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“Book of Obadiah, Part 2”

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With

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Book of Obadiah, Part 2

This episode continues and concludes our discussion on the book of Obadiah, with an emphasis on its foretelling of Edom's doom and how that prophecy was – and will be – fulfilled.

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 107, Book of Obadiah, Part 2. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael S. Heiser. Hey Mike, how are you?

MSH: Very good.

TS: And I threw S in there because I don't think you've ever told us what S in your name stands for.

MSH: Stephen. The publisher insists, and for good reason, that we have the S in the website and the books and basically anything else I do because believe it or not, there is another Michael Heiser that has an Amazon publication that has something to do with Bible stuff. I don't know who it is, different middle initial, but the S has to be there to disambiguate me from this other guy, whoever that is. That's why we use it.

TS: Can I or can I not call you Steve?

MSH: No.

TS: Has anyone ever called you Steve?

MSH: No.

TS: Okay, well, it's too bad. I like it.

MSH: When I was teaching a class, I'd tell students you can either call me Dr. Mike, Mike, or your Holiness. It was pretty rare when someone picked the the last option there. I don't need to hear Dr. in front of my name to be happy so I'd rather just go with Mike.

TS: Sounds good Steve. Okay Mike. Well, I'm excited about the second part of Obadiah here. That first one, learned a lot with that one.

MSH: Yeah, it's a little book. It's neglected, but there's some good stuff in there. And I think people will be a little bit surprised at how it contributes to some pretty important things in the New Testament, so hence, that's what we're going to do in part 2 today. Just as I said last time, we're going to be focusing on New Testament connections with Obadiah. Last time we introduced the book, went through the book a little bit, and I sort of reserved a couple sections of the book to spend a little more time on in relationship to New Testament stuff. And so that's what we're going to focus on today. Now the key thoughts, to bring in from the first part, would be something to this effect so try to fix this in your mind as we begin here in part 2. If you can do that, I think you're going to be tracking all the way through what we do today. So in the prophetic books, Edom was a place of doom. It was associated with the nations that threatened Israel and the external nations that and other gods and so on so forth.

It was specifically linked to Babylon because Edom helped Babylon destroy Jerusalem and carry the last two tribes into exile. They didn't help Jerusalem Judah at all. In fact, they did the opposite. They did things that encouraged the Babylonians and help the Babylonians in

some way. Consequently, pay back against Edom was viewed as part of the end of the exile and a new beginning for Israel, in fact, the beginning of the new Israel and the renewal of the Kingdom of God on earth. So basically, Edom had to get what was coming to it for the Jews to have a sense that the exile is over. We're back to where we were before. We were sent into exile before the Babylonians did with they did, so this vengeance, this consequence, this payback, this retribution, against Edom had a very particular role to play in kind of what we would call the eschatological consciousness of Judaism, this return from exile. The exile's now over in all its parts, nothing's lingering out there.

The exile is completely over and now we can start over again as the people of God and kick start, renew the Kingdom of God on earth. So Edom is part of that consciousness, part of that psychology. Now if you've listened to this podcast for any amount of time, you already know that the things I just described are things we've talked about before. We spent a couple of episodes on eschatology not too long ago. We've hit them before about this sense of when does the exile end and what does that mean. How does that look in New Testament theology, New Testament thinking, Second Temple Period Jewish thinking? Edom is to be part of that discussion. So let's go back to Obadiah and pick up a few of the sections that you we sort of reserved for this time. Obadiah 18 in particular, and then we're going to go to Obadiah 21. And I think you're going to be able to see how some of these things factor in. And then we're going to go to specific New Testament passage that really sort of plays off the need to have Edom dealt with in relationship to the renewal of the Kingdom of God. There's a very specific passage that deals with that in the New Testament. So Obadiah 18 says,

The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
and the house of Joseph a flame,
and the house of Esau [**Edom**] stubble;
they shall burn them and consume them,
and there shall be no survivor for the house of Esau,
for the LORD has spoken.

