***“Studying the Gentile Prophets”—Jonah, Nahum, and Obadiah***

***JONAH***

**Written between 800-750 B.C., The book of Jonah, though it is placed in the midst of prophetical books, is rather a history than a prophecy, with only one line of prediction, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown,” Jonah 3:4. The rest of the book is a historical narrative. This book centers on “A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST.” Jonah, the reluctant prophet, authors one of the most “denigrated,” “maligned” books in the Bible. It is often misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misquoted. His name means “dove,” and he was a Hebrew, the son of Amittai, which means “my true one.” He is from Gath-hepher near Nazareth, and he was a prophet to the northern tribes just prior to Amos during the first half of the eighth century B.C., 760 B.C. This discounts the Pharisees’ wrong assumption which said, “NO PROPHET HAS ARISEN OUT OF GALILEE,” JOHN 7:52. Jonah was the ONLY OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET TO ATTEMPT TO RUN FROM GOD. JEWISH TRADITION STATES THAT JONAH WAS THE WIDOW’S SON OF ZAREPHAH WHOM ELIJAH RAISED FROM THE DEAD, I KING 17:8-24. Jonah’s ministry was parallel with Elijah, Elisha, Hosea and Amos and was in the time of evil king Jeroboam II, king of Israel. Jeroboam II, was the most powerful King of the northern Kingdom, according to 2 Kings; he was able to acquire the land that formerly belonged to Aram, N.E. toward Damascus when Assyria suffered a political, internal set-back. However, the “Sleeping Giant, Assyria” awakened to devour the Northern Kingdom, and the prophets’ predictions were fulfilled. Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, is in the middle of the Assyrian Kingdom. In 722 B.C. Sargon II carried them into captivity. It is important to understand the gospel before we study Jonah. KEY: MATTHEW 12:40, “**For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” **AND SEEKING A SIGN:** **Luke 11:29-30, “**And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. 30For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.” **Jonah’s ministry was parallel with Elijah, Elisha, Hosea and Amos and was in the time of evil king Jeroboam II, king of Israel. Jeroboam II, was the most powerful King of the northern Kingdom, according to 2 Kings; he was able to acquire the land that formerly belonged to Aram, N.E. toward Damascus**

1. **Compare Jonah with the Apostle Paul.**
	1. **Both Paul and Jonah are apostles to the Gentiles**
	2. **Both used the sea: cast into the sea, witnessed to the sailors on board, and used to deliver the sailors on board.**
2. **The four chapters of Jonah can be compared to the four missionary journeys of Paul (Jonah: 1. Journey into a fish, 2. Journey to dry land, 3. Journey to Nineveh, 4. Journey to the heart of God.)**
3. **Elaborate on the six themes of the Book of Jonah.**
4. **Jonah is the one book of the Old Testament which sets forth the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**
5. **The Book of Jonah emphasizes that salvation is not by works, but by faith which leads to repentance.**
	1. **The third purpose of this book is to show that God’s purpose of grace cannot be frustrated.**
	2. **God will not cast us aside for faithlessness.**
	3. **God is good and gracious.**
	4. **Check out Jonah 4:2, “So he prayed to the Lord, and said, “Ah, Lord, was not this WHAT I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You *are* a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.”** **…..MOST PENETRATING PICTURE OF GOD IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE!**

**1:1, “Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, goes to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.”**

1. **Elaborate on the theme of Chapter 1: “Call and commission of Jonah; Jonah goes west; the great wind; Jonah arrives in the fish.”**
	1. **What was the “call and commission” of Jonah? MOST OTHER PROPHETS called to Israel, while he was called to the Gentiles.**
	2. **Which gods were worshipped in Nineveh? Nabu, Asshur, Adad, and Dagon (also the god of the Philistines).**
	3. **Talk about the “fish god” hats worn by modern priests. What about the fish symbol, “icthus” used on jewelry and decals?**
	4. **Why did Jonah try to escape the Lord? See Psalm 139:7-10, “*Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.*”**

