

The Books of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 10: Three Prophets, One God: Justice, Mercy, and the Nations

Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

Doctrinally, this review lesson gathers the great themes of all three prophets and shows their unity in the one God who is revealed fully in Christ. Help the class see the consistency of God's character across the three books: He is unfailingly just (judging Edom, Nineveh, and His own people without partiality) and unfailingly merciful (relenting toward the penitent, gathering the outcast, delighting in steadfast love). Justice and mercy meet in the gospel, where God is both just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus (Romans 3:26).

The heaviest doctrinal work is to draw together the Messianic and kingdom hope of all three books and to fix it rightly in Christ and His church. The kingdom that belongs to the Lord (Obadiah 21), the sign of Jonah fulfilled in Christ's resurrection, and the Ruler from Bethlehem who is our peace (Micah 5) all point to Jesus. Teach clearly that this kingdom is the one Christ established, which began at Pentecost (Daniel 2:44; Mark 9:1; Acts 2; Colossians 1:13), not a future earthly, political restoration of national Israel. Reading the prophets with Christ as their goal (Luke 24:44-47) guards the class from both a flat moralism and a dispensational misreading.

This lesson also presses the whole study into the student's life. It calls for honest self-examination about pride, resentment, repentance, justice, and hope, and for concrete, lasting change. As a review, it should consolidate not just what the class has learned but how they have been formed, and send them out walking in it. Where appropriate, point to the New Testament call to respond to the gospel: to believe in Jesus, repent, confess Him, and be baptized into Christ, and then to remain faithful, living out the justice, mercy, and humble walk these prophets describe.

Question 1

Student Question:

Across all three books, God judges sin wherever He finds it: in proud Edom, in violent Nineveh, and in His own covenant people. What does this consistency teach us about God's holiness and justice, and why is it important that God shows no favoritism in dealing with sin (Romans 2:11)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Open the review by drawing together the theme of God's justice across all three books. In Obadiah, God judges proud Edom; in Jonah, He confronts violent Nineveh; in Micah, He brings

His own covenant people to account. The same holy God deals with sin wherever He finds it, in pagan enemies and in His own people alike.

Teach the impartiality of God's justice. "God shows no partiality" (Romans 2:11). He does not have one standard for outsiders and a lower one for insiders; if anything, His own people are held to a higher accountability (Amos 3:2; 1 Peter 4:17). This guards against the presumption that being God's people exempts us from taking sin seriously.

Show why this consistency matters. A God who judged only His enemies would be a tribal deity; a God who excused His friends would be unjust. The God of these prophets is the impartial, holy Judge of all the earth, and that is exactly what makes His mercy so precious. Justice that is real makes grace that is real.

Set up the balance for the whole lesson. God's justice is never in tension with His mercy; both are constant across the three books, and both meet perfectly in Christ. Begin here so the class feels the weight of God's holiness before rejoicing in His mercy.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God judges sin consistently in all people, His enemies and His own.
- God shows no partiality (Romans 2:11).
- God's people are held to higher, not lower, accountability (Amos 3:2).
- Real justice makes real grace precious.
- God's justice and mercy are both constant and meet in Christ.

Discussion Prompts

- What does God's consistent judgment of sin teach us about His holiness?
- Why is it important that God shows no favoritism in dealing with sin?
- How does the reality of God's justice make His mercy more precious?

Question 2

Student Question:

These prophets confront pride (Edom), self-righteousness (Jonah), and hollow religion (Micah). As you look back, which of these sins has this study most exposed in your own heart, and what is God calling you to do about it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-examining question invites the class to look back over the study and name which sin it has most exposed: the pride of Edom, the self-righteous resentment of Jonah, or the hollow religion of Micah's people. Each is a mirror, and most of us will see ourselves in at least one.

Help the class engage honestly rather than abstractly. The pride that says “who can bring me down,” the resentment that begrudges grace to others, the religion that performs while the heart stays cold, these are not ancient problems but present temptations. A good review makes the old texts uncomfortably current.

