



Isaiah 33-34

Tape #7257
Isaiah 33-34
By Chuck Smith

So let's turn to Isaiah chapter thirty three, and continue our journey through the Bible. The thirty third chapter of Isaiah is directed towards Assyria, and it is written about the time that Assyria was defeated by God in her attempt to conquer Jerusalem.

Sennacherib, the king of Assyria had come to Jerusalem, and had demanded tribute from king Hezekiah, which he paid. It was sort of a extortion kind of thing, "Either you pay it, or we're gonna destroy you!" So Hezekiah took money out of the treasury, and he paid off king Sennacherib. But having received then the payment, he turned as if to go away, but then he returned and set up the siege against the city. Thus he broke the covenant that he had made, and he set his siege against Jerusalem.

Now Isaiah pronounces the judgment that is going to come against Assyria, in the first part of this chapter. During the time that the chapter was written, that judgment came. The Assyrians, as he began this were again arrayed in battle. They had broken this covenant, or this treaty, they had dealt treacherously with Israel, or with Judah, and king Hezekiah. So he pronounces the judgment and then the judgment came, and he then pronounces the subsequent reaction of those Jews who were in the city of Jerusalem when they saw the effect of God's judgment against the Assyrians. So he begins the chapter with a...

Woe unto you Assyria that spoils, and you were not spoiled; you dealt treacherously, but they did not deal treacherously with you! when you shall cease to spoil, you will be spoiled; and when you shall make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with you. [Then his prayer.] O Lord, be gracious unto us; for we have waited for thee: be thou their arm [That is the strength for Jerusalem, and Judah.] every morning, be thou their strength, our salvation also in the time of trouble (33:1-2).

So he is pronouncing of the woe against Assyria. They had dealt treacherously. They had been spoiling all of the nations. They had not been spoiled, they had not been defeated. So Isaiah announces, "Lord, we have waited upon you." Now that was the command of God, to just wait upon the Lord, and trust in the Lord for their deliverance. That is what Isaiah has been encouraging the king Hezekiah to do, to let God be their defense, that God would defend Jerusalem from the Assyrians. So having seen the treachery of Assyria, he is now saying, "Lord we've waited on you, be thou their arm every morning." That is, the strength to them each morning. "And be their salvation in the time of trouble." Now he is describing what took place...

At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered. ["Lord when you came on the scene, they were scattered, "the noise of the tumult".] And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them (33:3-4).

So when the Assyrians left in great haste, those that were left as you know the story from the Bible, the angel of the Lord went out into the camp of the Assyrians, and in one evening he killed a hundred and eighty five thousand of their elite troops. So that, in the morning, when the children of Israel awoke, and looked out on the battlefield, they saw all of these Assyrian corpses lying there on the field, dead. Those that did survive were fleeing.

No doubt they left tremendous spoil as the prophet said, "you will be spoiled", and they no doubt left tremendous spoil there. All the things that they had brought in preparation for battle was left there on the battlefield. All of these dead bodies that were there. So the people came out from Jerusalem, and they are described like locusts hopping around, just in pouncing upon all of the booty and spoil that was there.

For the Lord is exalted; for he dwells on high: and he has filled Zion with judgment and righteousness (33:5).

So God is being praised. The people recognize that the Lord reigns, and the Lord rules, and the Lord is exalted because of this tremendous victory that He gave to the inhabitants of Jerusalem over the Assyrians. "He has filled Zion with judgment and righteousness."

And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure (33:6).

The Bible speaks about those treasures that God has. God treasures those who fear Him. Malachi tells us that, "They who love the Lord spoke often one to another about Him." God listened in. Whenever you get together with people, and you just start talking about the Lord, and the goodness of God, God eavesdrops. He loves to hear you talking about Him! And he said, "And the Lord shall account them as His jewels in that day when He makes up His treasures." So they that fear the Lord are His treasure. They that speak often one to another of God, He treasures that.

In Ephesians chapter one, as Paul is offering his prayer for the Ephesians, he prays that they might know what is the exceeding richness of His inheritance in the saints. One of the petitions, that you might know just how much God treasures you! If you only knew how much God loves you! How much God treasures you!

