

Isaiah

The Lord Is Salvation

**A Day
Of
Vengeance**

Isaiah 34:5-17

Lesson Thirty-Seven

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

Isaiah

The Lord Is Salvation

A Day of Vengeance

In the first four verses of chapter 34, we saw the prophesy of destruction at the end of time. It was an awful picture. In the remaining verses of this chapter we read what seems to be an example of what that will look like.

The specific target of God's wrath is Edom. Some translations of the Bible call it Idumea (Id-ooo-me'-uh). These people, who were the descendants of Esau, refused to allow the Hebrews to pass through their land when they were coming from Egyptian captivity. Later they were conquered by David, King of Israel. They regained their independence and when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC, the Edomites looted the conquered city with the Babylonians. They were seen as constant enemies of God's people.

This is most likely the reason why they were chosen as the example of how God would destroy the nations. Several of the minor prophets mention the Edomites and the little book of Obadiah focuses on this nation. So, Edom becomes the symbol of all the enemies of Israel. Read Isaiah 34: 5-17.

What a gruesome picture. God's wrath is directed toward "the people I have totally destroyed." If this is a picture of the destruction at the end of time, we will see some of the oracle as symbolic...representing God's total destruction and the effects as seen through human eyes.

It is difficult to think about this oracle without having horrible, grisly thoughts. The sword of punishment is filled with blood...it is dripping off the sword. The flesh of those destroyed is still on the sword. This terrible slaughter was to take place in Bozrah. This was an important city in Edom.

It is not only people who die by the terrible sword. Animals also die and even the soil will be affected. It will be turned into burning waste land. It will be like someone spread tar all over the land and it was burning. It will be uninhabitable by humans. Nothing but owls, jackals, hyenas, wild goats, mysterious night creatures and falcons will come there. The only thing that will grow there will be nettles and brambles, (cactus and thorn bushes, maybe).

All this will take place in the Lord's "day of vengeance." This is about the most awful picture that someone of that day could imagine. As time went along, and God revealed more and more of His plan, we see this as more of a symbol, or representation, of what will really happen. We know from later prophecy, and the words of Jesus, that there will be a day of judgment when God will stop time. The book of The Revelation has many more pictures of the destruction when God finally confronts evil and ends the power of sin.

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Isaiah said that the “Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution, to uphold Zion’s cause. What is “Zion’s cause?” God has a chosen people. He will protect those people. Edom (Idumea) was the enemy of Zion...the Hebrew nation. God would take vengeance on them. The prophet saw that coming. We can apply that to anyone who has “Edomish” feelings and behavior toward God’s people.

In verse sixteen, we hear God say, “Look in the scroll and read.” More exactly, “Search the book of Jehovah...” The picture is of a person leaning over a table which bears the scroll which contains the words God had inspired His prophets to write. Very likely what is referred to here is the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Bible. (These are also called the Torah.) All male children in the Hebrew nation were required to memorize those books. The voice is urging the person listening to look carefully at what God has already said, and find there what Isaiah is saying.

All the terrible things predicted here, the destruction, the waste, the animals making their homes in what had been the palaces of the royal families...all of this is found in God’s Word. Just like God created, according to Genesis, each of the creatures mentioned here, He can assign them anywhere He wants them to be.

Another idea here. Edom and Israel were close kin. Edom descended from Esau, and Israel descended from his twin brother Jacob...later named Israel. They had the same DNA. They were family. Edom had chosen to turn their back on Israel, even go so far as to join with the enemies of Israel to seal their doom. Looking at the story of Abraham, his son Isaac and his twin sons Jacob and Esau (Genesis 21-33), we see the seed of this tragedy.

Also, Israel and Edom had made a treaty. Edom had violated that treaty. God is going to take vengeance on Edom for their sin.

For us today, we need to see how seriously God takes His Word and our responsibility to that Word. Also, we find here information about the end of time which gives us hope. God is going to see that His will is accomplished.

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

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Scripture Memory: “For the Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution to uphold Zion’s cause.” Isaiah 34:8

Lesson Goal: To encourage students to see the future as in God’s hands...to see Him at work making everything right in the end.

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Student Worksheet

A Day of Vengeance—Isaiah 34:5-17

As the teacher goes through the lesson, listen for answers to these:

1. What is the specific target of God's wrath?
2. From whom did the Edomites descend?
3. The Edomites were seen as constant _____ of God's people.
4. In what Bible book do we find many more pictures of the destruction when God finally confronts evil and ends the power of sin?
5. What is "Zion's cause?"
6. Israel and _____ had made a treaty. _____ had violated that treaty. God is going to take vengeance on _____ for their sin.
7. At the end of time, God is going to see that His _____ is _____.

Scripture Memory: "For the Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution to uphold Zion's cause. Isaiah 34:8

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.