

When Silence Is Violence

Text : **Obadiah**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Being the shortest book in the O. T. does not mean Obadiah is unimportant.

1. It's called a "minor prophet" only because it is brief.
2. It was written by God NOT our congress so length is not the measure of importance.

B. Obadiah is a message from God.

1. "The vision of Obadiah."
2. "Thus says the Lord ..."

C. It foretold of the complete end of the nation of Edom.

1. God only needed two pages (21 vs) to pronounce and explain it.
2. Our congress needs more than a 1000 pages to make things unclear.

D. Thus far we have seen some of the reasons Edom was brought down.

1. Pride had caused them to elevate themselves in their own eyes distorting their view :
 - a. Of themselves
 - b. Of others
 - c. Of God
2. Their pride had cause them to trust in strongholds that were not really strong such as :
 - a. Their natural defenses
 - b. Their riches
 - c. Their military might
 - d. Their alliances
 - e. Their wisdom

E. With this lesson we will learn that consequences of inaction.

1. All responsible parents teach their children that actions have consequences.
 - a. This is true individually or collectively. (*Country , Congregation , etc.*)
 - b. This is true spiritually as well as in this world.
2. By Obadiah's writing God teaches us that there are consequences to inaction.
 - a. God viewed Edom's inaction was violence against Israel. (**Vs. 10**)
 - b. This is a well established N.T. concept as well.
James 4: 17- Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

I. There are times when neutrality is required.

A. It is not wise to inject oneself in another's domestic disputes.

1. **Prov. 20:3-** Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man,
But any fool will quarrel.
2. A wise man will not take sides when a husband and wife are disputing anything.

B. Members from one congregation should not inject themselves in problem in another congregation.

1. When asked to be a peacemaker, love requires one try to help.
2. For church leaders to **offer** to mediate is not to inject themselves, it's their duty.
3. A wise preacher will not be drawn into ongoing disputes in strange congregations.

ILL. – **When I used to preach meetings, members would often try to get me to take sides in local disputes.** (*What's your opinion about ...*)

C. To remain silent in the face of sin because of fear or apathy is sin.

1. Modern day “*political correctness*” a work of the devil.
 - a. It's purpose is to eliminate social pressure.
 - b. Healthy societies resist evil **not** embrace it.
- *2. **All it takes to allow Satan to establish his rule in the hearts all mankind is for good men to remain silent, to do nothing.**

D. Our text shows us that in passive inaction progresses into active evil.

1. Vs. **11** ... They stood aloof . (**passive, non-committal**)
2. Vs. **12** ... They began to gloat. (**felt superior, “they deserve it”**)
3. Vs. **13** ... They found a way to profit from their devastation. (**gleaning spoils**)
4. Vs. **14** ... They actively participated. (**stayed at the fringe of the violence**)

II. There are time when Christians must stand up and be counted FOR GOD.

A. It is Christians who create and maintain the image of God on the earth.

1. In all circumstances, we are responsible for projecting God's image on the earth.
2. “**WWJD**” is not just a slogan; it's the way Christians commit to live.
3. When people see us, they should see the face of God's Son.

B. When there is an issue of right and wrong, the Christian must not be silent.

1. This worldly culture tries to shame us into silence. (**Don't let Satan intimidate.**)
2. We see the moral decay all around us because good men have remained silent.
3. You can make a difference.
 - a. Tell people you don't appreciate offensive language. (**ILL.- Checkout experience**)
 - b. Write TV & movie producers and complain to their sponsors.
 - c. Write brief handwritten letters to you political representatives. (**abortion, etc**)

C. Any time a brother is in need of a defense ... we MUST stand up for him.

1. Protect him in case of a physical attack. (*It's almost instinctive for us.*)
 - a. Edom was condemned for not fighting.
 - b. If Edom would have fought, they would most likely have lost, but it was their duty.
2. When a brother's character or reputation is under attack.

ILL.- Lowest paid preacher in the area stood against the most influential preacher around in defense of another preacher's reputation.
3. These days unjust legal actions are a problem.

D. Christians must stand in defense of God's church.

1. There are those who will speak evil of the church and each one must be opposed.
2. Those who paint the Lord's church in a bad light must know they will be confronted.
- * 3. The church is not just one congregation. **We stand up for all of God's church.**

E. Christians must stand up for the gospel of Christ and His teachings.

1. Both the Apostle Paul and the church in Philippi defended the gospel.

Phil. 1: 7- For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.
2. The Apostle Peter commanded us all to prepare ourselves to defend the gospel.

I Pet. 3: 15- but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;
3. The epistle from Jude commands us to be involved in the defense of the gospel.

Jude 3- Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

F. In today's world we Christians must even defend the word of God.

1. Those in the world call it a book of fables. (**Muslims defend their Koran.**)
2. Even some who profess Christianity deny that it is inspired of God.

G. Even the idea of Christianity itself must be defended.

1. We live in a time when it is popular to speak out against Christianity.
2. The uninformed attribute false things to Christianity.

ILL- A professor almost kicked me out of a college psychology class when I disputed his teaching that Christianity caused guilt which was the number one cause of people needing therapy. Christ came to take away guilt by forgiving sins.

III. Today those in greatest need of defense have been ensnared by Satan.**A. Millions living around us are doomed to be lost, eternally separated from God.**

1. Most don't even realize, or at least accept, they are lost. (**addicted to self**)
2. Those who don't know God live in search of :
 - a. Pleasure which quickly fades.
 - b. Inner peace which is allusive.
3. They are never really contented or satisfied within. (*Left with inner longing*)
4. The Apostle Paul describes those outside Christ as :

Eph. 2:12 - remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

B. Sin kills just as surely as bullets.

1. The wages of sin is death. (**Rom. 6:23**)
2. Those in sin are dead to God.

Eph. 2:1- 3 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

C. To leave people trapped in Satan's snare is to do violence against them.

1. This is one of the most powerful lessons God taught us in the book of Obadiah.
2. Edom was condemned for doing nothing. (**also warned about future sin**)

* **Cain asked God, “Am I my brother’s keeper.” God said “YES.”**

3. We are responsible for the souls of those we see day-by-day.

*a. *Our relationship with God depends upon our attitude toward the lost.*

b. Jesus warned us that we do not have the liberty to remain bystanders.

Luke 11:23- He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters. (*Inaction is opposition !*)

D. Christianity is a proactive religion ... not a passive acceptance of doctrine.

1. In order to be saved, one must accept servanthood to a Savior. (**Serve Him !**)

a. He commanded us to love the lost as HE loved the lost ... Cf. – **Phil 2**

b. He admonished us that He expects us to surrender our lives to His service.

Matt. 10: 38-39 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. **39** He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

c. As long as we are in control of our lives we remain lost.

2. As servants our assignment is to actively seek and save lost people.

a. Our Lord (Master) set the example for us. (**Luke 19:10**)

b. **Matt. 28: 19-20**

Go = proactive

Make Disciples = confrontational

Baptize = transforming

Teach = conform

c. **Mark 16: 15-16** .. **Go .. all the world .. preach .. baptize** **Goal oriented assignment**

CONCLUSION :

A. Silence can be great violence.

1. To Brethren , Church , Gospel , Scriptures , Christianity, & to the lost

2. The greatest violence is to allow the souls of men to be taken by Satan.

B. The greatest of all commands is to love.

1. Love motivated Jesus to give His life for lost men.

2. Love will **not** allow us to stand by while others perish.

ILL.- **Mother was rescued from burning house, but ran back in after her child.**

C. Obadiah teaches us the judgment which results from inaction.

INVITATION :