

Use Week of:

## Unit 17 • Session 1

# Obadiah the Prophet

**BIBLE PASSAGE:**  
Obadiah

**STORY POINT:**  
God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.

**KEY PASSAGE:**  
Jeremiah 29:11

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:**  
How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.



**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
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**TEACH THE STORY**  
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**APPLY THE STORY**  
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Additional resources are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [ministrygrid.com/gospelproject](http://ministrygrid.com/gospelproject).

## LEADER Bible Study

The conflict between Edom and Israel originates in the story of Jacob and Esau. The twins struggled in the womb, and their mother Rebekah asked God why. God explained that from her womb would come two nations, and the older would serve the younger. (Gen. 25:23)

The nation of Israel descended from Jacob (the younger), and the nation of Edom descended from Esau (the older). God promised to Jacob the same promises He made to Abraham (Gen. 28:15), but Esau was a godless man who despised God's promises. (Heb. 12:16)

For centuries, the two families were at odds. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, the king of Edom refused to let the Israelites pass through his country to get to the promised land. (Num. 20:14-21) Edom fought against Israel on several occasions. (See 2 Chron. 20:2; 28:17; 2 Kings 8:20-22.)

The Book of Obadiah is God's message about Edom in response to their sin—specifically their gloating over the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem. When the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem, the people of Edom didn't help. Like an envious brother, Edom was glad to see Judah overcome. In fact, Edom was a guilty participant in the action against Judah. (Obad. 11)

The prophet Obadiah detailed the charges against Edom, announced their guilt, and handed down the sentence from the Lord: Edom would be totally destroyed. No remnant of Esau's family would remain. On the other hand, Obadiah said God's people would be restored.

God said the people of Edom would get what they deserved. "As you have done, it will be done to you; what you deserve will return on your own head" (Obad. 15). God's rule is just. The fate of the Edomites might as well be ours. But here's the reality: As you have done, it was done to Christ; what you deserve was returned on His head. Jesus is King, and one day He will deliver His people from their enemies once and for all.

# The BIBLE Story

## Obadiah the Prophet

*Obadiah*

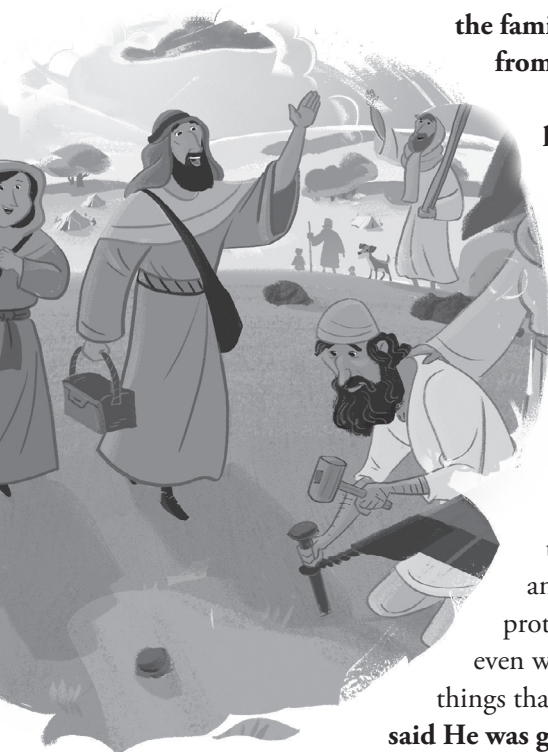
God sent a message to Obadiah (oh buh DIGH uh) the prophet in a vision. **God had news about a country called Edom (EE duhm). The people who lived in Edom were like brothers to the people in Judah.**

**Both groups were descendants of Isaac's twin sons, Jacob and Esau. The people in Edom came from the family of Esau; God's people came from the family of Jacob.**

**The people of Edom didn't love God.** They worshiped false gods. They lived in the mountains and trusted the mountains and their own strength to protect them. **The people thought they were better than everyone else.**

**The Edomites didn't get along with God's people in Judah.** When the Babylonians took over the city of Jerusalem, the people in Edom just sat back and watched. They didn't try to protect Judah. The people of Edom even went into Jerusalem and took things that didn't belong to them. **God said He was going to punish Edom.**

**"Listen up!" God said. "Out of all the nations, you will be the least important. No one will like you. You were proud, and I will punish you. You thought you were safe, but I will bring you down."**



**Obadiah's message for the people of Edom was bad news.** God was going to allow Edom's enemies to take away everything they had. Even the people who were their friends would steal from them. Many people would be killed.