**1:4, “But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.”**

1. **A trilogy of salvation appears in Jonah: the salvation of sailors, eventually Jonah, and finally the whole city of Nineveh. Elaborate about the power of “3.”**
2. **Compare the “three days and three nights” to Jesus’ words in Matthew 12:39-40, “But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”**
3. **Elaborate on the “Ten Miracles” explained in Jonah.**
	1. **The “supernatural” storm**
	2. **Selection of Jonah as guilty**
	3. **Sudden subsiding of the storm**
	4. **The great fish at the right time and place**
	5. **Preservation of Jonah**
	6. **Ejection, safe and sound, onto dry land**
	7. **Repentance of the entire city of Nineveh**
	8. **The Gourd**
	9. **The Worms**
	10. **The East Wind**
4. **Jonah Flees His Mission (Chapters 1-2)**
	1. **Jonah's Commission and Flight (1:1-3)**
	2. **The Endangered Sailors Cry to Their gods (1:4-6)**
	3. **Jonah's Disobedience Exposed (1:7-10)**
	4. **Jonah's punishment and Deliverance (1:11-2:1;2:10)**
	5. **His Prayer of Thanksgiving (2:2-9)**
5. **Jonah Reluctantly fulfills His Mission (Chapters 3-4)**
	1. **Jonah's Renewed Commission and Obedience (3:1-4)**
	2. **The Endangered Ninevites' Repentant Appeal to the Lord (3:5-9)**
	3. **The Ninevites' Repentance Acknowledged (3:10-4:4)**
	4. **Jonah's Deliverance and Rebuke (4:5-11)**
6. **NINEVEH FELL IN 612 B.C. TO THE BABYLONIANS**
7. **Reference Matthew 12:39-41, “But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here.”**

**2:1-2, “Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish’s belly. And he said: I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, and He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, *and* You heard my voice.”**

1. **Where is Jonah when he prayed? Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish’s belly. What is also interesting is how Jonah chapter 1 represents the Old Testament law (go to Nineveh and preach against it, 1:2) Chapter 2 represents the death and resurrection of Christ, and chapter 3 represents the New Testament grace (go and proclaim to it the message, 3:2).** Of course Jesus was much more willing to go than Jonah!
2. **Where is Sheol? Jonah’s prayer in chapter 2 indicates he was praying from the Sheol. The Hebrew word is “Sheol” which means “the abode of the dead.”** He was in the belly of Sheol. Sheol is the place of the dead, where men go to await the resurrection and judgment. So if we are to take his statement literally, Jonah said that he died. It’s the place where the spirits of people who died went to await the resurrection. In his prayer he told of how he drowned and sank to the roots of the mountains, in other words the bottom of the sea. In verse 7 Jonah says he prayed as his life was ebbing away. Then the Lord brought his life up from the pit, which is another word for Sheol. We believe Jonah experienced physical death and his spirit was out of his body and in Sheol for some of the time his body was in the whale, before the Lord reunited his spirit with his body, and had the whale spit him out. This was a type resurrection, an out of body experience followed by resuscitation. The Bible says “*The earth with its bars closed behind me forever*.”
	* 1. **Sheol (Hebrew)—occurs in O.T. 65 times—this is a temporary abode for the departed souls/spirits. THIS IS THE ABODE OF THE DEAD, BOTH GOOD AND BAD. Under the earth, underworld, where one is conscious. This is the place of disembodied spirits.**

**Read Ephesians 4:8-10. ABRAHAM’S BOSOM WAS ABANDONED WHEN JESUS DIED, WENT INTO HADES TO SET THE CAPTIVES FREE.** “Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.”9(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ePHESIANS+4%3A8-10&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-29282b)] descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)”

