

Session 12 The Forerunner Message in Isaiah 34-35

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Isaiah 34 and 35 are to be read as one passage. Isaiah 34 is one of the most negative chapters in the Bible. Isaiah 35 is one of the most positive chapters—it crescendos with God's people seeing God's glory and being filled with gladness. It gives insight into God's plan, personality, and leadership.

²They shall see the glory of the LORD...¹⁰and the ransomed of the LORD shall return...and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isa. 35:2, 10)

1. God's heart and throne is the epicenter of joy (Ps. 16:8). Isaiah 35 gives expression to this. The disposition of His heart is joy and gladness. He is troubled about that which hinders love.

¹¹...In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Ps. 16:11)

2. God's end-time judgments are about removing everything that hinders love. He intervenes in judgment because He is zealous to fill the earth with love, humility, and righteousness.
3. We cannot fully understand the reality of the positive aspects of God's end-time plan to fill the earth with His glory without seeing the intensity of the negative aspects of His plan. We cannot understand the negative judgments without understanding the positive promises.
4. Isaiah 34-35 describes God's end-time judgment of all the nations that oppose Him and the manifestation of His salvation in context to the Great Tribulation and Jesus' millennial reign. This passage develops and concludes the themes of judgment and salvation in Isaiah 28-33.

We are on session twelve. Here in Isaiah 34 is one of the key fundamental principles of understanding the end times. I say it over and over, like a broken record. I want everyone to get this: that God's judgments are about removing everything that hinders love. His judgments do not just happen in a vacuum, He is not venting. He is actually intervening because He is so zealous for love. He is removing the hindrances. He is confronting the darkness that diminishes love, so that love can fill the earth.

Here in Isaiah 34-35 we find two of the most extremely opposite chapters. Most commentators will tell you that Isaiah 34-35 go together. You have to keep these two chapters together. Isaiah 34 is as negative as can be. It is one of the most negative chapters in the whole Bible. Isaiah 35 is one of the most positive chapters in the whole Bible. Here is the point: you cannot understand the positive in reality if you do not see the intensity of the negative. You cannot understand the negative if you do not see the intensity of the positive. So, by the Holy Spirit's direction, Isaiah put these two extremes together, joined them together. They are the same themes, the same language through them.

It is God's zeal in judgment in Isaiah 34 that expresses His zeal for love in Isaiah 35. So always keep those two together. As many of you are teachers—you may be teaching five or ten, you may be teaching through social media, many more in the days to come—as teachers, always keep the two together, the intensely negative and the intensely positive because both of them are necessary to understand the other one in a fuller way. There is no better chapter or portion than these two chapters the Holy Spirit has put together.

B. Outline for Isaiah 34-35

34:1-17 God's end-time judgment on the nations

- 34:1 All nations commanded to listen to God's end-time message
- 34:2-4 All nations who oppose the Lord will be judged
- 34:5-7 God's end-time judgment against Edom
- 34:8-10 The day-of-the-Lord vengeance on Edom
- 34:11-15 Edom will be a desolate land
- 34:16-17 The Lord's judgment against Edom is recorded

35:1-10 God's glory and salvation

- 35:1-2 The transformation of nature
- 35:3-4 A call to strengthen God's people
- 35:5-7 Healing and restoration of the people and land
- 35:8-9 The highway to Jerusalem
- 35:10 The Lord will fill His people with joy and gladness

Let's look at a quick outline here. Isaiah 34:1-17, God's end-time judgments on all the nations. This is the one time it is called "the day of vengeance." That is the key phrase in Isaiah 34 because it is a singular day; it is a future day. The Bible calls it "the day of the Lord," and Isaiah 34 calls it "the day of vengeance." In a positive way, it is the day when God repays or rewards His people. It is the day of vengeance as He removes the obstacles to love and those that oppress His people, and the day of reward or the day of recompense when all the promises that He gave throughout history all come to pass openly into the nations.

So, I do not have this in the notes, but Isaiah 34:8 is the day of vengeance, a singular day yet in the future. I do not mean it is a twenty-four-hour day. There is a twenty-four-hour day when the Lord appears in the sky, but it also refers to a period for a few years before and after that when the Lord intervenes in the most dramatic way. It is so dramatic we cannot even hardly comprehend it.

I am reading Isaiah 34, which is, again, the most intense chapter of negative events in the Old Testament. I do not know of any chapter that is more intense than that. I look at that and I am just stopped, you know, thinking, "Lord, this is literal. This is future, and this is real!" Some commentators will try to tell you it is poetic or symbolic, but it is real and it is future.

Isaiah 35 is the day of salvation; it is God's glory in salvation. Now the thing I love about Isaiah 35 is the final verse. It has this crescendo where God says that His people are filled with joy and gladness, the joy and gladness that He has planned forever for His people. Again, Isaiah 35 is the "joy and gladness" chapter. The joy and gladness that He has planned for you and me is an expression of His own personality.

The reason He thought of plans to make us glad is because He is infinitely glad. He has happiness in His heart. Our God is a happy God. Yes, He is troubled about that which comes against love. The disposition of His heart from eternity past to eternity future for billions of years as it says in Psalms 16:11. King David said it, "In your presence"—at the very throne—"is the fullness of joy. At Your right hand"—right at Your throne—"is pleasure forevermore." God's heart and throne is the epicenter of pleasure and gladness forever and forever. Isaiah 35 gives expression of that.

- C. The analogy of childbirth is an excellent picture of the glory and pain in God's end-time plans. The pain will be intense but very short compared to the joy of the "birth" of the millennial earth.**

⁸*All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. (Mt. 24:8, ESV)*

²¹*Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain...but when she gives birth...she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born ... (Jn. 16:21, NAS)*

⁶*So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? ⁷Alas! for that day is great...it is the time of Jacob' trouble [Great Tribulation], but he shall be saved out of it. (Jer. 30:6-7)*

²²*For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs... (Rom. 8:22)*

⁸*...Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children. (Isa. 66:8)*

II. END-TIME CONTEXT: JESUS WILL REPLACE THE EVIL LEADERSHIP OF THE EARTH

- A. One significant aspect of God's end-time plan is His commitment to replace the evil leadership of the earth with godly leaders. Jesus will remove wicked leaders from the earth in one hour to establish a new world order and inaugurate the millennial kingdom. This is one of the most surprising and extreme aspects of His plan. He will draw all the nations and their evil leadership to a battle around Jerusalem in order to kill them (Ezek. 38:4; Joel 3:2, 12; Zeph. 3:8; Zech. 12:3; 14:2).

²*I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken... (Zech. 14:2)*

⁸*My determination is to gather the nations to My assembly of kingdoms, to pour on them...all my fierce anger; all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy. (Zeph. 3:8)*

Okay, now you have to understand this context. This is the sort of context that I will cover several times over these six semester-long modules in the three-year period where we are covering all 150 chapters in which the primary subject is the end times. This is a set of information that you need to know. It is not difficult to know, but I just really want you to get familiar with it because you will not understand a lot of the end-time chapters if you do not get this basic premise right here. So, I will say it tonight, I have said it before, and I will say it a few more times in this three-year series that we are on. It is that Jesus is going to replace all the evil leaders in the earth. **He Himself** is going to remove all the bad ones, all the kings and governors and senators, the mayors, all the leaderships of all the nations and all the cities. He is going to replace them all in a very short timeframe. Then He is going to fill the earth with gladness, humility, and love under the new leadership that He installs on the earth.

He has a plan to gather all the leaders together, God does, around the city of Jerusalem. He is going to call all the kings of the earth together in one city. Never in history have all the kings of the earth gathered in one location. Then Jesus is going to kill all of them. I know that is almost unthinkable. You think, "What?"

Remember Isaiah 34 is as intense as it gets, but it is only because He wants to fill the earth with gladness and love. He might say, "You do not understand the intensity of My intervention of judgment until you understand My commitment and zeal to fill the earth with purity and life and joy and gladness of My people." So here is, I think, one of the most surprising, extreme ideas anyone could ever think of. I could never have thought of an idea like this. Only God could have thought of this, that He is going to call all the leaders of the nations to one city on one day, and then He is going to kill them all.

Now this is not really a message that is politically correct if you go to the United Nations. You do not really want to say this; you want to talk about other things at that time. All the kings in the days to come—I mean we do not know how many decades down the road this is—there will be a time where the kings will all be in determined hostility against the Messiah, a determined hostility to block His kingdom, His leadership, and the flow of His grace in the earth. He says, “Well, you are never going to triumph, for I am going to remove you. Now I am going to display My zeal for love and My zeal for My people in this act.” If you do not see the zeal for love, then all you see is a violent act, and then you are trying to figure out how that is a God of love. He says that it is only for the sake of love.

We are at a disadvantage when we read these chapters because ahead of time we cannot imagine the depth of determination that these kings have against Jesus. Because, you know, we know some leaders here and there who are pretty nice guys or nice ladies. There is coming a day where the kings of the earth will have a fierce, determined hatred for Jesus. They will manifest it in their governments in their nations.

The Lord says, “In that day I am going to make a dramatic change.” When He makes that change is related to His coming back, His second coming, because Jesus is not coming back just to stay in the clouds. He is coming back to drive evil off the planet, to change out all the leadership in the nations, and to fill the earth with humility, love, truth, and kindness.

Now look what He says here in Zechariah 4. He wants the whole world to witness this, by the way. The event is His second coming, and this is the activity. It is a military, political action. Jesus is coming back the second coming, not in a vacuum, to appear in the sky, but He is coming back in context to a military conflict and to a political confrontation in the earth. He is going to make that confrontation. He is going to remove all the evil leaders, put in all new leaders, and that is how the earth transitions to the age to come. Just to really make a big deal out of it, He is going to call the New Jerusalem down to the earth into proximity with the earthly Jerusalem. He is going to rule. His throne will be in the New Jerusalem and the earthly Jerusalem, one throne, this vast, dynamic, glorious reality. The garden of Eden reality is going to just begin to break forth and fill the earth. So, this is exciting!

His plan—who would have thought of this? Look at Zechariah 4:14, “I am going to gather all the nations to Jerusalem.” The key word is, “I.” Then the other one is, “all the nations.” Nobody will be exempt. You know there are about 200 nations. “Every single nation,” the Lord says, “I am going to gather them.” As it says here in Zephaniah 3:8, “My determination is to gather all these nations.” You can read that. There are quite a few verses where the Lord makes it clear He is going to do this. This is one of the most often overlooked, significant events in the end-time storyline. Jesus coming to make this political, military intervention into the authority structures of the earth. In context to that, He is coming to bring peace to the nations.

Now why is He going to do it? He is going to purify the Church. He is going to bring a billion new believers into the kingdom. He is going to bring about the salvation of an entire nation. Every single person in Israel, no exception, will end up saved. They will be the first totally born-again nation in which every member will walk in righteousness. He is going to replace all the governmental structures across the whole earth, all the top government position. That is kind of item number one when He returns. It is like, “Wow!”

You know, I step back and I say, “Lord, who would have thought of this? I love You, and I say this respectfully, but this is bizarre. I mean, who would think up this plan?” It is all through the Bible. We have to get our mind around it because I do not hear it mentioned hardly ever. It is not a peripheral event. It is a main, center feature event in the biblical narrative of the end times.

