

Isaiah 34-36

- Tonight we conclude the first part the of Book of Woes and into the story of Hezekiah
 - But before we go into Isaiah, let's take a moment to revisit a scene in Revelation 19

[Rev. 19:11](#) ¶ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

[Rev. 19:12](#) His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

[Rev. 19:13](#) He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

[Rev. 19:14](#) And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

[Rev. 19:15](#) From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

[Rev. 19:16](#) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

[Rev. 19:17](#) ¶ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,

[Rev. 19:18](#) so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

[Rev. 19:19](#) ¶ And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

[Rev. 19:20](#) And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

[Rev. 19:21](#) And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- As we know, this is the moment of Christ's Second Coming to set up His kingdom
 - His return occurs in the midst of the Antichrist's attack on Jerusalem
 - With his armies made up from the Gentile nations assembled against Israel
 - And the Lord destroys those armies in a moment

- This scene will mirror the earlier one we've been studying from Isaiah's day, when Assyria attacks Jerusalem but is defeated by the angel of the Lord
 - With that scene from Revelation 19 fresh in our minds, let's return to Isaiah 34

[Is. 34:1](#) ¶ Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples!

Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it.

[Is. 34:2](#) For the LORD'S indignation is against all the nations,
And His wrath against all their armies;
He has utterly destroyed them,
He has given them over to slaughter.

[Is. 34:3](#) So their slain will be thrown out,
And their corpses will give off their stench,
And the mountains will be drenched with their blood.

[Is. 34:4](#) And all the host of heaven will wear away,
And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll;
All their hosts will also wither away
As a leaf withers from the vine,
Or as one withers from the fig tree.

- Isaiah describes a destruction coming for "all nations"
 - We've been watching Isaiah draw parallels between the coming destruction of Assyria and the future destruction of the Antichrist's armies
 - And by the context here we know we're looking at the Antichrist
 - The references reflect a massing of nations, not simply the one nation of Assyria
 - There is a slaughter unlike anything else
 - It's reminiscent of Rev 14, where we hear of the Antichrist's defeat in passing terms

[Rev. 14:19](#) So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

[Rev. 14:20](#) And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

- Tremendous blood letting takes place at the Lord's return

- Further evidence that this is a unique time is found in verse 4
 - In conjunction with this mass death, there are remarkable signs in the heavens
 - Signs consistent with the events of Tribulation
 - So we know Isaiah is looking forward to the events of that day
- Now we have even more specifics concerning the Lord's battle in that day

[Is. 34:5](#) For My sword is satiated in heaven,
Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom
And upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction.

[Is. 34:6](#) The sword of the LORD is filled with blood,
It is sated 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
And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

[Is. 34:7](#) Wild oxen will also fall with them
And young bulls with strong ones;
Thus their land will be soaked with blood,
And their dust become greasy with fat.

- The Lord's sword is satiated in heaven means the Lord's desire for judgment will descend from heaven
 - And it descends upon the land of Edom
 - And upon a people God has devoted to the end of destruction
 - And it is used to institute a sacrifice in Botzrah, or Petra
 - This is same place that the Jewish remnant is hiding under protection
 - It's apparent that the slaughter taking place in this location is associated with the descriptions we've just seen of Tribulation
 - Apparently, the Lord's return involves a two-part battle
 - He battles forces at Botzrah and armies around Jerusalem
 - Remember when we looked ahead to Isaiah 63, we heard this:

[Is. 63:1](#) ¶ Who is this who comes from Edom,
 With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah,
 This One who is majestic in His apparel,
 Marching in the greatness of His strength?
 "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

[Is. 63:2](#) Why is Your apparel red,
 And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

[Is. 63:3](#) "I have trodden the wine trough alone,
 And from the peoples there was no man with Me.
 I also trod them in My anger
 And trampled them in My wrath;
 And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments,
 And I stained all My raiment.

[Is. 63:4](#) "For the day of vengeance was in My heart,
 And My year of redemption has come.