1. **Jonah 2:6-7, “I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God.7“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went *up* to You, Into Your holy temple.”**
2. **Jonah is sent again to Nineveh, ABOUT 760 B.C., (Assyria was in control of the world from 930 B.C.-612 B.C.), a city of three days' journey across its boundaries, about a 550 mile journey from the coast (took Jonah more than a month to get there from the “vomit landing on the banks of the Mediterranean”), (being sixty miles in circumference, according to Diodorus Siculus),** [**Jonah 3:1-4**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+3:1-4&t1=en_nas)**. The inhabitants, in consequence of the prophet's preaching, repent in dust and ashes,** [**Jonah 3:5-9**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+3:5-9&t1=en_nas)**. God, seeing that they were deeply humbled on account of their sins, and that they turned away from all their iniquities, repents of the evil with which he had threatened them,** [**Jonah 3:10**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+3:10&t1=en_nas)**. Jonah, sent to Nineveh, flees to Tarshish,** [**Jonah 1:1-3**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+1:1-3&t1=en_nas)**. He is overtaken by a great tempest,** [**Jonah 1:4-14**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+1:4-14&t1=en_nas)**; thrown into the sea,** [**Jonah 1:15**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+1:15&t1=en_nas)**,** [**Jonah 1:16**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+1:16&t1=en_nas)**; and swallowed by a fish, in the belly of which his dead body is miraculously preserved three days and three nights,** [**Jonah 1:17**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jonah+1:17&t1=en_nas)**. Nineveh—which represents the world in its natural greatness, full of pride and iniquity, regardless of God and of His authority—had deserved the righteous judgment of God.**
3. **Jonah Preaches God's Message of Repentance. 3:1-10**
	1. **A. God Again Commissions Jonah. 3:1-2**
	2. **B. Jonah Obeys God. 3:3-4**
	3. **C. Nineveh Repents. 3:5-10**
4. **Review “Dagon” the fish god? See I Samuel 5:2-7, “**When the Philistines took the ark of God; they brought it into the house of Dagonand set it by Dagon. 3And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again. 4And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the Lord. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands *were* broken off on the threshold; only Dagon’s *torso*was left of it. 5Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon’s house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.6But the hand of the Lord was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and He ravaged them and struck them with tumors, *both* Ashdod and its territory. 7And when the men of Ashdod saw how *it was,* they said, “The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for His hand is harsh toward us and Dagon our god.” **The Ark of the Covenant against Dagon. \*\*\*\*See Fish Note at End**

**Jonah 3:5-9, “So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered *himself* with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell *if* God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?”**

1. **Verse 5 shows a staggering impact of Jonah’s message. Examine.**
2. **Jonah 3:10, “Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.”**
3. **Many fine scholars ask a profound question: WHY IS THIS CHAPTER HERE? Could it be that this chapter is the REAL REASON GOD ALLOWED THIS STORY? Is God pointing to us as a creature just like Jonah? Jesus points to this very story as important. THIS OLD TESTAMENT STORY IS ONE OF THE FOUR MOST POPULAR IN ALL THE BIBLE!! Many scholars quickly “jump on Jonah’s case” calling him disobedient, selfish, scared, and “the prophet with the defiant attitude!” For sure, he was disobedient at first commandment to go to Nineveh, but his story does not end there.** Does it seem a bit strange that Jesus Christ personally choose to equate himself to Jonah in his role as the Messiah? **JESUS AUTHENTICATES JONAH**--**In Matthew 12:38-41,** “***38Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”39But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here,” Matthew* 16:4, “4A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophetJonah,”** and **Luke 11:29-32**, **“And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. 30For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. 31The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here. 32The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here.”**
4. **What was the real purpose of Jonah chapter 4?**

**Jonah 4:2-3, “So he prayed to the Lord, and said, Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You *are* a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for *it is* better for me to die than to live!”**