1. His end-time plan will result in purifying the Church, winning the harvest, saving Israel, and replacing all the evil governments of the earth.
 2. Jesus will return in context to a military and political conflict to bring peace to the nations and to drive evil off the planet and fill the earth with love, humility, joy, and righteousness.
 3. Never in history have all the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to one place. They will be drawn to Armageddon by *the Lord* (Joel 3:2, 12; Zeph. 3:8; Zech. 12:3; 14:2), by *Satan* (Rev. 16:13-14; 19:19), and by their own *evil motives* (Ezek. 35:11).
- B. Satan will send demons to gather the kings of the earth to the battle of Jerusalem (Rev. 16:13).
- ¹⁴...Demons performing signs...go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle...¹⁶to the place called...Armageddon. (Rev. 16:14-16)**

Now it is going to throw you a curve ball, because in Revelation 16, the devil gathers all the kings of the earth. Well, who is it? Is God gathering them or the devil? Both of them are working with very different agendas and a very different spirit. The devil is deceiving the kings, and God is gathering the kings, so, both of them are working with a very, very different agenda. God is using the devil's deception of these kings to lure them to Jerusalem.

- C. Jesus will replace the evil leadership of the earth in one hour in establishing a new world order that He inaugurates the Millennium. In that day, the kings will have a determined hostility against Jesus (Rev. 17:14; 19:19). They will go to war against Jesus undoubtedly thinking they can defeat Him.
- ¹⁹The kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered to make war against Him [Jesus]...**
²⁰The beast [Antichrist] was captured... ²¹The rest [of the kings] were killed with the sword...
(Rev. 19:19-21)

¹⁴They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them... (Rev. 17:14)

We see this in Revelation 19 which is one of the grand second-coming passages. When Jesus comes, it says in Revelation 19:19, all the kings and their armies will gather, these 200 nations. The kings are going to bring their military power and their generals with them. We find in other places that they bring all of their top government with them. It is like the Antichrist is convinced in his arrogance that he can win, so he mandates everyone that he is influencing to bring their entire top government leadership. "You have to bring all your military leaders. You have to bring your senators. Your top government cabinet, they have to be here too." Of course, they are in this big, euphoric momentum. They are gathering to Jerusalem in this historic gathering. They are coming, look at what it says in Revelation 19:10, "...to make war against Jesus."

Because the Antichrist deceived them, they think Jesus is the Antichrist who can be defeated. The Antichrist is saying, "They believe in that impostor from Nazareth, from way back. I am the real one. He is the fake one. We know we can beat the fake one." The nations are going to buy that rhetoric, so they are actually gathering, not just to war against Israel, but they are gathering to war against what they think is the Antichrist: Jesus of Nazareth appearing in the clouds.

They might say, "Well, how could He appear in the clouds and be false?"

Then the Antichrist will say, "Watch this," and he will call fire down from heaven. He says, "Watch this. I am going to have a deadly head wound, I am going to die, then I am going to raise again from the dead." The earth

is awed when he does it. He says, “I can do all that stuff. So what if He is in the clouds? That does not matter. I have power like that too.”

Literally the world is going to be absolutely completely confused about this. I do not mean everyone, but millions and millions are going to be confused. Here is the point I want you to see in Revelation 19:21. When all the kings gather all of their cabinets, all their top military brass, it says in verse 21 that Jesus kills them. I mean like, “Ugh! That is intense.” Like, “I cannot even hardly imagine such a thing.”

He will transition this earth to the age to come, and that is one of the key events.

- D. David saw Messiah killing the kings of the earth who resisted God in the end times.

⁵The Lord...shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. ⁶He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies; He shall execute the heads of many countries. (Ps. 110:5-6)

David saw a war against Messiah about 1,000 years before John saw it in Revelation 17-19. Jesus will fill the places with dead bodies of their soldiers, and then He will execute the heads of many nations. John was not the first one who, in the book of Revelation, saw this. One thousand years before John the apostle, David wrote Psalm 110. David, the anointed man after God’s own heart, saw it 1,000 years before John saw and wrote it in the book of Revelation.

Read this, Psalm 110. David is looking at the future Messiah. He does not know who He is. He knows it is his offspring, but he does know which one or when or how it is going to work. He said, “...but I know one thing: that my great-great-great-grandson, who is going to be Messiah, a day is coming when,” look at this verse 5, “He will execute the kings.” David called it “the day of His wrath.” Isaiah called it “the day of vengeance.” The day of wrath and the day of vengeance are the same thing.

Look at this, verse 6. “He will judge among nations.” This is just the strangest sentence: He will really fill the places—the geographic areas, actually around Jerusalem, because that is where they all are—He is going to fill those places with dead bodies. Then He will execute the leaders when He gets there, when He touches down and sets up His government. He will actually execute those leaders. He will execute the heads of many nations.

Now Psalm 110 is a song. Could you imagine singing that song? “He will execute the kings of the nations.” Like, how does that song sound? I cannot wait to hear David’s version of it. What was he thinking? I mean this was odd. It is in the Bible so we believe it. It was a real man who really received this information from God.

- E. Jesus will violently confront the rebellion against His leadership and oppression of His people on a global level to bring peace and to establish a new world order based on love and righteousness. Jesus will gather the kings of the earth and their armies together to what Scripture refers to as *God’s winepress* (Isa. 63:2-4; Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:19-20; 19:15). Jesus will trample these evil armies like grapes. Isaiah 63 is a companion passage to Isaiah 34, so it is best to study them together.

³I have trodden the winepress...I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. ⁴For the day of vengeance is in My heart...⁶I have trodden down the peoples [nations]... (Isa. 63:3-6)

¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations... He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. (Rev. 19:15)

I have already said this, but never in history have all the kings and all their armies ever gathered to one place. God has a term for the place they gather. It is used maybe five or ten times in the Bible. Pay attention to this phrase because it means something specific. Where He gathers them is called “the winepress” of God, because it is like a big vat. You see, in the ancient world, they might have a winepress like the size of this platform and five or six feet deep. They put all the grapes in it, then a whole bunch of people got in and stomped the grapes; that is a winepress. Well, this is like a 200-mile diameter winepress. It is not full of grapes; it is the leadership of the earth gathering.

They will gather in Armageddon. Armageddon is up north in Israel. Armageddon is not the battle. You have heard of the battle of Armageddon. That is not actually an accurate idea. Armageddon is a staging area where all the military powers gather to get organized. The major battle is actually down south in Jerusalem. It is really the battle for Jerusalem, and Armageddon is the staging area. There are many battles that are sent out from that staging area, so I call it the Armageddon campaign because it goes on for three-and-a-half years. They all gather there.

It is about 150 miles from up north where Armageddon is to down south where Bozrah is. Most of you have heard the word, Bozrah. We are going to run into that in a few moments. It is about 150 miles long; that is the winepress from a global point of view, from the 60,000-foot view, the airplane looking down that little area. It is a winepress on a global level. It is only going to happen one time in history.

Jesus is going to gather all the kings; the devil is going to gather all the kings. The kings are going to come due to their own greed; they have their own agendas. They do not even need the devil to do it because they have their own motives. That is in Ezekiel 35, and that is for another day. They gather out of their greed and lust. They are all in this geographic area. The Lord calls this several times in the prophets, “My winepress,” because “I am going to tread the grapes.”

In the ancient world, they understood what that meant. The grape juice is going to splash all over Him. That is why the prophets ask, “Why are Your garments red?” and He says, “Because I have the stain of the blood of My enemies literally upon Me.” Okay, so that is the winepress of God, and in Isaiah 63, we will get to that winepress in our second module, in our second semester here. Isaiah 63—same Isaiah—is one of the main passages. Isaiah 63 is a companion passage with Isaiah 34, the one that we are in right now tonight.

Isaiah 34 and 63 are companion passages. You should study them together. Much of the terminology and the ideas are the same. So, “the winepress of God,” and once you get that in your mind then you can understand a lot of these passages. You’ll say, “Ah, that makes sense.”

Remember after Isaiah 34 comes what? Isaiah 35. What happens in Isaiah 35? Joy and gladness and everything that is dead becomes alive. Everything that is sad becomes filled with gladness. Everything that is barren bears fruit. It is the exact opposite, so do not get in Isaiah 34, the judgment, without being anchored in Isaiah 35. Do not get in anchored in Isaiah 35 without being anchored in Isaiah 34 because you are going to end up with a wrong view and approach to gladness. You are going to end up offended at the Lord when He intervenes in this really aggressive way called the day of His vengeance. That is an historical term. It only happens one time in the major historic way called the day of vengeance or the day of the Lord.

- F. God’s end-time winepress will result in blood flowing for 1,600 furlongs (about 185 miles) which will cover the entire length of Israel. (From Bozrah in the south to Meggido in the north is 130 miles). “God’s winepress” is a very unusual winepress in being about 185 miles long (Rev. 14:20).

²⁰And the winepress was trampled outside the city [Jerusalem], and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles [about 4 feet], for 1,600 furlongs [185 miles]. (Rev. 14:20)

John also brings up this winepress thing in the book of Revelation. He says, ... “The winepress was trampled outside the city.” Really, it is about a 200-mile area. It is the whole area of Israel, because that is where all the armies from all the nations are gathered, from far up north in Armageddon or Megiddo to down south in Bozrah. It says that “blood is going to come out of the winepress.” Because there are millions of soldiers from 200 nations or whatever the number actually ends up being, it says the blood is up to the horse’s bridle. It is about four feet deep.

People say that is not possible for sixteen hundred furlongs, that is 185 miles, the length and breadth of the land of Israel. You might wonder how could you have blood four feet deep. Commentators say it has to be symbolic. It is not symbolic! Here is why: because Ezekiel 38 will tell you that in the day when this takes place, when all the kings have gathered, there is flooding rain that comes upon Israel. That is after a three-and-a-half-year drought that has been in the land by the words of the two witnesses. They have brought the drought to Israel like Elijah did, for the same period of three-and-a-half years. So, the land is parched from drought. Then when the kings gather and Jesus comes, there is this flooding rain. These ravines and valleys and hills and blood and water and everything is flooding! It will be literally four feet deep of blood-colored water all over the land, literally. You know, Israel is not like Kansas. It is not like a plain. It has ravines. This is literal! This is actually going to happen.

1. The blood of millions of soldiers in this “winepress” will be about four feet deep (up to a horse’s bridle). When the kings gather for battle at Jerusalem, flooding rain will come upon Israel, filling its ravines and valleys with blood mixed in the flooding waters.

“...I will rain down on him [Antichrist], on his troops...with flooding rain... (Ezek. 38:22)

2. Armageddon will be a military staging area where the armies of the nations will gather to organize for their major battle around Jerusalem.

- G. Isaiah 34 has two sections—God’s judgment on all nations (34:1-4) and His judgment on Edom (34:6-17). Isaiah called all the nations to hear the message (34:1) that God will judge all nations (34:2-3) and shake the heavens (34:4). 34:1-4 is an overview of the last 3½ years of this age.

“For thus says the LORD of hosts...I will shake heaven and earth...’ and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations...” (Hag. 2:6-7)

- H. The shaking of the heavens (like the shaking of the earth with earthquakes) in the end times includes several significant occurrences. I see 34:4 as parallel to Revelation 6:13 and thus occurring near the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Isaiah narrowed his focus to the final days of the Great Tribulation in specifying what will happen to Edom (34:5-17).

III. GOD’S END-TIME JUDGMENT ON THE NATIONS (ISA. 34:1-17)

Okay, now we can kind of buzz through or zip through Isaiah 34 quite a bit faster because it makes more sense since all Isaiah 34 is doing is describing that day. Once you get the picture, and you know where it is going, you can go faster.

