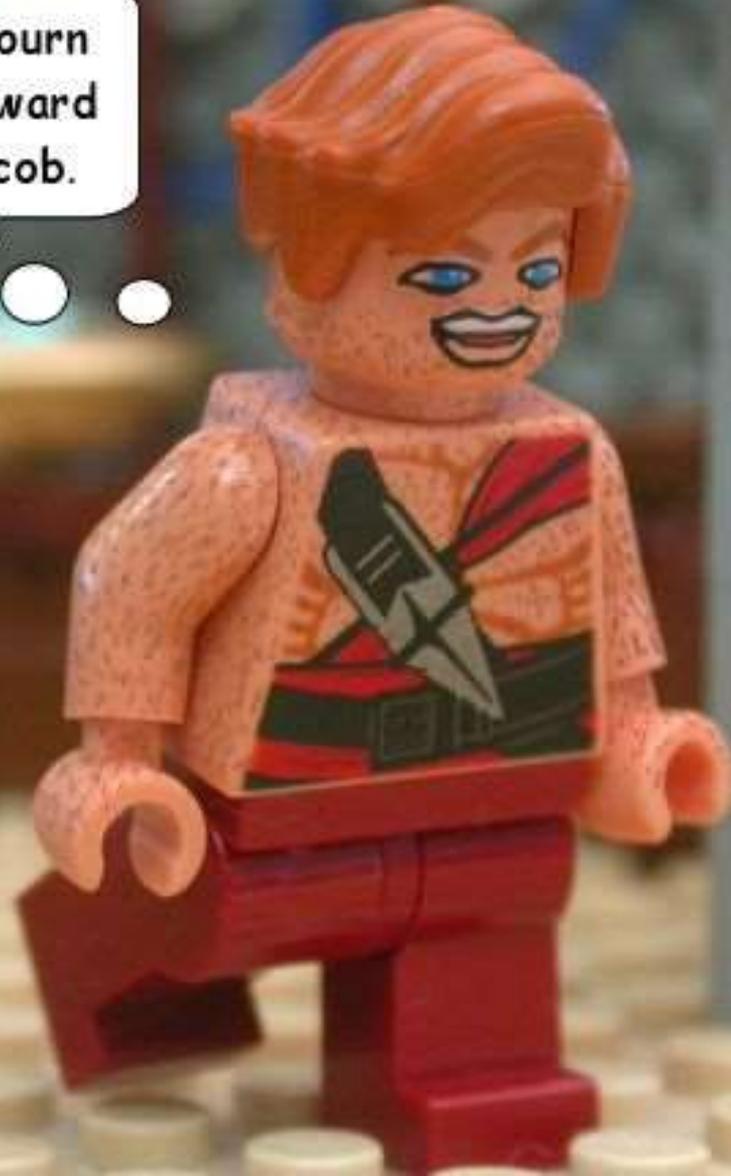
