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OBADIAH

A 2-Week Group Bible Study

By Greg and Kayla Gibson

WEEK 1 OF 2 • GENERAL / MIXED GROUP EDITION

The Pride of Edom — Obadiah 1:1–14

Scripture Scope: Obadiah 1:1–14 (ESV) • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

PARTICIPANT STUDY EDITION

Synchronized Section-by-Section with the Leader Guide Edition · Includes Group Reflection Workspace

Obadiah — 2-Week Group Bible Study (Participant Study Edition)

Week 1: The Pride of Edom (Obadiah 1:1–14)

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- **The title:** "The vision of Obadiah" (1:1). Nothing is known of Obadiah beyond his name, which means "servant of the LORD." The book gives no date; most readers connect it with Edom's conduct when Jerusalem fell to Babylon in 586 BC.
- **The voices:** The Lord GOD speaks through Obadiah concerning Edom, the nation descended from Esau, Jacob's brother.
- **Its form:** A single prophetic oracle of 21 verses, the shortest book in the Old Testament.
- **The structure:**
  - Edom's pride brought down (1:1–9).
  - Edom's violence against its brother Jacob (1:10–14).
  - The day of the LORD upon all the nations, a remnant on Mount Zion, and the kingdom that belongs to the LORD (1:15–21).
- **Why it matters:** Obadiah exposes the pride that says, "Who will bring me down to the ground?" and the quieter sin of standing aloof while a brother suffers. It ends with hope: the LORD's kingdom will have the last word.

How This 2-Week Study Works

You may notice this study is shorter than our usual eight weeks. Even though we are 8weekbiblestudy.com, stretching Obadiah to eight weeks would have left it thin on content, and we never want to trade quality for quantity.

Designed for weekly small groups, mini-churches, and community gatherings (75–90 minutes per session) rather than daily homework checklists, this study is two weeks rather than the series' usual eight. Obadiah has only 21 verses in one chapter. Two weeks follow the book's own turn at 1:15, from the charge against Edom (1:1–14) to the day of the LORD and the kingdom (1:15–21), without padding. Each week invites you to humility, faithfulness to others in their day of trouble, and hope in the LORD's kingdom together through six repeatable sections:

- **Section X.1 — Opening:** Sets the scene, the Week at a Glance, Head, Heart, and Hands objectives, the Opening Frame, and the Opening Entry Question.
- **Section X.2 — Historical & Literary Context:** Places the week's passage inside the structure of Obadiah and the ancient Near Eastern world.
- **Section X.3 — Movement 1:** The week's first guided passage: Guided Scripture Reading, Anchor Verses, Teaching Narrative, and Group Discussion Questions.
- **Section X.4 — Movement 2:** The week's second guided passage, following the same flow.
- **Section X.5 — Canonical Horizon:** Traces how the passage echoes across Scripture and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- **Section X.6 — Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer:** Moves the week's study into everyday life, previews next week, and closes in prayer.

Key anchor verses are printed in each section for quick reference. Longer focal passages are read aloud together from the ESV.

Choosing a Bible Translation: Top 5 Translations Compared

Every English Bible translation falls along a spectrum between two primary approaches: word-for-word translation (formal equivalence, which prioritizes literal accuracy to the original phrasing and sentence structure) and thought-for-thought translation (dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes immediate modern readability by translating idioms and ideas into natural contemporary expressions). Here is how five widely used English translations compare:

- **ESV (English Standard Version) — Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Follows the wording and sentence structure of the original Hebrew and Greek closely while using modern English; well suited to close study.
  - Cons: Because it tracks the original sentence structure, some phrasing can feel more formal than everyday speech.
- **NIV (New International Version) — Balanced (Between Word-for-Word and Thought-for-Thought)**
  - Pros: Widely read; balances accuracy to the original languages with natural, everyday readability.
  - Cons: Because some idioms are rendered as modern expressions, a few literal wordplays or technical terms can be less visible.
- **NLT (New Living Translation) — Thought-for-Thought**
  - Pros: Warm and conversational; reads smoothly aloud and helps readers follow the big picture of long passages.
  - Cons: Because it prioritizes meaning over literal phrasing, it can be harder to use for close word study.
- **CSB (Christian Standard Bible) — Optimal Equivalence (Balanced)**
  - Pros: Stays close to the original words where possible while smoothing awkward phrasing into natural modern English.
  - Cons: Because it is a newer translation, some well-known verses may sound different from the wording many readers remember.
- **KJV / NKJV (King James Version & New King James Version) — Traditional Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Historic cadence that shaped English literature and church history; the NKJV updates archaic pronouns ("thee/thou") while keeping the classic rhythm.
  - Cons: Often reads like older English poetry, with complex sentences and archaic or formal vocabulary that can be harder for modern readers to follow.