MSH: So this is a reference to, fairly obviously, the obvious part is that Edom is going to be reduced to stubble because God's going to pay them back for all the bad things they did to Judah, to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so on so forth, through the promised line. Let's talk about some terminology from Obadiah 18. House of Joseph, now we know that Joseph had two sons. Joseph's descendants therefore were Ephraim and Manasseh, at least the ones we know about. And if you know about the 12 tribes of Israel, you know about Ephraim and Manasseh. They get land allotted to them separately in the conquest and those were the two sons that are blessed in Genesis 48 so that ought to be familiar. But since those two tribes really got the lion's share of land when it was allotted by Joshua and therefore presumably had the biggest population of the tribes based on the amount of land they got, since that's true, the house of Joseph became a term that really stood for the entirety of the northern kingdom. Ephraim and Manasseh were the biggest tribes, the biggest allotments in the northern region of the land.

So later on in Israel's history, when you have essentially the division of the monarchy after Solomon, 10 of the tribes defect and go north, form the northern kingdom, and then you have Judah and Benjamin in the south. Well, among that 10 nation northern confederacy, Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, had by far the most land and presumably the most

people. So house of Joseph became sort of a stand-in term for the northern kingdom of Israel, the 10 northern tribes. For example, in 2 Samuel 19:20 we read,

²⁰ For your servant knows that I have sinned. Therefore, behold, I have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king.”

MSH: This is when David is sort of getting run out of town and we have someone from the northern kingdom come down. They refer to where they're from as the house of Joseph. I think maybe a better example would be Zechariah 10:6,

“I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and I will save the house of Joseph.
I will bring them back because I have compassion on them,
and they shall be as though I had not rejected them,
for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.

MSH: This is a reference, usually you have Israel and Judah put in tandem when the writer wants to talk about all 12 tribes but here you actually have house of Judah and house of Joseph. So house of Joseph is a much clearer stand in for the counterpart to Judah, which was the southern kingdom. So house of Joseph is the northern kingdom. Just store that away. Here we have an Obadiah 18 reference to the house of Joseph, the northern kingdom. We also have a reference to the house of Jacob. Now there's two ways to understand that phrase. First, you could just understand it as residents, members of the southern kingdom. I think in this particular verse, Obadiah 18 that makes good sense since house of Joseph is the northern kingdom. In Obadiah 18, you have a reference to both kingdoms, the southern one and the northern one. Elsewhere, house of Joseph's line is part of the house of Jacob and house of Jacob can be a phrase, it refers to the totality of all the tribes since the 12 tribes of Israel are the 12 tribes of Jacob. We understand that.

But the point is that in some passages, and I think in particular here in Obadiah 18, because we have house of Joseph signifying the northern kingdom, house of Joseph or house of Jacob, excuse me, signifies the southern kingdom. So basically all 12 tribes are in view. This is the important part. All 12 tribes are in view in Obadiah 18, that they're going to sort of flame up, become a living flame and consume Edom. So Edom is cast as something that needs to be dealt with in relationship to, not just the two tribes that Babylon conquered but all the tribes, and this would make sense if the judgement on Edom is connected with the end of the exile. Because if you recall our 2 episodes on eschatology, a Jew would not think that the exile was actually over until all of the tribes, all 12 tribes, had been recovered, returned, and the people of God were reunified in totality. So we have a reference to that same idea here in Obadiah 18. All the tribes have something to do with this conquest of Edom or dealing with Edom that will end the exile and then be the signal that the people of God are now being brought together again in one family, and the Kingdom of God is now being started up again. Now if we go to Obadiah 21, we have a curious verse and some curious terminology here.

Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion
to rule Mount Esau [**Edom**],
and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

MSH: This is the way the book of Obadiah ends. This is the last verse, “saviors will go up onto Mount Zion to judge Mount Esau and the kingship will belong to Yahweh”. So a few items to notice here. There’s a reference to saviors. The is from the lemma *yasha*, which of course you have words like *yeshua*, the deliverer, the savior, that sort of thing going on, to save or to deliver, to rescue is kind of the base meaning for the lemma. You can translate that the plural here as either saviors, as ESV does, or deliverers, something like that. Savior language is going to be something I bring up here in a moment. Second thing to notice is you’ll have these saviors going up to Mount Zion. Well, what’s Mount Zion?

It’s where Jerusalem is, that’s kind of obvious. Third, they’re going there to judge Mount Esau, which is Mount Edom or Edom itself as an entity. And fourth, all of this will somehow result in the kingdom returning to Yahweh. In other words, Mount Edom, Edom, will belong to him. The Edomites will sort of be brought into the fold so to speak and Yahweh will be lord over the Edomites, over Edom part of his kingdom. So we have deliverers, saviors going up to Mount Zion. Now just think about this. Deliverers, saviors going up to Mount Zion to subjugate Edom or make it part of Yahweh’s dominion so that the Kingdom of God over all nations, because Edom is representative of the other nations, so that all nations would return to Yahweh. This ought to be sort of turning a few lights on in your head about possible New Testament connections, but just hold those thoughts. I want to read a little bit from the Anchor Bible Commentary here by Raabe and his volume on Obadiah. He says this about this verse.