Encourage specific identification. It is easy to admire a study and remain unchanged. The question presses for a particular sin that God has put His finger on, and for a response. Naming it honestly before God is the beginning of repentance.

Move toward action. Invite each person to name the one sin this study has most exposed and one concrete step of repentance, whether confession, restitution, a changed habit, or a conversation that needs to happen.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Each prophet exposes a sin that remains a present temptation.
- Pride, resentment, and hollow religion are mirrors for us.
- A good review makes old texts uncomfortably current.
- Honest naming of sin is the beginning of repentance.
- Repentance requires concrete steps, not just admiration of the study.

Discussion Prompts

- Which sin has this study most exposed in your own heart?
- Why is it easy to admire a study and remain unchanged?
- What concrete step of repentance is God calling you to take?

Question 3

Student Question:

All three books reveal God’s mercy reaching beyond Israel: Obadiah’s promise of God’s kingdom, Jonah’s mission to Nineveh, Micah’s vision of the nations streaming to God. How do these prophets, centuries before Christ, reveal God’s heart for all the nations and anticipate the gospel going to all the world?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question gathers the missionary heart of all three books. Obadiah ends with the kingdom belonging to the Lord over all nations; Jonah is sent to a pagan city and watches even sailors and Ninevites turn to God; Micah sees the nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord and an ingathering from sea to sea. Centuries before Christ, God reveals Himself as the God of the whole earth.

Teach that God’s heart for the nations is not a New Testament novelty but a constant biblical theme. From the promise that all nations would be blessed through Abraham (Genesis 12:3) to

the prophets' visions of the nations coming to God, the Old Testament consistently points toward a worldwide salvation. The Great Commission fulfills what God intended all along.

Show the trajectory toward the gospel. These prophets anticipate the moment when repentance and forgiveness would be proclaimed in Christ's name to all nations (Luke 24:47), when the gospel would go from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), and when people from every tribe and tongue would worship the Lamb (Revelation 7:9). The books we have studied are early chapters in that one great story.

Apply it to the class's vision. If God's heart has always been for all the nations, then His people are called to share that heart, to care about the lost near and far, and to participate in the gospel's spread. A narrow, tribal religion is foreign to the God of these prophets.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God's heart for the nations runs through all three books.
- Worldwide salvation is a constant biblical theme, not a NT novelty (Genesis 12:3).
- The prophets anticipate the gospel to all nations (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8).
- The story culminates in worship from every tribe and tongue (Revelation 7:9).
- God's people are called to share His heart for the lost.

Discussion Prompts

- How do these prophets reveal God's heart for all the nations?
- Why is the gospel going to all the world not an afterthought but God's plan all along?
- How should God's heart for the nations shape our own vision and priorities?

Question 4

Student Question:

Jonah resented God's mercy to outsiders, while these books show God's heart reaching the nations. Is there anyone, or any group, you have quietly written off as beyond God's mercy or unworthy of it? How does this study challenge that?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question revisits Jonah's resentment and presses it on the class one last time. Jonah resented God's mercy to people he considered unworthy. The question asks whether we have quietly written anyone off as beyond God's mercy or undeserving of it.

Help the class examine their hearts honestly. We rarely say it aloud, but we often carry a mental list of people or groups we would be uncomfortable seeing in heaven, those whose sins we consider worse, those who have wronged us, those on the other side of some divide. The Jonah-spirit is alive whenever we are reluctant to see grace reach someone.

Teach the leveling truth of grace. No one deserves God's mercy; that is what makes it mercy. If grace reached us, who were also enemies of God (Romans 5:10), then we have no standing to begrudge it to anyone else. Resenting grace to others always means forgetting grace to ourselves.

