Jacob.** For thine open violence. Hence tachmas, the vulture, who liveth by rapine, **Leviticus 11:14**. Thine iniquity, rapine, injury done by force and in public view, set upon the "top of a rock," that all might behold it, **Ezekiel 24:7**.

Against thy brother. Thine own mother's son, **Psalms 50:20**. This is no small aggravation of thy sin, that is *in germanum Iacob*, thy nearest allies. Edom had other sins not a few; but this was the chief, and is therefore here and elsewhere chiefly alleged as the cause of their utter ruin, **Ezekiel 25; Ezekiel 35; Amos 1 Malachi 1**. Nothing is more hateful to God than unnaturalness. "A brother is born for adversity," **Proverbs 17:17**; his birth binds him to it: and he must first offer violence to himself that is unkind to his distressed brother; he must tear the dictates of nature out of his own heart. And however at other times brethren may jar and jangle, yet at a strait, and in a stress good nature (if there be any remains of it) will work; and good blood will not belie itself. Israel was charged for this cause not to abhor an Edomite, because he was his brother, **Deuteronomy 23:7**; and yet the Edomites used them as discourteously in their passage to Canaan as the Moabites and Ammonites did, **Numbers 20:20, 21**; they were also their perpetual enemies, and of a devilish, vindictive spirit toward them to the very last; hence their ensuing doom.

Shame shall cover thee. For thy violence covering thee as a garment, and for thy pride compassing thee as a chain, **Psalms 73:6**. The face of such as are ashamed is wont to be

covered with blushing, the blood flushing to the outward parts to relieve them, and, as it were, to hide their shame. Hence the Hebrews say, that those that blush for shame "are covered with shame," **Micah 7:10; Psalm 69:9; 35:26; 109:29; Job 18:20**. Those that "shame the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge," **Psalm 14:6**, shall themselves be covered with confusion here, and be raised up at the last day "to shame and everlasting contempt," **Daniel 12:2**.

And thou shalt be cut off for ever.

"Aeternum, ex ima decisis stirpe, peribis."

Isaiah prophesieth the same irreparable ruin to Edom, **Isaiah 34:10**, and so doth Ezekiel, **Ezekiel 35:9**. That which Jeremiah speaketh of seventy years' continuance only of their serving the king of Babel, **Jeremiah 25:11**, is not meant of an end of their captivity, but of the Babylonish monarchy. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In the day that thou stoodest on the other side.** Over beside, curiously eyeing and maliciously promoting, by thy virulent tongue and violent hands, the downfall of Israel. *Nemo curiosus quin malevolus*, saith an ancient. These Edomites fed their eyes with their brethren's miseries, as with a pleasant spectacle. At first perhaps they were only onlookers, but afterwards they "stood against them in battle" (when they saw them worsted) and took part with their enemies. See **Esther 8:2; Psalm 9:6; Ephesians 6:11**. The Samaritans afterwards served them in like sort, as Josephus reporteth; especially when Antiochus tormented the Jews, they wrote to him to excuse themselves as no Jews; and (offering him their service) basely styled him Antiochus, the mighty God.

In the day that the strangers carried away captive, &c. Edom's malice is here aggravated by the circumstance of time they took to express it; viz. when God's people were at worst, and when their extreme misery should have moved pity. This was a dog-like, devil-like practice, to fall upon those that are down before; "to add affliction to the afflicted," **Psalm 69:26**; to push the wounded out of the herd, as they say deer do. Of such barbarous and savage usage David often complaineth, and Job, and Jeremiah, and Jesus, **Psalm 22**; such shall one day cry out at God's bar, as Joseph's brethren did, **Genesis 42:21**, and find no mercy, **James 2:21**, no more than cruel Haman did, **Esther 7:10**, it being just with God to set off all hearts from him who had been so unreasonably merciless. This Job well knew, and therefore so studiously purgeth himself of this heinous wickedness, **Job 31:29**. Ausonius also out of Pittacus Mytilenaeus affirmeth him to be a beast and worse that maketh himself merry in another man's misery. The beastliest among brute creatures, even swine, seem to be affected with the outcries of their kind. Men only, more brutish than they, triumph in the calamities of each other, and are not moved with their outcries, albeit as bitter as that of Hezekiah, **Isaiah 38:14**, "O Lord, I am oppressed, help me." This Solomon calleth oppression of a high nature, **Ecclesiastes 4:1**; see **Psalm 142:4**.

