**“Poetic Justice”**

***Obadiah 1-21***

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

*January 30, 2022 a.m.*

Introduction: What was significant about last Thursday, January 27th? I’m not referring to Supreme Court Justice Breyer announcing his retirement, but rather, International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

This date was chosen because it was on January 27, 1945, that the Soviets liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau, the slave labor/death camp, in Nazi Germany. It was there that 1.1 million Jews were murdered, the so-called "Final Solution” to rid the world of Jews & others deemed undesirable. A total of 6 million Jews would be killed during the years of WW II. Why, 77 years later, should such a day still be marked? Consider an article by David Harris, the son of Holocaust survivors, written for Fox News.

It is interesting to note that this Remembrance Day follows another remembrance day, “The Sanctity of Human Life,” in recognition of the infamous Roe vs. Wade decision of January 22, 1973.

But consider with me this morning that anti-Semitism didn’t just start in the past century. I call your attention to the Book of Obadiah. This book is most probably the first of the so-called Minor Prophets to be written. Based on II Chronicles 21:8-10; 16-17, Obadiah was writing around the year 841 B.C. It was at this time, under the reign of Jehoram, that Edom revolted against Judah & the Philistines & Arabians invaded the Southern Kingdom. The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, brother of Jacob. They were in continual conflict with Israel (descendants of Jacob) down through the centuries. Ezekiel describes them as having a *“perpetual hatred”* for the children of Israel. The theme of Obadiah’s prophecy is “The doom of Edom,” & the key verse is 15, hence the title of the message, “Poetic Justice.” I want us to see here the consequences of pride, the causes of punishment, & the considerations to ponder.

I. The **consequences** of **pride** (:1-9)

[Note, it has been said, “Pride is the father & mother of all sin.” Consider the downfall of Lucifer,

described in Isaiah 14:12-15, & cf. Proverbs 6:16-19, *“…a proud look…”*).

A. Edom’s territory was **subdued** (:3-4):

1. They took great pride in their location.

2. They forgot it was the Lord who gives & takes – see Ecclesiastes 5:19 & Job 1:21.

B. Edom’s treasures were **stolen** (:5-6):

1. The extent of their loss – illustrated by thieves & grape-gatherers.

2. The example of our lives – Matthew 6:19-24.

C. Edom’s treaties were **scorned** (:7):

1. They felt confidence in their allies.

2. “You can make friends with the world, but the world will never make friends with you” – see

James 4:4 & I John 2:15-17.

D. Edom’s troops were **slaughtered** (:8-9):

1. The wise men of Edom (Teman) would be destroyed (cf. Jeremiah 49:7; Job 2:11).

2. The mighty men of Teman would be slaughtered.

II. The **causes** of **punishment** (:10-15)

A. Edom encouraged Israel’s **foe**s (:11):

1. At first they stood back as Israel’s enemies invaded Jerusalem.

2. Proverbs 17:5 warns, *“Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Master: & he that is glad at*

*calamities shall not be unpunished.”*

B. Edom enjoyed Israel’s **fall** (:12):

1. They *“rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction.”*

2. Proverbs 24:17 declares, *“Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, & let not thine heart be glad*

*when he stumbleth.”*

C. Edom engaged with Israel’s **foes** (:13):

1. They plundered Jerusalem along with the invaders.

2. They *“have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity.”*

D. Edom enslaved Israel’s **fugitives** (:14):

1. They blocked the escape of fleeing Israelites.

2. They imprisoned survivors of the battle.

Result: Verse 15 speaks of “Poetic Justice” – Edom will suffer the same punishments they had

inflicted on others.

III. The **considerations** to **ponder**

A. God’s promise to Abraham – Genesis 12:3, *“And I will bless them that bless thee, & curse him*

*that curseth thee…”*

1. This results in the judgment of Israel’s enemies.

2. This resulted in Edom’s judgment – there are no survivors of Edom today (yet Israel exists!).

B. God’s power to trust – Isaiah 26:4, *“Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH*

*is everlasting strength.”* (& see verse 3)

1. Edom trusted in its location, possessions, associations (allies), erudition (wisdom), &

militarization.

2. America has “In God We Trust” on its currency, but unfortunately not in her culture!

C. God’s plan to be realized – Obadiah 21, *“…& the kingdom shall be the LORD’s.”*

1. Romans 11:26, *“And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion*

*the Deliverer, & shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”*

2. Revelation 19:6, *“And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, & as the voice of many*

*waters, & as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent*

*reigneth.”*

Conclusion: Consider the oft-quoted, but often misquoted, Proverbs 16:18, *“Pride goeth before destruction, & an haughty spirit before a fall.”* What led to the downfall of Edom? Verse 3 says, *“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee…”* Pride often leads to the hardening of the heart & the eventual rejecting of heaven. Both James (4:6) & I Peter (5:5) quote Proverbs 3:34, *“Surely He scorneth the scorners; but He giveth grace unto the lowly."* Christ said in Matthew 18:3-4, *“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, & become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whososever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”* Consider again the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, *“And I will bless them that bless thee, & curse him that curseth thee: & in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.”* Anti-Semitismwill continue in our nation & around the world, but God will ultimately bless His people. For those who trust in God & in His Son, Jesus Christ, we have the promise, *“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* Is “In God We Trust” not only on your currency, but evidenced in your conduct?

The final lesson from Obadiah: “In this life, evil may seem to prevail. Righteous men may suffer per-secution. There is coming a day, however, when the Lord will right the wrongs of this life. His rule will prevail across the entire world & righteousness will become the characteristic of the day. It is this that gives hope to the believer. Knowing that God’s plan will come to pass, we remain faithful to Him” (J. J.).