Move toward repentance and prayer. Invite the class to name anyone they have written off and to begin praying for that person's salvation. To pray sincerely for someone's good is one of the surest cures for the Jonah-spirit.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- We often write certain people off as undeserving of mercy.
- The Jonah-spirit resists grace reaching certain people.
- No one deserves mercy; that is what makes it mercy.
- Grace reached us while we were God's enemies (Romans 5:10).
- Praying for someone's good cures the Jonah-spirit.

Discussion Prompts

- Is there anyone you have quietly written off as beyond God's mercy?
- How does remembering grace to yourself change how you view grace to others?
- Whose salvation could you begin praying for this week?

Question 5

Student Question:

Repentance is central to all three books: Edom is condemned for not turning, Nineveh is spared because it does turn, and Micah calls God's people back to true repentance. What have you learned in this study about the difference between feeling sorry and genuinely turning to God?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question gathers the theme of repentance, which is central to all three books. Edom is condemned partly for never turning; Nineveh is spared precisely because it does turn; Micah repeatedly calls God's people back to genuine repentance. Together they form a rich picture of what real turning to God involves.

Review the lessons learned about repentance. It is more than feeling sorry; it is a genuine turning from sin to God, evidenced in changed behavior (Jonah 3:10). Worldly sorrow merely regrets consequences; godly sorrow produces a changed life (2 Corinthians 7:10). The Ninevites did not just grieve; they turned from their evil ways.

Help the class apply the distinction to themselves. Many of us have felt sorry about sins we never actually forsook. The study has pressed repeatedly toward the difference between emotion and turning. A review is a good moment to ask whether our repentance has been real.

Point ahead to the gospel response. Under the New Covenant, the call is to repent and turn to God in faith, to believe in Jesus, confess Him, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38), and then to keep walking in repentance. This is the fitting response to all three prophets have shown us about God's justice and mercy.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Repentance is central to all three books.
- True repentance is a turning from sin to God, not mere sorrow.
- Godly sorrow produces a changed life; worldly sorrow does not (2 Corinthians 7:10).
- We often feel sorry about sins we never forsake.
- The gospel call is to repent and turn to God in faith (Acts 2:38).

Discussion Prompts

- What have you learned about the difference between feeling sorry and truly turning?
- Has your repentance tended to be emotion or actual turning?
- How does the New Testament call us to respond to God's mercy?

Question 6

Student Question:

Each prophet calls for a changed life, not just changed feelings: humility instead of pride, mercy instead of resentment, justice and kindness and a humble walk with God. Which specific change is God pressing on you most as this study ends?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question asks the class to name the specific change God is pressing on them as the study ends. All three prophets call for changed lives, not merely changed feelings: humility in place of pride, mercy in place of resentment, justice and kindness and a humble walk in place of hollow religion.

Help the class move from general resolve to specific commitment. "I want to be more humble" is easy to say and easy to forget. "I will apologize to this person," "I will stop this practice," "I will begin this discipline," these are the kinds of concrete changes that actually take root.

Teach that transformation is the goal, not information. The aim of studying these prophets was never merely to know more about Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah, but to become more like Christ. A review that ends without a concrete change has missed the point of the prophets, who always called for response.

Move toward accountability. Encourage each person to name one specific change and, if possible, to share it with someone who can pray for them and check in. Change that is named and supported is far more likely to last.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- All three prophets call for changed lives, not just changed feelings.
- Specific commitments take root where general resolves fade.
- The goal of study is transformation, not information.
- The prophets always called for response.
- Named and supported change is more likely to last.

Discussion Prompts

- What specific change is God pressing on you most as this study ends?
- How can you turn a general desire to grow into a concrete commitment?
- Who could you share that commitment with for prayer and accountability?

Question 7

Student Question:

Micah 6:8 summarizes a life that pleases God: “to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” How do all three of these prophets, taken together, illustrate what this kind of life looks like and what its opposite costs?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question uses Micah 6:8 as a lens to gather the ethical heart of all three books. “To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” summarizes the life that pleases God, and each prophet illustrates both this life and its opposite.