And foreigners entered into his gates. Having taken the city; then did the Edomites set fire to the temple, **Esther 4:45**. Citizens in a siege fortify their gates, and defend them to the utmost; for if the gates be gained the city is lost; as it was at Jerusalem, and as it had like to have been at the city of Coccinum, in the island of Lemnos, which the Turks had surprised suddenly, but that they were happily prevented by the courage of one Marulla, a maiden of that city, who seeing her father slain in the gate, took up the weapons that lay by him, and like a fierce Amazon, notably revenged his death, desperately fighting in defence of her country with those few that were in the gate at the first, and so kept the Turks out until the rest of the citizens, moved with the alarm, came to the gate.

And cast lots upon Jerusalem. *i.e.* upon the plunder of Jerusalem; according to the custom of

old soldiers, **Numbers 26:56**. See this fulfilled **2 Kings 24:13, 14; 25:13-17**; See also more of this practice, **Nahum 3:10; Joel 3:3**; and how grievous it is to the ingenuous, hear Andromache (Virg. Aeneid. III 323),

*"O foelix una ante alias Priameia virgo,
Hostilem ad tumulum, Troiae sub moenibus altis
Iussa mort, quae sortitus non pertulit ullos,
Nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile."*

Even thou wast as one of them. The emphasis lieth in the word "thou"; as in that of Julius Caesar, beholding Brutus among the conspirators that took away his life, What? Thou my son Brutus? **Καὶ σὺ τέκνον Βροῦτε** (Dio Cass.). Even thou, brother Edom, whom we spared in our passage through the wilderness, when we destroyed other nations, **Deuteronomy 2:5**; thou, who hast from David's days, for the most part, been our vassal and tributary. Jerome applieth this to heretics; Mercer, to that arch-heretic antichrist, an utter opposite to Christ, yet a pretended friend, as was Judas; a servant of God's servants (if you will believe him), but a most bloody persecutor of the Church, in whose ruins he yet revelleth, and will do, till Christ shall punish him, with "his sore, and great, and strong sword," **Isaiah 27:2**, and dung his vineyard with the flesh of that wild boar. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:12]]{{field-on:Bible}} **But thou shouldest not have looked on the day.** Unless it were with weeping eyes. *Iisdem quibus videmus oculis flemus*. Men have the same organ of seeing and of weeping; that when they behold a doleful object, they might weep over it; not as the crocodile doth over the dead body which she had slain before, and afterwards devoureth; but with true tears of compassion, weeping with those that weep. God takes it ill here, that any should once look upon his afflicted people, unless it be to pity and relieve them. He observed Cain's lowering upon his brother, **Genesis 4:6**, and the Jews' wagging their heads, **Matthew 27:39**, Rabshakeh's lofty looks, **Isaiah 37:28**, Laban's change of countenance, **Genesis 31:2**. Men may not look at liberty, and as they list. *Vultu saepe laeditur charitas*. It was not for nothing, therefore, that in Queen Elizabeth's days, at a meeting of the borderers in the marches between England and Scotland, about goods unjustly taken, security was given and confirmed on both sides by oath, according to custom and proclamation made, that no man should harm other by word, deed, or look.

When he became a stranger. And fell under a strange punishment, as Job speaketh, **Job 31:3**, that is, a rare and unheard of misery, *monstrosum exilium*, Tremellius rendereth it. This was threatened, **2 Chronicles 7:21**, and accordingly fulfilled, **Lamentations 1:9**. Israel became the world's wonderment, a famous instance of God's severity against a people of his wrath and of his curse. Aben Ezra rendereth it, In his strange day, such as he had never seen the like before. Others, when he was banished his own borders, and became a stranger at home: when God seemed to look strange upon him, and to stand aloof, or as a man astonished, that knows not whether he had best help or no, as a mighty man that cannot save, **Jeremiah 14:8, 9**. John Baptist was beheaded in prison without any law, right, or reason, as though God had known nothing at all of him, saith that martyr (Acts & Mon. 1423).

Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children, &c. For this is to be sick of the devil's disease, **ἐπιχαίρεκακία**, and such are assured that they shall not go unpunished, **Proverbs 17:5**. God will soon see it, and be displeased, and turn the current of his wrath upon such an offender, **Proverbs 24:18**, as he did here upon Edom, for looking with liking on the calamity of his brother, for rejoicing at the downfall of his enemy.

Neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly. Heb. Magnified thy mouth, blustering and breathing out big threats, setting up thine horn on high, and saying, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof," **Psalms 137:7**.

"Diripite, ex imis evertite fundamentis." (Buchanan.)

Such a Pyrgopolynicas was Nebuchadnezzar, **Isaiah 10:13**, and Alexander the Great, and Antiochus, that little antichrist, **Daniel 7:8**, and that great antichrist of Rome, bellowing with his bulls, and menacing hell to all that adhere not to him. See **Revelation 13:5, 6**, and a like phrase to this, **Ezekiel 35:13**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate**, &c. But have looked upon them as my people, though under a cloud of calamity; which will soon blow over. To enter, therefore, into their gates for prey and spoil is to burden yourselves with that burdensome stone that shall break you; to drink of that poisonous cup that shall bane you; to lay your hands upon that hearth of fire that will burn you, **Zechariah 12:2, 3, 6**. Look to it, hands off, keep you far from so evil a matter, lest it prove as that gold of Toulouse, *Aurum Tholosanum*, a mischief to all that meddle with it.

Thou shouldest not have looked. See **Obadiah 1:12**. The repetition shows the heinousness of the sin. The Holy Ghost doth not open his mouth in vain (whatever Job did, **Job 35:16**), nor multiply words without reason.

In the day of their calamity. This is thrice mentioned, to show how sensible God was of this savage dealing of theirs with his poor people, who now lay under the strokes and stripes of a displeased mercy. The Hebrew word here rendered calamity signifieth a fog, vapour, or misty cloud, **Genesis 2:6; Job 36:27**; and by a metaphor, it is put for affliction and misery, as it is also in Latin. *Tempera si fuerint nubila, solus eris* (Ovid.). *Nubecula est, cito transibit*, said Athanasius. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:14]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway.** To intercept those poor fugitives, who sought to save themselves by flight, since they could not by fight. But alas,

"Una salus victis, nullam sperare salutem."

Seeking to shun the shelves, they ran upon a rock. Mischievous Edomites waylaid them; and either slew them or drew them back to prison, as in the next words.

Neither shouldest thou have delivered up. Or shut up close prisoners the residue, Heb. *Serido* (the same almost with the English, the letters only transposed), those poor few that were yet undevoured by the sword. This was the greatest cruelty of all. And see the Edomites' progress in it, and what proficients they prove. *Nemo repente fit deterrimus*. Sin proceeds by degrees; neither is any man at his worst at first. First they looked at the Church's calamity, and then they laughed, and then they insulted and spoke big words, and then they plundered, and lastly they butchered some and imprisoned others. Did not God's enemies do all this among us in our late unnatural commotions? wherein, besides the many massacres made everywhere, it was a like difficult thing, in those parts where they prevailed, to find a wicked man in their prisons or a good man out of them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:15]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For the day of the Lord is near**, &c. "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming," **Psalms 37:12, 13**, the particular day of his sore punishment, a type and pledge of the general judgment, that great day of the Lord, as it is called, **Revelation 6:17; 16:14**, because the great God will on that day do great works, and determine great matters, **Jude 1:19**. But as some men's sins go before to judgment (as it were, by a special sessions preceding and anteverting the great Assizes), so should Edom and his neighbouring nations taste also of Nebuchadnezzar's cup and whip, **Jeremiah 25:17**, and this day is said to be near upon them, though it came not of above a hundred years after; so is the

coming of Christ to judgment near, though we presume not to set the time, as some have done, deceiving and being deceived.

As thou hast done, it shall be done to thee. God loves to retaliate, and to oppose frowardness to frowardness, *Psalm 18:26*, contrariety to contrariety, *Leviticus 26:18, 21*, severity to cruelty, as he did to Adonibezek, Agag, Zebah, and Zalmunna, *Judges 8:19*, and Edom here, and *Ezekiel 35*. And the heathens held this but meet, as appeareth by their fables and stories of Phineus (Ovid).

