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C0624 – June 21, 2006 – Obadiah – Dick Roesch – Introduction To Obadiah

This is a book is about Israel – not the Church. We will be reminded of many of the teachings of Jeremy through Exodus and Revelation.

We will see through Obadiah's eyes in his vision; hardness of heart, persecution of the Jews, the patience of God, finally, the pronouncement of guilt, the judgment and wrath of God, the punishment executed, and the restoration of land to Israel. And we will see this in two perspectives – near and far.

But, before we get into this little book, I'd like to review some of the doctrines and themes of the Old Testament that will play a large part in our understanding the book of Obadiah.

The review will consist of who God is and what He wants

Doctrine of God

God's desire for a relationship with His creatures

The creature's refusal to obey his Creator

God starts over

God sets His plan into action

God chooses Abraham

God chooses Isaac

God chooses Jacob

God's ongoing love affair with Israel

God's eight covenants

Doctrine of God:

The doctrine of Aseity teaches about God's absolute independence. He only depends *a se* on Himself. He is self-existent. The terms *self-contained*, *self-existent*, *self-sufficient*, and *independent* are often used as synonyms for *a se*. In biblical terms, the aseity of God and the doctrine of creation are inseparable. Creating something from "nothing" presupposes God's self-existence. How can we describe "otherness"? How big is infinite? How deep is knowledge? What is the measure of eternity? How pure is holy?

When Moses asks God what His "name" is in Ex 3:13, Moses is not asking "what should I call you", rather, he is asking "who are you; what are you like; what have you done"? In Jewish thought the name conveys the nature and essence of the being named.

Exodus 3:14-15 tells us how God names Himself: "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM' has sent me to you.'" – the self-existent One; the One who was, is, and will be.

We have come to know His attributes as: Sovereign, Righteous, Just, Eternal, Love, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Immutable, and Truth. These words and concepts always come up short in truly describing the One God-Three Persons! God is the Creator, the Supreme Being, the One before Whom there was none - and we will spend eternity learning more and more about Him because He is so OTHER than us!

Is 55:8-9 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Jeremiah 10:6 proclaims: "No one is like You, O Lord, You are great, and Your name is mighty in power."

Sometime in the eternal counsel of the Triune God, a decision was made to bring this world and creation into existence. A creation whose life and movements; organization, complexity and variety would proclaim the glory of their Creator.

Genesis 1:1. The Bible records: " "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

The expanse of the universe -billions of galaxies! There are an estimated 100 billion galaxies in the universe.

What an extraordinary expanse!

We live in the Milky Way galaxy.

To go from one end of this galaxy to the other,
it would take 100,000 years - traveling at 186,000 miles/second.

Billions of galaxies!

One earth.

“The whole narrative (of creation) is sober, definite, clear, and concrete. The historical events described contain a rich treasury of speculative thoughts and poetical glory; but they themselves are free from the influence of human invention and human philosophizing” (*Delitzsch – Commentary on the Old Testament*)

God’s desire for a relationship with His creatures

And on the sixth day of His wondrous work, (Gen 1:26) “Then the Lord God formed man from the dust (mud) of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Again, the eternal counsel of the Triune God had determined: “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule....”

The epitome of His creation, man, is equipped to learn, communicate, understand, and freely have a relationship with his Creator i.e. to walk with Him in the cool of the evening.

The creature’s refusal to obey his Creator

With the temptation and fall, sin entered the world and ruined the relationship that had been established. Man is now to grow and eat food from a cursed ground in the sweat of his brow, and women will bring forth children in pain.

And yet in Gen 3:15 we read “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.”

The first Messianic prophecy.

The seed of the woman is Christ.

The seed of the serpent will be the Antichrist.

And in Rev 20:10 we will see the final destruction of Satan as he is thrown into the Lake of Fire for eternity.

God starts over

Things go from bad to worse; man is nothing but rebellious; angels take women for wives, and in Gen 6:5-7 we read: “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.’”

Happily, the next verse reads “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.” And God tells him to build an ark.

God tells Noah in

Gen 6:17-18 “And behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark-- you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.”

First Adam, now Noah stands as representative of mankind.

Only eight people survive: Noah and his wife, his three sons Shem, Ham, Japheth and their wives. Here we see the theme of Judgment / Salvation.

God sets His plan into action

After the Flood, we find in Gen 9:1 “And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’” But instead they stayed together, had their children, traveled together, and eventually in Gen 11: 4 we read “And they said, ‘Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven,

and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’”

A kind of “united we stand” slogan went out. They had the same language and skill sets, and were aiming for independence and a strong settlement. How prideful and disobedient to God.

Well, God changes all that. Their language was confused so that they did not understand one another’s speech and so the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the earth – as He had originally intended!

Here we see the principle: God’s Will will be done!

God chooses Abraham

God separates Abram from the rest of the human race.

Gen 12:1-3 “Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you;

And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing;

And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Abram’s name will be changed to Abraham (Father of many nations). Indeed, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam “look to Abraham” as their spiritual progenitor.