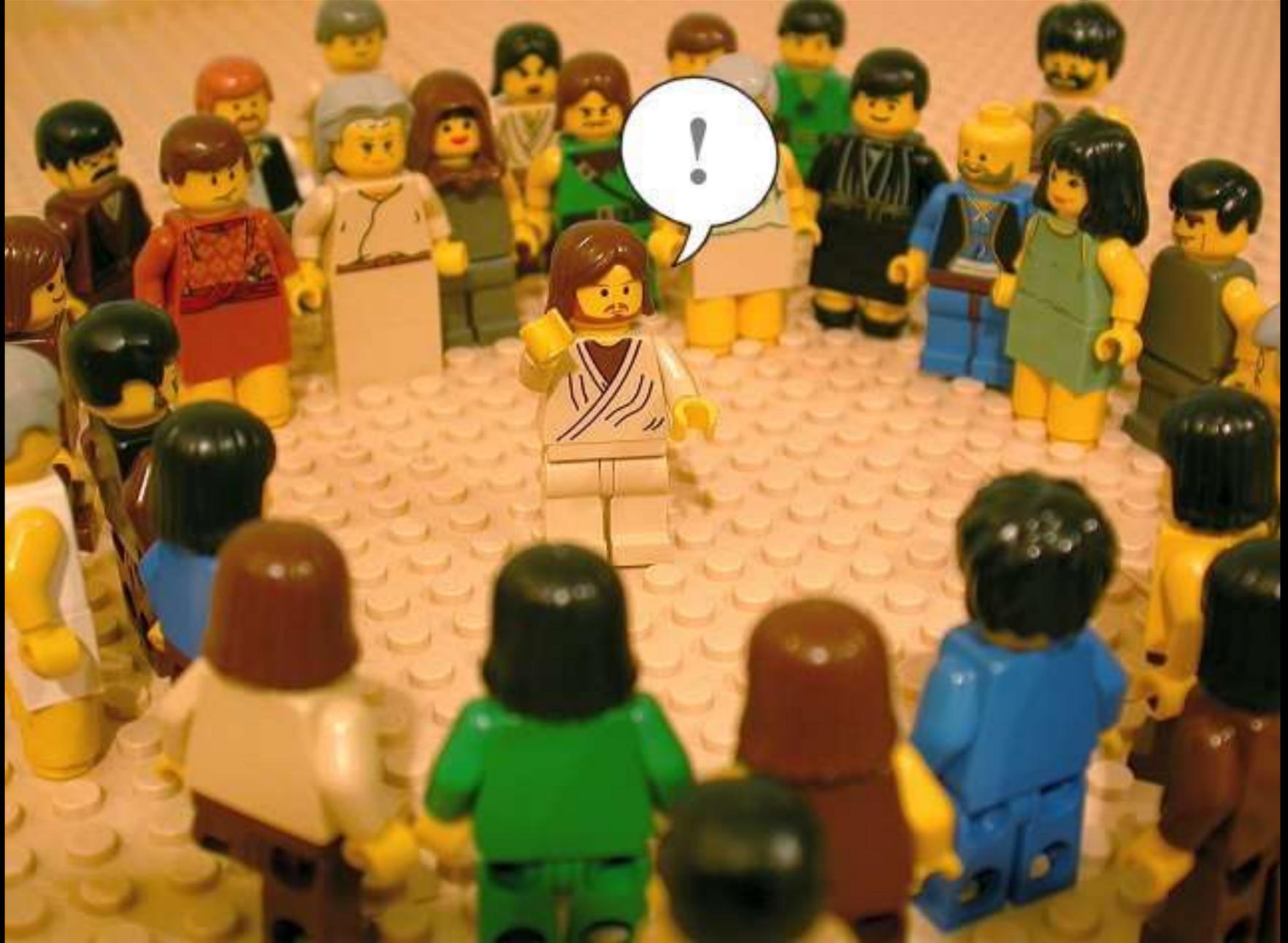