I don’t know that Isaiah understood it as much as John the apostle did in the book of Revelation 1,000 years later, because John the apostle in Revelation had all of Isaiah. Then he had Ezekiel’s stuff and Daniel’s. Then Jesus gave him some new stuff and things, so he really had quite an intense picture. We are going to get to the book of Revelation in about a year or so. I am excited!

- A. All nations are commanded to hear and heed God's end-time message (34:1).

¹Come near, you nations, to hear; and heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all things that come forth from it. (Isa. 34:1)

This is really pertinent to us. It starts off Isaiah 34:1, "Come near, you nations." Again, just think in round numbers, 200 nations in the earth. That number goes up and down two or three nations every few years, a couple more, a couple less, because nations join or different things happen. So, that is just a good ballpark number.

1. ***Let the earth hear***: The end-time message of Isaiah 34-35 is to be spoken to all the nations. This message includes making known the carnage that will occur in the "winepress event" of 34:2-3, 7; 63:1-6. The coming violence resulting from God's judgments is redemptive—it serves God's purpose by confronting darkness and increasing love. It is not random violence.

Here is what God commands. He commands the nations to hear the message. Now, how are the nations going to hear, because the message in Isaiah 34 is the end-time message? It was not a contemporary message back then, although undoubtedly there was an application. When you read Isaiah 34, it is the winepress event. It is all the nations gathering and this tremendous intervention of Jesus. He says to the nations in verse 1, in effect, "I want all of you to hear."

2. ***Nations***: The Lord is raising up messengers who will tell the biblical end-time storyline. He wants all the nations to hear it. They will not get it from the liberal or the conservative press.

So I take a step back, and I say, "Lord, how are they going to hear?" The answer is, the Lord is raising up messengers who are going to tell the biblical storyline because He wants all the nations to hear it. So, I could tell you for sure He is going to inspire this whole reality of end-time messengers because Isaiah 34 tells us—and of course there are many other verses as well that tell us—the Lord is demanding that the nations get the message clearly. Well, they are not going to get it through the liberal press or the conservative press. They are not going to get through just "business as usual" Christianity. They are going to get the message through people who have looked at the biblical narrative and have gone deep in it.

I believe the Lord is stirring up people all around the earth. I have this privileged position of being able to interact with people who come, and I visit leaders from all around. The hunger for the biblical narrative of the end times has significantly increased, even in the last five years. Just talking to leaders, I think, "Yes, yes, it is happening. I think we are at the beginning of the beginning."

One thing is for sure: God is going to fulfill this verse 1. The nations are going to hear because He is going to have messengers that make it clear. It will not just be broad strokes, like, "Jesus is coming; the Antichrist loses; the two false prophets are really powerful, but then they are killed and are raised from the dead." It is going to have some details. It is going to have biblical detail in it. Do not be overwhelmed, though. You do not need to know every detail, but we need to know a little bit more than the broad strokes. That is why we are going through these 150 chapters.

3. ***Hear***: Isaiah called all the nations to hear the message about God's end-time judgments. There are similar calls to the nations in the Psalms (Ps. 96:1-3; 97:1; 98:1-4).

4. **Heed:** The nations were warned to respond by embracing and trusting God's end-time leadership. In the Scriptures, we get the "better view" of things. When we see rightly, then we live rightly. We feel fear and anxiety when we see no solution to the crisis before us.
5. Earlier, Isaiah exhorted people to be strengthened by the knowledge of God's end-time plan related to His coming judgment and salvation (33:6). Knowledge of this plan stabilizes God's people and enables them to interpret the shaking of the nations in a very different way. This plan is that a glorious "kingdom worldview" would be fully established in the Millennium with Jesus' perfect leadership being openly displayed in every sphere of life.

⁶Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation...

¹⁷Your eyes will see the King in His beauty...²⁰Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home [a peaceful home without any enemies] ...²¹But there the majestic LORD will be for us... (Isa. 33:6, 17-21)

Remember last week, in Isaiah 33, he said that if you get the knowledge of what God is doing in a time of judgment and blessing, if you get the knowledge ahead of time, it will strengthen you. God will use you to strengthen others. The knowledge has power in it because, if we know what is going on, it is not random violence, but it is an ordered demonstration of zealous love to fill the earth with righteousness. When you know that, you watch the shaking of the nations with a very different perspective, if you have that knowledge. Again, remember last week Isaiah 33:6, he said if you have this knowledge, it will stabilize you and it will give you strength. You will be able to stabilize others and give them strength. So, Isaiah 33, the chapter before, is really dovetailing right into here in Isaiah 34:1.

- B. All nations who oppose the Lord will be judged (34:2-4). It takes the Spirit's help for us to grasp such an extreme divine intervention into history as described in both Isaiah 34 and Isaiah 35. Here Isaiah described the carnage that will occur throughout the Great Tribulation including the Armageddon campaign, the battle of Jerusalem, and the destruction of Edom.

²For the indignation of the LORD is against all nations, and His fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them; He has given them over to the slaughter. ³Also their slain shall be thrown out; their stench shall rise from their corpses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. ⁴All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; all their host shall fall down...as fruit falling from a fig tree. (Isa. 34:2-4)

Okay, here is the message now, and this is clearly an end-time message. "For the indignation or the anger of the Lord is against all nations."

Right now we are thinking, "Why? I mean, we have a lot of problems, but it is not that bad." I think the Lord's answer is that it is going to be Psalm 2; the kings of the earth are going to gather together. David said in Psalm 2 that they are going to plot together to drive the influence of the Word of God completely out of the culture of the nations of the earth. They are just beginning the escalation of that right now in the last few years. I mean they have been doing it all through history, but there has been a discernible escalation of political, religious, and economic leaders in the last five years in a concerted, newly energized effort to drive the influence of the Word of God out of schools, out of the culture, out of the boardrooms, the courtrooms, the classrooms, everywhere, and to make it a militant, secular state.

What the Lord knows, that we do not know, is the level of this intensity in the years ahead. I do not know how many years; it could go on for quite a while or it could speed up and not be quite so long. We do not know. It is

going to get to a level of hostility that we are not guessing. We cannot see it. The Lord says that it will get really hostile. Read Psalm 2. David said they will be filled with rage against the God of Israel and His Messiah, filled with rage. God, knowing all of this, is talking about His indignations towards all nations. We are looking at the nations now thinking that it is not that great, but it is not that bad. The Lord would say, “This is not the context I am talking about.” It is going to end up in a very determined, organized, calculated rage against God that will surprise us if we are not reading the biblical narrative. It may throw us off.

I know where it is going, but at the same time the greatest revival in history is going to happen. A revival surpassing the book of Acts is going to happen the same time this is happening. The great harvest of a billion souls, with signs and wonders and dreams and visions, the first commandment established in first place. I mean, this is the hour to be alive, in that drama! Now we do not know if it is going to come to fullness in our lifetime, but we want to be ready in our spirit and our understanding. If it does not happen in our day, we want our children and grandchildren anchored with understanding and stable in their heart, not just “deer in the headlights, what is going on?” as if the world is the train running off the track.

It said that His fury will be against all their armies. See, that is interesting. Why? Well, we covered it a few minutes ago. All the kings are bringing their armies to Jerusalem, not just to fight Israel, but to fight Jesus because they think He is the false one. They believe He is defeatable. It says several times in the book of Revelation that they are coming to fight Him. I remember years ago, when I used to read that, and it says they are making war against Him. I would think, “Like, what do you mean? You mean with His people?” Yes, against His people, but against Him. “Like why? A bow and arrow shooting at the sky to hit Jesus? Like what? Why would they go against Jesus? That does not make any sense.”

When you understand the narrative a little bit, you’ll see they are going to be as convinced as we are. We are absolutely convinced the Antichrist will fail and be totally destroyed. They will have the same confidence the other way around. It is going to galvanize the earth. It is going to purify the Church and bring in a billion new believers. I mean, I believe it is going to be more than a billion.

It says that He will utterly destroy all of these armies. Remember these armies are around Jerusalem. He will give them over to the slaughter; that is that winepress idea. They are literally going to die, and the blood is going to be four feet deep, mixed of course with torrential rain storms. After three years of drought, you know the water is flooding everywhere because the ground is not receiving it like it would in a normal way.

Verse 3, “their slain will be thrown out.” Meaning, there are going to be so many millions killed that they will not have time to bury them. To throw them out means they are going to lay on the ground while the living will get about their business of the next thing. It is going to be a huge, dramatic conflict. They will not have time to bury them. The stench shall rise from their corpses. Millions of the unburied corpses of the people who have come against the Lord, and “the mountains shall be melted with their blood. All the host of heaven shall be dissolved. The heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll.” I have a little bit on this on the notes, so I am not going to talk about it.

John the apostle comments on this verse. He elaborates on it. As you know, I give you the six-page notes on Friday, and then I have about twelve pages a couple days later. So, I will have this more developed, but I do not want to take time tonight to cover it.

1. **All nations:** The Lord’s anger will be against all nations and their armies in the end times because their kings will plot together with great rage to seek to drive the influence of the God’s word out of the culture—they will bring their armies to Jerusalem to fight Jesus.

¹Why do the nations rage...? ²The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD...saying, ³“Let us break Their bonds [God’s word] in pieces and cast away Their cords [God’s word] from us.” (Ps. 2:1-3)

2. **Stench shall arise:** The odor will come from the rotting flesh of unburied corpses (34:3). This battle will be a physical battle, not a merely spiritual or symbolic one as some suggest. It will take seven months to bury the corpses of the Antichrist’s army (Ezek. 39:12-14).

²⁰“But I will remove far from you [Jerusalem] the northern army [the Antichrist’s armies] and will drive him away into a barren and desolate land...His stench will come up, and his foul odor will rise, because he has done monstrous things.” (Joel 2:20)

The stench will arise. Like, that is weird in the natural. Like what? The Lord could say, “I want you to know this is going to be real. It is going to be physical. It is going to be a real time. It is not poetic. It is not symbolic. This is really going to happen with real human beings and real time and space.”

Joel 2 talks about the Antichrist’s armies. He describes them as the northern armies, in this context of Joel 2. Here is what happens: the Lord is going to drive him into a desolate land. Isaiah 34 is all about that as we will see in a minute.

The stench and the foul odor of the slain Antichrist’s armies will arise. The stench rises because so many die so fast. You ask, “Why so many so fast?” Joel answers it here in the end of verse 20: because he has done monstrous things on a global level, God wants to do so much so fast. That is why they cannot even manage to bury the corpses.

3. **Utterly destroyed:** The armies of the nations will be destroyed (34:2), the land will be drenched with blood, and corpses of soldiers left unburied to rot, leaving a great stench (Ezek. 39:11-14). That it will take seven months to bury the dead speaks of the vast number of the slain whose bones are left after the birds and worms devoured the flesh of the carcasses.

¹¹...I will give Gog [Antichrist] a burial place there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea; and it will obstruct travelers, because there they will bury Gog and all his multitude. Therefore they will call it the Valley of Hamon Gog. ¹²For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, in order to cleanse the land... ¹⁴They will set apart men regularly employed...to bury those bodies remaining on the ground... (Ezek. 39:11-14)

Look at this next passage, Ezekiel 39. Ezekiel said that when that day comes, when the Lord returns—it all happens in that context—they will take seven months burying the corpses of the enemies, seven months. Look at verse 14! They will set apart men, they will give them a paycheck, they will employ them to go bury these guys because the whole land will be defiled.