This is the preeminently chosen one from whom would come the promised Seed of Gen 3:15 – the God / Man Jesus.

Kenneth Mathews in his [The New American Commentary](#) comments on God’s command for Abram in Gen 12:1 to “Go forth from your country” and in Gen 22:2 “...go to the land of Moriah...”.

He calls these two commands the “bookends” in the narration of the patriarch’s obedient walk. Then he continues with an interesting comment: “Abram is called upon to leave both his past and his future in placing his trust in God.”

Truly an example of walking by faith and not by sight.

And God continues in

Genesis 17:7,

"And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Abraham was the representative head of the whole Jewish nation

not all humanity. There are a total of fourteen provisions in this covenant.

1. A great nation was to come out of Abraham, namely, the nation of Israel.
 2. Abraham was promised the land of Canaan.
 3. Abraham himself was to be greatly blessed.
 4. Abraham’s name was to be great.
 5. Abraham will be a blessing to others.
 6. Those who bless Israel will be blessed.
 7. Those who curse Israel will be cursed.
 8. In Abraham all will ultimately be blessed.
 9. Abraham would receive a son through his wife Sarah.
 10. His descendants would undergo the Egyptian bondage.
 11. Other nations as well as Israel would come forth from Abraham (Arab states).
 12. His name would change from Abram to Abraham - “father of a multitude”.
 13. Sarai’s name would change to Sarah - “my princess”.
 14. Circumcision was to be the token of the covenant (specifically on the 8th day)
- (from Arnold Fruchtenbaum - Ariel Ministries)

God chooses Isaac

Even though Sarah interferes, God's promise of Sarah bearing a child will come about.

Gen17:18-19 "Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" But God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him."

So Isaac becomes a miracle child, a child of promise; the one that God chose to carry His line of "the seed".

God chooses Jacob

Even though God allowed the interference of Rebekah's scheme to promote Jacob over Esau, there was a great cost. The cost of unbelief will be that Jacob receives the birthright and blessing but incurs the hatred of Esau. And though Esau forgives Jacob in Genesis 33:4, that hatred would continue through the generations of Esau's descendants, the Edomites. They will be a thorn in Israel's side through centuries.

Still, God chose Jacob to carry His line of "the seed".

Gen 28:13-14 tells us "...I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants.

Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

God's ongoing love affair with Israel

Jacob had twelve sons and from them came the twelve tribes of Israel. And God forms and sets apart a nation for Himself. He has covenanted with Abraham – land and

descendants – to be a great nation. He has pledged that He will bless those that bless this nation, and will curse those who curse this special nation.

He sets these people apart as His Own:

‘Israel is My son, My first-born.’ *Exodus 4:22*

Zechariah 2:8 ".....for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye."

Turn in your Bibles to Exodus 6:7. We will be going through quite a number of verses to give you a fuller import of how much God loves and desires Israel. I call these verses the ongoing love affair with Israel. I’m aware that some of these verses are eschatological and some attached to the Mosaic Covenant, but the echoing refrain will be heard.

God chose Abraham, chose Isaac, chose Jacob.

God formed (created) this nation; gave them their own calendar.

God made covenants with this nation.

God sent His Only Son to be born into this nation.

God sent prophets into this nation to proclaim that their King was coming.

God wants to rule over Israel bringing them the peace they desire.

God has claimed this nation as His own. They are His chosen people.

Yet Israel is described as a harlot, an unfaithful wife, an idolatress, and prostitute.

And it comes to pass that Jesus, the Christ, came among his own people and they did not accept Him as their King, and this moved Him to sorrowfully exclaim in Matt 23:37-39

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!

How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say,

'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'

(Also in Luke 13:34-35).

God's eight Covenants

With Mankind in general:

Edenic Covenant – Conditional

Adamic Covenant - **Unconditional**

Noahic Covenant – **Unconditional**

With Israel in particular:

Abrahamic Covenant – **Unconditional**

Mosaic Covenant – Conditional

Palastinian (land) Covenant – **Unconditional**

Davidic Covenant – **Unconditional**

The New Covenant - **Unconditional**

Conclusions

Christ will return when Israel repents and calls upon His name, and then He will write His Law on their hearts (Jer 31:33, Heb 8:10, Heb 10:16) and their Messiah will set up His theocratic kingdom and rule for 1000 years on this earth.

George Peters, referring to the Messiah and the Kingdom writes:

“Thus, e.g. Farrar’s Life of Christ informs us that
“waiting for the consolation of Israel” is equivalent to Mark 5:43,
“waiting for the Kingdom of God”, and that among the Jews a prayer for
the coming of the Messiah was, “may I see the Consolation of Israel”.

The Life of Christ by Frederic W. Farrar. 1894

So we see that the Messiah and the Kingdom were united in Jewish thought.

Jeremiah looks on to the hour of Israel’s greatest joy and blessing in the Millennium, that era in which Israel will fulfill the purpose of God for her, which has always been in His heart.... “I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Paul Enns writes, “The day when God is worshipped in His holiness by a regenerated people in a restored world will be the millennial kingdom.”

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