This study quotes the ESV.

Greg & Kayla's Recommended Study Bibles

Having a trusted study Bible on hand is one of the best ways to go deeper as you read through Obadiah:

- **Greg's Favorite Study Bible:** The MacArthur Study Bible (ESV), which contains extensive explanatory notes beneath almost every verse, ideal for detailed study.
- **Kayla's Favorite Study Bible:** The ESV Study Bible, containing over 20,000 study notes, articles, and explanations.

The 2-Week Obadiah Study at a Glance

Week	Title & Passage	Movement 1 / Movement 2	Canonical Horizon
1	**The Pride of Edom** (1:1–14)	Pride Brought Down (1:1–9) / Because of the Violence to Your Brother (1:10–14)	Pride brought down; the Brother who did not stand aloof
2	**The Kingdom Shall Be the LORD's** (1:15–21)	The Day of the LORD upon All the Nations (1:15–18) / Saviors on Mount Zion (1:19–21)	The kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ; a remnant and a holy mountain

WEEK 1 OF 2

WEEK 1 SESSION GUIDE · OBADIAH 1:1–14

Week 1: The Pride of Edom

Scripture Scope: Obadiah 1:1–14 (ESV) • Focal Passages: Obadiah 1:1–4; 1:10–11 • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

Section 1.1

Opening: The Pride of Edom (Obadiah 1:1–14)

Opening

Obadiah's vision is about Edom, the nation descended from Esau, Jacob's twin brother. Edom lived high in rocky mountain strongholds and felt untouchable. The LORD speaks directly to that confidence: "The pride of your heart has deceived you," he says to the people who ask, "Who will bring me down to the ground?" His answer is plain: "from there I will bring you down." Edom's wealth will be stripped, its allies will betray it, and its famous wisdom will fail.

Then Obadiah names the charge. When Jerusalem was invaded, Edom did not help its brother. It stood aloof and watched, then gloated, joined the looting, and even stood at the crossroads to catch those trying to escape. "Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you."

Week 1 At a Glance

Scripture Scope	Obadiah 1:1–14 (a report from the LORD and a summons among the nations, a proud people made small, a nest among the stars brought down, allies who deceive and wisdom that fails, violence against a brother, standing aloof on the day of disaster, and a warning against gloating, looting, and handing over survivors)
Focal Passages	Obadiah 1:1–4; 1:10–11
Literary & Structural Anchor	The oracle moves from Edom's height to its family name: pride in the clefts of the rock (1:3–4), then "your brother Jacob" (1:10). Edom's question, "Who will bring me down?" is answered in the LORD's first person. 1:11 interprets the violence: standing aloof made Edom "like one of them." The repeated "day" in 1:11–14 leans toward the day of the LORD in 1:15.
Big Idea	The LORD brings down the pride that thinks itself untouchable, and he does not forget violence against a brother, including the violence of standing aloof.

Week 1 Learning Objectives (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD **Know Pride and Its Fall:** Learn how Obadiah exposes Edom's pride and names its violence against its brother, including standing aloof.

HEART **See the Brother Who Came Down:** See that Christ did not stand aloof from his brothers but humbled himself and came down to save them.

HANDS **Stand with Those in Trouble:** Take one step to humble yourself before God and to stand with someone in their day of trouble.

Opening Frame: The Pride of Edom

Amos judged Edom for pursuing its brother with the sword (Amos 1:11) and closed with a promise that included "the remnant of Edom" (Amos 9:12). Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament, takes up Edom's pride and its betrayal of its brother. Edom descended from Esau, Jacob's twin, and lived in high, rocky country south of Judah. When Jerusalem fell, Edom stood aloof, gloated, and even joined in. This is a 2–week study: this week we read verses 1–14, where the LORD brings down Edom's pride and names its violence against its brother; next week we read verses 15–21, the day of the LORD and the kingdom that belongs to him. The question for this week: how does pride deceive us, and what does God think of standing aloof when others suffer? Before we read together, take a moment to share with the group:

Opening Entry Question (Icebreaker)

1.1 Q1 (Opening Entry Question): When you were a child, who was someone who stood up for you, or someone you stood up for?

Section 1.2

Historical & Literary Context: Brothers at Odds (Obadiah 1:1–14)

Entering the World of Edom and Its Brother

1. Historical Background

Edom lay southeast of Judah, in rugged highlands. When Babylon captured Jerusalem in 586 BC, Edomites appear to have joined in the plunder and caught those fleeing.

2. Cultural Setting

Israel remembered Esau as Jacob's brother (Genesis 25–33). The law commanded, "You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother" (Deuteronomy 23:7). Betraying a brother was a deep covenant wound.

