

Obadiah 1:8-9

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/obad/obad-1/obadiah-18-9/>

The LORD declares that He will destroy the wise men of Edom. Every citizen of Edom will be slaughtered.

Edom not only prided herself in her prosperity and her fortresses (vv. 2–4), but also in her wise men. She gleaned much knowledge and wisdom from them and thought she would always make the right decision. But the LORD challenged Edom’s thinking and asked her a question. In asking the question, the LORD inserted the phrase ‘*declares the LORD*’ to add weight to the statement. God’s word will surely come to pass because God is faithful and true. As He declared in Isaiah, “So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire and without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

Therefore, God asked, *Will I not on that day, declares the LORD, destroy wise men from Edom and understanding from the mountain of Esau?* The expected answer to the question is “Absolutely.” The phrase *on that day* often occurs in prophetic literature when speaking of a judgement day, a day of God’s intervention (Hosea 2:16, 19; Amos 8:9; Haggai 2:23). The phrase *wise men* is parallel with *understanding* in the second line. The term *Edom* parallels *the mountains of Esau*, Edom having been another name for Esau. Indeed, under the LORD’s judgment, Edom would fail to understand the treachery of her allies as the LORD would destroy all her wisdom and understanding (v. 7).

As a result, everyone in Edom will be slaughtered. As the LORD declared, *Your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman, so that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.* The *mighty men* refer to Edom’s warriors, of whom she was so proud. The verb translated *dismayed* can also mean “to be filled with terror” (2 Kings 19:26).

Teman refers to the first chief listed from the firstborn of Esau (Genesis 36:15). It was also apparently a major city of *Edom*, in that it is mentioned as a parallel to Bozrah, which was a principle city, and considered the capital (Amos 1:12). Here however, *Teman* likely refers to the tribal chief, as it is synonymous with the nation of Edom.

The LORD made it clear that Edom’s soldiers would not be able to resist His judgment. They would be overcome with terror on the day of His judgment, causing Edom’s population to be decimated. Every citizen of Edom would be slaughtered because of Edom’s pride and sinful deeds. As the writer of Proverbs asserts, “Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished” (Proverbs 16:5).

Biblical Text

⁸ “Will I not on that day,” declares the Lord,
“Destroy wise men from Edom

And understanding from the mountain of Esau?

⁹“Then your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman,

So that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.