What a different concept this is of God that is often painted to us, even in the pulpit! I'm afraid that many times the ministry is guilty of misrepresenting God to the people. For you see, as I stand here at the pulpit, I stand here as a representative of God, to bring you God's word. I represent God. That's an awesome responsibility! I wonder how many times God has been misrepresented.

Even as Moses who represented God as being angry with the people. "You rebels!", he cried, "Must I strike this rock to give you water again? How long are you gonna rebel against God?", and he was mad, he was angry! He smote the rock, water came out because God is gracious. But God said, "Moses, come here a second." "Bad scene!" "It's gonna have consequences Moses. You're not gonna be able to lead my people into the promised land. I've gotta teach them a lesson of representation. You misrepresented me." So we read later on that Moses was not able to lead the people into the land, because he misrepresented God at the waters of Mirabah.

I wonder how many times do we represent God as being disgusted, because we're disgusted? "You failed again. Oh come on, forget it! Get out of here!", you know and we represent God as being totally upset, and disgusted, and ready to give up. That isn't true! His mercy endureth forever! God treasures you! Paul prayed that you might know, the Ephesian church, that they might know just what was His exceeding richness of His inheritance in the saints. How much God treasures you.

You remember Jesus gave the parable, "The series on the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man going through a field, and discovering a treasure. And who for the joy thereof, goes out and sells every thing he has, so he might buy the field, so he can obtain the treasure." As we seek to unravel the mysteries of that parable, realizing that the field is the world, we must ask, "Who gave every thing to redeem the world?", or to purchase the world, and the answer is, "Jesus." "What is the purpose?" "That He might have the treasure." Then, "Who is the treasure?" As Peter said, "You are His peculiar treasure." But God treasures you peculiar as you are!

So, "They that fear the Lord are His treasure." God loves us to reverence Him, He loves us to talk about Him, He loves us to worship Him, and you become His treasure. He puts great wealth, such great value that Jesus gave Himself, sold everything, that He might purchase the field, in order that He could have the treasure.

Now Isaiah is describing at this point, the scene that was going on in Jerusalem, just before God intervened. The ambassadors had gone out, they had paid the extortion that was demanded by the king. They thought that they were off the hook, and yet Sennacherib came back, and began to make further demands which they were not able to keep. So he said...

Behold, the valiant ones shall cry in the streets, in the open: [These, these men, these leaders, were out there weeping, because they knew that the city could not really stand against the Assyrian siege.] *the ambassadors of peace* [Those that went out to make peace.] *shall weep bitterly.* [At that point] *The highways* [Were occupied by the Assyrians, they were shut in the city, and thus,] *the wayfaring man ceased:* [There weren't any travelers on the highways, they were being occupied by the enemy.] *he has broken the covenant,* [He had made a covenant, it was paid by Hezekiah, but Sennacherib broke the covenant.] *he has despised the cities,* [He's overrun all the cities.] *and he doesn't regard any man.* [He did not regard God either, as was evidenced by his letter to Hezekiah.] *The earth mourneth and languisheth:* [Because of the

destruction of the Assyrians, they had conquered all of these other peoples and nations.] *Lebanon had been conquered, it is ashamed and it has been cut down: Sharon [That beautiful plane] is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits (33:7-9).*

These fruitful areas of Israel have been made bare. So we get now God's response. It's desperate, the valiant men, the ambassadors are weeping openly. They see no hope. They see only destruction and being carried away into captivity. But the Lord declares...

Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself (33:10).

It is interesting to me that God often waits until we have exhausted every human means of deliverance. He lets time run its course, and He lets us attempt every endeavor that we can think of to deliver ourselves. He watches us as we go through these machinations of attempting to find the solution, to solve the problem. He waits until we have exhausted our own resources, mentally, physically, emotionally. When we're beat! When we are like those valiant men and ambassadors who were just weeping because, "I just can't see any way out! I've done all I know to do! There's nothing left! I tried every thing!"

God often waits for us to get in that place of, of despairing completely of self. Then He works. God says, "Alright you've had it." You're there weeping in the streets. "You've had it. Now I will exalt myself. Now I'll show you what I can do. You've done everything and it hasn't worked. You're, you're facing the, the slaughter." You're recognizing now your total ineptness and your helplessness to do anything about the situation.