# The roots of Obadiah's vision from the Lord ~

Soon it will be time to mourn  
for my father, but afterward  
I will kill my brother Jacob.



Obadiah: *Edom - and all nations - will be judged!*



Obadiah: *Edom - and all nations - will be judged!*



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Ok—what is this little book about? What is the message? We looked at the book last week and came up with section headings and key verses and themes and things, but let's zoom out now and look at the bigger picture—let's take a quick run through the whole (that is, all 21 verses...) book –

Obadiah at first glance –

- It may not look real exciting...looks like it's about old stuff, some nation called *Edom* that doesn't even exist anymore.
- Why study some book (i.e., Obadiah) that looks like it's not real relevant to our lives today?

# Obadiah at first glance ~

- This is a vision (v. 1), an *oracle* (a burden or load), a divine judgment against Edom. It's written in Hebrew poetry, like we mentioned last week. A basic grasp on Hebrew poetry will be a huge help in understanding the text of Obadiah's vision.

## Edom ~

- A nation that neighbored Israel, to the southeast of the Dead Sea.
- Remember—the Edomites had a shared ancestry with the Israelites. This is the backstory for the severity of the judgment they face.

# Edom ~

- Both belonged to the family of Abraham. Jacob and Esau were the sons of Abraham's son Isaac.
- The two brothers had a...well...*complicated* relationship (read about it in Gen. 25-27).
- Both became known by a different name: Jacob to *Israel*, and Esau to *Edom*.
- Their descendants continued on in this adversarial relationship. No one wanted to play nice for very long. But they had a family bond...
- ...and it was that family bond that was betrayed and shattered in the tragedy that surrounded Jerusalem's fall to Babylon in 586 BC. See 2 Kings 25:1-21.

# At the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians –

- Edom laughed, and encouraged the Babylonian army to hold nothing back (Ps. 137:7).
- Edom abused Jewish captives and even captured fleeing Jews and turned them over to the Babylonians (Amos 1:6-12; Ezekiel 35:5-6).
- Edom took advantage of the fleeing and the captives, and plundered Jewish cities (Ezekiel 35:10-12, 15).

A good time for a brief little point here: take a look at Proverbs 24:17-18. Let's make sure we're not guilty of the same thing. Let's be humbled and sober-minded when the Lord judges.

# The Three Big Things in the book of Obadiah ~

Big Thing #1: In v. 1-14 we see God's charges against Edom—His accusations; the Divine Judge presents His case. The big issue: pride and self-exaltation.

Hmmm...ever see those two things crop up as issues in other relationships?

The Edomites lived in the desert mountains southeast of Israel—just like they lived in an elevated place, they had elevated opinions of themselves as well: see Obadiah v. 3-4. They were convinced they were superior to the Israelites.

# The Three Big Things in the book of Obadiah –

Big Thing #1: In v. 1-14 we see God's charges against Edom—His accusations; the Divine Judge presents His case. The big issue: pride and self-exaltation.

It was that pride that led them to not only gloat over Israel's downfall (Obad. v. 12-13), but to actually participate in Israel's destruction (Obad. v. 14).

