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May 2016

Obadiah

Inside Terry's Office: The Book of Obadiah

"I Didn't Forget You"

In previous books, prophets have called for repentance, stated the consequences of continued idolatry, and explored the possibility of declaring the Hebrews in violation of the covenant and ending the covenant (divorce).

As all this has taken place Edom, descendants of Esau, watched on. It seems they were happy to acknowledge Israel's hypocrisy and idolatry, and agreed that God should give up on the covenant. Then God sent Obadiah to Edom with a message. In this one chapter book, the message is clear; The Lord says, "I haven't forgotten you, Edom!" As if he is breaking Edom's perceived protective bubble, Obadiah proclaims, "*The pride of your hearts has deceived you, ... I will bring you down.*" He makes it clear that all that the prophets have proclaimed concerning Israel applies equally to Edom. Yet, this points out something of a problem: Was Edom considered by God to be in the same covenant as Israel?

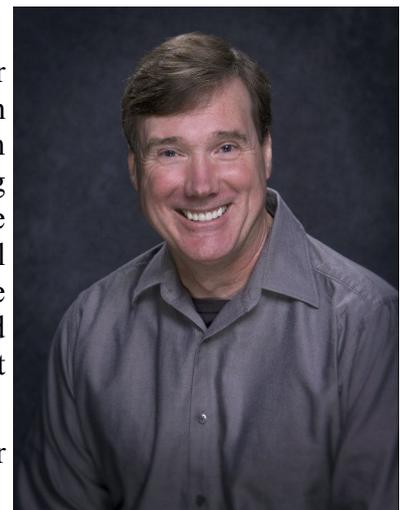
The best I can tell, Edom was not considered by God to be in the same covenant, but only because they had not accepted it. They fully understood that Israel was a "light to the nations" to offer all the same covenant relationship with God that they shared with God. In other words, Edom understood that the offer of covenant relationship had been offered to them. Apparently, Edom refused the offer because they had reason to resent Israel and instead of receiving the blessing Israel had to offer, held to their offenses instead. Edom justified themselves by pointing out Israel's sin and hypocrisy. And, although what they held against Israel might have been true, God was not to blame. It was God who was offering Edom covenant relationship. Because God made the offer through a bunch of sinners does not make the offer any less wonderful.

The book of Obadiah is like the book of Jonah in reverse. Jonah didn't want to offer Ninevah to covenant relationship with God because he resented them. Edom didn't receive the covenant relationship with God because they resented His messenger, Israel.

The message for me and you is clear; We are responsible for our own acceptance or rejection of covenant relationship with God regardless of who else is involved. For example: 1. I can be a viable witness for the Lord even if those I am witnessing to know I am a sinner. 2. Regardless of the fact that my wife occasionally (very, very seldom) sins against me, I am still responsible for responding to her with the love God offers me in that covenant relationship. 3. Although my church is flawed and sometimes hypocritical, I am still responsible for "being at peace with all, as far as it pertains to me."

Obadiah reminds us that God is never just looking at, or speaking to, the other guy.

In His Grip, TWE



ESTABLISHING A PLUMBLINE IN THE HEART OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The Plumbline

“Who me? A Grudge?”

The Thirty first letter, Obadiah, “is about severe family tensions going on for a long time between Esau and his descendants, the Edomites, and Jacob and his descendants.” (66 Love Letters, Larry Crabb) The Voice commentary on Obadiah explains “the Babylonian crisis has reopened the deep wound of an ancient family feud.” The Voice also describes the message of God through Obadiah as this,

“The day of the Eternal is near and coming close. On that day, God will settle every score, right every wrong, and bring justice to an unjust world. Edom itself is destined to be ruled by Jacob’s sons and daughters as the kingdoms of this world give way to the kingdom of the Eternal God.” (see Obadiah vs. 20-21)

And from 66 Love Letters,

“Take heart. My message to you in this letter includes the guarantee that I can and I will tear down every obstacle to building My kingdom, where My people will live in line with My plan and with My character.”