3. Literary Structure of Obadiah 1:1–14

- **A report and a summons** (1:1)
- **Made small, brought down from the heights** (1:2–4)
- **Plundered and betrayed** (1:5–7)
- **Wisdom destroyed** (1:8–9)
- **The charge of violence against a brother** (1:10)
- **Standing aloof** (1:11)
- **Gloating, looting, and cutting off fugitives** (1:12–14)

4. Key Themes

Pride; self-deception; the LORD's sovereignty over the nations; brotherhood; violence; standing aloof; the day of the LORD.

5. Theological Considerations

Obadiah teaches that pride is self-deception and that refusing to help a brother is itself violence. Judgment is the LORD's, not ours to carry out against any modern people.

6. Relevant Scholarly Insights

Obadiah 1:1–9 closely parallels Jeremiah 49:7–22, suggesting shared prophetic tradition about Edom. The rivalry of Jacob and Esau runs through Genesis and the Prophets, ending with Malachi 1:2–5.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.2)

1.2 Q1: Edom's pride was tied to its secure, lofty home. How can our security, success, or position make us proud?

1.2 Q2: Why does it matter that Obadiah calls Jacob Edom's "brother"?

1.2 Q3: Why is standing by and doing nothing while another person suffers so painful, and how does Obadiah help us distinguish faithful solidarity from unsafe intervention? (Feel free to reflect quietly or pass.)

Section 1.3

Movement 1: Pride Brought Down (Obadiah 1:1–9)

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: Obadiah 1:1–4** (focal passage) — The vision of Obadiah concerning Edom: a messenger summons the nations to battle; the LORD will make Edom small and despised; its proud heart has deceived it in its lofty home, saying, Who will bring me down? Though it soars like an eagle among the stars, the LORD will bring it down.
- **Summary of Obadiah 1:5–7** — Thieves and grape-gatherers would leave something behind, but Esau will be stripped bare; Edom's allies will deceive it and set a trap for it.
- **Summary of Obadiah 1:8–9** — On that day the LORD will destroy the wise men of Edom and the understanding of Mount Esau; its mighty men will be dismayed and cut off.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Obadiah 1:1:** The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom: We have heard a report from the LORD, and a messenger has been sent among the nations: “Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!”
>
> **Obadiah 1:2:** Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be utterly despised.
>
> **Obadiah 1:3:** The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, “Who will bring me down to the ground?”
>
> **Obadiah 1:4:** Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the LORD.

Teaching Narrative: Pride Brought Down

1. A Report from the LORD (Obadiah 1:1)

A summons among the nations.

2. Made Small (Obadiah 1:2)

The LORD's verdict on pride.

3. Who Will Bring Me Down? (Obadiah 1:3–4)

Pride deceives; the LORD answers.

4. Stripped and Betrayed (Obadiah 1:5–7)

Retold briefly. Allies who deceive.

5. Wisdom Destroyed (Obadiah 1:8–9)

Retold briefly. Pride's partners fail.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.3)

1.3 Q1: "We have heard a report from the LORD, and a messenger has been sent among the nations" (1:1). What does it mean that the LORD directs the affairs of nations, even nations that do not know him?

1.3 Q2: "Behold, I will make you small among the nations" (1:2). Why does God humble those who exalt themselves?

1.3 Q3: "The pride of your heart has deceived you" (1:3). In what ways does pride deceive people about themselves, others, and God—as seen in Edom's boast—and what might you examine privately without needing to share aloud?

1.3 Q4: Edom said in its heart, "Who will bring me down to the ground?" (1:3). What makes this question so dangerous?

1.3 Q5: "Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down" (1:4). How does this verse speak to people who feel secure in their own achievements?

Section 1.4

Movement 2: Because of the Violence to Your Brother (Obadiah 1:10–14)

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: Obadiah 1:10–11** (focal passage) — Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame will cover you and you will be cut off forever; on the day strangers carried off his wealth and cast lots for Jerusalem, you stood aloof and were like one of them.

- **Summary of Obadiah 1:12–14** — Do not gloat over your brother on the day of his misfortune, or rejoice over the people of Judah on the day of their ruin, or boast in the day of distress; do not enter his gate or loot his wealth in the day of his calamity; do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his fugitives or hand over his survivors.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Obadiah 1:10:** Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.
>
> **Obadiah 1:11:** On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them.

Teaching Narrative: Because of the Violence to Your Brother

1. Violence to Your Brother (Obadiah 1:10)

The charge, and its shame. Edom's judgment belongs to the LORD; it is never a license for revenge or for hostility toward any people today.

2. You Stood Aloof (Obadiah 1:11)

Distance in a brother's disaster is not innocence.

3. Gloating and Boasting (Obadiah 1:12)

Retold briefly. Rejoicing over another's ruin.