[Is. 63:5](#) "I looked, and there was no one to help,
 And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold;
 So My own arm brought salvation to Me,
 And My wrath upheld Me.

[Is. 63:6](#) "I trod down the peoples in My anger
 And made them drunk in My wrath,
 And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

- As we mentioned the last time we took a peek at these verses, the Lord is seen from Isaiah's perspective as he stands in Jerusalem
 - Jesus is walking northwest toward the city of Jerusalem
 - And He's already bloody from battle
 - And He fought this battle entirely by Himself
 - And as we studied earlier, Christ leads His people out of the gate from Botzrah and brings them to Jerusalem
 - And then in Jerusalem another battle takes place to save that city

[Zech. 14:1](#) ¶ Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

[Zech. 14:2](#) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

[Zech. 14:3](#) Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

[Zech. 14:4](#) In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

[Zech. 14:5](#) You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

[Zech. 14:6](#) ¶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

[Zech. 14:8](#) ¶ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

[Zech. 14:9](#) ¶ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

[Zech. 14:10](#) ¶ All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses.

[Zech. 14:11](#) People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

- Clearly, there is war waged in more than one spot during the Lord's return, and it concludes at Jerusalem
 - And this judgment is specifically as a day of vengeance for injustices against Israel
 - And it will fall particularly heavy on Edom itself

[Is. 34:8](#) For the LORD has a day of vengeance,
A year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

[Is. 34:9](#) Its streams will be turned into pitch,
And its loose earth into brimstone,
And its land will become burning pitch.

[Is. 34:10](#) It will not be quenched night or day;
Its smoke will go up forever.
From generation to generation it will be desolate;
None will pass through it forever and ever.

[Is. 34:11](#) But pelican and hedgehog will possess it,
And owl and raven will dwell in it;
And He will stretch over it the line of desolation
And the plumb line of emptiness.

[Is. 34:12](#) Its nobles — there is no one there
Whom they may proclaim king —
And all its princes will be nothing.

[Is. 34:13](#) Thorns will come up in its fortified towers,
Nettles and thistles in its fortified cities;
It will also be a haunt of jackals
And an abode of ostriches.

[Is. 34:14](#) The desert creatures will meet with the wolves,
The hairy goat also will cry to its kind;
Yes, the night monster will settle there
And will find herself a resting place.

[Is. 34:15](#) The tree snake will make its nest and lay eggs there,
And it will hatch and gather them under its protection.
Yes, the hawks will be gathered there,
Every one with its kind.

- Remember the oracle against Edom we studied in chapter 21?
 - This was one oracles of judgment for the neighbors that surround Israel
 - And the oracle against Edom was particularly harsh
 - It said that Edom would enter a deathly silence, the silence of eternal death
 - And even when the rest of the world is brought into the Light of Christ's return, this place is kept in perpetual darkness
 - Here we see Isaiah confirming again this bleak future for the land of Edom
 - There is a special judgment reserved for this land
 - Though the name Edom isn't mentioned in these verses, the earlier mention makes clear this is the region in view
 - Rivers run dry, the land turns to burning sulfur
 - A perpetual burning
 - No one ever passes through it again
 - Only wild desert creatures dwell there

- Notably in verse 11 the phrase used is the same phrase to describe the creation in it's earliest moment in Gen 1:2
- There is some reason to believe that the strange creatures described in in verse 14 are actually euphemisms for demons
 - The goat head is the symbol used by the satanic church even today
 - And the night monster is the world lilith in Hebrew
 - It means one who wanders in night places, like Jesus' comments in Matt 12:

[Matt. 12:43](#) ¶ " Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.

- And in Jewish talmudic teaching it meant female demon
- Finally, the reference to snakes in verse 15 seem to add more evidence that we're talking about the demonic realm
- That if so, it would mean the demonic realm is held in Edom during the time of the kingdom

[Is. 34:16](#) ¶ Seek from the book of the LORD, and read:

Not one of these will be missing;
None will lack its mate.
For His mouth has commanded,
And His Spirit has gathered them.