See, it is not like Jesus returns, He waves His hands, all the bad guys evaporate, and all the cities pop up, restored overnight. It is not going to be like that. When He comes, there will be a battle, a conflict. The dead bodies will be there for seven months. The cities will have to be rebuilt, stone by stone, brick by brick, just like the cities of World War II. You’ve see in the movies or the documentaries how they had to rebuild the cities. That whole global reality is going to happen again. Not every city will be destroyed, but many will be, many more than any time in history. There will be some cities that are not destroyed, though we do not know which or where. The Lord would say, “Just cry out to Me, do what I tell you, and I will take care of it. I am a really good leader. You can trust My leadership.”

Again, I am skipping some things because you are going to read it on your own. I will, again, double the size of notes in the next couple days, Lord willing, and He is willing.

- a. This grave site will be east of the Dead Sea near Sodom. The area will be called the valley of Hamon Gog. The word, *Hamon*, translates to *multitude*; thus some translate it, “*The valley of the multitude of Gog.*”
- b. This vastness of this grave site will obstruct travelers and arrest their attention, resulting in many stopping to look and ponder God’s judgments on rebellion and His mercy on those who ask for it (Isa. 66:24).
4. ***Mountains melt with blood:*** As soil on mountains moves after flooding rains, so the soil will be washed away by rivers of blood, and so the mountains will seem to melt away. The blood of the slain will soak the mountains in such quantities that it will loosen the soil, causing mudslides. The carnage described here occurs in the 30 days between the 7th trumpet and the 7th bowl.
5. ***All the host of heaven shall be dissolve:*** The host includes *physical objects* (meteors and asteroids) and *spiritual hosts* (demonic beings) dwelling in heavenly places (34:4). The entire created order is impacted by man’s sin and demonic powers; thus, they will all be shaken.
 - a. ***Dissolve:*** Translations of *dissolved* include *consumed* (Young), *rot away* (ESV), *wear away* (NAS), *fall down* (Int’l Standard), *fade away* (NET), and *pine away* (Douay).
 - b. ***Spiritual hosts of heaven:*** The dissolving of spiritual hosts speaks of demons being thrown down to the earth. There will be a war in heaven in which Michael will fight Satan and his demons (Rev. 12:7-9). Satan will be cast down at the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

⁷***And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon...***
⁹***Satan...was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev. 12:7-9)***
 - c. The spiritual hosts of heaven speak of false gods and the demons behind them (2 Kgs. 17:16; 21:3-5; 23: 4-5).

¹⁶***So they [made]...a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. (2 Kgs. 17:16)***
 - d. Demonic spirits and evil kings will be put in prison like Satan (Isa. 24:21-23). Satan will be thrown into prison for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). The final judgment for Satan and his angels is the lake of fire, not the bottomless pit (the abyss).

²¹***The LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones [demonic powers], and on the earth the kings of the earth.*** ²²***They [demons and kings] will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit [bottomless pit], and will be shut up in the prison [Rev. 20:1-3]; after many days [1,000 years] they will be punished [lake of fire].***
²³***Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will***

***reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously.
(Isa. 24:21-23)***

- e. Demons will both come down from the sky (Rev. 12:7) and come up out of the earth (Rev. 9). The veil between the physical and spiritual realms will be lifted in context to Jesus' return. The bottomless pit (abyss) is a temporary prison for fallen angels. There is a huge shaft extending from the earth's surface to its depths that is currently sealed. A demonic king named Abaddon dwells in this pit (Rev. 9:11). A multitude of demons will come out of the bottomless pit when it is "unlocked" (Rev. 9:1-4).
- 6. ***Physical hosts of heaven:*** The Greek word for *stars* used here is *aster* from which we get the word *asteroid*. An *aster* refers to any shining mass in the sky, including meteors, asteroids, or flaming debris. This implies a vast swarm of asteroids and meteor showers hitting the earth. Stars as we commonly think of them are still in the sky in the fourth trumpet (Rev. 8:12).
- 7. ***The heavens rolled up like a scroll:*** The apostle John made reference to this cosmic disturbance in the sixth seal (Rev. 6:12-14) near the beginning of the Great Tribulation.
¹²I looked when He opened the sixth seal...the sun became black...and the moon became like blood. ¹³And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up... (Rev. 6:12-14)
 - a. Revelation 6:14 referenced this passage saying that the heavens or sky shall *recede* or move back (NKJ), *depart* (KJV), *vanish* (ESV), *split apart* (NAS), *be separated* (Holman Bible) or *removed* like a scroll when it is rolled up (American Standard).
 - b. Books were written on long strips of paper or parchment. The Lord will roll up the heavens like a scroll so that one part of the sky or the scroll cannot be seen.
- 8. Terrifying events in the sky will occur in context to the second coming of Jesus (Joel 2:10, 30-31; 3:15; Zech. 14:6-7; Mt. 24:29).
- C. God's end-time judgment against Edom (34:5-7): Edom here is a representative example of the judgment that will fall on all nations that stand against the Lord and Israel in the end times. The people shall become a "sacrifice" and the land filled with burning pitch and brimstone.
⁵"For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; indeed it shall come down on Edom, and on the people of My curse, for judgment."
⁶The sword of the LORD is filled with blood; it is made overflowing with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ⁷The wild oxen shall come down with them, and the young bulls with the mighty bulls; their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust saturated with fatness. (Isa. 34:5-7)

Okay, God's end-time judgment against Edom. Now the country of Edom is highlighted. This is, at first, a bit mysterious. Edom? Well, that is the ancient name of the country, Edom. Why is God speaking of Edom in an end-time, eschatological—most of you know that eschatological just means end time. You know, so every now and then I want to say a big word and I will say "eschatology" but mostly I just say "end times"—anyway, in

this eschatological setting, why this little country of Edom? Why are they important? Well, Edom is modern-day Jordan. It is right next-door. It is only a portion of modern-day Jordan. In Edom, there is going to be an intensity of conflict of the Antichrist and Jesus in the land of Jordan on the way to Jerusalem. Just outside of Jerusalem, there is going to be a major conflict in Edom. Again, it is ancient Edom, but it is modern-day Jordan.

Also, Edom is not just indicative of that geographic area back 1,000 to 2,000 years ago. Edom also represents all the nations that hate Israel like Edom did, because Edom was famous for their hatred of Israel. So, Edom has two applications. It is literally that little country that is a part of Jordan as it is not a country now, but a geographic area. It is also the Lord saying, “If you treat Israel like Edom did, you must know that I never change. I have the same attitude.” So, Edom is a bigger storyline than just their local conflict and drama.

1. ***My sword shall be bathed in heaven:*** Soldiers often “bathed” their swords in various substances to polish them to prepare for war. God’s sword being “bathed” in heaven speaks of it being sent from His divine counsels to prevail in the end-time war waged against Him.

He says in verse 5, “My sword shall be bathed in heaven.” That is an interesting term, because the conflict, which we will see in a few verses later, begins in the spirit realm in Revelation 12, and I have the verses there. In Revelation 12, Michael the archangel comes in full force against Satan and all of his demons. Michael casts the whole demonic host to the earth. So, there is a tremendous conflict in the heavenly realm when the sword of the Lord goes forth against demonic powers and principalities. This is a big subject. We will get to this at another time and spend a good amount of time on it, but not now.

I just want you to know, verse 5, the sword begins in the heavenly realm. The sword means the battle of the Lord. Do not think just of a three-foot sword. Think “sword in God’s hand” means battle, and it means God confronting His adversaries with a military aggression, with the intent of destroying them.

Well, we know that it starts in the heavens, but it surprises us that its local expression and its most intense part is this little geographic area in the modern-day nation of Jordan called Edom in the ancient world. The capital of this little country Edom was called Bozrah. We hear that Jesus marches through Bozrah, the capital of Edom, which is Jordan. He is on His way to Jerusalem. He is marching through Bozrah to kill the Antichrist’s armies, to liberate Jerusalem as the greater David. To completely free the city and then build the temple as the greater Solomon. To destroy the Antichrist and the False Prophet as the greater Elijah. As the greater Joshua, He crosses the river. As the greater Moses, He liberates all the captives of Israel. Every one of those in this time, He is the Captain of the armies of the Lord. That is our Beloved. That is who we are married to! We are His Bride, His eternal companion forever! Is that that amazing?

Okay, verse 6, the sword of the Lord is filled with blood. That is a phrase that just means that the sword of the Lord is going to fulfill its mission until the mission is over. It is a bloody mission; I mean, this is a gory mission. So again if you only read Isaiah 34, and you get tired and go to bed, you might have a disturbing dream. Read Isaiah 35 before you go to bed. You want to end it on Isaiah 35 because He is only doing it for love. He is doing it because of His zeal for love.

Now He says verse 6, “the sword of the Lord is filled with blood.” That means the mission, for which the sword of the Lord is released into that timeframe yet future in history, is going to result in incredible slaughter. I mean the blood will be four feet deep throughout the land of Israel, of course because of that torrential rain storm as well.

“It is made overflowing with fatness and the blood of lambs and goats and the fat of the kidneys.” You might think, “What?” Isaiah is describing this slaughter in the language of the animal sacrifices in the priesthood. So

the people in Israel's day got it. Modern-day Americans, we say, "The fat of the kidneys? What?" Isaiah is really saying is that, if there is sin in the earth, there has to be an atonement. There is One who came and shed His blood for the atonement. Any person or nation that receives that the sacrifice of the Lamb of God is sufficient, they are pronounced innocent, without any condemnation. If they cast off His sacrifice, they are to be sacrificed is the idea. They will stand for their own sins. Isaiah is using the language familiar in that day of the priesthood, so it is weird to us, but it was normal to them to hear this kind of language. I do not know that you have to tear all that down [i.e. research it word by word]; it is just the language in terms of how the sacrifices happened. You can read about it in Leviticus. If you are really excited about it, Google it. Okay.

Look at this, "For the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah." Remember Bozrah is the capital city of Edom. There is a modern city today that was where ancient Bozrah was. It is about twenty-five miles south of the Dead Sea. You can look it up if you want to know. There is still a town there where the ancient Bozrah was. The Lord is speaking of a sacrifice in Bozrah, meaning He is using the animal-sacrifice language of the Old Testament. Because the nations resisted His shed blood and have stood in animosity against Him and mocked Him and tried to prevent the nations from hearing the truth about Him, The Lord is going to judge them. The Lord would say, "I have a sacrifice, a plan for Bozrah. It is a winepress." Call it what you want; call it a sacrifice or a winepress. There is going to be a great slaughter in the land of Edom which we know as modern-day Jordan.

2. **Edom:** Amos referred to Edom's perpetual hatred of Israel and anti-Semitism (Amos 1:11; cf. Gen. 33:4-16; Num. 20:14-21; 24:18; Jer. 49:7-22; Ezek. 35:1-15; Obad. 10-14; Mal. 1:2-5).

¹¹"...I will not turn away its [Edom's] punishment, because he pursued his brother [Israel] ...and cast off all pity; his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever." (Amos 1:11)

¹⁰ "For violence against your brothers Jacob...you shall be cut off forever..."¹¹When foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem—even you were as one of them.