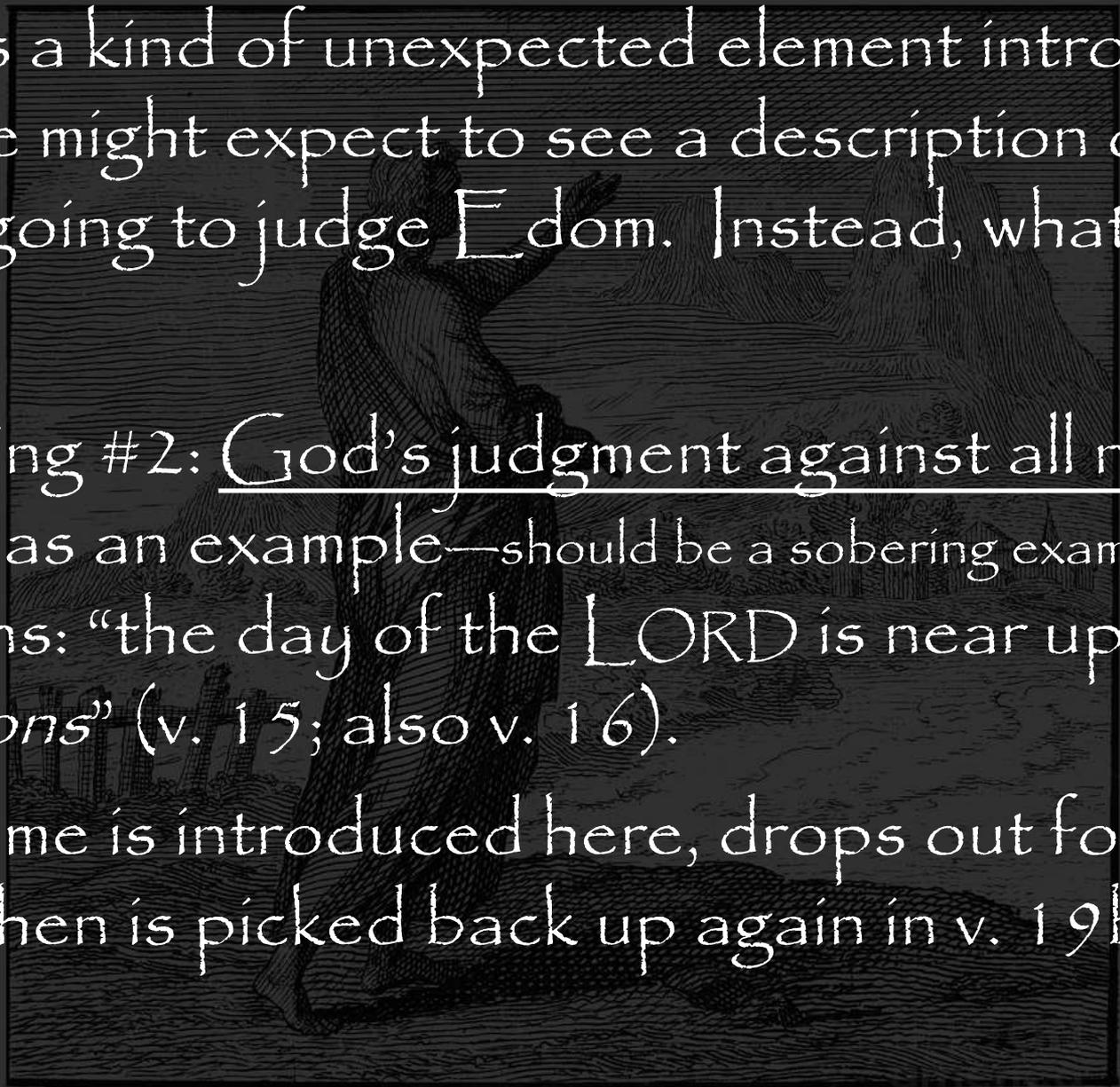
- And so God declared that He would bring Edom down...both physically and metaphorically, Obad. v. 4.
- And this: “As you have done, *it shall be done to you...*” ~ v. 15

# The Three Big Things in the book of Obadiah –

There is a kind of unexpected element introduced in v. 15—we might expect to see a description of how God is going to judge Edom. Instead, what do we see?

Big Thing #2: God's judgment against all nations. Edom was an example—should be a sobering example—to all nations: “the day of the LORD is near upon *all the nations*” (v. 15; also v. 16).

The theme is introduced here, drops out for a few verses, then is picked back up again in v. 19b-20.



# The Three Big Things in the book of Obadiah –

Big Thing #2: God's judgment against all nations.

Edom was an example to all nations: “the day of the LORD is near upon *all the nations*” (v. 15; also v. 16).

Why the shift in emphasis? Why broaden the scope here from Edom to all nations?

The message: all prideful nations that act like Edom will be brought low—they will experience the justice and judgment of God and will fall from their heights.

- God is the King of the nations—Ps. 110:6-7; Joel 3:2; Matt. 25:32.
- Edom was a small player on the world stage, but an example of coming judgment on all nations.

# The Three Big Things in the book of Obadiah –

But there's one more element in Obadiah's little book—one more Big Thing. And we see it hinted at in v. 17-21...

Big Thing #3: God's judgment is never His final word. Which means what?

The two books that come before Obadiah—Joel and Amos—both paint a picture of what will happen *after* the day of the Lord, after judgment.

- First, it means we need to understand what “the day of the Lord” means. Stand by.
- Second, in both books we see an amazingly gracious restoration...

# The Three Big Things in the book of Obadiah –

Big Thing #3: God's judgment is never His final word.