[Is. 34:17](#) He has cast the lot for them,
And His hand has divided it to them by line.
They shall possess it forever;
From generation to generation they will dwell in it.

- The chapter ends with a confirmation that these demons will be separated out and gathered into this place and remain there forever
 - The forever reference would seem to suggest that this abode becomes the Lake of Fire eventually
- Following this judgment, the next chapter explains the joy that follows for those saved at Christ's return

[Is. 35:1](#) ¶ The wilderness and the desert will be glad,
And the Arabah will rejoice and blossom;
Like the crocus

[Is. 35:2](#) It will blossom profusely
And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
The majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the glory of the LORD,
The majesty of our God.

[Is. 35:3](#) Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble.

[Is. 35:4](#) Say to those with anxious heart,
"Take courage, fear not.
Behold, your God will come with vengeance;
The recompense of God will come,
But He will save you."

[Is. 35:5](#) Then the eyes of the blind will be opened
And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

[Is. 35:6](#) Then the lame will leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.
For waters will break forth in the wilderness
And streams in the Arabah.

[Is. 35:7](#) The scorched land will become a pool
And the thirsty ground springs of water;
In the haunt of jackals, its resting place,
Grass becomes reeds and rushes.

[Is. 35:8](#) A highway will be there, a roadway,
And it will be called the Highway of Holiness.
The unclean will not travel on it,
But it will be for him who walks that way,
And fools will not wander on it.

[Is. 35:9](#) No lion will be there,
Nor will any vicious beast go up on it;
These will not be found there.
But the redeemed will walk there,

[Is. 35:10](#) And the ransomed of the LORD will return
And come with joyful shouting to Zion,
With everlasting joy upon their heads.
They will find gladness and joy,
And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

- The land itself is seen coming to life as a result of the Lord's return
 - And all the geographical references relate to Israel
 - They will see the glory of the Lord

- The feeble and exhausted will be strengthened to see the Lord coming to defend and rescue them
- Notice that important phrase in v.5
 - The ears and eyes are opened
 - A reference to the Spirit's opening of the Israel's spiritual senses so that they might know and receive the Lord
- In v.6 the Lord's arrival results in a complete physical regeneration of Israel as well
 - Which makes sense since we know that all Jews receive their new immortal bodies
 - In v.7 we see the land become prosperous again
- In v.8 there is a roadway on which the righteous of Israel walk into the holy city
 - The ransomed of Israel, those purchased by Christ's blood
 - They are walking this highway into Jerusalem
- And with that, Isaiah transitions to an account of the history of Hezekiah and the events surrounding the attack of Assyria

[Is. 36:1](#) ¶ Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.

- This chapter begins an important transition for Isaiah
 - Prior to this chapter, the book is written in Hebrew poetry
 - But here it becomes prose at least until the story of Hezekiah is concluded in chapter 39
 - Chapter 39 also marks the end of Isaiah's interest in Assyria
 - In chapter 40, the focus moves to the Babylonian judgments
 - Remember we said that the book has a two part division much like the Bible itself
 - The first 39 books of the bible are found in the OT
 - The remaining 27 books make up the NT

- A similar spit is occurring here in Isaiah
 - The first 39 books are speaking to the judgments under the hands of the Assyrians
 - Concluding with the story of Assyria coming against Jerusalem in 36-39
 - The final 27 chapters will focus on the Babylonian period
 - We'll look at how these two sections reflect the Bible later in this course
- In Ahaz's day, the Assyrians had invaded Judah in response to Ahaz's refusal to trust in the Lord, as we studied at the beginning of Isaiah
 - Now Ahaz's son Hezekiah is ruling and the Assyrians are still in the land of Judah
 - In 703 BC Hezekiah leads a revolt against Assyria expecting the Egyptians to join him having entered into a covenant
 - Hezekiah built a half mile tunnel underground to connect the city to its primary water supply
 - This protected the city's water supply from the Assyrian blockade
 - In 701 BC, King Sennacherib invaded to put down Hezekiah's rebellion
 - Egypt made a half-hearted effort to help defend Israel, but they were roundly defeated, leading Israel to fight Assyria alone
- As Assyria advanced toward Jerusalem and it was obvious that Hezekiah wasn't powerful enough to defeat Assyria, Hezekiah sues for peace
 - The Assyrian King makes demands, including expensive war reparations and a tribute, which Hezekiah pays
 - But the Sennacherib demands that the city of Jerusalem surrender and the citizens be deported
 - Hezekiah refused, and so the siege of the city began

[Is. 36:2](#) And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field.