¹²But you should not have...rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction...¹³You should not have entered the gate of My people...you should not have...laid hands on their substance...¹⁴You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped, nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained in the day of distress." (Obad. 10-14)

¹²"Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance...avenging itself on them,"¹³therefore thus says the Lord God: "I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and make it desolate from Teman; Dedan shall fall by the sword."¹⁴I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel..." (Ezek. 25:12-14)

Now you might ask, "Well, why?" Edom has this perpetual, long history of anger towards Israel. Other nations do too, but Edom leads the host. I mean they are at the front of the line of long-term enemies. Look what it says in Amos: they have perpetual forever animosity. It did, and we know that now it is found in context to various sects of Islam. Not all of Islam, but part of Islam has this animosity. They have this absolute hatred to drive Israel into the sea. The Lord is saying that anybody who lines up with that narrative and that rhetoric are going to get the same results that Edom or the city of Bozrah is going to get.

So, I look at what is going on regarding the nation of Israel today, even around the American campuses and the campuses around the Western world where they are saying, like, “Let’s cast off Israel and let’s do this and let’s do that.”

I say, “You know, just go slow. Read your Bible first. Find out what God thinks about the land in Israel and what He thinks about this hostility against it.” Because there is a whole lot of that hostility that is increasing in the nations, I look at this passage and I am very informed by it.

I do not think Israel can do no wrong. I think Israel does a lot of wrong. The Lord is disciplining Israel. Israel has a tough road ahead, but they have a glorious road after that. I mean Israel has a glorious road, but a tough road. I do not look at Israel through rose-colored glasses and say they can do no wrong. No, but I am lining up with what God says about that land, about that ancient people and about their future and about Jerusalem being the city of the Great King.

Edom right next door is the picture of God’s anger at what they are doing. I say, “Nations of the world, do not line up with the animosity that Edom represents.”

3. *“There is rage against the holy covenant in the injured spirit of Esau. That spirit is lodged in the neighboring Arab nations, and in the Palestinians in particular. This calls for a closer study of Edom and Esau in scripture and prophecy. The humanistic world, ignorant of God’s covenant Word, is being drawn into the conflict as their sympathetic identification with the Palestinian struggle is causing them to pick up Esau’s offense at God’s prerogative “to choose as He will choose.” In their biblical illiteracy, and disregard for an ancient covenant concerning a literal land and people, the nations (and most of Christendom) are naively advancing and facilitating the final expression of Esau’s everlasting hatred that will show no mercy. —Reggie Kelly*
4. *Edom, Moab, and Ammon were three small nations in the ancient world comprising what is modern-day Jordan. Some of them will escape the rage and heavy demands of the Antichrist.*
⁴¹He [Antichrist] shall enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. (Dan. 11:41)

In Daniel 11 we read of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. Those three little people groups in the ancient world comprise modern-day Jordan. Every one of those are a part of Jordan today, because they were just little, ten-miles-across-type nations. They were very quiet back then. These three nations which are all clustered together in Jordan today somehow—we do not have details in Daniel 11—escape the rage of the Antichrist.

So, you think, “Why does the Antichrist let them off?” It is only conjecture. “Why isn’t he being rough with them like he is with the other nations?” There is something going on between them and the Antichrist that they escape his heavy, heavy demands and heavy rage coming against them. We get a little tip off here in Daniel 11 about Edom, Moab, and Ammon which is the same basic geographic area.

So war breaks out in heaven, and the sword of the Lord is bathed in heaven, but it finds its way down to Edom and Bozrah. All the kings of the earth are gathered into that geographic area. God then disciplines the nations there with Bozrah the city and Edom the nation being the local point that the prophets identify.

5. **Geographic location of Edom:** Edom occupied the area that is now in Jordan near the southeast border of Israel, between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba. It is also referred to as Idumea. Edom may host the Antichrist's armies in the end times.
 - a. Edom entered the story via Esau who had enmity against his younger brother Jacob (Gen. 33:4-16; Num. 20:14-21).
 - b. Many see Edom also as a representative example of the judgment that will fall on all nations that stand against the Lord in the end times.
 - c. By connecting the shaking of the heavens with the judgment of Edom, Isaiah makes it clear that what happens in Edom is very significant. Edom is representative of all nations hostile to the Lord.
6. **Bozrah:** The ancient capital of Edom is often identified with modern Buseirah, about 25 miles southeast of the Dead Sea. Jesus will march through Bozrah to kill the Antichrist's armies (63:1-6) on His way to liberate Jerusalem from them.
7. **The Lord's sword filled with blood:** This is a picture of the sword of the Lord being saturated from killing its victims (34:6). The sword is *filled*, or satiated *with* the blood of armies slain in Edom in the end times. The Lord with a sword is the Commander of the army of heaven (Josh. 5:13-14).

¹³...Behold, a Man stood opposite him [Joshua] with His sword drawn in His hand. Joshua...said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?" ¹⁴He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped. (Josh. 5:13-14)
8. **Great slaughter:** The end-time slaughter in Edom (Jordan) is compared to butchering large flocks of lambs and goats and herds of oxen (34:6).
9. **The Lord has a sacrifice:** Isaiah was picturing the God offering Edom up as His sacrifice (34:6). Isaiah described the end-time crisis in Edom in the familiar language of the Israel's priesthood sacrificing animals to the Lord. The soldiers from Edom (Jordan) and the Antichrist's armies stationed there will be like sacrificial animals being slain at the altar.
 - a. This prophecy speaks of God's judgment on Edom and on the nations under the influence of Edom. In context to day-of-the-Lord judgments, the nations destroyed are described as being offered as a "sacrifice" to God (Ezek. 39:17; Zeph. 1:7).

¹⁷...Speak to every sort of bird... "Come...to My sacrificial meal ...a great sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood." (Ezek. 39:17)

⁷Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD; for the day of the LORD is at hand, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests [birds who eat the slain bodies]. (Zeph. 1:7)

- b. Jesus took the judgment for our sin. If people reject His sacrifice, they must endure making the just payment for their own sins. All sin must be atoned for with the sacrificial death (Lev. 4) of the sinner or of One in place of that sinner (Isa. 53).
 - c. The promises in Isaiah 35 are possible because Jesus was offered up for our sin as a substitutionary sacrifice in Isaiah 53. Those who reject the sacrifice of Christ who paid the debt for their sins must themselves pay the debt for their sin.
10. **Lambs and goats:** Isaiah described the human leaders in Edom as lambs, goats, and bulls being sacrificed by God (34:6). The lambs and goats represent Edom's common citizens. The strong and fierce oxen and bulls represented her strong national leaders.
11. **It is made overflowing with fatness:** The Lord's sword is filled with the blood and fattened by the blood (34:6). This is an analogy to birds who were made fat by gorging on with the blood and fat of the slain after a battle. The Lord's sword will be made fat with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
12. **Blood and fat:** In the sacrificial system, the blood and fat of animals were set apart for God only (Lev. 3:4-5, 16-17; 7:23-27). The fat was burned on the altar instead of being eaten by the priests. The fat meant the fat of the inwards of the animal or the fat on the kidneys of cattle and sheep.
- ⁴The two kidneys and the fat that is on them...⁵Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar...as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD...¹⁶and the priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma; all the fat is the LORD's. "*** (Lev. 3:4-5, 16)
13. **Land soaked with blood:** In that day, the land of Edom will be like an altar soaked with the blood of the soldiers in the Antichrist's armies (34:7). Blood will be four feet deep in part due to the flooding rain that occurs in context to the end-time battle for Jerusalem (Ezek. 38:22; Rev. 14:20).
- ²²...I will rain down on him [Antichrist], on his troops...with flooding rain...*** (Ezek. 38:22)
14. **Dust:** The blood will be so abundant that the dirt in Edom will saturated or soaked with it (34:7). Their dust or soil shall be saturated with the fatness and blood of the slaughtered armies.
- D. The day-of-the-Lord vengeance on Edom (34:8-10): It has an eternal dimension to it. It is very rare for God's judgment on a nation to be eternal in duration. The land of Edom will be desolate forever (34:8-12) and a home for unclean animals (34:13-17).
- ⁸For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion. ⁹Its streams shall be turned into pitch, and its dust into brimstone; its land shall become burning pitch. ¹⁰It shall not be quenched night or day; its smoke shall ascend forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; no one shall pass through it forever and ever. (Isa. 34:8-10)***

Okay, let's look at the day-of-the-Lord vengeance. This is interesting, the day of the Lord vengeance. "Day of the Lord" means the end times related to Jesus' return. I find this very interesting; well, interesting is not the right word because that sounds like it is like a movie or we are kind of entertained by it. This is really serious stuff, as the vengeance of the day of the Lord on Edom is unlike on other geographic areas. Why? Because there is an eternal dimension to it. Because when God judges a nation, normally it is not eternal. With this geographic area, he is using this strange language that you do not quite know what to do with this language because it has language like, "and the smoke will rise forever."

You are thinking, "Forever? You mean until the Lord returns? Till the smoke kind of tapers off? No? Forever?" You are thinking, "Huh."

Let's read it here, Isaiah 34:8-10. I told you this is a pretty negative chapter here. This is the day of the Lord's vengeance. The day of wrath is what King David called it in Psalm 110. Here it is called the day of the Lord's vengeance. It is a day of repayment because of the way they treated Zion. Zion and Jerusalem, you could use them near interchangeably. There are technical differences for another time, but not for right now.

1. **Day-of-the-Lord:** There is a "24-hour day" when Jesus appears in the sky; there is also a "longer day" that may last several years before and after the time Jesus returns in the sky.
2. **Vengeance:** God's vengeance is not an expression of hateful revenge but of His justice and salvation. Jesus will march through Bozrah killing the Antichrist's armies to liberate Jerusalem as the greater David. He will rebuild the temple as the greater Solomon. He will defeat the False Prophet and destroy gods as the greater Elijah. He will liberate the captives like the greater Moses and will drive the enemy out of Israel as the greater Joshua.
3. **The cause of Zion:** One reason for this judgment is to repay those who persecuted Israel. This is meant to be warning to all nations through history (Mt. 25:31-46). Gentile nations will be judged for how they mistreated the Jewish people and exploited their land (Joel 3:1-8).
4. **Its streams shall be turned into pitch:** Pitch is a hot, tar-like substance comparable to asphalt. The streams that once flowed with water will be filled with pitch. Streams of burning pitch will move slowly through Edom like lava, filling it with flames and smoke. Tar seeping up from the ground exists on a small scale in Los Angeles in the *La Brea Tar Pits*.

It is there that God is confronting Edom. One reason is their hatred towards Zion or Jerusalem. So we see Zion—just think Jerusalem so that you can lock into the geographic storyline that is going on there—and now here is the strange language talking about Edom, verse 9, "Its streams will be turned into pitch and its dust into brimstone." Ugh. "Its land shall become burning pitch." Now when you think of pitch, the closest I come to pitch is that it is like hot, running asphalt. Pitch has a liquid dimension to it. It can run, and it is black. It is like asphalt, burning hot. What he is saying is that its streams, its rivers, are going to be turned into like a molten ash fault, flowing through the land. You say, "Ugh!" It is going to become this burning pitch or asphalt; that is the best analogy I can come up with.

- a. Fire, brimstone, pitch, lava, and sulfur come to the surface, possibly from an earthquake and/or a volcanic eruption.