“When the word saviors, deliverers, the plural there in Hebrew, refers to humans, it designates military heroes authorized and empowered by Yahweh to deliver Israelites from enemies or distress. For example, in the book of Judges, Judges 3:9, 3:15, 2 Kings 13:5, so on so forth. Isaiah 19:20 is the only exception according to which Yahweh promises to send a deliverer who will rescue the Egyptians from their oppressors. The plural here, *moshi’am*, occurs only one other time in the Bible. Nehemiah 9:27 uses the word to refer to the judges of the pre-monarchic period, the period of the judges and here’s the Nehemiah quote:

²⁷ Therefore you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them suffer. And in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them deliverers [*moshi’am*] who saved them [*yasha*] from the hand of their enemies.

MSH: Essentially, his point is that when this term is used elsewhere, it’s typically some sort of military deliverance or salvation. The textbook example are the Judges period. Okay, that’s fine. Nothing terribly surprising there. If we look at how the Septuagint renders these references to *moshi’am*, the judges, the cross-references that Raabe just gave us, if we look at how the Septuagint renders those things we see some interesting items. Even though we have a military context for salvation or deliverance, the Septuagint will use words like *soter*, which means

Savior, and it is the singular that is used exclusively of Jesus in the New Testament, or it will use *soteria*, which is salvation in a broad abstract sense. So if you're a literate Jew who knows the Hebrew Bible, also can read Septuagint, this is something that would be striking to you, especially when if you start reading or listening to the apostles and hearing what they're saying about Jesus. It's the same terminology.

You say maybe there's a connection, maybe not, just hold the thought. I think we could put this in the form of a question though this way. Could it be that New Testament writers could have abstracted a verse like Obadiah 21 and its terminology of saviors or salvation by virtue the Septuagint, could New Testament writers have abstracted that whole idea that the judgment of Edom and the restoration of the people in Kingdom of God might refer to spiritual salvation instead of military deliverance? In other words, that salvation would come to Mount Zion and that wouldn't be a literal military salvation but a spiritual salvation? This should be setting off lights in your head. We can ask another question. Who did ascend to Mount Zion to bring salvation? Hebrews 12, let's just go to a New Testament passage, verses 18-24. The writer says,

¹⁸ For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest ¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. [**Sinai panic episode**]²⁰ For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned."²¹ Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear."²² But you [**Jewish followers of Jesus**] have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

MSH: So the writer of Hebrews does abstract the idea of coming to Mount Zion. Mount Zion is not just the physical Jerusalem but it's the heavenly Jerusalem. It's the meeting place of the Divine Council, innumerable angels in festal gathering, the assembly of first born who are enrolled in heaven. We've talked about this Divine Council language before about believers who are exalted and deified and divinized to become part of the Divine Council. We had a whole lot on this with David Burnett. You've come to this place, the writer of Hebrews is telling people who are still alive here. This is what has happened with salvation. You've been made part of this family. The focus here is not on the literal Jerusalem anymore. It's on the spiritual Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem to quote the passage. So we do get evidence that ideas like Mount Zion could be abstracted in New Testament theology and the people who are going up to Mount Zion are in fact believers.

Hold that thought. Just to recapture some of this, let me go back to my original question or my original sort of summary of what we're reading in Obadiah 21. Saviors, deliverers, going up to Mount Zion to subjugate Edom, to make it part of Yahweh's kingdom, his dominion, so the Kingdom of God over all nations would return and Yahweh would be lord of all those things, one family and one rule. You say come on Mike. This is just too abstract. It's too nonliteral. No New

Testament writer would be thinking that Obadiah 21 was about the advance of the message of salvation to Jerusalem, like the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost in Jerusalem. Paul's use of Psalm 68 in Ephesians 4 where Mount Bashan, Mount Hermon, would be conquered and made Yahweh's turf. You say Edom needed to be conquered literally and physically to be brought under Yahweh's governance and it had to be literally judged. That had to happen for Yahweh to be ruler of all the nations.