Show how the three books illustrate the call. Justice: Obadiah condemns Edom’s violence against a brother and Micah exposes those who exploit the vulnerable, while the call is to treat others rightly. Kindness (mercy): Jonah is the great study in the mercy God shows and wants us to delight in, even toward enemies. Humble walk with God: all three contrast humble dependence on God with the pride, self-righteousness, and presumption that destroy.

Show how the three books illustrate the cost of the opposite. Edom’s proud injustice brought it low; Jonah’s resentment left him bitter and miserable under a dead plant; Micah’s people, abandoning justice and a humble walk, fell into dishonesty, violence, and judgment. The opposite of Micah 6:8 is not freedom but ruin.

Apply it as a rule of life. Micah 6:8 is a compact summary of the whole study’s ethical vision, and Jesus affirmed the same balance as the weightier matters of the law (Matthew 23:23). Encourage the class to carry this verse as a daily measure of a life that pleases God.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Micah 6:8 summarizes the life that pleases God.

- Justice, mercy, and a humble walk are illustrated across all three books.
- The opposite of Micah 6:8 leads to ruin, not freedom.
- Jesus affirmed this same balance (Matthew 23:23).
- Micah 6:8 can serve as a daily measure of life.

Discussion Prompts

- How do all three prophets illustrate the life of Micah 6:8?
- How do they illustrate the cost of its opposite?
- How could Micah 6:8 serve as a daily measure of your life?

Question 8

Student Question:

These books repeatedly hold together honest realism about sin and brokenness with unshakable hope in God. How has this study helped you face hard realities without despair, anchoring your hope in God rather than in circumstances?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question gathers the theme of hope that runs through all three books. Each holds together honest realism about sin and brokenness with unshakable hope in God: Obadiah faces Edom's cruelty yet ends with God's kingdom; Jonah faces a wicked city yet sees mercy triumph; Micah faces a corrupt society yet ends with sins cast into the sea.

Teach the biblical pattern of hope. It is neither denial nor despair, but honest trust. The prophets never pretend things are fine, yet they never lose hope, because their hope rests on God's character, not on circumstances. This is the hope the study has modeled repeatedly.

Help the class apply this to their own realism. Many people swing between naive optimism and bleak despair. The prophets offer a third way: face the hard truth squarely, and anchor hope in the faithful God who is just, merciful, and sovereign over history. Such hope can hold in any darkness.

Move toward personal anchoring. Invite the class to name a hard reality they are facing and to consciously anchor their hope in God's character rather than in a hoped-for change of circumstances. This is the steadying gift of these prophets.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- All three books hold realism about brokenness together with hope in God.
- Biblical hope is neither denial nor despair but honest trust.
- Hope rests on God's character, not on circumstances.
- The prophets offer a third way between naive optimism and bleak despair.
- Such hope can hold in any darkness.

Discussion Prompts

- How has this study helped you face hard realities without despair?
- What is the difference between hope anchored in God and hope based on circumstances?
- What hard reality do you need to anchor in God's character right now?

Question 9

Student Question:

Taken together, these prophets point forward to Christ: the kingdom that belongs to the Lord (Obadiah 21), the sign of the resurrection (Jonah and Matthew 12:40), and the Ruler from Bethlehem who is our peace and who casts our sins into the sea (Micah 5 and 7). How is the hope of all three fulfilled in Christ and His church, the kingdom established at Pentecost, rather than in a future earthly, political kingdom, and why does seeing Christ as the goal of these prophets matter for how we read all of Scripture?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the heaviest doctrinal block of the lesson, and it draws together the Messianic and kingdom hope of all three books and fixes it rightly in Christ. Take time here; this is the climax of the entire study. Each book contributes a thread that finds its end in Jesus.