**God said to Edom, "You were cruel to the people in Judah, so you will be punished.** When Judah needed your help, you stood back and did nothing. You laughed and were happy that they were attacked. **Every bad thing you did to others will be done to you."**

**"The Day of the Lord is near," Obadiah warned.** "Every evil thing you did to others will be done to you."

God said that the bad things that were happening to His people in Judah were only for a little while. God would deliver His people. "But when I punish you, Edom," God said, "everything will be destroyed."

**Obadiah's message from God had good news for God's people. "My people will have the land that belongs to Edom," God said. God's people would return to their homes and God would take care of His people, but Edom's punishment was forever.**

*Christ Connection: Like God's people were mistreated by the people of Edom, Jesus was mistreated by His own people. God will punish sin. Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment we deserve for our sin. We can trust Jesus to make wrong things right.*

## **Bible Storytelling Tips**

### **• Active listening:**

Assign key words (*God, Edom, bad news, good news*) a motion or a verbal response. Instruct kids to listen closely during the story and respond to each of the assigned words.

### **• Change position:**

Stand at one side of the room when telling about the bad news for Edom. Move to another spot to tell the good news for Judah.

# INTRODUCE the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Obadiah the Prophet

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Obadiah

**STORY POINT:** God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Jeremiah 29:11

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to think of some good news or bad news they have heard. As each kid shares news, give a thumbs-up if it is good news and a thumbs-down if it is bad news.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Map Mania” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Map Mania” on the activity page. Kids should follow the instructions to label the map.

**SAY** • The two groups in today’s Bible story were descendants of brothers. These families were separated by the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, but they were bitter rivals. When one family was being overtaken, the other family watched and even stole from them. We will find out what happened.

## LOW PREP

- small object (ball, box, coin, etc.)

## Session starter (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Steal your brother’s bacon

Form two groups of kids. Instruct one group to line up shoulder to shoulder on one side of the room and the other

group to line up shoulder to shoulder on the other side of the room. Each group should face the other.

Announce that although the players are two groups, they are brothers. Assign each player a number. (Each group should have a 1, 2, 3, and so on.) Place an object (the “bacon”) in the middle of the room. Call out a number.

The players from both teams with that number rush to get the bacon first and take it back to his team before the other player (the “brother”) tags him. Play again as time permits.

**SAY** • The goal in this game was to steal your brother’s bacon. We know this is not how God wants people to treat one another. In today’s Bible story, two groups were like brothers; but one group didn’t protect the other, and they even stole from them! God had an important message for both groups.

#### **OPTION 2:** Rebuild structures

Before the session, create a simple structure built out of building blocks. Position the structure in the middle of the room. Form two groups of kids, and give each group enough blocks to create the structure. Explain to each group that its pieces were once just like the provided structure, but now they are in pieces. They need to be rebuilt to look like the model structure.

• building blocks

**SAY** • Before, your blocks were just a mess; after, they were restored to look like they should look. Today we are going to learn that God’s people were in a big mess, but **God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.**

### **Transition to teach the story**



# TEACH the Story



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**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

**Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas:** Simulate an airport terminal by creating a flight status board. Include destinations such as Edom, Judah, Jerusalem, and so forth. Line up some chairs like the waiting area. Stack luggage and hang a baggage claim sign above it. You may also display the theme background slide.

## Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- suitcase
- watch

*[Leader enters wearing a watch and carrying a suitcase. He or she sits down as if waiting on a flight and looks at watch.]*

**LEADER** • I can't believe it—another delay announcement!

I am so tired of bad news today. I'm [*your name*], and I've spent the last year traveling the world. I'm just ready to get home! I don't think that family over there [*point across the room*] can take any more delays either. Those brothers are already fighting.