- b. Jordan has significant oil shale deposits (rock from which oil can be extracted) in 26 known localities. It has 8th largest oil shale resource in the world. Geological surveys show existing deposits underlie more than 60% of Jordan's territory. The resource is estimated at 40-70 billion tons of oil shale. It has a sulfur content.
- 5. ***Dust turned to brimstone:*** The soil will be turned to a combustible powdered brimstone or sulfur. The dirt shall be saturated with blood and combustible brimstone which will keep the fire burning in the pitch.
 - a. Brimstone is a yellow mineral substance or stone that is closely identified with sulfur. Brimstone means, "burning stone." When powdered brimstone is exposed to fire, it will burn like a liquid. The mineral substance will melt and even drip like wax as it gives off poisonous and harmful fumes that can kill people.
 - b. Brimstone starts out in molten rock under the earth's surface and comes to the surface in the lava from volcanoes or in hot springs.
 - c. Brimstone/sulfur can be converted to sulfuric acid which is used in many things such as fertilizer, batteries, chemicals, tires, detergents, explosives, matches, drugs, etc.
 - d. Brimstone is mentioned 14 times in the Scripture in various contexts—Sodom (Gen. 19:24; Lk. 17:29), the judgment of the Antichrist's armies (Isa. 30:33; 34:9; Ezek. 38:22), describing certain demonic beings (Rev. 9:17-18), and punishment in the lake of fire (Rev. 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8).
- 6. ***Its smoke shall ascend forever:*** The burning pitch and brimstone will send up columns of smoke that will ascend forever from Edom. This is comparable to the smoke ascending forever from the lake of fire (Rev. 14:11) and from Babylon (Rev 18:9, 18:19:2-3).

⁹...If anyone worships the beast...¹⁰he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night... (Rev. 14:9-11)

Verse 10, "It will not be quenched day or night. The smoke shall ascend"—from Edom—"forever." You are scratching your head, saying, "What? Isaiah what are you talking about?" This is so unusual to describe. We know that people go to hell and have eternal judgment as an individual. I just hate to say that in passing. That is the most horrific thought I could imagine, so you do not want to say that kind of in passing, but here a geographic area is described in this way. It says that it will not be quenched day or night. Its smoke will ascend forever from generation to generation. No humans will ever pass through that area forever and ever and ever. You are wondering, "What is going on there?"

John the apostle uses the same language from Isaiah 34:10 right here in Revelation 14:9. It says that anybody who takes the mark of the beast and worships the Antichrist will be tormented, and it has the same language from Isaiah 34:10. I mean John the apostle in Revelation just borrowed it! So, you think, "Huh." John adds another dimension. He says, the people will be tormented "in the presence of the Lamb." Well, the Lamb's throne is in Jerusalem. It is just down the way from Bozrah, so what different people have suggested, and I think is plausible because—oh, by the way, Edom is very close to where Sodom and Gomorrah were in the ancient world. Edom is described in the similar judgments of Sodom and Gomorrah with this added dimension of smoke

and brimstone and pitch forever and forever—so what I believe is happening is that this is an area, a geographic area outside of Jerusalem that is a little ways out. I do not know how many miles, thirty, forty miles, something like that I think. I am doing that by memory, I have a bunch of cities in my mind here. I mean it is not next door, but it is a little bit down the way.

It is comparable to what is happening in the lake of fire because it goes on forever and forever. It has the same language of the lake of fire, the same language. So, what I think is happening, very plausibly, though you know you have to look at this softly. You do not want to be dogmatic. It is a geographic area, and it is described in the way the lake of fire is described. It is like Jesus is establishing in the millennial earth a testimony to the future, coming lake of fire. There is burning asphalt in a place of judgment. It is like a testimony for 1,000 years in the Millennium: do not join the satanic revolt because this is where it is going forever and forever. Something like that, though I do not know for sure what is happening.

7. **No one shall pass through it forever:** No humans will ever pass through that area forever. Edom's original hostility was expressed in not allowing Israel to pass through their land to Canaan. The Lord will repay them in a similar way by seeing to it that no traveler shall ever pass through Edom.
8. Isaiah compared the judgment on Edom to the judgment of Sodom (34:9-10; Gen. 19:24-28). Ancient Edom was close to where Sodom had been geographically, and its future judgment with smoke and brimstone is similar to Sodom's judgment.
*¹⁷**“Edom also shall be an astonishment; everyone who goes by it will be astonished and will hiss at all its plagues. ¹⁸As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah...” says the LORD, “No one shall remain there, nor shall a son of man dwell in it.” (Jer. 49:17-18)***
9. Edom and Babylon are described with a similar judgment comparable to Sodom—with fire and brimstone coming from heaven (Gen. 19:24, 28; cf. Jer. 49:17-18; Isa. 34:9; Jer. 50:40; Isa. 13:19-22), that burns with smoke arising forever (Rev. 19:3; cf. Isa. 34:10) and resulting in such destruction that humans cannot live there (Jer. 49:13, 18, 20; 50:9-40; 51:43; cf. Isa. 13:20; 34:10; Ezek. 35:9, 14-15; Mal. 1:3-4) but only creatures of the desert (Isa. 13:20-22; 34:11-15).
*¹⁹**And Babylon...will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation... ²¹But wild beasts of the desert...owls; ostriches...and wild goats will caper there. (Isa. 13:19-22)***

I am making just a speculation here. Edom and Babylon have a shared border, because Babylon is Iraq and Edom is Jordan. They are next-door to each other in modern-day Jordan and Iraq. They have these similar descriptions, Babylon does and Edom does. I think it is worth considering—nothing in the Bible says it but I think it is worth considering—with these two regions sharing a boundary line, maybe it is the same vast geographic sulfur that is burning, one reality touching both of the lands of these ancient nations. I do not know, but that is kind of what I am looking at. That is the best I can come up with at this point in time.

10. **Lake of fire:** Edom shall be called the “Territory of Wickedness” and “the people against whom the Lord has indignation with forever.” I see the judgment on Edom as connected with the lake of fire in some way. God's judgment on Edom throughout the Millennium will be a testimony to the nations for 1,000 years of the reality of the lake of fire.

⁴...they [Edom] shall be called the Territory of Wickedness, and the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever. (Mal. 1:4)

11. ***One vast area:*** It is significant that Edom and Babylon receive a similar end-time judgment. The two regions border each other, and both are described as being a place of perpetual burning. It may be *one vast, desolate, flaming region* that is connected with lake of fire.
12. In the Millennium, those going to Jerusalem to worship will look on corpses (Isa. 66:23). Isaiah did not identify where these corpses will be—Edom is a good possibility. John used the language about Edom from 34:10 adding that the people will be tormented in the “presence of the Lamb” (Rev. 14:10)—whose throne will be in Jerusalem about 75 miles from Edom.
²³“And it shall come to pass that...all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD. ²⁴“And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched.” (Isa. 66:23-24)

- a. ***All flesh:*** Many Gentiles and Jewish believers coming to Jerusalem will stop to look at corpses suffering eternal judgment. Those surviving the Great Tribulation will worship Jesus in Jerusalem during the Millennium (Isa. 25-26; Zech. 14:16-21).

Here, this is really an unusual verse. We will look at this in Isaiah 66 in our next module in the spring. Isaiah 66 is really intense as well. In the Millennium, here is what it says in verse 23, they will come, that means people from the nations, “all flesh,” meaning Gentiles and Jewish believers from all over the world in the Millennium, “will come to Jerusalem to worship.”

- b. ***Look upon corpses:*** Viewing these unburied corpses will be a testimony or witness to the people in the millennial earth warning them about the lake of fire and not to embrace the rebellion at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:7-10) and reminding them what God’s mercy saved them from by the death of Jesus on the cross.

Verse 24, then when they come to Jerusalem, they are going to stop and “they are going to look on the corpses of the men” that are under judgment. “For their worm never dies,” and that is prophetic language for “they have eternal conscientiousness.” Their worm never dies, “and their fire is never quenched.”

- c. ***Go forth:*** Conquerors returned the next day to the battlefield to view the corpses of their enemies which lie rotting as worms fed on their flesh. The armies of the Antichrist will be killed, and believers in the Millennium will go forth to view them.

So what Isaiah is talking about in Isaiah 34 is that Edom is going to burn forever. John the apostle says that about the lake of fire. I think it is a testimony, a witness to the millennial earth, “Do not buy into that final rebellion.” I think it is a testimony to the redeemed, “This is what I saved you from, through My scarred hands. This is where you would have gone if I was not crushed by the wrath of God. That would have been your future.” So I think it is a “Wow, I love You Jesus!” moment. It is an “I better not join the great revolt at the end of the 1,000 years.”

Look again Isaiah 66:24, when they go look upon those corpses. They go look in Edom—I believe it is Edom—at the corpses of men that have died, but they are conscious. The people going to worship look at that and just

think like, “Oh man, that is intense!” That is a strange verse! You do not normally hear that preached on Mother’s Day on Sunday morning, okay.

- d. ***Their worm not dying***: Their “worm not dying” speaks figuratively of the on-going remorse, memory, and misery of the conscience of the damned. The implication is that their consciousness never dies—they will experience a perpetual torment of conscience always gnawing at them, and never permitting them to be at rest, even as worms continually gnaw on their corpse while it is rotting and decomposing.
- e. ***Fire is not quenched***: This refers to the eternal punishment on the resurrected bodies of the damned (Dan. 12:2; Jn. 5:29).

²⁸...the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice ²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. (Jn. 5:28-29)

- f. Jesus referenced Isaiah’s mention of worms and fire (Mk. 9:44-48; cf. Isa. 66:24). Worms eating the decomposing flesh in context to unquenchable fires are two elements from Gehenna (in the Valley of Hinnom) describing eternal destruction. What will happen in Edom in 34:10 and in 66:24 parallels what will occur in the fires of hell and the lake of fire—with unquenchable fire (Mk 9:43-48; Rev. 14:10).

⁴³If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—⁴⁴where “Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.” (Mk. 9:43-44)

- E. Edom will be a desolate land (34:11-15) filled with thorns, wild beasts, and birds. There will be no human beings there. Each animal will reproduce without any interference from humans who might drive them away.

¹¹But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it, also the owl and the raven shall dwell in it. And He shall stretch out over it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. ¹²They shall call its nobles to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all its princes shall be nothing.

¹³And thorns shall come up in its palaces, nettles and brambles in its fortresses; it shall be a habitation of jackals... ¹⁴The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the jackals, and the wild goat shall bleat to its companion; also the night creature shall rest there... (Isa. 34:11-14)

- 1. Nine of the animals (34:11-14) are unclean according the law of Moses (Lev. 11). The animals here were commonly found around marshes and desert places. The message is that the once flourishing cities of Edom will become a wilderness that is undisturbed by humans.
- 2. ***Owl and raven***: These are birds that occupy deserts. The image here is of a desolate land given up to birds and wild animals who are commonly seen in uninhabited places.