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament which means it can be easily overlooked. Since I have committed to write an article coordinating with all 66 books of the Bible, I am compelled to take a

look. Based upon what I see I ask the Lord, what is the message here for me and what do you want me to share with others?

The first thing that came to my mind (truly) was the rivalry between OU and OSU. You Okies will know of what I speak. For that matter, you out of staters will also know as I know you have your own similar rivalries between prominent state colleges. When it comes to National Championship games I am able to cheer for an Oklahoma team full heartedly but I know of others who due to their allegiance to their state college of choice cannot bring themselves to cheer for the success of their rival. If you follow the NCAA “March Madness” tournament, you know that Villanova beat OU in the final four match up. I cheered on Villanova in the championship game thinking it would console me to think our team (OU) got beat by the champions, but my husband could not bring himself to cheer on the team that beat his team. Now I am NOT saying who was right or wrong here –just giving an example (wink, wink). I have also been made aware that some people carry long standing grudges against a team and their fans from a bad experience with fans of the opposing team from years ago and refuse to ever align themselves in any way with said team or their fans.

Talking about grudges held in team sports is easy for me because as you see from my story above I CAN TAKE THE HIGHER ROAD. If I lay myself bare, however, I have to confess that

grudge holding and the consequences of grudge holding is something of which I am far too familiar. I am just much more covert about my grudge holding. I have experienced feeling betrayed by a friend and I have also experienced feeling pleasure when that friend experienced struggle. Larry Crabb says the appeal of revenge makes evil look good and then directs our lives. It is why I (we) entertain gossip---it satisfies a need to feel justified in our grudge holding. Obadiah has been a reminder to me of my own susceptibility to seek revenge in my heart. I close with this last thought from Love Letter Thirty-One, Obadiah:

“Never exact vengeance on another. Only one who is not worthy of judgment himself can administer just retribution without sinning himself. Vengeance is My prerogative, not yours. My vengeance is always rooted in redemptive desire. I kill to resurrect.”



This is a hard article for me to write because pride is something I struggle with. So, I'm sharing from my own understanding, and sharing a tool I personally use that helps me walk in a way that God would want me to. I use the same tool to help others.

Verses 3-4 stand out to me. "You have been deceived by your own pride because you live in a rock fortress and make your home high in the mountains. 'Who can ever reach us way up here?' you ask boastfully. But even if you soar as high as eagles and build your nest among the stars, I will bring you crashing down," says the Lord.

Deep breath....wow!

I'm not a Bible scholar so I'm just wondering what kind of beef Edom had with Israel that might cause them to take such a stance. Some motives may be discussed elsewhere in Scripture and I imagine there are some we just don't get to know about.

So to bring this forward in dealing with present issues, I'm thinking of how we respond to things when we've been offended or even if our perception is that we've been offended. Often our filter plays into things. What carries the weight is not the thing that actually happened; rather, how we felt and what we believe about it. But that's another topic. :)

When offenses come, it's tempting...at least it is to me...to want to get even...sort of a "Fine. If that's the way you wanna be...I'll show you. I'll just..... whatever." (fill in the blank).

But....that is not how God wants us to respond. He wants us to walk in humility and forgiveness. How do we do that?!!!!

We have a tool we use to help. We call it the forgiveness model. On this chart, we list the offender, the offense, the possible sin motivation, the consequences to them and to us, the punishment due, and then we move to forgiveness.

This is an important process. It's important to take stock of what's been done to us and to process through it. One of the most important categories on this chart (to me) is the punishment due column. That's where we get to think of the punishment due that fits the crime done to us. It needs to be harsh. We are dealing with our hearts here. We are not actually going to carry out the punishment due. It's just a way for us to own the pain of what happened and it's a way to count the cost of forgiving. That feels scary sometimes, but the thing is...the mind and subconscious are already coming up with a punishment due. We just spend a lot of time trying to ignore it because it doesn't fit our definition of what a good Christian does, or maybe we think God will be mad at us for thinking it.

The idea here is to embrace it. Remember...that's what we do...we acknowledge and embrace our reality and we make a godly response.