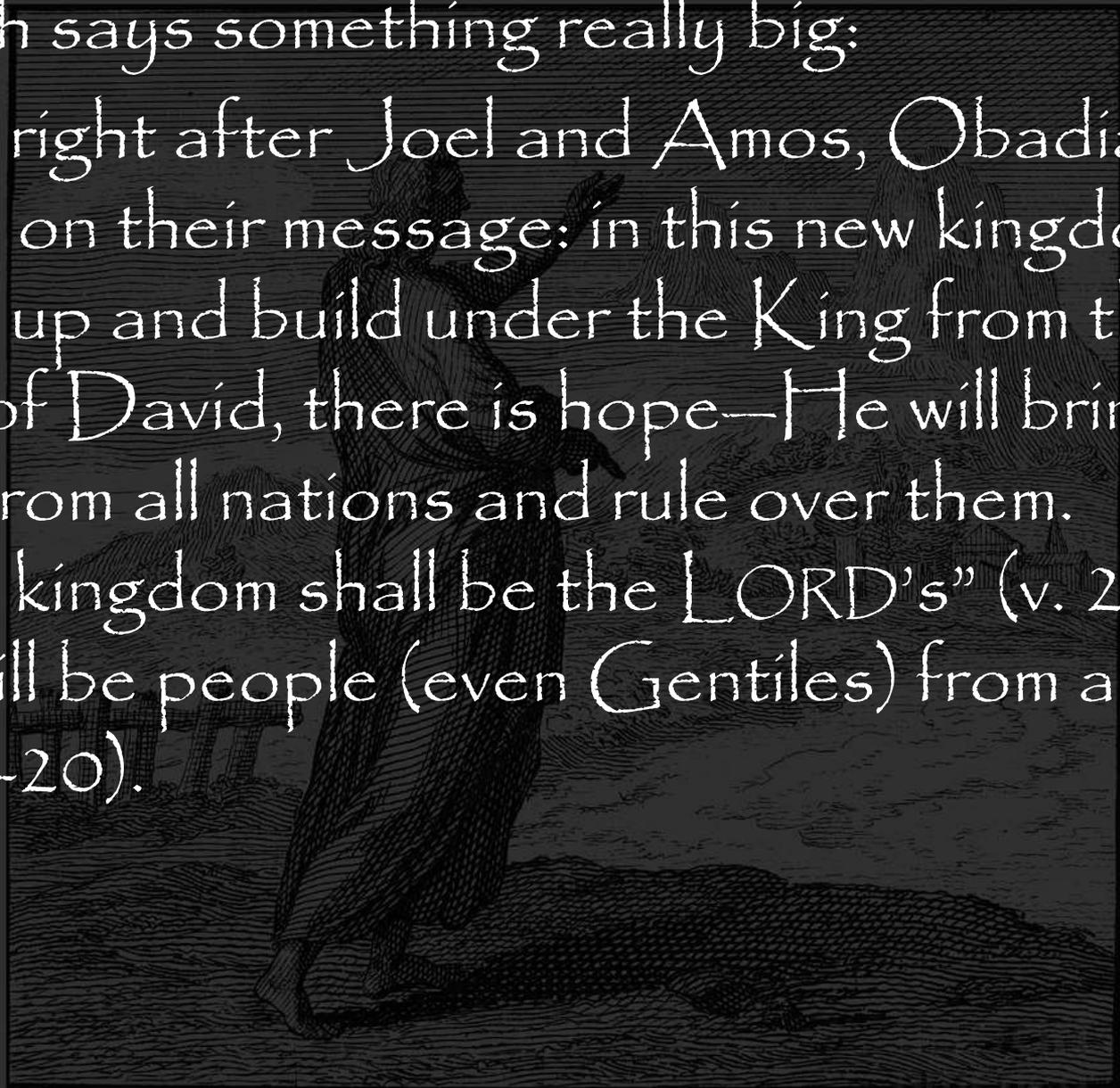
Joel 2:18-32—v. 28-29 indicate that the Lord will save not only Jerusalem, but *all* who call on His name: He will pour out His Spirit on *all* flesh.