3. ***He shall stretch out over it the line:*** God will stretch His plumb line over Edom to measure or evaluate it to determine the judgment it deserves. This will reduce the land to confusion and emptiness. As an architect uses a measuring line to determine exact measures for his work, God will determine the exact measure of justice coming to Edom (Amos 7:7-8). Conquered cities were measured with a line to indicate which areas were to be destroyed (2 Kgs 21:13).
 4. ***Stones of emptiness:*** Stones were used to mark the borders of a conquered land. The words translated *confusion* and *emptiness* are translated as “without form and void” in Gen. 1:2.
 5. ***They shall call its nobles:*** There would not be any people for the nobles of Edom to rule over (34:12). The palaces, fortresses, and strongholds where the noble lived will be desolate.
 6. ***All its princes shall be nothing:*** There will be no leader in Edom to proclaim a kingdom.
 7. ***Night creature:*** The Hebrew word here is *lilith*; it referred to demonic beings that were common in popular or mythical stories (34:14). Isaiah saw them as demons, yet called them by their popular name—the lilith. The Septuagint translates it this as *demonic*. Isaiah emphasized the perpetual desolation of Edom by mentioning animals making their nests without being disturbed by people.
- F. The Lord’s judgment against Edom is be searched out (34:16-17). Isaiah urged his readers to examine the details of this prophecy to verify its accuracy when it is fulfilled in the future.
- ¹⁶Search from the book of the LORD, and read: not one of these shall fail; not one shall lack her mate. For My mouth has commanded it, and His Spirit has gathered them. ¹⁷He has cast the lot for them, and His hand has divided it among them with a measuring line. They shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell in it. (Isa. 34:16-17)***
1. ***Book of the LORD:*** This book included Isaiah’s written prophecies. He emphasized the reliability of these prophecies even to the minute details outlined in 34:14-15. In 34:1, Isaiah called the nations to compare his predictions with the historical fulfillment to verify how exacting and accurate they are— God’s warnings and promises. There was a collection of prophecies referred to the book of the Lord (8:16-18; 29:11-12; 30:8; 33:6; Dan. 9:2)
 2. ***Search from the book:*** We are to search the Lord’s book by comparing one biblical passage with others. After the end-time judgments come on Edom, Isaiah assured the future reader that what he predicted would be clearly verifiable and fulfilled in a precise way.
 3. ***Not one of these shall fail:*** There are two ways to interpret this phrase. First, that not one of Isaiah’s predictions in chapter 34 would fail. Second, that not one of the species of animals mentioned in 34:11-15 would fail or cease to mate and continue to be in Edom.
 4. ***My mouth commanded:*** Here the Lord spoke directly in the first person claiming that these animals would be in their place by His command and the Spirit’s work to gather them. God has decreed each species of bird and beast that is to dwell in desolate Edom forever.

5. ***His Spirit has gathered them:*** The Spirit will gather the unclean birds and beasts spoken of in 34:11-15 as the ones to continue to multiply and thus dwell in Edom forever.
6. ***Cast the lot:*** As the Lord divided up the Promised Land by divine lot to give to the tribes of Israel (Num. 26:55-56; Deut. 32:8; Josh. 14:1-2; 18:4-10), so He will divide up the land of Edom to assign to the birds and wild beasts. Each animal will be assigned a place in Edom by God so that each may know its place as clearly as if it were set a part by a measuring line.
¹⁰Then Joshua cast lots for them...and there Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions. (Josh. 18:10)
7. ***Measuring line:*** God measured or determined the land of Edom to be desolate forever. After a nation was conquered, the victors apportioned various areas of a land by lot to its new inhabitants. As the “Conqueror of Edom,” the Lord divided land by lot to the wild beasts.
8. ***His hand has divided it:*** A land was often surveyed by a measuring line, divided into smaller portions, and then the lot was cast to determine who inhabited each portion.
9. ***Not one shall lack her mate:*** There are two ways to interpret this phrase. First, that not even one of Isaiah’s predictions in 34:8-15 shall lack a fulfillment as its “companion” or “mate.” Second, that no beast there shall be without its mate to breed so to continue in Edom forever.
10. ***They shall dwell in it:*** The wild beasts in 34:11-15 would inhabit Edom forever.

IV. GOD’S GLORY AND SALVATION (ISA. 35:1-10)

- A. The greatest desire of the redeemed is to see and encounter the glory of the Lord. Jesus is zealous to remove wicked from the earth to establish a community filled with joy and gladness (Isa. 35:10). Isaiah 35 is about the open manifestation of God’s glory in the restoration of His people and the land.

²They shall see the glory of the LORD...¹⁰and the ransomed of the LORD shall return...and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isa. 35:2, 10)

Okay, we are going to spend about maybe just four or five minutes more on this because the negative is the part that is kind of like, “Ugh! I do not even want to know that.” As for the positive, we tend in the Body of Christ to talk about that all the time, so we are kind of a little bit more familiar with the positive. I am going to give you the positive kind of rapid-fire because it is a theme that is talked about far more.

Now Isaiah 35, this is the extreme glory. This why the negative happens: so the positive can happen. The Lord is not going to violate anybody’s free will. He is not looking at the nations saying, “I am going to make you love Me.” No, He would say, “I am going to allow an environment to happen in the nations where a billion will choose Me. I am not going to make you choose Me. I am going to let you see reality. I am going to let you see the rage of demons. I am going to let you see the hatred and cruelty of man’s sin. I am going to show you My zeal against it. I am going to show you My kindness and My tenderness, and you decide.” That is what is happening in Isaiah 34-35.

1. **See God's glory:** They shall encounter many different manifestations of God's glory. Here, we gain insight into Jesus' personality and power by seeing what He will do in Israel. He will release similar manifestations of His glory globally for "all flesh to see" (Isa. 40:5). Whatever He does in fullness in Israel, He will also do in part in all the nations of the earth.
³... "Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God... ⁵The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together..." (Isa. 40:3-5)
 2. Earlier Isaiah assured the people that they could be strengthened by knowing God's end-time plan (33:6) which emphasized the full and open manifestation of His salvation across the earth. He called them to be anchored in the knowledge of a glorious "kingdom worldview" that would be fully established in the Millennium with Jesus' perfect leadership seen by all.
⁶Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation... ¹⁷Your eyes will see the King in His beauty... ²⁰Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home [a peaceful home without any enemies]... ²¹But there the majestic LORD will be for us... (Isa. 33:6, 17-21)
 3. **The beauty narrative:** We embrace the truth about the glory of our beautiful God, who has a beautiful plan for our life, in which He uses His power to impart incorruptible beauty into our life that continues forever (Rom. 8:28; 1 Pet. 3:4). David was intentional about focusing on the "beauty narrative" of his life (27:4). The enemy wants to shift our life into a negative narrative of how bad we are treated, how hard things are, what we do not have, how much we fail, and how worthless our life is. We must refuse to let a dark narrative dominate our heart.
- B. The transformation of nature (35:1-2): The promise of "the desert" rejoicing includes the people who live in the desert being full of joy because of what the Lord does in the deserts. Jesus will reverse what is dead, sick, sad, or lacking with vibrant life, healing, gladness, and abundance.
- ¹The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God. (Isa. 35:1-2)**

Well, first is the transformation of nature. What is really happening in Isaiah 35 is that everything is reversed. Everything that was dead becomes filled with life. Everything that was sick, under Jesus' leadership it is healed. Everyone who was sad is given gladness and joy. Wherever there was suffering and lack, there is abundance. That is the storyline. Isaiah takes them right through.

He starts with nature in verse 1. He says, "The desert"—I don't mean the kind of "You know it is a little hot out there" desert; I mean the dangerous, deadly-heat desert that is around the nation of Israel. That desert where nothing can survive, well, maybe a certain kind of animal can. I am saying that human life cannot thrive and survive in that kind of context as just a normal setting. He says God will completely reverse it. The most hostile environment is going to blossom like a rose. Where there is no supply whatsoever, He is going to bring water supernaturally. He is going to cause rivers to flow.

Here is the idea: whatever He does in Israel, He is going to be doing the same thing in Asia, Latin America, Canada, Europe, the islands. He might say, "If I can do it here, I can do it everywhere. I am the God who does this." So we look at the Israel version, and we want to have joy about that. I am looking beyond Israel to the

Captain and what His personality is like. He would say, “I replenish deserts. I heal agriculture. I heal the atmosphere. I heal the animal kingdom. I take everyone that is sick and make them well. I cause fruitfulness to break forth everywhere where My leadership is honored.” That is what Isaiah 35 is saying over and over.

1. **Desert:** The Hebrew word *Arabah* is translated as the *desert*. The speaks of the dry desert south of the Dead Sea. It is extremely hot and dangerous and is unable to sustain much vegetation or human life. Jesus restores the animals, atmosphere, and agriculture.
2. **Glory of Lebanon:** The beauty for which Lebanon was famous will be seen in the deserts. Lebanon with its cedars and Mount Carmel with its fertile plain of Sharon speak of God’s favor and abundance. This desert will have the glory of Lebanon, the abundance of Carmel, and the beauty of Sharon. The Lord turned Edom into a desolate desert in Isaiah 34, but transforms the desert into a glorious garden in Isaiah 35.
3. **Blossom as a rose:** The most hostile desert environment will blossom like a rose. He will cause rivers to flow. Human life cannot survive and thrive in that context.
4. **See the glory of the Lord:** The open manifestation of God’s glory will be the transforming power that heals the land and the people. The people will see an unprecedented measure of God’s glory (2:10, 19, 21) because Jesus will “come” to earth with His reward (35:4; 40:10).
¹⁹They shall go into...the caves of the earth, from the terror of the LORD and the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth mightily. (Isa. 2:19)
³...“Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God...”
⁵The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together...” (Isa. 40:3-5)
¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. (Isa. 40:10)

Now look at the end of verse 2. This is the most amazing part because the people will see the glory of the Lord. There are many manifestations of the glory of the Lord. Seeing the glory of the Lord is our greatest desire. I do not mean kind of in just a faint way where by faith we say, “I think that was the glory.” I do that, and we need to do that. It is important to do that, to appreciate the faint whispers of His glory.

You know, there was one time in history, for three-and-a-half years, when an anointed Man from Nazareth was the full manifestation of the glory. It is the only time the full manifestation of glory walked around the earth. He did it for three-and-a-half years with the Spirit on Him. Everyone He touched was healed. That is what happens when that Man is in charge. Some people look at that and say, “Well, if Jesus healed everyone then, how come every single person is not healed now?”

I answer, “When His manifest glory is happening like it was when He walked around, everything He touches comes to life.” Here is the good news: He is coming! He is the glory that everyone sees. He is the Man on the throne in Jerusalem healing the whole earth. This is so amazing.

Here is the part I want you to see in Isaiah 40:5. This is in Isaiah a few chapters later. As a matter of fact, it is our next session. We will look at Isaiah 40 after the break. “The glory of the Lord will be revealed”—here is the part I want you to see, “all flesh”—all the nations—“will see it together.” So this is not some little revival center tucked away in a little building in Jerusalem.

The glory of the Lord is a Man coming on a cloud across the earth in flaming fire in the glory of the Father with all the angels and all the saints. His voice is calling forth everyone out of the grave. He looks at the Antichrist. His gaze destroys him. His breath completely defeats him, throws him in prison, kills all the evil leaders of the earth, and then He starts healing everyone and everything that submits to His leadership. That is the glory of the Lord.

5. **See the excellency of our God:** Jesus' excellency is another term that speaks of His glory, beauty, and splendor (4:2, 5; 24:23; 28: 5; 33:17; 40:5; 52:10; 60:1-2; 66:18). Paul joyfully gave up everything when empowered by seeing even glimpses of Jesus' beauty (Phil. 3:8). Paul emphasized the transforming power of seeing God's glory or beauty (2 Cor. 3:18).

⁸I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus ...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ (Phil. 3:8)

¹⁸We all...beholding [seeing]...the glory of the Lord, are being transformed... (2 Cor. 3:18)

6. **They shall see the glory:** "They" does not have an obvious antecedent—it may refer to all flesh (40:5), all the redeemed (35:9-10), or the remnant of Israel who survived the Great Tribulation.