*"Quid fodis immeritis natis sua lumina, Phineu?
—Poena reversura est in caput ipsa tuum."*

So of Diomedes, King of Thrace, cast by Hercules to be devoured by his own dogs, which he had so often fed with man's flesh. The like might be said of Perillus and his brazen bull, whereof himself had the lucky omen. *Iustum est, ait Rhadamanthus, quod quis iniuste aliis intulit idem subeat et patiatur* (Arist. Ethic.). Herein they said no other thing than what God had in the old law decreed, *Leviticus 24:19*, and Christ in the new hath confirmed, *Matthew 7:2*, for a terror to evildoers, who shall have like for like returned unto them, and be filled with their own ways, *Proverbs 14:14*. See *Lamentations 4:21*. The Rabbis conceive all this to be spoken of the Romans (whom they call Edomites); sure we are God will be even with that Romish antichrist, and render him his own in kind, when he once takes him in hand, as *Revelation 13:10; 18:6*. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:16]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For as ye have drunk upon mine holy mountain.** As you, O Edomites, have rejoiced and revelled in the ruins of Zion, carousing and carolling in her calamity, so shall many nations, and you among, yea, above the rest (for your excessive perfidy and cruelty), drink deeply of the cup of God's fury, which hath eternity to the bottom.

And they shall be as though they had not been. This clause makes against that other sense that some set upon the text, viz. The heathen shall drink, feast, and triumph over thee, O Edom, whom they have subdued; yea, they shall drink so stoutly that they shall swallow thee up, and all thy substance, leaving thee nothing, *praeter coelum, et coenum*, as that Roman prodigal boasted he had done to himself. Their exposition seemeth more probable who here begin the consolatory part of the prophecy, and make this verse an apostrophe to the afflicted Jews thus: Like as ye my people have drunk your part of the cup of affliction (an ordinary metaphor, not in Scripture only, as *Ezekiel 23:32; Jeremiah 49:12; Matthew 20:22*, but also in heathen writers, in allusion perhaps to the cup of poison given at Athens to malefactors, or, as some think, to the manner of their feasts, whereat the *symposiarch*, or ruler of the feast, *John 2:9*, gave order what, and how much, every one should drink), so shall all the heathen drink, and that continually; yea, they shall not only sip of the top, that which is sweetest and clearest; but the dregs and sediments too, they shall both drink and swallow down; till such time as it hath wholly swallowed them up, so that they shall be as though they had not been. See, for confirmation of this sense, *Jeremiah 25:15; 49:12*, and pray for the ruin of Rome, so long since foretold by Sibylla: *Tota eris in cineres, quasi nunquam Roma fuisses*. The prophecy is fulfilled already in Edom; whose very name is lost, more than what the Scripture reporteth of them. The Chaldees cut off abundance of them, together with the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighbouring nations. After that Judas Maccabeus, and his nephew Hircanus, slew a great sort of them; and then, lastly, the Romans and other princes rooted them utterly out. See Joseph. lib. i. Antiq. cap. 10; *Mark 5:65; 10:16, 32*. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:17]]{{field-on:Bible}} **But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance.** God will "turn again their captivity as the streams in the south." He stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to send them home; he restored unto them both religion and liberty; he did all

that could be done for them, by sending his Son among them in the fulness of time, "made of a woman," &c., made also unto all his people, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," **1 Corinthians 1:30**. Jesus hath delivered us from the wrath to come, **1 Thessalonians 1:10**. Neither is there any other name, whereby heaven is to be had, but only by the name of Jesus.

And there shall be holiness. "Holiness to the Lord," as **Zechariah 14:20**. (See Trapp on "**Zechariah 14:20**") All the Lord's people shall be a holy nation, **1 Peter 2:9**. Every inhabitant of the city of God shall be partaker of holiness, both imputed and imparted; that, for justification, being inherent in Christ, imputed to us; this, for sanctification, imparted by Christ, inherent in us.