Trace the threads. Obadiah ends, "and the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obadiah 21), the assured triumph of God's reign. Jonah's three days in the deep are the sign Jesus chose for His own death, burial, and resurrection (Matthew 12:40). Micah names the Ruler born in Bethlehem whose goings forth are from everlasting, who shepherds His flock, who is our peace (Micah 5:2-5), and the God who casts our sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). Every one of these points to Christ.

Now fix the kingdom rightly, against premillennial and dispensational misreadings. The kingdom these prophets foresaw is the one Christ established, not a future earthly, political restoration of national Israel or a thousand-year reign. Daniel foretold that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom in the days of the Roman emperors that would never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44); Jesus announced it as at hand (Mark 1:15) and said some standing there would see it come with power (Mark 9:1); it was established when the church began at Pentecost (Acts 2), and believers have been transferred into it already (Colossians 1:13). Christ reigns now from the right hand of the Father.

Teach the principle of reading all Scripture with Christ as its goal. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus showed that everything written about Him in the Prophets must be fulfilled, and that repentance and forgiveness would be proclaimed in His name to all nations (Luke 24:44-47). Reading Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah with Christ as their goal guards us from two errors: a flat moralism that reduces them to good advice, and a dispensational scheme that pushes their fulfillment into a future political kingdom. Both miss Jesus, who is the point.

Close by pressing the gospel response. If the hope of all three prophets is fulfilled in Christ and His kingdom, then the fitting response is to enter that kingdom on His terms: to believe in Jesus as Lord and Christ, to repent, to confess Him, and to be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27), and then to remain faithful, living the justice, mercy, and humble walk these prophets describe. The study ends not in information but in allegiance to the King.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Obadiah's kingdom, Jonah's sign, and Micah's Ruler all point to Christ.
- The kingdom foreseen is the one Christ established, not a future political Israel.
- The kingdom began at Pentecost; believers are already in it (Daniel 2:44; Acts 2; Colossians 1:13).
- Christ reigns now from the right hand of the Father.
- All Scripture is to be read with Christ as its goal (Luke 24:44–47).
- This guards against both flat moralism and dispensational misreading.
- The fitting response is to enter Christ's kingdom and remain faithful (Acts 2:38).

Discussion Prompts

- How is the hope of all three prophets fulfilled in Christ and His church?
- Why is it important to see the kingdom as established by Christ rather than a future political kingdom?
- Why does reading these prophets with Christ as their goal matter for how we read all of Scripture?

Question 10

Student Question:

Look back over the entire study of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah. Name one specific, lasting way Jesus has used these three prophets to change how you think about God, how you treat others, and how you live, and one step you will take to keep walking in it.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The capstone question asks the student to look back over the entire study and name one specific, lasting way Jesus has changed how they think about God, treat others, and live, along with one step to keep walking in it. This is the culmination of ten lessons; give it room.

Gather the whole journey: the humbling of pride (Obadiah), the widening of a narrow heart (Jonah), and the call to justice, mercy, a humble walk, and hope in God's pardoning love (Micah). Together they reveal one God, perfectly just and gloriously merciful, fulfilled in Christ.

Help different people land differently and lastingly. For one, the change is a humbler view of self; for another, a wider mercy toward others; for another, a more honest hope, or a deeper assurance of forgiveness in Christ. The aim is a change that outlasts the study.

Close the entire study in prayer and, if appropriate, in a call to respond to Christ. Thank God for these three prophets and the one God they reveal, ask Him to make the changes lasting, and invite any who have not yet entered Christ's kingdom to do so, and all to keep walking in justice, mercy, and humble faith until the King returns.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The study aims at lasting transformation, not just completed lessons.
- Humility, wider mercy, honest hope, and assured forgiveness are the chief fruits.
- The three prophets reveal one God, just and merciful, fulfilled in Christ.
- Lasting change should be named and pursued with a concrete step.
- The fitting end is prayer, response to Christ, and continued faithfulness.

Discussion Prompts

- Name one lasting way Jesus has changed you through this study.
- What one step will you take to keep walking in that change?
- How will you respond to the King these three prophets point to?