



# ISAIAH 34

## GOD JUDGES HIS ENEMIES

We have heard the prophetic messages Yahweh has been giving to his people, the nations that surround them and to the distant nations who are enemies of God’s people. The Lord really raises the bar in Chapter 34. Isaiah is bringing a major announcement...to the whole world! His message is clear, God’s fury is about to be released and his plan is to “annihilate them all.” No one will escape his fury.

As Isaiah’s message unfolds, it’s clear that God’s anger will be expressed in its fullness towards the nation of Edom. The devastation in that nation will be overwhelming and that’s exactly what the Lord wants the world to see. There are also glimpses of the millennial kingdom there for the listening church can pick up on. The message is getting clearer...Good News is coming for the people of God. It’s never been more important for everyone to know to know whose team your on.

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 34:1 Draw near, O nations, to hear, and give attention, O peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that fills it; the world, and all that comes from it. <sup>2</sup> For the LORD is enraged against all the nations, and furious against all their host; he has devoted them to destruction, has given them over for slaughter. <sup>3</sup> Their slain shall be cast out, and the stench of their corpses shall rise; the mountains shall flow with their blood. <sup>4</sup> All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall, as leaves fall from the vine, like leaves falling from the fig tree.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> For my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; behold, it descends for judgment upon Edom, upon the people I have devoted to destruction. <sup>6</sup> The LORD has a sword; it is sated with blood; it is gorged with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom.</p>	<p><b>a</b> 34:4 Or “The host of heaven,” which can refer to demonic powers. See 2 Kings 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4–5; Eph. 6:10–18.</p> <p><b>b</b> 34:4 The Dead Sea scroll adds “And the valleys will be split open.”</p> <p><b>c</b> 34:4 See Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:13–14.</p> <p><b>d</b> 34:5 As translated from the Dead Sea scroll. The Hebrew is “My sword is drenched in the heavens.”</p> <p><b>e</b> 34:6 Bozrah (modern Busaira) was the capital of Edom. See Isa. 63:1–6; Jer. 49:13; Amos 1:12. Bozrah means “sheepfold.” The sacrifice the Lord offered in the sheepfold can point to the supreme sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God.</p>	<p><b>God Judges His Enemies</b></p> <p>Isaiah 34:1 Come close to me, you nations, and listen! Pay attention to me, you peoples! Let all the world hear me, the earth and all that springs from it. <sup>2</sup> For Yahweh has turned his anger toward the nations and his fury against all their armies. He has doomed them to destruction and will annihilate them all. <sup>3</sup> Their slain will be cast out, the stench of their corpses will rise, and the mountains will stream with their blood. <sup>4</sup> The heavenly powers <b>a</b> will fade away to nothing, <b>b</b> and the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll. All their mighty host will wither as leaves fall from a withered vine or fruit from a withering fig tree. <b>c</b></p> <p><sup>5</sup> The Lord says: “Indeed, my judgment-sword has appeared in the heavens, <b>d</b> and when it has drunk its fill, you will see it descend on the people of Edom, those whom I have doomed to judgment.” <sup>6</sup> Lord Yahweh has a judgment-sword dripping with blood. It is smeared with fat, dripping with the blood of lambs and goats, and covered with the fat of ram’s kidneys. Lord Yahweh has a sacrifice in Bozrah <b>e</b> and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.</p>

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<p><sup>7</sup> Wild oxen shall fall with them, and young steers with the mighty bulls. Their land shall drink its fill of blood, and their soil shall be gorged with fat. <sup>8</sup> For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> And the streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch, and her soil into sulfur; her land shall become burning pitch.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Night and day it shall not be quenched; its smoke shall go up forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever. <sup>11</sup> But the hawk and the porcupine shall possess it, the owl and the raven shall dwell in it. He shall stretch the line of confusion over it, and the plumb line of emptiness. <sup>12</sup> Its nobles—there is no one there to call it a kingdom, and all its princes shall be nothing.</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Thorns shall grow over its strongholds, nettles and thistles in its fortresses. It shall be the haunt of jackals, an abode for ostriches. <sup>14</sup> And wild animals shall meet with hyenas; the wild goat shall cry to his fellow; indeed, there the night bird settles and finds for herself a resting place.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> There the owl nests and lays and hatches and gathers her young in her shadow; indeed, there the hawks are gathered, each one with her mate. <sup>16</sup> Seek and read from the book of the LORD: Not one of these shall be missing; none shall be without her mate. For the mouth of the LORD has commanded, and his Spirit has gathered them. <sup>17</sup> He has cast the lot for them; his hand has portioned it out to them with the line; they shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell in it.</p>	<p><b>f</b> 34:7 This is likely aurochs, an extinct species of wild cattle.</p> <p><b>g</b> 34:7 Or “drunk.”</p> <p><b>h</b> 34:11 The exact meaning of the animals listed here is uncertain. Some translations include hedgehogs, pelicans, porcupines, hawks, and several types of owls.</p> <p><b>i</b> 34:12 See 1 Cor. 2:8; Eph. 6:12.</p> <p><b>j</b> 34:13 See 2 Cor. 10:3–6.</p> <p><b>k</b> 34:13 Or “dragons,” or “jackals.”</p> <p><b>l</b> 34:13 The Hebrew word for “owls” is uncertain.</p> <p><b>m</b> 34:14 Or “satyrs.”</p> <p><b>n</b> 34:14 Or “Lilith,” a female goddess known as the sexually perverse “night-demon.” The Dead Sea scroll 4Q510-511 lists Lilith among a list of demonic monsters.</p> <p><b>o</b> 34:15 See Matt. 24:28.</p> <p><b>p</b> 34:17 See Eph. 4:7, 11.</p>	<p><sup>7</sup> Cattle and young bulls will also be slain; <b>f</b> their land will be drenched <b>g</b> with blood and the dust soaked with fat. <sup>8</sup> For Lord Yahweh has a day of vengeance, a year of vindication for Zion’s cause. <sup>9</sup> Edom’s streams will be turned to pitch and its soil to sulfur; her land will become blazing pitch. <sup>10</sup> Night and day it will never be extinguished; its smoke will go up forever and ever. Through the endless ages it will lie desolate; no one will pass through it forever. <sup>11</sup> Nothing but desert hawks and wild animals <b>h</b> will live there; owls and ravens will find a home there. The Lord will stretch out over it a measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of emptiness. <sup>12</sup> It will be named No Kingdom There, and all its rulers and princes will come to nothing. <b>i</b></p> <p><sup>13</sup> Its palaces will be overgrown with thorns, its fortresses <b>j</b> with thistles and briars. It will become a haunt for demons <b>k</b> and an abode for owls. <b>l</b> <sup>14</sup> Wild beasts will mingle with wolves and goat-demons <b>m</b> will howl to one another. There too the night-demon <b>n</b> will settle in and find her rest.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> There the arrow-snake will build her nest, lay her eggs, and hatch her brood in the shadows. There too the vultures will gather <b>o</b> to breed. <sup>16</sup> Seek for Yahweh’s book and read it carefully. You will learn that none of these prophecies will fail; none will lack a fulfillment as its companion. For the Lord has issued his decree. It is his Spirit that has gathered them. <sup>17</sup> He is the one who apportioned it to them by lot, whose hand measured the share of each. <b>p</b> They will possess it for all time and dwell there throughout the ages.</p>

## BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY

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### THE LORD’S DAY OF VENGEANCE (CHAP. 34)

This chapter includes an invitation to the nations (v. 1), God’s coming judgment on the nations (vv. 2-4), and an announcement of judgment on Edom (vv. 5-17), a representative of all nations hostile to Israel.

- **An invitation to hear** (34:1)

- **34:1.** The Lord invited all nations and peoples to hear the announcement He was about to make (cf. 1:2).

- **Judgment on the whole world** (34:2-4)

- **34:2-4.** In God's judgment of wrath against the armies of all nations the dead bodies will rot on the ground. Also the stars ... will be dissolved. Catastrophic events in the sky will accompany the Messiah's return to the earth to establish His millennial reign (cf. Joel 2:10, 30-31; 3:15; Zech. 14:6-7; Matt. 24:29). However, Isaiah 34:4 may refer to the judgment of the sixth seal in the Tribulation (Rev. 6:12-13), or to the eternal state, after the Millennium, when the sun will not be needed (Rev. 21:1). Or perhaps Isaiah was speaking figuratively of a change in the whole power structure in the Millennium when human kings will be done away with and God alone will be in control.

- **Judgment on Edom** (34:5-17)

- **Isaiah used Edom as an example of God's judgment against the world.** The Edomites were descendants of Esau, Jacob's older brother. Their father Isaac told Esau he would live in an infertile area (Gen. 27:39-40). Because Edom became a perpetual enemy of Israel (cf. comments on Ezek. 35; and comments on 36:5), she was an appropriate example of what the Lord will do to all nations that fight against His people.
- **34:5-8.** God's slaughter of Edom by His sword is pictured as a great sacrifice in Bozrah (cf. 63:1), modern-day Buseirah about 25 miles southeast of the Dead Sea, where various animals were slaughtered for sacrifice. God's reason for judging Edom is that He must uphold Zion's cause (34:8). (On the day of vengeance; see 61:2; 63:4.) Having promised to bless His Chosen People, He must [Vol. 1, p. 1085] fulfill His promises. Therefore when they are attacked He goes to their aid.
- **34:9-17.** As a result of God's sword of judgment on Edom, her land will seem to be ablaze (cf. Obad. 18) with sulfur (see comments on Isa. 30:33) and burning pitch, a tar-like substance seemingly unquenchable. The land will lie desolate for many generations (34:10; cf. v. 11). Edom's cities and territories will be inhabited by wild birds and animals, which do not normally inhabit populated villages and towns. Owls (vv. 11, 13), ravens (v. 11), jackals (v. 13), hyenas ... wild goats (v. 14), falcons (v. 15), and other desert creatures (v. 14) will thrive because no people will be there (v. 12). Edom's defenses will be overgrown with thorn bushes (v. 13). The wild creatures will live in Edom from generation to generation (v. 17; cf. v. 10) because God's Spirit will so direct them (v. 16).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When most believers think back about their conversion they feel that is a move *they* made. They receive the free gift of salvation. Their life is being changed, sometimes radically. Rarely does an individual understand that they are now part of something bigger than themselves. If you were walking someone through the salvation experience, what might you share with them to help them understand a little about the "family" they are now part of?

2. When you think about the part *you* play on "team Jesus" (Sorry. I just happened to be watching the Oregon Ducks football game while I'm writing the questions.) what are some of the gifts or talents that you bring to the table?
  
3. As you think of how you function in the body of Christ, what types of people do you work best with and what personalities types are hard for you to work with? What kind of adjustments do you typically try to make with people that hard for you to work with?
  
4. Why do you think it's important for followers of Jesus to have a "working knowledge" of the End Times? What aspect of End Times study would you like to learn more about and in what setting?
  
5. As you look at the Millennium as our destiny and destination, how does this encourage you to speak hope to people? How would you articulate the central message or inspiration of this hope you share with people?