[Is. 36:3](#) Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him.

[Is. 36:4](#) ¶ Then Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, "What is this confidence that you have?"

[Is. 36:5](#) "I say, 'Your counsel and strength for the war are only empty words.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me?"

[Is. 36:6](#) "Behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.

[Is. 36:7](#) "But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'?"

[Is. 36:8](#) "Now therefore, come make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.

[Is. 36:9](#) "How then can you repulse one official of the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?"

[Is. 36:10](#) "Have I now come up without the LORD'S approval against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'""

- The man sent out was a chief of the army
 - And they send a large army with him to ensure he intimidated Hezekiah
 - And standing at the same place that Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, made the error that resulted in the Assyrians coming into the land, they meet Hezekiah's representatives
 - Twenty years earlier Ahaz had disregarded Isaiah's word from God and now his son was suffering the consequences of that mistake
 - The Assyrian representative begins by stating the obvious
 - Hezekiah had relied on a weak ally in his rebellion
 - And now where did that leave Israel in the face of a superior enemy?
 - All this was true and in accordance with God's own promises concerning Egypt
 - But then he goes further and declares that Israel can't depend on the Lord their God either
 - In v.7 the representative says that God won't help them because Hezekiah removed the high places and altars around Israel

- They assumed that these high places were worshipping the same God
 - We know that Hezekiah removed the high places that praised false gods, which pleased the Lord
 - So the Assyrians were making a wrong assumption about the Lord
- Then to mock Israel's weakness, the official offers to give Israel 2,000 war horses if Israel even has the men to mount them
 - The is the equivalent to someone challenging another runner to a race by offering to give them a head start
 - The Assyrians are so confident of their strength, they are suggesting that they could spot Israel 2,000 horses and not lose the advantage
 - Finally in v.10, the official even acknowledges that God brought them in the first place
 - But as we've already studied, God brought Assyria to the northern kingdom of Israel, not to Judah
 - Assyrian's venturing into Judah was against God's decree

[Is. 36:11](#) ¶ Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak with us in Judean in the hearing of the people who are on the wall."

[Is. 36:12](#) But Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

[Is. 36:13](#) ¶ Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

[Is. 36:14](#) "Thus says the king, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you;

[Is. 36:15](#) nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, 'The LORD will surely deliver us, this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'"

[Is. 36:16](#) 'Do not listen to Hezekiah,' for thus says the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern,

[Is. 36:17](#) until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

[Is. 36:18](#) 'Beware that Hezekiah does not mislead you, saying, 'The LORD will deliver us.' Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?

[Is. 36:19](#) 'Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they delivered Samaria from my hand?

[Is. 36:20](#) 'Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD would deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

[Is. 36:21](#) ¶ But they were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him."

[Is. 36:22](#) Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

- This is an intriguing exchange
 - The Jewish delegation asks the Assyrian to speak in Aramaic, the language of diplomacy in that day
 - But obviously their real concern is to avoid panic among the people of Israel
 - In response the Assyrian continue to speak in Hebrew and even louder to ensure the citizens on the wall hear every threat
 - And they make a demand for surrender
 - He offers a blessing for surrender, the opportunity to return to the field
 - Followed by deportation to a "good land"
 - Finally, he argues that other peoples couldn't trust in their gods to deliver them, so why should Israel trust their god to do any better
 - But the people follow King Hezekiah's orders and give no response to the demand
 - Instead, the delegation returns to the palace in mourning for what they assume will be their fate