



# “WHEN THE TABLES TURN!”

Obadiah 1

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Many of us have never heard of, read, or much less sat in church and listened to a sermon from the Book of Obadiah! Probably fewer of us knew Obadiah is the shortest book in the First (Old) Testament. However, Obadiah’s brevity is full of bite! Set in the exilic years of Israelite captivity in Babylon, Obadiah is not a “cautionary tale!” Rather, it’s a real warning that all people should heed concerning vengeance! By Christian standards, vengeance is never good, right!?! However, if we’re honest, many of us feel and have felt this emotion! In fact, it’s quite natural to think about or want to exact vengeance upon others despite Scripture’s reminder that God has exclusive jurisdiction over it! One reason is because, unlike us, God always connects justice with vengeance! Obadiah, whose Hebrew name means “servant of YHWH,” is one of the twelve minor prophets, but who sent a major message to anyone who abuses, misuses, and oppresses God’s people!

In the creation narrative, God created *all* human beings in the likeness of the Triune God: Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. This is our ontological DNA and identity! Even America’s founding documents state, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that *all* men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” While we’re *all* undeniably part of the humanity, America does not treat *all* people the same! As people of African ancestry, we have and continue to disproportionately absorb the brunt of injustice, racism, and oppression. Our lives, liberties, and pursuits of happiness continue to suffocate in the cesspools of a systemically unjust society. African Americans are fed up, and if we’re honest, many of us want an “Obadiah-like” move of God. Today’s sermon forces us to deal with realities we may never say aloud. We’re waiting to see “**When the Tables Turn!**”

## II. THE COUNTRY’S ARROGANCE!

- A. America must admit its sin and wretchedness! **Isaiah 1:4-7**
  - B. Pride and arrogance also befell satan! **Isaiah 14:12-15**
  - C. Dr. King’s last sermon would have been, “Why America May Go to Hell!”
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## III. THE CRIMINAL ACCOMPLICES!

- A. The deafening silence of the Christian church is violence! **vv. 12-14**
  - B. Beware of inside jobs! **Genesis 37:21-24**
  - C. Are we really our brothers’ keeper? **Genesis 4:9-10**
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**IV. THE CONSEQUENCES ASSURED!**

**v. 15**

- A. We will reap what we sow!
- B. Don't fret at the sight of evil!
- C. Vengeance belongs to God!

**Galatians 6:7-9**  
**Psalm 37:1-2**  
**Deuteronomy 32:35**

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**V. THE CAPTIVES' ASCENSION!**

- A. The last shall be first!
- B. Still we rise and emerge from the ashes!
- C. We will reclaim the land!

**Matthew 20:16**  
**Psalm 113:7; Maya Angelou**  
**vv. 19-20**

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**VI. CONCLUSION**

Our ancestors could only imagine and hope for the freedoms that we have today. They could only hope. The reality is, our ancestors' hopes continue to be deferred, derailed, and destroyed! As America's moral fabric continues to erode and deteriorate before our eyes, the potency of the toxicity, evil, and divisiveness against people of African ancestry have us wondering if God even cares! Like Israel, we have been mistreated by our brother Edom (White America), and God will never allow this to stand! We must always remember we serve the God of justice and righteousness! Psalm 103 of The Message Bible says, "God makes everything come out right; He puts victims back on their feet." When and how God decides "to make everything come out right" is not the Believers' business! Our faith is to believe that God can, and God will cause the tables to turn!

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