* 1. **Compare verse 2 with I Kings 14:23-29, “**23For they also built for themselves high places, *sacred* pillars, and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. 24And there were also perverted personsin the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel.25It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam *that* Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. 26And he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king’s house; he took away everything. He also took away all the gold shields which Solomon had made. 27Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place, and committed *them* to the hands of the captains of the guard, who guarded the doorway of the king’s house. 28And whenever the king entered the house of the Lord, the guards carried them, then brought them back into the guardroom.29Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?” **BACKGROUND INFO ABOUT JONAH:** The northern kingdom of Israel was victorious in its wars under Jeroboam II and was regaining power and territory. In the middle of this Israelite resurgence was the prophet Jonah. Verse 25 states that the prophet Jonah had been used by God to give prophecies that Israel would be victorious in its wars and would regain territory and strength. This gave Jonah a central role in the reign of Jeroboam II. Being a prophet with a good message about the kingdom would have made Jonah popular at the king’s court and Jonah would surely have felt he had a role in Israel’s resurgence. Jonah would have had every right to feel a patriotic pride in Israel’s restoration and he likely looked forward to Israel become steadily stronger. II Kings 14:25 reveals that Jonah was from the city of Gath-Hepher, which Joshua 19:13 records was in the territory of the tribe of Zebulon. While Jonah was in the midst of this patriotic fervor in the ancient kingdom of Israel, he received an unexpected message and mission from God. Jonah 1:1-2 records that God told Jonah to go and preach against Nineveh, whose sins were so great that God had Himself taken notice of it. Jonah knew Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire which was an enemy and existential threat to the kingdom of Israel. Jonah, close to the inner politics of the Israelite kingdom, knew very well that if God destroyed Nineveh, it would be a tremendous boon to the kingdom of Israel and it would prolong the power and strength of the kingdom of Israel. Indeed, it could even restore more of the lost greatness Israel had enjoyed in previous times! However, Jonah already knew that God had been merciful to the kingdom of Israel in spite of its sins under Jeroboam II, so he also knew that God could conceivably be merciful to Nineveh as well. Jonah 4:2 reveals that Jonah had this thought “when [he] was still in his own country before he fled to Tarshish.” This verse gives a key insight into Jonah’s intentions, and why God spared him in his disobedience and why Jesus Christ himself compared himself to Jonah. Jonah realized that if God could be so merciful to sinning Israel, he might be just as merciful with sinning Assyria. If Assyria survived, Jonah also realized its power would likely overwhelm Israel in the future. Jonah loved his nation and people, and he made a plan. He thought that if he was the person who was assigned by God to bring this warning to the Assyrians, the Assyrians could not repent if they never got the warning from him. Jonah reasoned his own refusal to go would result in God’s destruction upon Nineveh and Jonah’s nation, Israel, would be spared for a long time into the future. So Jonah decided to make sure Nineveh could not repent or be spared…by refusing to go to Nineveh to deliver the message that they needed to repent. **THEREFORE, HE WOULD SACRIFICE HIMSELF FOR HIS PEOPLE….A FORESHADOWING OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH**.
1. **What is the wrap-up to Jonah? How does it apply to modern America?**

**Paul defines THE GOSPEL this way in I Corinthians 15:3-4, “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”**

***NAHUM***

**THE BOOK OF NAHUM (means, “Consolation or Comfort”) IS A BOOK ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD and it highlights the character of the God who brings judgment. Nahum comes along one century after Jonah; they both preach to the same area, the capital of the Assyrian empire, Nineveh. Both Jonah and Nahum came from Galilee, and both preach to Nineveh. THIS BOOK IS “AN ECHO OF JONAH.” The judgment on Nineveh is comfort to Israel, and a testimony to the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD! We don’t know exactly when Nahum gave this prophecy. He mentions the destruction of the Egyptian city *No Amon* (Thebes) in** [**Nahum 3:8**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Nahum+3:8&t1=en_nas) **and Thebes fell to the Assyrians in 663 b.c., so Nahum must have been written after that. Nineveh was destroyed 50 years after No Amon (612 b.c.). It is likely that Nahum was written during the *height* of Nineveh’s power. Nahum was concerned with Nineveh, and was delivered almost certainly when she was at the height of her power.**

1. **Who founded Nineveh? See Genesis 10:8-12, *“Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.” 10And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city).”*** Nineveh was an ancient, famous city. It was founded by the first world dictator, Nimrod ([Genesis 10:11](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+10:11&t1=en_nas)) From Nineveh’s walls, temples, palaces, inscriptions, and reliefs, mute yet elaborate witness is given to a city that flourished up to its destruction in 612 b.c.