This just has to be taken literally. No New Testament writer would quote Obadiah to make these points this way. On one level that's true, but the New Testament does quote another passage specifically about the judgment of Edom to make precisely those points that you might think are too abstract or nonliteral. I'm referring here to Amos 9:11-12, and the way that passage is quoted and interpreted by James in Acts 15. We hit this in our series in the book of Acts but we're going to revisit it obviously here because now you have a context for Edom. Edom needed to be dealt with for the exile to end, to be officially over, and so that the people of God could be brought back, brought together, into one family so that the kingdom of God could be reconstituted on earth and the nations brought in to that kingdom. Edom plays a crucial role in this, in part of the eschatological consciousness of Jews living at this time. So let's look at Amos 9. The passage should be familiar because we have dealt with it before on this podcast. Amos writes,

¹¹ “In that day I will raise up
the booth of David that is fallen
and repair its breaches,
and raise up its ruins
and rebuild it as in the days of old,
¹² that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations who are called by my name,”
declares the LORD who does this.

MSH: Now think about the wording. In that day, I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen, we talked before in our series on Acts about it's our propensity to read that and think literalism, booth of David. What is that? A lot of people say that must be the Temple. It's not the Temple. David didn't live in the Temple but a lot of people will use it to talk about the rebuilding of a temple but that's hard to make that work. Maybe it's David's house, maybe some other physical structure associated with David, or maybe it's David's dynasty. That's a little more abstract so some Christians don't like it. Some prophecy “experts” don't like that because they're insisting on rigid literalism. But it's spoken of as a thing. I will repair its breaches. I will raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old.

And then in verse 12, we don't have it anymore. We have they. Did you catch that? In that day, I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old that they may possess the remnant of Edom. Who's they, because if we abstract it in verse 11, the booth of David is David's dynasty, there's only one Messiah. There's only one son of David who actually is the Messiah. Who would they be? Well, I'm going to tell you who they are. If you've read Unseen Realm, you already know the answer to this. They are you because now you are members of the Messiah's household. You are the ones to whom Jesus in Revelation 2-3 grants to rule with him on his Father's throne and gives to you

the Morning Star. You are they. You say it just seems so abstract. It seems so non-literal. What about the nations called by my name? Let's look at how James quotes this passage in Acts 15 and what he thinks it means. You're either going to allow the New Testament to be an inspired commentary on the Old Testament or you're not. So let's go to Acts 15 and frankly, we'll just start at the very beginning so you get the full context of it. This is the so-called Jerusalem council meeting.

But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."² And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.³ So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.⁵ But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses."

⁶The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.⁷ And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.⁸ And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us,⁹ and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.¹⁰ Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?¹¹ But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."

¹²And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.¹³ After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me.¹⁴ Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name.¹⁵ And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written,

¹⁶"After this I will return,
and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen;
I will rebuild its ruins,
and I will restore it,

¹⁷that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord,
and all the Gentiles who are called by my name,
says the Lord, who makes these things ¹⁸known from of old.'

¹⁹ Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, ²⁰ but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. ²¹ For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”

MSH: We covered what that list constituted back in our series on Acts. Listen to what he does. I'm going to read you the quotation again. This is what James says. He's quoting Amos 9.

¹⁶ “After this I will return,
and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen;
I will rebuild its ruins,
and I will restore it,
¹⁷ that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord,
and all the Gentiles who are called by my name,
says the Lord, who makes these things ¹⁸ known from of old.”

MSH: Now the first thing that will pop in your head is what happened to the reference to Edom? If we go back to Amos 9, let me read that again.

¹¹ “In that day I will raise up
the booth of David that is fallen
and repair its breaches,
and raise up its ruins
and rebuild it as in the days of old,
¹² that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations who are called by my name,”
declares the LORD who does this.

MSH: What happened to Edom in James's quotation? Why does James have the word Gentiles instead of all the nations that we read in Amos 9? This is a crucial crucial passage. What James is doing is he's doing precisely the abstracting that I just talked about a few minutes earlier in the episode about Edom, that the judgment on Edom, Edom needing to be dealt with so that the exile could end and the Kingdom of God could be present again and the family of God could become whole under Yahweh's leadership, under one Father. He abstracts the judgment on Edom to basically mean everyone who's not a Jew. In Amos 9, Edom, if you know a little Hebrew, is spelled עֲדוֹם. In James's quotation, which comes from the Septuagint, we have the remnant of mankind instead of the remnant of Edom.