7. **With joy and singing:** The redeemed will sing over the desert *before* and *after* it blooms.

- C. A call to strengthen God's people (35:4-5): God's people in the Great Tribulation will need encouragement to keep their eyes on the Lord and to resist being overcome with fear (Lk. 21:26).

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense [reward] of God; He will come and save you." (Isa. 35:3-4)

Well, I wanted to quit with that because I feel so good, but I have one more point. I want to quit on that, but I have to give you paragraph C, because he says in the next verse, as it were, "Messengers, this is to you guys and to a million others out there in the nations whom the Lord is raising up in this hour." I mean, God is stirring up messengers. He says, I want you to do this, verse 3, do not just get excited for the glory, but "Strengthen people." Make it your mission to invest in people who do not get it. They do not get it, so their hands are weak and their knees are limp. Read the whole thing. Isaiah says, "Hey, if you are paying attention to me, then do what I do. Strengthen them with the narrative. Tell them the storyline."

That is what I am so enjoying and so appreciating, that we have a whole community of about 400 or 500 of us wanting to see what Isaiah said. Here Isaiah is saying, "Tell them what I am telling you because I am strengthening you. Now you strengthen others." It is not just a "pat on the back" strengthen; it is a "tell them the biblical narrative of the greatest hour of intense conflict and glory." The end-time narrative is what Isaiah was most focused on in his chapters. He says verse 4, "Say to those that are fearful-hearted, "Be strong." He was saying that there will be fear everywhere.

1. **Strengthen, make firm, and say:** The redeemed are called to strengthen, make firm, and say things to those who are fearful. Many will need a message of hope to strengthen them to act (hands), be steady (knees), and confident (hearts). Weak hands and knees speak of feeling helpless—a message of hope will be essential for those besieged Jerusalem (Zech. 14:1-5).

2. **Your God will come:** Jesus will personally come to His people when He comes to reign over all the earth (35:4). The message of hope is that God will come with vengeance to save His people from the reign of terror of Antichrist, restore all things, and to reward them (35:4).
3. **Be strong, do not fear:** Strength comes from hearing God's plans and promises to save them. Many will feel weak and fearful when trouble and darkness continues to escalate (Lk. 21:26). Many will be overwhelmed with fear and expectation of what might be coming next.
²⁶...men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming... (Lk. 21:26)

We know the famous verse. Jesus said that men will be fainting for fear, heart attacks, overwhelmed, caving in, giving up, total despair because of fear, not just normal fear, but fear of what is unfolding in the nations. It says it is the fear of what is coming next. They will be like this. The nations will be fearful.

God would say, "I have an answer. First, the Holy Spirit, but I have a human answer too. I am going to anoint messengers to say the message to them."

Look, it says in verse 4 to say to them, "Be strong." Then tell them the storyline: God is coming with vengeance, Isaiah 34. He is coming with reward, Isaiah 35. Give them the whole storyline. You have to know the storyline to give it to them. You have to be anchored in it so that you are not thrown off by the fear.

It is like a word picture I heard one of the people in our small group on Saturday morning give. I love this word picture. She said, "Here is what I think of as the effort I am putting into becoming a messenger. It is like when the plane drops and the air mask drops, and the airlines say, 'Put it on yourself first before you put it on your children's.' Because you got to be functioning if you are going to help them." She said, "I want to be functioning, not filled with fear, so I can go put the mask on other people." That is what Isaiah is talking about right here.

4. Part of our life mission is to strengthen others with understanding of the end-time message.
5. **Say to the fearful:** The Lord's messengers must not be overcome with fear in that day—they are to say things to the fearful about God's end-time plan (40:9-10). They are to boldly lift their voice with strength—to do this they must know the biblical end-time storyline.
⁹O Zion...lift up your voice with strength...be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah...
¹⁰"Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand... behold, His reward is with Him." (Isa. 40:9-10)

In Isaiah 40:9-10, he says the same thing again. He says, "O Zion"—O Jerusalem—"lift up your voice with strength." Here is an interesting thing here in verse 9. We will end with this. He says to the messengers, "Do not be afraid." Though the messenger's mandate is to help others not be afraid, Isaiah says, "Hey, I am one of those messengers too. Sometimes I kind of hesitate." He said, as it were, "I am telling you: do not be afraid, messengers."

It is going to be bold. It is going to be costly. It is going to be a real issue. So don't back away. Make sure you put the mask on and stay strong, and then you can put that air mask on others. You say to the cities of Judah, "Lift up your voice with strength." Be bold. Do not be timid and say, "Well, I kind of think that the Lord is going to... maybe sort of..." No, we know the storyline or we are getting familiar with the basic overview of it.

Go tell them, verse 10, “God will come with a strong hand,” that is Isaiah 34. He will come with a reward, that is Isaiah 35. He is going to bless His people.

6. It is wise to prioritize putting time and effort into preparing our heart and mind with understanding to become “messengers” who can prepare others with understanding. It is hard to help others understand if we ourselves are not first established the biblical narrative. For example, when needing oxygen on an airplane, the stewardess routinely instructs passengers to put oxygen on themselves before putting it on their children. Why? They want the parents to be able to function before helping the others.
- D. The Lord will release healing and restoration of the people and land (35:5-7). Isaiah elaborates on ways in which God’s glory will be manifested—healing people and transforming agriculture. The Lord’s plans include releasing power in every aspect of human life and creation. This passage does not stress freedom from powerful oppressors, but the release of abundant life and healing.

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. ⁷The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes. (Isa. 35:5-7)

 1. ***The eyes of the blind shall be opened:*** There will be a need for physical healing for the unsaved survivors of the Great Tribulation and for their offspring throughout the Millennium. Though millennial conditions will be glorious, people will still be born in sin and sometimes with infirmities, and some will face sicknesses in their life that will need to be healed.
 2. ***Waters shall burst forth:*** Abundant clean water flowing in the desert is a manifestation of God’s supernatural blessings (35:1-2; 41:18; 43:19-20; 44:3-4).
 3. ***Habitation of jackals:*** There shall be abundant grass and lush vegetation in the desolate places where jackals normally live (35:1-2, 6-7).
- E. The Lord will cause a highway to Jerusalem to be built (35:8-9). The prophecy of a “highway” is unique to Isaiah (Isa. 11:16; 19:23; 35:8; 40:3; 49:11; 57:14; 62:10).

⁸A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it...Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it...But the redeemed shall walk there, ¹⁰and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion... (Isa. 35:8-10)

 1. This highway will serve different purposes such as facilitating Jewish refugees in returning to Israel, and Gentiles making pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3; Zech. 14:16-19), and helping people who travel from Egypt to Assyria so they can serve the Lord and His purposes in the nations (Isa. 19:23).
 2. In the seventh bowl, an earthquake and 100-pound hailstones will destroy many highways (Rev. 16:18-21).

3. ***Come to Zion:*** This highway will help people come to Zion, or Jerusalem, the capital city for the whole earth. Multitudes from the nations will make pilgrimages to Jerusalem to worship Jesus and to receive teaching from Him (2:2-3; Zech. 14:16-17).
²...and all nations shall flow to it [Jerusalem]. ³Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to...the house of the God of Jacob...” (Isa. 2:2-3)
¹⁶...everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
¹⁷And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. (Zech. 14:16-17)
4. ***From Egypt:*** It seems that this highway will start in Egypt and go to Assyria, yet with Jerusalem as its main destination. It will serve as a strategic connection from Egypt to Assyria so they both can serve the Lord and His purposes in Jerusalem in an effective way. This highway will support international unity that will result in economic blessing.
²³In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. (Isa. 19:23)
5. ***Highway of Holiness:*** Only the redeemed people will travel on this highway. This highway will be associated with holiness. Those traveling on this highway will participate in singing worship songs and will encounter God’s presence with deep joy by the power of the Spirit.
 - a. Traveling on this highway may include elements that teach and inspire holiness for those walking on it. What if there are “stations” along this highway that—in a more dynamic way than Disney’s *Epcot* theme park—tell the history of salvation?
 - b. We can only speculate what might be available on this highway such as high-tech capacities, Holy Spirit ministry opportunities, beautiful landscape, amazing hospitality services, and much more. Those traveling on this highway will be glad.
 - c. I assume that this highway will be a tremendous architectural and technological accomplishment commensurate with the glory of millennial Jerusalem. This highway might even be considered as one of the great wonders of the new world.
6. ***Fools:*** The simple, uneducated, or unlearned shall not be lead astray en route to Jerusalem; they will not go astray or wander from the road getting lost when traveling on this highway to Jerusalem. People without traveling experience can easily get lost in the process of international traveling, but this will not be the case on this glorious highway.
7. ***Lions:*** No lions or dangerous animals will be there to threaten one’s safety. This highway will be safe and free from any harmful animals or ravenous beasts.
8. ***Unclean shall not pass over it:*** The unclean will not be allowed to travel on it.

9. **The redeemed:** For the first time, Isaiah mentions the “redeemed,” the first of 24 references to the redeemed in the book of Isaiah.
10. **Return:** Some will be returning to Jerusalem where they lived before fleeing the city as refugees or being taken away as captives (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 11:11-14, 16; 14:1-3; 19:23; 27:12-13; 40:11; 42:7, 16, 22; 45:14; 49:9-12, 21, 24-26; 60:10, 12, 14; 61:1, 5; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Hos. 11:11; Joel 3:1-2, 8; Amos 9:14; Mic. 2:12-13; 4:6-7; 5:6; 7:12; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 10:10-11; 13:8; 14:2; Mt. 25:43; Lk. 21:24).
- F. The Lord will fill His people with joy and gladness (35:10). This gives us important insight into the Lord’s personality and leadership.
- ¹⁰and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isa. 35:10)**
1. **Joy:** The result of God’s salvation is a people forever filled with gladness and joy (35:10; cf. 25:8; 51:11; 65:19. Gladness will fill the heart of God’s people when they see the full implications of their salvation and of being liberated from their sins and the sins of others.
- ¹¹...In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Ps. 16:11)**
- ⁸But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...⁹Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” (Heb. 1:8-9)**
2. **Sighing:** The Lord will remove all death, sorrow, crying and pain (Rev. 21:4).
- ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. (Rev. 21:4)**
- G. **Summary:** This is doable. We want to be messengers who are not afraid because we interact with the King who is the author of the biblical storyline. We must engage with the Spirit, grow in the biblical message, and do this in community. The message will not penetrate our heart without the help of the Spirit, and we will grow best in this if we are not in isolation. I need community because I cannot make it alone, and I cannot make it without growing in the Word with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Amen and amen. Let’s stand before the Lord. Again, in a few days I will have more notes on this. Some of these verses may still be a little cryptic, and you may be looking at them, thinking, “Hum.” Not that I have all the insight on them, but I will give you a little bit more on a few more of these kind of unusual phrases, because we want to know this. We do not want to be afraid of the book of Isaiah. We want to say that we can learn this. I mean, this thing is doable.

Lord, here we are before You. Lord, we want to be messengers who are not afraid. We want to be messengers who are not afraid.

I want to have ministry time for folks who are saying, “I want to be a messenger who is not afraid so I can make other people unafraid. I want to be anchored in the biblical narrative. I want to know it. I want to interact with

the King who is the author of the storyline.” You may be saying in your heart, “I am kind of new at this” or “I do not know quite where I am at. I want to be strong in this and I would like prayer tonight.” I want to invite any of you that would like prayer for that to go ahead and come on up. I want to ask the Holy Spirit to release His glory on you.