**Nahum 1:2-8, “God *is* jealous, and the Lord avenges; the Lord avenges and *is* furious. The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves *wrath* for His enemies; the Lord *is* slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked.* The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of His feet. He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, and the flower of Lebanon wilts. The mountains quake before Him, the hills melt, and the earth heaves at His presence, yes, the world and all who dwell in it. Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. The Lord *is* good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him. But with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place, and darkness will pursue His enemies.”**

1. **What will be the ultimate outcome for Nineveh? Your name shall be perpetuated no longer:** The city of Nineveh was once instantly recognized as one of the great power cities of the world. God promises to bring this wicked city so low that they lose their legacy and name among the nations.
2. **Nahum 2:13, “Behold, I *am* against you, says the Lord of hosts, I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.”**
3. **List the prophecies fulfilled in this book.**
	1. **Nahum 3:12, the Assyrian fortresses surround the city would be easily captured.**
	2. **Nahum 3:14, the besieged Ninevites would prepare bricks and mortar for emergency defense walls.**
	3. **Nahum 3:13, the city gates would be destroyed.**
	4. **Nahum 1:10 and 3:11,** in the final hours of the attack, the Ninevites would be drunk. (According to Diodorus Siculus, “The Assyrian King distributed to his soldiers meats and liberal supplies of wine and provisions….while the whole army drank. The Assyrian King distributed to his soldiers meats and liberal supplies of wine and provisions….while the whole army was thus carousing, the friends of Arbakes learned from some deserters of slackness and drunkenness which prevailed in the enemies’ camp and made an unexpected attack by night.”)
	5. **Nahum 1:8, 2:6, 8, Nineveh would be destroyed by a flood.**
	6. **Nahum 1:10, 2:13, and 3:15, Nineveh would be destroyed by fire.**
	7. **Nahum 3:3, the city’s capture would be attended by a great massacre of people.**
	8. **Nahum 2:9-10, plundering and pillaging would accompany the overthrow of the city.**
	9. **Nahum 2:8, when Nineveh would be captured, its people would try to escape.**
	10. **Nahum 1:9, 14, Nineveh’s images and idols would be destroyed.**
	11. **Nahum 1:9, 14, Nineveh’s destruction would be final.**
4. **Nahum is almost all prediction:**
	1. **CHAPTER 1 (an Acrostic Poem, A MARVELOUS LITERARY WORK, which means that each verse begins with the next letter of the alphabet, in Hebrew, a carefully constructed work, constructed so his people, Israel, could remember)—Proclamation—who is going to touched by God? Disaster for God’s enemies and intervention for God’s people…..two sides of God (Psalm 50—God is sufficient and not needy). God is a God of jealousy and vengeance. Written in the set up: bad news to Nineveh, good news to Israel…..back and forth in this style.** Chapter one shows the majesty and might of God the LORD in goodness and severity.
	2. **CHAPTER 2 —Description of Nineveh’s demise—How Nineveh will fall; astonishing in its detail. He describes the destruction in vivid detail, as if he were there, although this is a prophecy. Interesting side note: Nahum sees the army who is destroying Nineveh in scarlet uniforms, and no one in his day wore these! HE EVEN SAW THE COLOR OF THEIR SUITS AND HE SAW THEM GETTING IN THROUGH THE GATES, BECAUSE OF THE RIVER. He describes the city being looted….called Nineveh “dying lions.” LIONS WERE THE SYMBOLS OF ANCIENT ASSYRIA.** Chapters two and three describe the fall of Nineveh, which later took place in 612 BC. Nineveh is compared to [Thebes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes_%28Egypt%29), the Egyptian city that Assyria itself had destroyed in 663 BC.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahum%2C_Book_of#cite_note-Kent_H._Richards_2006-1) Nahum describes the siege and frenzied activity of Nineveh’s troops as they try in vain to halt the invaders. Poetically, he becomes a participant in the battle, and with subtle irony, barks battle commands to the defenders. Nahum uses numerous similes and metaphor. Nineveh is ironically compared with a lion, in reference to the lion as an Assyrian symbol of power; Nineveh is the lion of strength that has a den full of dead prey but will become weak like the lion hiding in its den.
	3. **CHAPTER 3—Explanation—Why? MOVES FROM DESCRIPTION TO EXPLANTION, saying that GOD IS GOING TO INTERVENE BY SENDING A GREATER FORCE INTO THE CITY. EXPLANATION—this is happening because of the sheer inhumanity of Assyria. They were inhuman and corrupted by their finances (bribery, etc.).** It comes to conclusion with a taunt song and funeral dirge of the impending destruction of Nineveh and the "sleep" or death of the Assyrian people and demise of the once great Assyrian conqueror-rulers.
5. **Jonah’s story asks: “Does God control nature?”**
6. **While Nahum’s saga asks: “Does God control history?” READ! Paul said to the Greeks, Acts 17:24-28, God allots history for nations.**

