

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part LII: God's Expressed Vengeance In The Great Tribulation (Isaiah 34:1-17)

I. Introduction

- A. Passages like Isaiah 33:18-19, 23-24 show God predicting His judgment on Assyria, and this "naturally" leads "to a discussion of God's judgment on the world in the Tribulation," Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1084.
- B. Isaiah 34:1-17 presents this judgment, using God's judgment on Edom as an example, so we view the passage for our insight and application (as follows):

II. God's Expressed Vengeance In The Great Tribulation, Isaiah 34:1-17.

- A. In Isaiah 34:1, God summoned all peoples and nations to hear an announcement He was about to make. Obviously, that announcement involved the whole human race upon the earth.
- B. The Lord announced that He was angry with all nations, that His wrath was upon all their armies, that He would then utterly destroy them, giving them over to slaughter, with their slain bodies being thrown out to rot with a great stench and the mountains to be soaked with their blood as if with a heavy rain, Isaiah 34:2-3.
- C. Along with this worldwide divine military judgment, God would cause the stars of the heavens to be dissolved and the sky to be rolled up as a scroll, with the starry host falling like withered leaves from a vine or like shriveled figs from a fig tree, Isaiah 34:4. The description of Revelation 6:12-14 fits this prediction, revealing God here speaks of the Great Tribulation judgment to come after the Church is raptured, Rev. 4:1-2.
- D. Having mentioned His judgment on the world, God gave an example in Edom's fall of what He would do to all of the nations that war against His people: Edom was a "perpetual enemy of Israel" (Ezekiel 35:1-6), "an appropriate example of what the Lord will do to all nations that fight against His people," *Ibid.*; Isa. 34:5-17:
 1. God's slaughter of the people of Edom by His sword is figuratively described as a great sacrifice in Bozrah, an Edomite town located 25 miles southeast of the Dead Sea "where various animals were slaughtered for sacrifice," *Ibid.*; Isaiah 34:5-6.
 2. Thus, the slaughter of Edom, figuratively pictured as the sacrifice of animals in sacrifice, will be so great, the whole land will be drenched and the dust soaked with blood, Isaiah 34:7 NIV.
 3. The reason for such an immense divine slaughter is God's vengeance (Isaiah 34:8a) when He upholds the cause of His people in Zion who have been perpetually opposed by Edom's people.
 4. Isaiah 34:9-10 NIV predicts that Edom's seasonal streams would be turned to pitch, her dust to burning sulfur with the whole land becoming blazing pitch, that this fire would not be quenched night or day forever, and that the land would lie desolate from generation to generation. Since this is not how Edom's end occurred, we view this description as figurative, that just as Edom had been a perpetual foe to Israel, her end would be as lasting as the end of Sodom and Gomorrah that were destroyed by fire and brimstone (E. J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. II, p. 436-437), for Jeremiah 49:18 "states expressly that Edom will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah" so that no one will dwell there again, *Ibid.*, p. 436, fn. 18.
 5. Consequently, the desert owl, screech owl, the great owl and the raven would nest there, with God making the location of Edom a realm of chaos and desolation, Isaiah 34:11 NIV.
 6. Edom's nobles would have nothing there to be called a kingdom, and all her princes would vanish away with thorns, nettles and brambles overgrowing her citadels and strongholds, Isaiah 34:12-13a NIV.
 7. Edom would become a haunt of jackals, owls, desert creatures, hyenas, wild goats and night creatures, with owls and falcons gathering there with their mates and raising their young, Isaiah 34:13b-15 NIV.
 8. Isaiah told the reader to look in his scroll of prophecy and read to see that surely none of these creatures would be missing or lack its mate, for God's mouth had given the order and His Spirit would gather these animals there and allot them their portions so they would possess Edom perpetually, Isaiah 34:16-17 NIV.

Lesson: *As typified in God's sure, complete and lasting destruction of Israel's perpetual enemy, Edom, in the future Great Tribulation, He will administer sure, complete, lasting vengeance upon all of Israel's hateful foes.*

Application: *(1) May we not wrong others lest we face God's vengeance. (2) If we have been perpetually wronged by any one party or group of people, may we be sure that God will one day administer sure, complete lasting retribution to each and all involved, that we thus leave all vengeance for the Lord to administer, Romans 12:19-21; Deuteronomy 32:35. (3) May we examine ourselves to see if we have wronged others and repent as needed.*