Amos says in 9:11-15 that after the day of judgment God will raise up the house of David—because God has committed Himself to bless the world through the family of David (2 Sam. 7:15-16; Ps. 72:17)—and include even the remnant of Edom in that restoration. James quotes from the Gk. version of the OT in Acts 15:14-18.

So the little one-chapter, easily-overlooked book of Obadiah says something really big:

Coming right after Joel and Amos, Obadiah expands on their message: in this new kingdom God will raise up and build under the King from the House of David, there is hope—He will bring in a people from all nations and rule over them.

- “...the kingdom shall be the LORD’s” (v. 21), and in it will be people (even Gentiles) from all nations (v. 19-20).



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So the little one-chapter, easily-overlooked book of Obadiah says something really big:

The ancient pride and self-exaltation and betrayal and judgment of the Edomites becomes an example of the greater human condition.

Edom's downfall points to the day when God will deal with the evil in our world—and in that is a message of hope.

- His healing kingdom of peace will come to all nations—and there is where we see Christ in the little book of Obadiah.

And that is the big picture of the little book of Obadiah.

Okay—look at something in Obadiah: v. 9, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21. What do you notice?

- A bunch of place names.

Are the place names important, or are they just colorful filler? Do they mean anything?

Let's take a quick tour through Obadiah-land...

Mt. Esau: v. 8, 9, 21—

There isn't one; there's no mountain with this name.

So now what do we do?

1. First, remember: this is written in the language of poetry. With poetry think *images*.
2. Think *figurative language*. The term Mt. Esau must point to something. But what?

Mt. Esau: v. 8, 9, 21—

So what is Mt. Esau?

- Notice again the picture in v. 3-4: God will bring Edom down—their arrogance was as high and lofty as their dwellings were.
- The mountains of Edom's land:



Mt. Esau: v. 8, 9, 21—

So what is Mt. Esau?

- Also notice the language connected with the references to Mt. Esau. This is poetic language (remember our discussion of parallelism in Hebrew poetry last week?).
- So Mt. Esau is best interpreted as a poetic way of describing the people/nation of Edom: high and lofty and arrogant, soon to be judged and brought low.
- It's like this: Prov. 16:5, 18, but on a national scale.

Teman: v. 9—

Take a look at Gen. 36:9-11, 15

- Oh—ok, Teman was a person, grandson of Esau, who became a strong leader—a Chief.
- And his descendants were...the Temanites (Gen. 36:34). Ah—so it was a people.
- But in Jer. 49:7 it looks like it refers to a place.

Aarrgghhhh! So which is it??? Is the reference in Obadiah v. 9 to a person, a people, or a place?

Yes. It's another way of referring to the Edomites as a whole—who were famous for their wisdom (v. 8) and courage (v. 9). This gives Obadiah's words additional force: "Your mighty men shall be dismayed, O Teman."

# My holy mountain/Mount Zion: v. 16, 17, 21—

Here we go again...

- Is it a city (Ps. 87:2-3)?
- Is it a mountain (Ps. 48:11-12; Is. 40:9)? Hill (Ps. 2:6)?
- Is it a people (Zech. 9:13)?
- Is it where God dwells (Ps. 132:13)?

Once again, yes. Most commonly in Scripture it is a general reference to Jerusalem, which sits on an elevated area between two valleys, where God figuratively dwells among His people.

The picture: Those who have taken refuge in the Lord will be spared from the coming wrath on Edom and the nations; and as King over the nations, He will ultimately rule from Jerusalem.

And then there's a rapid-fire list in v. 19-20:

- Negeb
- Shephelah
- Land of the Philistines
- Land of Ephraim
- Land of Samaria
- Gilead
- Land of the Canaanites
- Zarephath
- Sepharad

What do we do with this mess? How do we make any sense out of all that?

We look at a map (a great Bible study tool)...