***OBADIAH***

**The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, the firstborn son of Isaac and the twin brother of Jacob. In the womb, Esau and Jacob, twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, struggled together, and God told their mother, Rebekah, that they would become two nations, with the older one serving the younger (**[**Genesis 25:23**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2025.23)**). As an adult, Esau rashly sold his inheritance to Jacob for a bowl of red soup (**[**Genesis 25:30-34**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2025.30-34)**), and he hated his brother afterward. Esau became the father of the Edomites and Jacob became the father of the Israelites, and the two nations continued to struggle through most of their history. In the Bible, “Seir” (**[**Joshua 24:4**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Josh%2024.4)**), “Bozrah” (**[**Isaiah 63:1**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa%2063.1)**) and “Sela” (**[**2 Kings 14:7**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Kings%2014.7)**) are references to Edom’s land and capital. Sela is better known today as Petra.

The name “Edom” comes from a Semitic word meaning “red,” and the land south of the Dead Sea was given that name because of the red sandstone so prominent in the topography. Esau, because of the soup for which he traded his birthright, became known as Edom, and later moved his family into the hill country of the same name.** [**Genesis 36**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2036) **recounts the early history of the Edomites, stating that they had kings reigning over them long before Israel had a king (**[**Genesis 36:31**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2036.31)**). The religion of the Edomites was similar to that of other pagan societies who worshiped fertility gods. Esau's descendants eventually dominated the southern lands and made their living by agriculture and trade. One of the ancient trade routes, the King's Highway (**[**Numbers 20:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Num%2020.17)**) passed through Edom, and when the Israelites requested permission to use the route on their exodus from Egypt, they were rejected by force. Because they were close relatives, the Israelites were forbidden to hate the Edomites (**[**Deuteronomy 23:7**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Deut%2023.7)**). The book of Obadiah is a brief prophetic word regarding the nearby nation of Edom. And it’s bad news for Edom. This is the shortest book in the \*Old Testament and the** [**fourth-shortest book of the Bible**](http://overviewbible.com/the-5-shortest-books-of-the-bible-in-order/) **(after** [**Third John**](http://overviewbible.com/3-john/)**,** [**Second John**](http://overviewbible.com/2-john/)**, and** [**Philemon**](http://overviewbible.com/philemon/)**). The “SINS OF EDOM” are enumerated in Obadiah: 1. Pride, verses 3-4, 2. Confederacy, verse 7, 3. Violence, verse 10, 4. Rejoicing, verse 12, 5. Looting, verse 13, 6. Hindering Jews from escaping, verse 14, 7. Drunken celebration, verse 16. Obadiah means ‘the servant of \*Yahweh’ Or it means ‘the person who gives honour to \*Yahweh’.**