After we've thought of a proper punishment...or what we think is fitting for the crime...then we move on to forgiveness. We are essentially saying...God, I hurt. This is why I hurt, and this is what I think is fair payment. However...I trust that Your ways are higher than my ways and You know what is best for this person whether that be harshness or kindness. So I release the punishment due to You. I forgive this person and I trust You with me and with them.

It requires us to walk in a measure of humility. Pride says...forget this..I'm gonna take care of this myself and I'm gonna treat you this way and that. Humility says...even though this happened and it was awful and I'm really mad and hurt about it..I forgive you and I give it to the Lord.

Let's not be deceived by our own pride. There is freedom in forgiveness, friends. Try it and see. Who knows what the Lord will do?! Let's walk in freedom together!

Struggling, striving, and growing,
Michelle Elliott



Okay, I'm going to start with a personal confession. Most of the time when I read old testament prophesies like Obadiah, I just say to myself that those things applied to "those people" and don't usually think more about them. Does anyone else do this? Well, this time was different. As I tried to put myself into the story, a couple of things started to be revealed.

Obadiah is telling us about the coming judgment against the nation of Edom. So what does that have to do with us? After all, he is not writing this to the Edomites as a warning or a call to repentance, but he is writing this to the Israelites and to us. Why do we need to know this about them?

A bit of history shows us that Edom was the nation formed by the people who were the descendants of Esau. This means that the Edomites were not "foreigners" to the nation of Israel. This was not a "Hatfield versus McCoy" feud; this was a civil war. They were only slightly "other"- brothers, cousins, family! So, how did they come to hate the Israelites so much? I believe that this is the end result of Esau's hatred for Jacob that went un-dealt with and was passed/taught to generations to come. This is a stern warning to the Israelites and to us of the power that pride has that leads to unforgiveness which leads to bitterness. When we see someone who is like us, dealing with an issue, we become aware that we are not immune to falling into the same trap. It is not something that can only happen to "others", but it is something of which we all have to be aware.

The other thing that Obadiah is telling us, is the great faithfulness of God. He is declaring how God is bringing this judgment out of His love for His people and to uphold promises that He made to them. Now I would have imagined that there were some of the people that would have wished that God would have shown up sooner and not let Jerusalem be defeated and the city plundered. I'm sure that some were asking why these things were happening. It must have been a very dark time for them. Yet, this word comes from God, as a reminder that He is still with them and He has not forgotten nor forsaken them. He has a plan that includes the restoration of His people.

This dichotomy is just another example of how God lays out the consequences to our choices. On the one hand, we can choose to hold on to our pride, our hurts, our perceptions. Those things may feel right, justified, and true. They may even serve us well for a time. After all, Esau didn't suffer these consequences. His family grew into a powerful nation! God may have been very long-suffering, waiting, hoping, that Esau would repent-but, in the end, he did not, and the consequences came to his descendants. On the other hand, we can trust in God. That sounds simple, but its not very easy sometimes. It means that sometimes we lose things that are important, valuable, and even necessary to us. It means that He is asking us to believe in His promises to us even when He doesn't do it like we want or when we want. This gives us the ability then to do things like "love our enemies", to "do good to them that persecute you", and to have "peace that passes understanding" in the midst of the storm. We get to place our hope in the one who is bigger than our circumstances!

Be Who You Want to Be!
Anthony Elliott

Soul Care Training

Soul Care Training V– Unit 6 “This is your Brain on Prayer” Thursday 6:30 -8:30 p.m. May 12, 2016-July 28, 2016

This semester of Soul Care Training will be devoted to **understanding the development and functioning of the brain and how our prayers affect our brain functioning**. We will explore therapeutic options of healing the brain and connecting with God. We will discuss and practice praying together as fellow children in relationship with Father God, as intercessors, and as spiritual warriors. We will discuss and practice prayers of blessing, binding, loosing, and spiritual warfare among others. In each case, we will be referencing our Joyful Identity or lack thereof.