And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. They returning from Babylon shall not only recover their own possessions, out of the hands of the Edomites, Samaritans, and Syrians, by virtue of an edict from King Darius; but they shall also possess the Edomites themselves, and their territories; when converted to the faith of Christ, they shall bring their wealth unto the Church, and (as it is said of Tyre, **Isaiah 23:18**) feed and clothe therewith the saints of God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:18]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And the house of Jacob shall be a fire,** &c. The house of Jacob are the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; the house of Joseph are the ten tribes of Israel, whereof Ephraim was the head. The sense is this, those two tribes, together with such of the ten as joined themselves to them, either before or after the captivity, shall invade Idumea, burn it, and subdue it, as fire doth stubble fully dry. This was done by Hircanus and Judas Maccabeus, who compelled the Edomites to be circumcised; and so wholly possessed those parts, that there were not any relics of them remaining; no, not so much as one πυροφόρος (as the Septuagint render it), or, πυρφόρος (as some read them), any to carry grain after the camp or fire before it, according to the custom of the Greeks and Easterlings; which torchbearer might as little be violated as an ambassador; but here, he should be cut off with the rest, and not so much as a messenger left, to relate the overthrow. The Edomites were so utterly rooted out by Hircanus, that they thenceforth ceased to be Edomites, and became Jews. Those of them that were converted by the preaching of the gospel, ceased to be either Edomites or Jews, and became Christians. The apostles, burning with the zeal of God's glory and love to men's souls, devoured and wasted the infidelity, idols, and vices of the Gentiles wherever they came preaching, Hence Chrysostom saith, Peter was a man made all of fire, walking among stubble; Paul was *insatiabilis Dei cultor*, an insatiable servant of Christ. And to the like purpose it was, that to one that desired to know what kind of man Basil was, it is said, that was presented in a dream, a pillar of fire, with this motto, *Talis est Basilius*, Such a one is Basil. And old Latimer, when he was demanded the reason why so little powerful preaching? answered, *Deest ignis*, the spark of the spirit is wanting. Howbeit this prophecy, as it began to be fulfilled at first by the apostles, and the apostolic persons that came after them; so it is daily, and shall be continually to the world's end, fulfilled by the faithful preachers of God's holy word, who are clothed with a spirit "of judgment and of burning," **Isaiah 4:4**, and out of whose mouth proceedeth fire, **Revelation 11:5**; to purge the gold, and to consume the stubble. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:19]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And they of the south shall possess the mount of Esau.** Those of the south, that is, the tribe of Judah. For Judaea was divided into five parts, **Joshua 15**, whereof one was southward, toward the coast of Edom, **Joshua 15:21**. Another was in the vale or plain, near unto the Philistines, **Joshua 15:33**. Here, then, Obadiah sheweth that the Jews shall not only recover their ancient inheritances, but also much enlarge the same; whereby he signifieth that the Church of Christ shall grow so very great, that Jewry shall be too narrow for them, see **Zechariah 10:10**; the ancient bounders shall not receive

them, see **Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 40:14**. The gospel was soon spread, not only to the neighbouring nations, but to all the ends of the earth: the Edomites, Philistines, &c., are only mentioned, as being better known and more adverse to the Jews than other nations were.

And they of the plain the Philistines. *i.e.* Those five lordships, Gath, Gaza, Ascalon, Ekron, and Azotus, all which country (called Saron, **Acts 9:35**) Augustus gave to Herod the Ascalonite; and, after his death, to his sons; dividing it into tetrarchies, **Luke 3:1**.

And they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria. All which Hircanus subdued, and destroyed their temple built in mount Gerizim.

And Benjamin shall possess Gilead. That is shall propagate and extend his habitation beyond Jordan; and in respect of his exceeding great multitude, shall be compelled to hold and possess Gilead, all the country between Jordan and mount Libanus. Thus Jerome with the Hebrew scholiasts and many others; who do also note, that under these earthly felicities heavenly are described; and that all this is chiefly accomplished under Christ, when as the faithful are made heirs and lords of all things by him, who is their head. See **Ezekiel 37:16-23**.
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Verse 20. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:20]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel, &c.** *i.e.* The multitude of the Jews carried captive to Babylon, returning at length into their own country, shall possess all the places of the Canaanites, all the maritime cities, all the tract of ground as far as Sarepta, which is between Tyre and Zidon, therefore called Sarepta of Zidon, **1 Kings 17:9**. Here dwelt the Canaanites, whom Asher could not expel, **Judges 1:31, 32**. See **Matthew 15:22**.