Well, mankind in Hebrew is מִן־בְּנֵי־אָדָם, exactly the same constants as Edom but the vowels are different. So if you look at what he's doing here, you can say the Septuagint translator changed the text and that's a highly interpretive translation and that's kind of weird. It's kind of funky. It's kind of I don't know what to do with that because it's really quite a different text or a different reading or it's a change or something like that, like he's changing the word of God. Gentiles is easier because Gentiles is *éthnē* in Greek and *éthnē* is the Greek word that would be used to translate in nations all over the Old Testament so that part's easy. Now, there's another

way to look at this though that since Edom, catch this. This is what we've been talking about. This is our second week. Since Edom in Old Testament thinking represented everybody who isn't a Jew, in other words all the nations, all those other nations, James is sitting there listening to Peter about how God used him to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles, people who aren't Jews, how those same people got the Holy Spirit just like they did, that the Gospel's the same no matter who you are.

Paul and Barnabas echoing the same thing, look at what God has done through us to the Gentiles. And James either remembers or is given by the Holy Spirit this passage and to him in his mind, Edom no longer means, no longer was even intended to point to the physical place of Edom. Edom was everybody else. It was everybody who was not Israel. Edom was the rest of mankind conceptually. So we could argue that the translator of the Septuagint at this point, and they were all Jews, thought the same way. It's literal in respect to the fact that the people being saved are real. They're literal. Salvation is a real thing to real people. What happened on the cross was real. But James is clearly reading the judgment on Edom, this little place that Obadiah spends 21 verses talking about, as now meaning on the other side of the cross everybody who isn't part of the 12 tribes. If you do that then the remnant of mankind may now seek the Lord. Everybody else including us but not excluding the Jew but everybody else, the entire world, all of humanity can now have a right relationship with Yahweh, the God of Israel, the God of Jacob. Everybody counts now.

This is a very clear instance of non-literal thinking when it comes to the interpretation of prophecy and it's really really really important because it redefines who the people of God are. It's not just the house of Jacob. It's not just the house of Joseph, Southern and Northern kingdoms. The people of God are everyone who believes. The remnant of mankind can seek the Lord and the Gentiles who are called by my name. It used to be that the only people who were called by the name of Yahweh, my people, were Jews. Remember our two sessions on eschatology a short time ago? We talked about who all Israel is and how Paul takes all Israel, a phrase is use the Old Testament the 12 tribes, but then he uses it to talk about those who are not my people, quoting Hosea 1:10, in other words, the Gentile. This is fundamental stuff to eschatology and to New Testament theology. So although we've been talking with respect to Obadiah about Edom needing to be dealt with, if we were having this session and James walked into the room here while I'm doing the podcast, he would say Edom has been dealt with. It was dealt with at the cross.

It was dealt with at Pentecost. Because look what happened at Pentecost, you had the people of God, Jews, coming to Jerusalem where Mount Zion is and many of them went away believers in Jesus and they went back to their homes, which were not Mount Zion. They were among the nations, the Gentiles, and they planted the seed so that all of the nations could be brought into the fold. In other words, they could be conquered spiritually by the Gospel, freed from the gods that enslaved them now, brought into the kingdom and into the family. James would say this is already present. Edom has been dealt with already. The exile has ended. The exile ended with the cross. It ended with Pentecost. It ended with the Jews returning back to Jerusalem being regathered back to Jerusalem for the event of Pentecost specifically so that now the nations can be brought into the fold, into the family, into the kingdom, as well. This is basic New Testament theology. What happens is, and we've talked about this before, is you have people who will look at these points and affirm the obvious that the Church is the new Israel, to quote Galatians 6:16, the church is the Israel of God. The church is the new Israel.

To affirm this absolutely transparent point, Galatians 3:26-29. If you are Christs, you are Abraham's seed. How much more explicit could Paul be? You are inheritors of the promises given to Abraham if you're Christs. It doesn't matter who you are, Jew or Gentile. They'll affirm these things that are very obvious then they'll extrapolate to the unnecessary and come out with this full-blown replacement theology that argues that these prophecies given to national Israel, there will not be any sort of fulfillment to them or any role for national Israel, ethnic Israel, in the future. That goes too far and I have denied that in other podcasts for very obvious reasons. We're going through this or that passage that says otherwise. What about Armageddon, the meeting place of the council? It's Jerusalem.