# Negeb: v. 19-20—

The desert region south of the Dead Sea, especially south of Beersheba. The Hebrew root word means *to be dry* – an appropriate name. Today it is the land of nomadic Bedouins and their flocks of goats and camels.



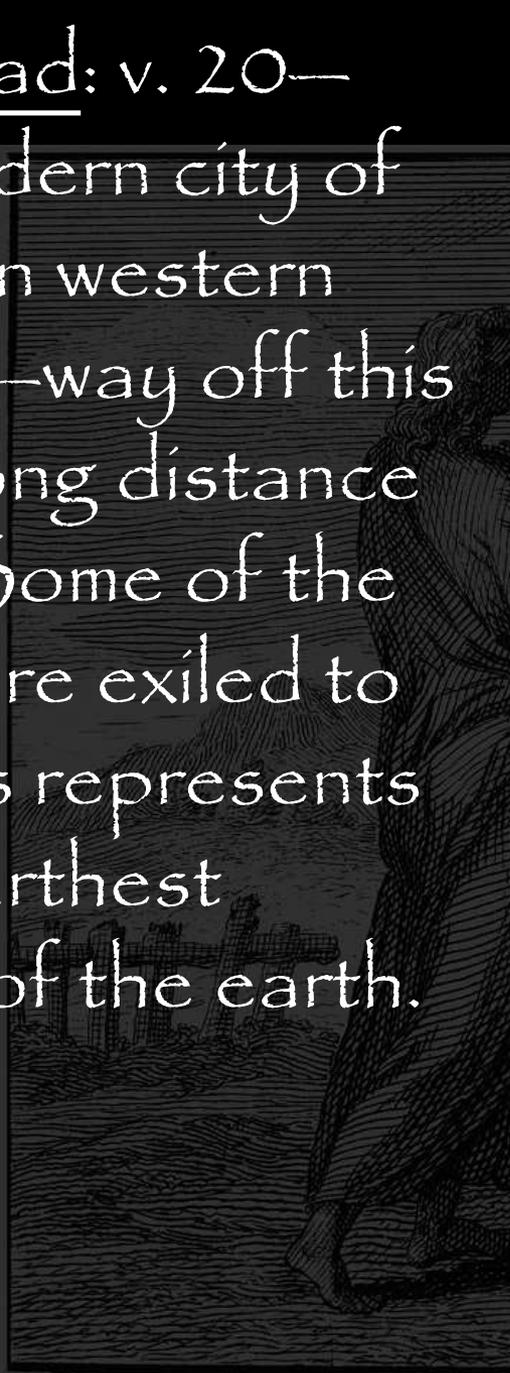
Shephelah: v. 19—  
The lowland area between the central highlands of Palestine and the Mediterranean coastal plain, where the Philistines dwelt in earlier OT times. Whoever controlled this region controlled the major trade route along the coastal plain—the Via Maris.







Sepharad: v. 20—  
The modern city of  
Sardis in western  
Turkey—way off this  
map, a long distance  
away. Some of the  
Jews were exiled to  
what this represents  
as the farthest  
regions of the earth.