4. Looting and Handing Over (Obadiah 1:13–14)

Retold briefly. Joining in, then cutting off escape.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.4)

1.4 Q1: "Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you" (1:10). Why does God treat betrayal of a brother so seriously?

1.4 Q2: "On the day that you stood aloof" (1:11). Why is standing aloof while someone suffers a form of violence?

1.4 Q3: "You were like one of them" (1:11). How can doing nothing put us on the side of those who do harm?

1.4 Q4: Obadiah warns Edom not to gloat or rejoice over its brother's disaster (1:12). Why is it so tempting to enjoy someone else's downfall, especially someone who has hurt us?

1.4 Q5: Edom went from watching, to gloating, to looting, to handing over survivors (1:11–14). How can small steps of indifference grow into active harm?

Section 1.5

Canonical Horizon: Pride Brought Down; the Brother Who Did Not Stand Aloof

Tracing the Thread Across Scripture

Edom climbed high and was brought down, but Christ came down from the highest place and humbled himself to death on a cross (Philippians 2:5–8), and he is the Brother who did not stand aloof but shared our flesh and blood to set us free (Hebrews 2:11–15). Turn to each passage as the connections are traced.

1. The Brother Who Came Near (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:11–15)

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus is not ashamed to call his people brothers; he shared their flesh and blood to free them.

2. The One Who Humbled Himself (Philippians 2:5–11)

Edom climbed high and was brought down. Christ came down from the highest place, humbled himself to death on a cross, and was exalted by the Father.

3. God Opposes the Proud (1 Peter 5:5; Luke 14:11)

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled.

4. The Neighbor Who Stopped (Luke 10:30–37)

As an ethical parallel to Obadiah's call not to stand aloof, the Samaritan stopped and helped rather than passing by. Jesus says, "You go, and do likewise."

Anchor Verse (ESV)

Obadiah 1:3: The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, “Who will bring me down to the ground?”

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.5)

1.5 Q1: Hebrews says Jesus "is not ashamed to call them brothers" (Hebrews 2:11). How does Christ's coming near contrast with Edom standing aloof?

1.5 Q2: Paul writes that Christ "humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death" (Philippians 2:8). How does Christ's humility answer Edom's pride?

1.5 Q3: Peter writes, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5). How is this verse both a warning and an invitation?

Personal & Group Application (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	Obadiah exposes Edom's self-deceiving pride and its violence against its brother, including standing aloof on the day of disaster.
HEART	Jesus did not stand aloof from us; he humbled himself, came near as our brother, and gives grace to the humble.
HANDS	Faith humbles itself before God and stands with brothers and sisters in their day of trouble.

Section 1.6

Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer

Application

Take a few minutes to move this week's study into everyday life. Discuss these three questions together and write down what you want to remember:

1.6 Q1: How does pride—a sense of being secure or above others—quietly take root in a person's heart, and what does humbling oneself before God look like in everyday life? (Personal reflection may remain private.)

1.6 Q2: When someone around us is going through a day of distress, what are wise, safe ways to stand with them rather than standing aloof, while honoring appropriate boundaries? (No need to name anyone aloud.)

1.6 Q3: Why is it tempting to feel glad when someone who has hurt or opposed us falls, and how can Scripture teach us to reject gloating and leave justice with God without minimizing harm or abandoning wise boundaries? (Feel free to pass or reflect silently.)

Looking Ahead to Next Week

Recap: In Week 1, we heard the LORD bring down Edom's pride, saw that pride deceives the heart, and heard the charge of violence against a brother, including the violence of standing aloof.

Transition: Next week the day of the LORD comes near upon all the nations, and Obadiah ends with a remnant on Mount Zion and the promise that the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

Week 2 Overview — The Kingdom Shall Be the LORD's (Obadiah 1:15–21): Movement 1, The Day of the LORD upon All the Nations (1:15–18), covers the principle that what is done will be returned, and the remnant who escape on Mount Zion. Movement 2, Saviors on Mount Zion (1:19–21), covers the restoration of God's people and the LORD's kingdom. The Canonical Horizon traces the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ. The session closes with a look back at the whole book.

Focal Readings to Preview

- Obadiah 1:15–17
- Obadiah 1:21

My One Concrete Step for the Week Ahead

Write down or name aloud the specific rhythm, boundary, or conversation you want to practice before next week's gathering:

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by inviting each person to share a one-sentence takeaway or prayer request, then pray together along these lines:

Closing Group Prayer

LORD, you rule the nations and bring down the proud. We confess the pride that deceives our hearts, and the times we have stood aloof while others suffered. We pray for those who have been abandoned, betrayed, or gloated over; draw near to them. Thank you for Jesus, who did not stand aloof but came near as our brother and humbled himself for us. Help us to stand with others in their day of trouble. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.