**“This is the shortest of all the books of the Old Testament, the least of those tribes, and yet is not to be passed by, or thought meanly of, for this penny has Caesar’s image and superscription upon it; it is stamped with a divine authority. This book is entitled, The Vision of Obadiah. Who this Obadiah was does not appear from any other scripture. Some of the ancients imagined him to be the same with that Obadiah that was steward to Ahab’s household (**[**1 Kings 18:3**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-kings/18-3.html) **); and, if so, he that hid and fed the prophets had indeed a prophet’s reward, when he was himself made a prophet. But that is a conjecture which has no ground. This Obadiah, it is probable, was of a later date, some think contemporary with Hosea, Joel, and Amos; others think he lived about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, when the children of Edom so barbarously triumphed in that destruction. However, what he wrote was what he saw; it is his vision. Probably there was much more which he was divinely inspired to speak, but this is all he was inspired to write; and all he writes is concerning Edom. It is a foolish fancy of some of the Jews that because he prophesies only concerning Edom he was himself an Edomite by birth, but a proselyte to the Jewish religion. Other prophets prophesied against Edom, and some of them seem to have borrowed from him in their predictions against Edom, as** [**Jeremiah 49:7**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/jeremiah/49-7.html) **and** [**Ezekiel 25:12**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ezekiel/25-12.html) **, etc. Out of the mouth of these two or three witnesses every word will be established. This book is wholly concerning Edom, a nation nearly allied and near adjoining to Israel, and yet an enemy to the seed of Jacob, inheriting the enmity of their father Esau to Jacob.”**

 **21 VERSES DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO THE JUDGMENT OF EDOM.**

**Genesis, it was given to Esau[Heb.,=hairy], in the Bible, son of Isaac, who sold his birthright to his younger twin, Jacob, for lentil stew and who was tricked by Jacob out of his father's blessing. Also known as Edom [Heb., =ruddy], the disinherited Esau settled on Mt., also called Edom, and his descendants. It extended along the eastern border of the Arabah valley, from the Dead Sea to Elat. Edomite history was marked by continuous hostility and warfare with Jews, Assyrians, and Syrians. At the end of the second century. B.C., they were subdued by Hasmonaean priest-king John Hyrcanus I, forcibly circumcised, and merged with the Jews. Herod, dynasty reigning in Palestine at the time of Jesus. As a dynasty the Herods depended largely on the power of Rome. They are usually blamed for the state of virtual anarchy in Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era.
Antipater (65 B.C...  The Great was Idumaean. The Romans grouped Idumeans with Judaea and Samaria in one procurator ship. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Idumaea was included in Arabia Petraea. THE EDOMITES, LATER KNOWN AS IDUMEANS, BECAME ASSIMILATED INTO THE PALESTIANS OF TODAY.**