That is a role to play in biblical prophecy. What could be more obvious? This is actually another one. So let's go back to Obadiah as we wrap up here. We have this thing where Edom has experienced what it was supposed to experience. They didn't experience physical wrath and judgment but what happened at the cross deals with them because it opens the door to salvation to all of them and so we don't win them back militarily. We win them back, we are their saviors through the Gospel, through the message of salvation. We win them by conversion, not military victory. And this has already happened. So that's the already but we also have a not yet. We're at the already not yet theme. We're going to see it again. If you go to Obadiah 5-6, think about this language because you're going to hear it in another passage that's going to matter.

⁵ If thieves came to you,
if plunderers came by night—
how you have been destroyed!—
would they not steal only enough for themselves?
If grape gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?
⁶ How Esau has been pillaged,
his treasures sought out!

MSH: These two verses were dealing with, they were rhetorical language for when you get what's coming to you, it's not going to be just a little bit. Thieves aren't going to come and take only what they need. You're going to be pillaged. If the grape gatherers, to use another analogy, come, they're not leaving you anything. You're toast. Everything you had is gone. Now this language gets repeated in Jeremiah 49:7-22. I'm going to read you the passage.

⁷ Concerning Edom.
Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Is wisdom no more in Teman?
Has counsel perished from the prudent?
Has their wisdom vanished?
⁸ Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Dedan!
For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
the time when I punish him.
⁹ If grape gatherers came to you,

would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves came by night,
would they not destroy only enough for themselves?

¹⁰ But I have stripped Esau bare;
I have uncovered his hiding places,
and he is not able to conceal himself.

His children are destroyed, and his brothers,
and his neighbors; and he is no more.

¹¹ Leave your fatherless children; I will keep them alive;
and let your widows trust in me.”

¹² For thus says the LORD: “If those who did not deserve to drink the cup must drink it, will you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, but you must drink. ¹³ For I have sworn by myself, declares the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a horror, a taunt, a waste, and a curse, and all her cities shall be perpetual wastes.”

¹⁴ I have heard a message from the LORD,
and an envoy has been sent among the nations:
“Gather yourselves together and come against her,
and rise up for battle!

¹⁵ For behold, I will make you small among the nations,
despised among mankind.

¹⁶ The horror you inspire has deceived you,
and the pride of your heart,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,
who hold the height of the hill.

Though you make your nest as high as the eagle's,
I will bring you down from there,
declares the LORD.

¹⁷ “Edom shall become a horror. Everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters. ¹⁸ As when Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities were overthrown, says the LORD, no man shall dwell there, no man shall sojourn in her. ¹⁹ Behold, like a lion coming up from the jungle of the Jordan against a perennial pasture, I will suddenly make him run away from her. And I will appoint over her whomever I choose. For who is like me? Who will summon me? What shepherd can stand before me? ²⁰ Therefore hear the plan that the LORD has made against Edom and the purposes that he has formed against the inhabitants of Teman: Even the little ones of the flock shall be dragged away. Surely their fold shall be appalled at their fate. ²¹ At the sound of their fall the earth shall tremble; the sound of their cry shall be heard at the Red Sea. ²² Behold, one shall mount up and fly swiftly like an eagle and spread his wings against Bozrah, and the heart of the warriors of Edom shall be in that day like the heart of a woman in her birth pains.”

MSH: Now some of this language gets used in another Old Testament passage that we need to look at, Isaiah 63. Catch this.

Who is this who comes from Edom,
in crimsoned garments from Bozrah,
he who is splendid in his apparel,
marching in the greatness of his strength?
“It is I, speaking in righteousness,
mighty to save.”
² Why is your apparel red,
and your garments like his who treads in the winepress?
³ “I have trodden the winepress alone,
and from the peoples no one was with me;
I trod them in my anger
and trampled them in my wrath;
their lifeblood spattered on my garments,
and stained all my apparel.
⁴ For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
and my year of redemption had come.
⁵ I looked, but there was no one to help;
I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold;
so my own arm brought me salvation,
and my wrath upheld me.
⁶ I trampled down the peoples in my anger;
I made them drunk in my wrath,
and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”

MSH: This is a theophany of the Divine warrior. Guess where this gets quoted in the New Testament? Remember, this is an oracle against Edom, Bozrah, that’s a place in the same region of Edom. It gets quoted in Revelation 19. This is when the Lord returns. This is the Armageddon scene or part of it. Let me go back up to verse 11, Revelation 19.