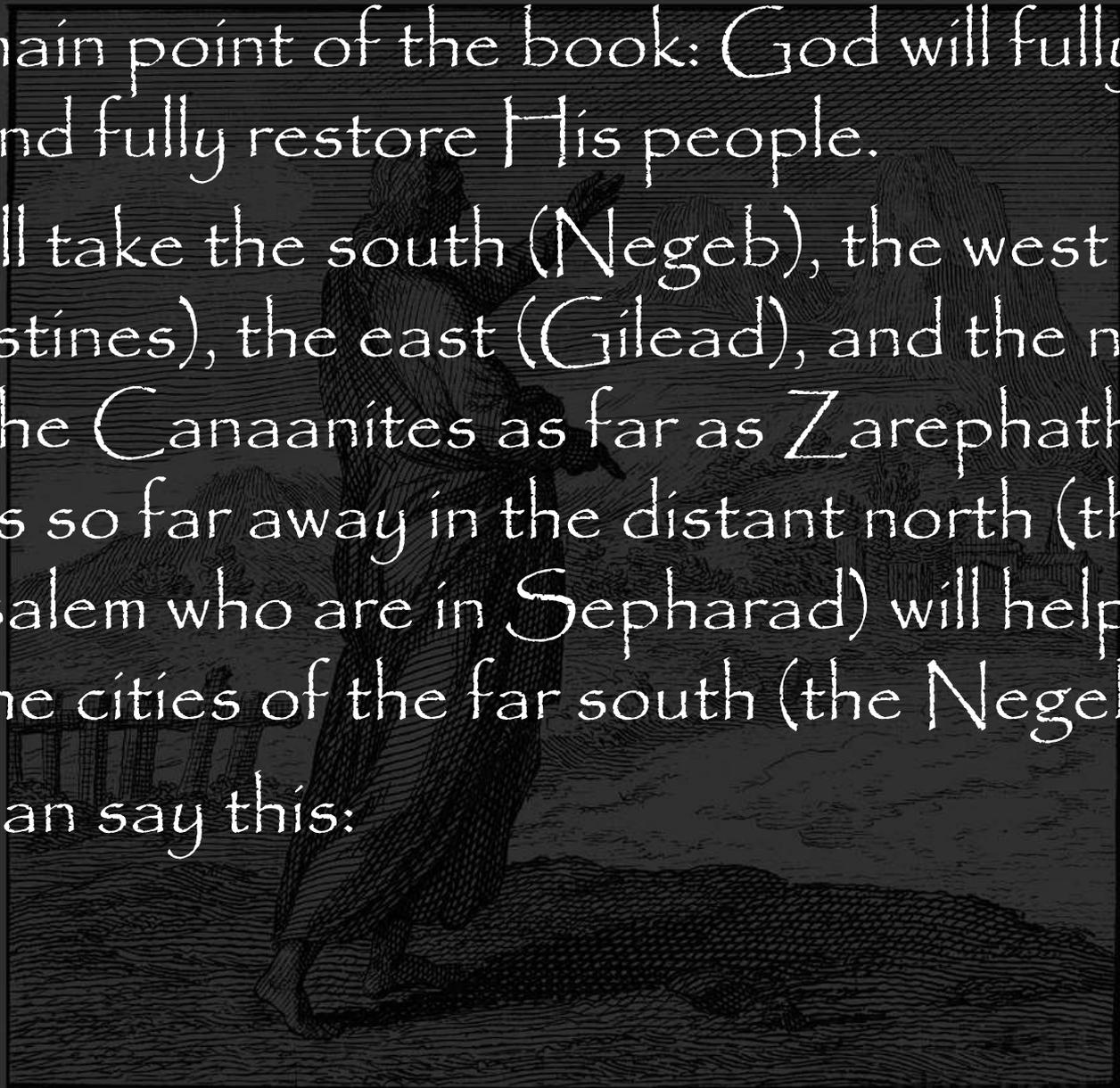


So—what's the point of v. 19-21?

It's the main point of the book: God will fully judge Edom and fully restore His people.

They will take the south (Negeb), the west (land of the Philistines), the east (Gilead), and the north (the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath). Even the exiles so far away in the distant north (the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad) will help to retake the cities of the far south (the Negeb).

So we can say this:



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So—what's the point of v. 19-21?

God always leaves His people with hope—He is always more concerned with our forgiveness and reconciliation with Him than we are.

- Remember the context of Obadiah: written to the captive Jews right after the tragedy of the exile in 586 BC. If they ever needed hope, it was then.
- Scripture, in darkest times, always gives hope.
- For the Jews, this hope culminated in v. 21: “the kingdom shall be the LORD’s.”

For a short little book, Obadiah packs a huge, and critical, message. This is Romans 15:4 happening.