1. **What people does God target in Obadiah?**
2. **What are the sins of Obadiah? 1. Pride, verses 3-4, 2. Confederacy, verse 7, 3. Violence, verse 10, 4. Rejoicing, verse 12, 5. Looting, verse 13, 6. Hindering Jews from escaping, verse 14, 7. Drunken celebration, verse 16.**
3. **Esau’s descendants became the nation of Edom, while Jacob fathered the** [**12 tribes of Israel**](http://overviewbible.com/the-12-tribes-of-israel-a-quick-guide/)**. Israel’s capital was Mount Zion (Jerusalem); Edom’s was Mount Seir (**[**Deuteronomy 2:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Deut%202.5)**, “Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.”) Both had an inheritance. Both had a mountain. Only one was God’s chosen people.  As time wore on, the relationship between their descendants became strained, basically hostile!  Edom refused to let Moses and the Israelites take the highway through their land, and opposed them militantly (**[**Numbers 20:20–22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Num%2020.20%E2%80%9321)**, “And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.22And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto mount Hor.”)**
4. **When God finally exiled Judah to Babylon, Edom helped the Babylonians loot Judah, and happily returned to their own fortified cities in Mount Seir. Edom was cheering on the Babylonians…Psalm 137:7, “Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof,”** [**Obadiah 10–11**](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Obad%2010%E2%80%9311)**, “For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. 11In 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.”**
5. **1-4, “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, *saying,* Arise, and let us rise up against her for battle): Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be greatly despised. The pride of your heart has deceived you, *you* who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; *you* who say in your heart, Who will bring me down to the ground? Though you ascend *as* high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down, says the Lord**.”
	1. **How is Obadiah different from other prophecies?**  **Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom**: Obadiah’s prophecy is unique because he doesn’t deal with Judah or Israel much at all. His focus is on the sin of Edom and the judgment coming upon them. Who were the Edomites?
6. **When Israel came out of Egypt and wanted to pass through the land of the Edomites to enter into the Promised Land, the Edomites wouldn’t let them, (**[**Numbers 20:14-21**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Numbers+20:14-21&t1=en_nas)**, “**And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us:15How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers: 16And when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border: 17Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders. 18And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.
7. **If Obadiah’s prophecy considers this time period under Jehoram (848-841 b.c.), it makes him a contemporary of the prophet Elisha and also makes him the earliest of the prophets, probably beating Joel by a few years. It also means that this Prophet Obadiah *may* be the same man mentioned in** [**2 Chronicles 17:7**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Chronicles+17:7&t1=en_nas)**, “**Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.”
8. **Why were the Edomites known for their wisdom?**  Destroy the wise men from Edom, and understanding from the mountains of Esau: The Edomites were renowned for their great wisdom, but God would bring such great judgment that even their wise men would be destroyed.
	1. **Refer to Job’s Eliphaz in Job 2:11, “**Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came everyone from his own place; **Eliphaz the Temanite,** and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.”
9. **Parallel** [**Obadiah 1:1-9**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Obadiah+1:1-9&t1=en_nas) **with** [**Jeremiah 49:7-22**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+49:7-22&t1=en_nas)**, “**Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts; is wisdom no more in Teman? Is counsel perished from the prudent? Is their wisdom vanished? 8
10. **10-14, “For violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever. In the day that you stood on the other side; in the day that strangers carried captive his forces, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem; even you *were* as one of them. But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother in the day of his captivity; nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; nor should you have spoken proudly in the day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of My people in the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor laid *hands* on their substance in the day of their calamity. You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped; nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained in the day of distress.”**
11. **\*\*\*\*OBADIAH’S TONE SHIFT HERE……TO A PROMISE FOR ISRAEL! 17-20, “But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob** **shall possess their possessions. The house of Jacob shall be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame; but the house of Esau *shall be* stubble; they shall kindle them and devour them, and no survivor shall *remain* of the house of Esau, for the Lord has spoken. The South shall possess the mountains of Esau, and the Lowland shall possess Philistia. They shall possess the fields of Ephraim and the fields of Samaria. Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead. And the captives of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess the land* of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath. The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the South.”**
12. **Discuss Zarephath in Bible history. Far north……This is the area where Elijah and the widow lived.**
13. **21, “Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lords.” Could this be pointing to the Millennium? Compare with Isaiah 30:21, “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” Obadiah tells all Gods people: Don’t worry about those who ignore your need, those who rejoice at your problems, those who take advantage of your crises, those who join their hands with others in attacking you. I will take care of them.**
14. **Why is verse 21 often labelled, “The Theme Verse of Obadiah?” Theme verse in Obadiah? “*The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and the kingdom will be the LORD’S. “ (***[***Obadiah 21***](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Obad%2021)***) VICTORY FOR JACOB!***
15. **Obadiah is a difficult book to understand. However, the message is very important for today. In this book, we learn that God will completely defeat his enemies. God says to the Messiah, “Sit here on the right side of me. I will put your enemies under your feet,” Hebrews 1:13. Punishment will come upon \*Edom's \*people. It is like the punishment that will come upon Babylon's people. In Revelation 18:5, 6 the writer says, ‘God remembers their wicked acts. Do the same to them as they have done to you.’ In his book, Obadiah also teaches that one day God will let His people return. He will be the King over all. There will be a New Jerusalem. ‘The royal seat of God will be in the city. It is also the royal seat of the Lamb (a name that Jesus had). God's servants will serve him’ (Revelation 22:3, “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”)**
16. **Philippians 2:14-15, “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe."**
17. **What is the “connecting thread” running through Jonah, Nahum, and Obadiah?**

***And, here are the promises:***

**Jonah 2:6-7, “I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God.7“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went *up* to You, Into Your holy temple.”**

**Philippians 2:14-15, “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe."**

**Nahum 1:3, “The Lord *is* slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit *the wicked.* The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of His feet.”**

**Nahum 1:7, “The Lord *is* good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.”**