We will ask each student to read “**This is your Brain on Joy**” by Dr. Earl Henslin, and “**Stickman’s Prayers**” published by Plumblin. We will also ask each student to **prepare a 10 minute teaching on a means of “returning to joy” that has blessed them.**

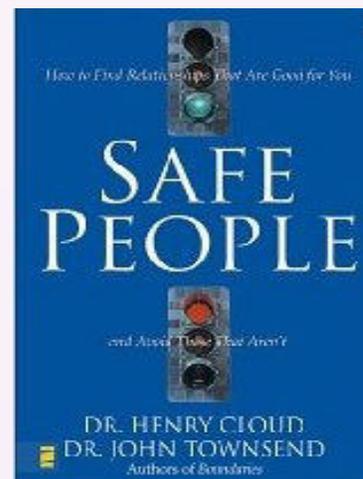
- May 12th - Joy Bonds
- May 19th - Fear Bonds
- May 26th - Maladaptive Schemas
- June 2nd - Healing Codes; Algorithms and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing
- June 9th - Return to Joy and Identity Change
- June 16th - Student presentations / Loosing prayers
- June 23rd - Student presentations / Blessing prayers
- June 30th - Book Reviews
- July 7th - James Wilder’s “Process for resolving trauma”
- July 14th - Ed Smith’s “Moving beyond Belief and Choice Barriers”
- July 21st - Exploratory Prayer
- July 28th - Exploratory Prayer

\$50.00 Deposit Due By April 28 and \$200 Balance Due By May 12

SAFE PEOPLE

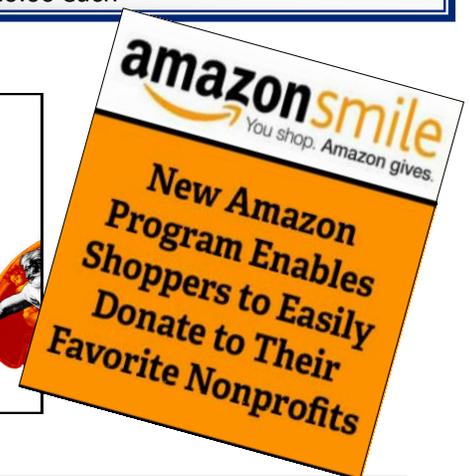
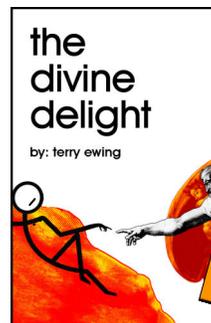
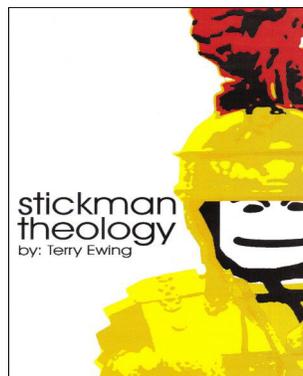
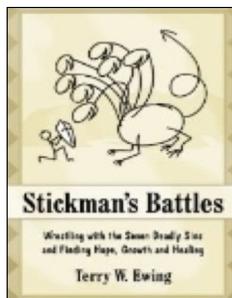
Tuesdays
June 7 - August 9
6:30 to 8:30
Cost: \$70.00 plus Book Safe People
by Cloud and Townsend

Taught by Margo Hanne



Financial Snapshot	March 2016	Year-to-Date 2016
Number of Client Hours	249	939
Contribution Income	\$11,315	\$30,972
Operations Expenditures	\$11,331	\$33,236
Shortfall	(\$16)	(\$2,264)

Available at Plumline for a suggested donation of \$10.00 each



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Establishing a Plumblineline in the Heart of God's People

Plumblineline Ministries

Plumblineline is a nonprofit Pastoral Counseling and Teaching Center

Our Mission is to partner with churches in order to offer Pastoral Counseling, to provide services to the community at large, and to establish a nation-wide teaching ministry promoting the principle that God delights in the struggling, striving, growing believer.

We accept clients through our sponsoring churches at no charge to the client, and from the public for a service fee. (\$65.00/hour)

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