

# **“Pride Comes Before the Fall”**

## **Sermon Reflection Questions January 24, 2010**

### **Obadiah 1:2-4, Unlocking the Old Testament**

Obadiah is the most “minor” of the Minor Prophets in that it is the shortest of the Minor Prophets and is even the shortest book of the Old Testament. It has one chapter and only 21 verses in that chapter. Obadiah also differs from many of the other prophets in that he speaks not against Israel or its sub-territories, but rather against the neighboring country of Edom. Edom was located to the south and east of the Dead Sea. The people of Edom came from the descendants of Esau (Genesis 25:19ff). These people often invaded neighboring lands and retreated back to their hill country. Because they were located on top of a very steep mountain, they could easily defend their territory against numerous armies.

Because of this strategic location they thought that they were invincible and often times would attack Israel and steal great amounts of treasure. They developed a great deal of pride and arrogance that they could not be defeated militarily. God speaks this prophecy against Edom to the Israelites, perhaps, as a promise of what He will do in the future and, perhaps, as a warning against the dangers of pride.

1. We often think of pride negatively, but even in scripture it can have positive connotations.

a. Read 2 Corinthians 7:4, Jeremiah 9:23-24, and Romans 5:2 which use the term pride or boasting positively. What is good pride?

b. Read Proverbs 21:24 and Ecclesiastes 7:8 which use the term pride or boasting in a negative fashion. What is bad pride?

c. How might you define pride that includes both the positive and negative characteristics of the term?

d. How do you know the difference between good pride and bad pride?

2. Why were they Edomites proud as a nation?

3. As Americans we have a certain level of pride, how can that pride become negative?

4. What are some reasons why we, individually, might become prideful?

5. We often don't think of pride as being “that big of a deal.” Yet God confronts pride more than so many other sins. Proverbs 16:18 tells us “pride comes before the fall.”

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- a. Why is pride such a big deal in God’s eyes?
  
  - b. What kind of sinful behaviors can come out of a prideful heart?
  
  - c. Read the story of the fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:1-7, how was, perhaps, pride at the center of their sin?
6. The opposite of pride is humility. God really affirms humility and often times in scripture God talks about what He can do with those who are humble. Read Psalm 25:9, Philippians 2:5-8, Isaiah 66:2, and Matthew 5:3 (poor in spirit is a term that is synonymous with humility.)
- a. What is humility?
  
  - b. Why is humility such an important characteristic?
  
  - c. What can God do with those who are humble that He cannot do with those that are prideful?
7. At the beginning of the study we mentioned that there are positive affirmations of being boastful and having pride. How can one both be virtuously prideful as well as humble?
8. Where in your life do you need to have a greater level of humility? What can you do to get to that place?