Speaking of family disputes, I'd love to share a Bible story with you. This story is about God's people—the people of Judah—and the people of

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Edom. Both groups descended from Jacob and Esau; surely they could treat each other like family, right?

Actually, God sent a messenger with bad news for the people of Edom because of the way they treated His people. The messenger had good news for God's people, too.

### Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • In today's Bible story, Obadiah was the prophet God sent to deliver His message. Although God had chosen Obadiah for the job, Obadiah was not perfect. Is there any such thing as a perfect prophet? There is—it's Jesus! Let's take a look at our big picture question and answer: *How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.*

• Big Picture Question Poster

### Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline

**LEADER** • Remember when we talked about the brothers Jacob and Esau? [*Point to the story of Jacob and Esau.*] The people of Judah were descendants of Jacob, and the people of Edom were descendants of Esau. Though they were related, they did not treat each other like family. The Edomites mistreated God's people, so God sent a message through the prophet Obadiah.

This story is just one piece of God's greater story, the gospel. All the stories of the Bible fit together to tell the one big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.



- Bibles
- “Obadiah the Prophet” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to the Book of Obadiah. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Obadiah the Prophet.”

**LEADER** • The two groups were practically family, yet the people of Edom refused to help another nation. The people of Edom trusted in their own strength. Look at Obadiah 3-4. [*Pause for kids to find Obadiah 3-4 in their Bibles. Suggest they refer to the table of contents. Choose a volunteer to read the verses aloud.*]

Edom was so far from God that they chose to laugh at the pain of another nation instead of helping them. [*Choose a volunteer to read aloud Obad. 12-13.*] God sent His messenger—the prophet Obadiah—to deliver bad news. God would make the wrong things right. Edom was about to learn the hard way that their opinion of God didn’t change the truth about who He is.

God is God whether or not people choose to worship Him. **God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.**

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • God’s people were treated unfairly by their brother Edom. In a similar way, Jesus was mistreated by His own people. Like Edom, we too are guilty of idolatry—trusting in and worshiping things or people that are not God. This is sin and God will punish sin. Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment we deserve for our sin. We can trust Jesus to make wrong things right.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 99 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

## Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 17, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about whether or not they should pray for God to punish people who do bad things. Guide them to discuss how praying for their enemies or showing kindness to them could change how they feel about them.

• “Unit 17, Session 1” questions from kids video



## Missions moment (3 minutes)

Show the Adoniram Judson photo and explain that you will be learning about a missionary who lived a long time ago. He was born in Massachusetts in 1788. Challenge kids to guess who became president of the United States a few months after Adoniram was born. (*George Washington*)

• “Adoniram Judson Photo” printable

**LEADER** • Adoniram (a-doh-NIGH-rum) Judson was one of the first American missionaries. He went to a country called Burma, which is now called Myanmar.

He learned the Burmese language and translated the Bible so the people there could read God’s Word. Life was hard for Adoniram and his family, but he faithfully shared God’s promises and the good news about Jesus.

## Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Jeremiah 29:11.

• Key Passage Poster  
• “A Future and a Hope (Jer. 29:11)” song

**LEADER** • God’s people found themselves in a difficult situation. Their country had been invaded and their brother nation did nothing to help them. Our key passage is found in the Book of Jeremiah. This Scripture reminds us that God knows everything we go through, and He has a plan. The verse doesn’t promise that life will be easy, but it does show us that

God's plans are good.  
Lead boys and girls in singing "A Future and a Hope  
(Jer. 29:11)."

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

Open your Bible and read aloud Jeremiah 20:13.

**LEADER** • God's people were in trouble, but we are learning that God rescues His people. He sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us! The Lord is faithful. Let's sing together "Great Is Thy Faithfulness."

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Dear God, Your Word tells us about prophets You sent to deliver bad news and good news. Although those prophets were not perfect, Your Son, Jesus, is the perfect Prophet. Jesus came and fulfilled all that the prophets said. Through His life and death, You rescue us from sin. We thank You and love You. Amen.