Man's extremities are God's opportunities. Now don't look for that scripture, you won't find it. Ha, ha! That's one of those that should've been written because it is a truth so often demonstrated in our lives. It is not until we've come to our extremity, that God then steps in and works. I can, looking back over my life, I can look at time, after time, after time, after time, where God brought me to the extreme. For I came to the end, where there was nothing left. For I had exhausted everything I knew! I figured, "This is it!" You just sort of wait in the corner for the guillotine to fall you know, and just, (da, da, da, da!)" Then God at that time exalts Himself.

So that there is then that complete recognition and exalting of God. Because you know that you had done everything you possibly could, and nothing had worked. Now that it is just working out, you say, "Well Lord you're so good!" You don't say, "Well I knew I could! I just you know, I had the right attitude towards it, and positive you know!" No, no. You're not taking credit. You can't take credit. All you can do is give glory to God. "He came through again, alright! You're great!", you know, and that recognition that God rules!

So they had come to this place. I mean the Assyrians are there, the valiant of the soldiers are weeping in the streets. Those ambassadors, they're weeping bitterly. "It's all over! Folks this is it!" "Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself."

Remember Gideon? God trimmed it down to three hundred men. Why? Because He knew the hearts of the people. He knew that if He delivered the Midianites to the ten thousand, they would've been boasting, "what they did". So He brings them down to three hundred. Makes it absurd! In order that only God can get glory from what happened. So, He says concerning Assyria...

You're going to conceive chaff, you will bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: or as thorns that are cut up they will be burned in the fire. [The thorn bush, burns very rapidly, very hot, but it's over, it's quick.] Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my [power, my] might (33:11-13).

So they had come to their extremities. They were hopelessly waiting for the end, for the destruction that was to come from the Assyrians, and God said, "Okay, now I will move." He tells of the judgment that He will bring against the Assyrians. Which, He did. Sent the angel down, and wiped out the elite troops. When that happened...

The sinners in Zion were terrified; fearfulness had surprised the hypocrites (33:14).

Men who were dwelling in the city of God, yet sinners. They were terrified. They saw the awesome hand of God at work! They recognize that this is the hand of God at work! The fire of God has burned among the Assyrian troops. They see all of these corpses out there on the ground, having encountered the

living God, and they were terrified. Because, they said...

Who among us shall dwell with this devouring fire (33:14)?

So God is pictured in the symbol of a fire. It is one of the three symbols of God that we have in the scripture. God is love, God is light, and God is fire. Fire, as we mentioned, is a combination of light and love. We speak of the flames of passion, the heat of emotion. We know that light is impossible without heat. So God, a fire. They had seen now the devouring fire. They saw how it devoured the Assyrians, and they came into that consciousness of what the fire does to the effete. "It destroys, it devours! Thus, who among us can dwell with this devouring fire?"

The word translated "dwell", has three possible translations from the Hebrew. "Who of us can dwell in the fire? Who of us can flee from the fire?" Or, "Who of us can fight the fire?" This Hebrew word is an interesting word, and the way it is translated always is determined by the context. So in some of the places in the old testament, this Hebrew word is translated "flee", and other places it's translated "conflict". But you usually take these, these particular words that have different meanings, and you translate it according to the context, what fits in the context.

They're talking about this devouring fire, they chose "dwell". "To sojourn as a guest", the Hebrew word, but in reality they could have chosen the other word "flee". "Who of us can flee the fire, this devouring fire?" Because you cannot flee from God.

Or, they could've taken that other "fight". "Who can fight this devouring fire?" You really can't fight, though some people have chosen to fight against God. Isaiah will tell us in another place, "Woe unto him who strives with his Maker." So, "Who amongst us can dwell? Who amongst us can flee?" Or, "Who amongst us can fight this devouring fire?" He answers the question. It's sort of a rhetorical question in that it is answered by the prophet. He said...

He that walks righteously, he that speaks uprightly; he that despises ill gotten gain, he that refuses to hold bribes [Or to receive bribes.] shakes his hands from the holding of bribes, or stops his ear from the hearing of blood, evil things, and shuts his eye from seeing evil (33:15).