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

MSH: What I'm getting to here is we can see from the way James quotes Amos 9:11 that Edom has been dealt with. The judgment on Edom can be viewed as a spiritual event, the event of the

cross whereby Edom, because they were looked upon as all of the nations, anyone who was not part of Israel, that they're dealt with. They're brought back into the fold through salvation and the Gospel, and as James is relating it to Gentile salvation. That's the already part but the not yet is in Revelation. Revelation borrows on Edom judgment language to describe the return as the second coming of Christ at the Armageddon event. In other words, there is an eschatological future in which the nations will be dealt with in the manner of which Armageddon speaks, in a judgment violent manner. It's already but not yet. The exile is over already. The nations have been dealt with already.

They've gotten what they deserved. Things have come full circle already but not yet. This is what the day of the Lord is about in Old Testament theology. God's enemies need to be dealt with. See, the Gospel, the already part, is reality now. It's already happened. It's already in operation. It's already moving forward. The church, the new people of God, the new Israel, is already a thing that fulfills biblical prophecy in many many respects that a lot of Christians just don't want to seem to own. It does that. A lot of this language about tribulation has nothing to do with the Jew. Remember Obadiah last week. The judgment language of Obadiah is to point out that the nations are going to get what they handed out to Jerusalem, to Judah. We talked about in our eschatology podcast the tribulation language is not thrown up against the Jews, the Jewish nation, the ethnic Jews. It refers the persecution of the Church of believers. I asked this question, how does this affect the way we think eschatologically because so many people want to have this hard and fast distinction between Israel and the Church and then they'll have the church escape from judgment, from this kind of language by saying that that refers to the Jews because they rejected Jesus, the same Jews to whom the Gospel was offered through the entire book of Acts, through the entire history of the early church.

What I'm suggesting is that it's just an inaccurate reading of this eschatological language. But that is not to say that the day the Lord won't be real because the church is never going to accomplish this complete overturning of God's enemies, this complete bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles, all these ideas. The church on its own, it's in operation, it's happening. The kingdom is advancing. It's growing and people are being released from bondage to the hostile gods who rule these nations, all of this stuff. That's going to go on because the gates of hell will not be able to withstand it. But there's going to come a time associated with the second coming that the Lord basically says okay, it's time to return and finish the job. And that will be a time of judgment and will be a time of upheaval. Before everything is brought into full fruition, before the entirety of the people of God is what God wants it to be, before the rule over all the nations by Him and also through us as inheritors', Revelation 2-3, those who inherit the Morning Star from the Messiah because we're part of his family now, all of that will be brought to a complete end and fulfillment by the return of the Lord.

And so that is a not yet aspect to this language. So we can't just say everything is over and done with because of the church. We also can't say nothing is over and done with because all this prophetic stuff refers to ethnic Israel and not the church. Both of those are incorrect. The already but not yet model template is what we see in Scripture consistently and how we need to parse this language. Edom, to close here, the book of Obadiah plays a role in this because it's about Edom being brought back into the fold and while the language is violent in the book of Obadiah, and we will see that language replayed and repurposed in the book of Revelation at the Armageddon event, the second coming, we also see that language used quite abstractly and non-

literally to refer to the church. So Obadiah is an important book as small as it is to help us think about what's going on with the nations and the people of God in terms of eschatology.

TS: Well Mike, you just can't escape eschatology, can you?

MSH: This was a little but by disguise but trust me, I will escape it. It's going to be a while before we track back in this. Obadiah, Edom, and frankly, you don't even have to get into that. There are a lot of people who, when they see the Old Testament side in the New Testament, never actually go look up the original thing that's being quoted. They never look at how it's being used or how it's being repurposed.

TS: Didn't you say today's modern New Testament scholars don't even do that as well?

MSH: Some of them just don't do it. They won't do it. You'll have some overdo it. Some of the replacement theology idea over does it. It affirms the obvious then extrapolates to the unnecessary but you have a lot of scholars who just don't want to think about the text in terms of how the New Testament repurposes the Old. And the people in the Second Temple Period notice the possibilities, and the New Testament sort of actually kind of acts on these possibilities, like with what James is doing in Amos. So there's just a tendency to think, and I hate to put it this way but I will. I've got my system and it works so I'm not going to be bothered with that. That's just a shame.