And the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad. That is, either in some city of Assyria or in the utmost bounds of the Babylonish dominion (as some interpret the word Sepharad, by taking it asunder), or as far as Apharad (so the Septuagint), that is, Euphrates. The Hebrew doctors, as by Canaanites here they understand the Dutch, and by Zarephath France, so by Sepharad they will needs have Spain to be meant, subdued, say they, by Nebuchadnezzar, after other of his great conquests, and by him planted with Jews, carried captive from Jerusalem. With such bold and frivolous fancies do these poor deluded creatures fondly feed themselves. They are generally light, aerial, and fanatical brains, saith one; apt to rework themselves into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage. They not only expect a corporal restitution to their own country, but also a sovereignty over all other nations, and possession of their provinces, saith another; they believe that the Messiah is not yet come, because the Christian Empire is not yet destroyed; and therefore they pray daily for the overthrow of the Roman Empire (Buxtorf. Synag. c. 5). Out of the east it is that they expect their Messiah, whither the Spanish Jews fled (when they were banished), and are exceedingly multiplied; for those do they hold to be this captivity of Jerusalem here mentioned, viz. of the tribe of Judah; and the other in Germany and Italy, to be of the tribe of Benjamin; who, in honour of the more noble tribe, and to correspond with them the better, do learn the Spanish tongue; which those still retain, in hope, belike, to be one day lords of that large and rich country.

Shall possess the cities of the south. *i.e.* Shall return to their own southerly cities and provinces. And this prophecy of recovering the holy land is to be taken in a spiritual sense; and it importeth, that all those that are Israelites indeed, Jews inwardly, shall flee to the Church of Christ, **Romans 9:24-29**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 21. [[@Bible:Obadiah 1:21]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And saviours shall come up on mount Zion.** Judas Maccabeus and Hircanus in the history: as in the mystery, the apostles and others of Christ's ministers, who are here and elsewhere called saviours, a very high style, because God maketh use of their ministry, as he doth likewise of the angels, for the good of them that

are heirs of salvation, **Hebrews 1:14**, and by their help the faithful are saved. Hence those expressions, **1 Timothy 4:16**, "thou shalt save thyself and those that hear thee"; **James 5:20**, he "shall save a soul from death"; **Job 33:24**, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have received a ransom." See also **Micah 5:6**; **Jude 1:23**; **1 Corinthians 3:6, 7, 9; 4:1; 9:22**. Let ministers hence learn their dignity and their duty. Christ hath communicated to them many of his own most honourable titles, as Light of the world, Doctor, Pastor, Saviour, Redeemer, &c. True it is, he alone is the principal Saviour, and therefore it followeth in the closure of this shortest, but most difficult prophet (*Brevissimus sed difficilimus Propheta*. Mercer), "the kingdom shall be the Lord's," he, to speak properly, is the sole both Sovereign and Saviour of his body, the Church. *Sed servatores dicuntur*, saith Mercer, but they are called saviours, because they preach the word of this salvation, and are instrumental to Christ in that great work; like as the apothecary is to the skilful physician, in curing his patient of a deadly disease.

To Judge the mount of Esau. Antichrist with his adherents; all other infidels also, and atheists, condemned here by Christ and his faithful ministers, as rebels against God, and sinners against their own souls. "Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know their abomination," **Ezekiel 20:4**, and to judge themselves worthy to be destroyed; that judging themselves, they may not be judged, **1 Corinthians 11:31**, but of Esauites may become true Jacobites; as Jetur, by nature an Ishmaelite, **1 Chronicles 1:31**, is, for his faith and piety, called an Israelite, **2 Samuel 17:25**. To thus "judge the mount of Esau," ought to be the ambition of Christ's ministers; for to gain them to Christ, by convincing "the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," that is, of the mischief of sin, the necessity of justification by Christ's merit, and of sanctification by his Spirit, **John 16:8**. This is to be both judges and saviours; as those judges of old were, whereunto the prophet here seemeth to allude. This is to save people "with fear, pulling them out of the fire," **Jude 1:23**. This is to proclaim Christ King, and to set the crown upon his head, as **Solomon's Song 3:11**, with that glorious acclamation, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, and he will save us," **Isaiah 33:22**.

The kingdom shall be the Lord's. Not only the kingdom of power over all creatures, **1 Chronicles 29:11**, and of grace in the hearts of his people here (called often the kingdom of heaven in the gospel), but also of righteousness, and of glory hereafter, to be chiefly exercised at that great and dreadful day.

"Now to this King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." (**1 Timothy 1:17**) {{field-off:Bible}}