

The Books of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah

Lesson 10: Three Prophets, One God: Justice, Mercy, and the Nations -- Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah

We have traveled through three short books written by three very different men, and now it is time to step back and see the whole landscape at once. Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament, thundered against the pride of Edom and ended with the promise that the kingdom belongs to the Lord. Jonah, the reluctant runaway, was dragged kicking and resisting into discovering that God's mercy reaches even the enemies we would rather see destroyed. Micah, the country preacher, exposed corrupt leaders and a hollow religion, then lifted our eyes to a Ruler from Bethlehem and a God who casts our sins into the sea. Three books, three voices, and yet, unmistakably, one God.

What strikes you first, looking back, is how consistent God is across all three. The same God who brings down proud Edom is the God who spares repentant Nineveh and the God who pardons His own wayward people in Micah. He is never less than just; He takes sin with deadly seriousness, in pagan nations and in His own people alike. And He is never less than merciful; He relents toward the penitent, gathers the outcast, and delights in steadfast love. Justice and mercy are not in tension in this God; they meet, supremely, at the cross of Christ.

The second thing that stands out is how wide God's heart is. These are not parochial, tribal books. Obadiah judges the nations; Jonah is sent to the nations; Micah sees the nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord. Long before the Great Commission, the God of Israel was revealing Himself as the God of the whole earth, whose mercy was always meant to spill out beyond one people to the ends of the earth. The gospel going to all the world is not an afterthought; it was God's heart all along.

And running through all three, like a golden thread, is the hope of the Messiah. The kingdom that belongs to the Lord (Obadiah), the sign of the resurrection (Jonah), the Ruler born in Bethlehem whose goings forth are from everlasting, who is our peace and who casts our sins into the depths of the sea (Micah), all of it points to Jesus. These prophets were not merely commenting on ancient politics; they were, often without fully knowing it, pointing forward to Christ and the kingdom He would establish in His church. This final lesson gathers it all up and asks what difference it makes for us.

Group Discussion: Looking back over Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah together, what is one truth about God that struck you most deeply during this study, and why?

Personal Reflection: Over these ten lessons, where has God most clearly put His finger on your own heart, whether about pride, mercy, justice, repentance, or hope? What is He still working on in you?

Read Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah

Study Questions

1. 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)?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. 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?
5. 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?

6. 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?
7. 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?
8. 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?
9. 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?
10. 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.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Romans 2:11, God shows no partiality; Luke 24:44–47, everything written about Christ in the Prophets must be fulfilled, and repentance for forgiveness proclaimed to all nations; Acts 2:38–39, repent and be baptized, for the promise is for all whom the Lord calls; Colossians 1:13–14, God has transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son; Micah 6:8 with Matthew 23:23, justice, mercy, and faithfulness as the heart of the law.

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