### **Dismiss to apply the story**

• "Great Is Thy  
Faithfulness" song

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# APPLY the Story



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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- building blocks
- adhesive labels
- permanent marker

Before the session, write the key passage on adhesive labels—one or two words per label. Put each label on a separate building block. Make two sets of key passage building blocks.

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading Jeremiah 29:11 aloud together. Then form two groups. Hide or cover the key passage poster. Give each group a set of key passage blocks and challenge them to build a tower with the words of the key passage in order. The first word should be at the bottom, and groups can build their verse upward.

As groups finish, invite them to say the key passage aloud together. For an added challenge, remove some of the blocks and let kids say the key passage, supplying missing words from memory.

**SAY** • Building that tower revealed an important message from God's Word. God has a plan. In today's Bible story, God revealed His plans to people through the prophet Obadiah. **God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.**

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to the Book of Obadiah. Explain that Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament—just one chapter! Obadiah wrote the book, and his name means “worshiper of Yahweh.” Choose a volunteer to read aloud verse 21.

**SAY** • God saw that His people needed help that only He could give. **God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.**

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What consequences did Edom face for their mistreatment of Israel? Will we face what we deserve for our sin? Why? *Lead kids to recall that God said the people of Edom would get what they deserved. (Obad. 15) We deserve death for our sin, but Jesus took the punishment we deserve by dying on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead. When we trust in Him, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Cor. 3:19-20.)
2. A lot of the problems from today’s story happened because the families of two brothers didn’t get along. What could you do this week to get along with your brothers, sisters, or friends? *Invite kids to share their ideas. Point out that not only does God call us to love our siblings, He even wants us to love our enemies.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 5:44.)
3. Do you think God can fix this broken world? Why? *Allow kids to share their thoughts. Then emphasize that we do live in a broken world where many unfair things happen, but God promises in His Word that one day, Jesus will return and make all things new.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rev. 21:5.)

• Bibles, 1 per kid  
• Story Point Poster

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.



## LOW PREP

- marker
- index cards

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

- Allergy Alert
- pennies, 1 per kid
- paper cups, 1 per kid
- plastic spoons
- paper towels
- vinegar
- salt

Tip: While kids wait, spend five minutes practicing saying the names of the Minor Prophets in order (from Hosea to Malachi).

### Activity choice (10 minutes)



#### OPTION 1: Bible story charades

Ask for volunteers to act out a story from the Bible while the others guess which story or person it is.

Write descriptions of Bible stories on index cards for volunteers to read. Use this list or choose other Bible people your group would know: *God created the world; Noah built the ark; David killed the giant Goliath; Jonah was swallowed by a fish; Jesus was born; Jesus died; Jesus rose to life.*

**SAY** • When missionaries don't know the language of the people, they can act out Bible stories to teach people about God. Missionaries can use actions, pictures, things in nature, and even sounds to help people understand the stories from the Bible. God helps missionaries communicate His love to others even before they have learned the new language. Like the prophets told the people God's words, we can tell people about God.

#### OPTION 2: Restore pennies

Form small groups of kids. Give each group an old penny, a paper cup, a plastic spoon, and a paper towel. Point out how dirty the pennies are. Ask if they have any ideas about what you could use to clean the pennies.

Pour  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of vinegar and add 1 teaspoon of salt into each group's cup. Instruct kids to stir their liquid until the salt dissolves. Then guide groups to place their penny in their cup. Invite them to watch the penny as it sits in the liquid. What do they see happening? After several minutes, invite kids to take the penny out of the liquid and wipe the penny clean with a paper towel.

**SAY** • How do your pennies look now? [*Allow kids to share*]

observations.] We had some dirty pennies before we restored them. *Restore* means “to bring something back to its former condition.” The longer the pennies soak, the more they are restored.

In today’s Bible story, God’s people were mistreated. They needed help. The great news is that **God promised to restore Israel and rule the earth as King.** There is great news for us as well. Like God’s people were mistreated by the people of Edom, Jesus was mistreated by His own people. God will punish sin. Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment we deserve for our sin. We can trust Jesus to make wrong things right.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

### Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to rescue and restore.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Fill In” on the activity page. For each blank, kids should circle the word that fits best.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “Fill In” activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.