Then the Lord says of that person who is qualified to dwell in the devouring fire. Fire an interesting, interesting phenomena of nature in that it does consume, but it also transmits into permanency. It all depends on the material that is in the fire. You throw this pulpit in the fire, and it would be consumed! Wood. You throw grass in the fire, it's consumed, hay. Throw a bunch of scraps, they're consumed, stubble.

The Bible tells us that in that day when we stand before God, our works are gonna be judged by fire. Many of our works will be consumed. They're wood, they're hay, they're stubble, they're done with wrong motives, consumed! But those works that survive the fire, we will be rewarded for those.

Now as a child of God, I am dwelling in the fire. If you are not a child of God, you also are dwelling in the fire. But, not being a child of God, the fire is destroying you, where that fire is destroying the impurities in me. Because, I'm God's child. So the purpose of God's fire in my life, is the burning out of the dross. Those things that would destroy me.

So we read of the purifying fire, the refining process of the fire. Pig iron, in the fire, in the blast furnace, heated at three thousand degrees Fahrenheit, the slag comes to the top, it's scraped off. But that pig iron is transmitted into steel, hardened by the fire. So it all depends on your relationship with God. Those that can dwell in the fire, are those who are walking righteously, and speaking uprightly. Walking in the fear of the Lord, in fellowship with Him.

And they will dwell on high: and their place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks (33:16):

Or their defense will be in the Rock. Our defense, our strength, is in Jesus Christ, the Rock of our salvation. God will provide for them. Now it should be noted that it isn't luxurious provisions necessarily! Bread and water. The Bible says, "Having food and raiment, be content." Paul said, "Godliness with contentment is great riches." There are those today who are espousing a gospel of prosperity and the amount of diamonds and jewels that you have dripping from your fingers is a sign of your spiritual state. It really is, but not the way they think. Not a sign of great faith! It's a sign of fleshly, gaudy demonstration, which will burn when it hits the fire. So God will provide for them.

And their eyes shall see the king in his beauty (33:17):

I love that scripture! Paul the apostle, writing to the Corinthians, said, “Now we know in part, we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then shall we know even as we are known.” We shall see face to face, our Lord. We will see the King in His beauty!

and they shall behold that land [Which I believe is heaven.] that is very far off (33:17).

I think that one of the sad tragedies of the Christian is the fact that we have a very poor concept of heaven. To the extent that a lot of people are wanting to delay their entrance therein. I know that as we are approaching the day of the Lord’s return, there are many young people that think they are being cheated. “I’ve never been able to get married, or have children! What if the Lord comes before I get married! Oh no! Lord delay your coming!” What a selfish thing to pray! “Delay the misery on the earth Lord! A little more killings, more gangs, more drugs, cause I want to get married!”

We have a very, very special person in our lives. My wife’s sister, who is just such an important part of our family. She lived in the magic kingdom. At least our children thought so! Her house was magic land for them. There was always jars of candy, and everything magical. They always looked forward to going down to see her. The Lord took her home a couple of years ago. Our one daughter, even yet, you’ll see her with tears coming down her cheeks, and something has reminded her of that special person, her aunt.

So we chide her and we say, “Oh yes. Poor aunt, Eacy. Up there in heaven and all of the angels, and poor aunt Eacy, my! She doesn’t have any arthritis anymore and all of that hurt and pain that she was going through. Poor thing! Just with God, you know what a shame!” You know. It sort of puts everything in perspective that our sorrow and grief is really not “poor aunt Eacy”, “poor me!” The candy jar is empty. Ha, ha! You know, all of the input that she gave into our life is not there. She was such a wonderful supportive person, and she’s not there. She’s one that always understood. No matter what you were going through, you could talk to her, and she understood, and she could sympathize. She always had a good word of wisdom, so wise! But the grief is “poor me” grief, when it’s analyzed.

We, we don’t have the proper concept of heaven. We will see that land! We will behold the King in His beauty, we will see that land that is very far off! Now having said that, he turns back to the Assyrian. He addresses again the Assyrian.

Your heart shall meditate in terror (33:18).

“A people of deeper speech than you can conceive.” Oh no. “Your heart shall meditate in terror.”

where is the scribe? [Among the, that is the, the strategizers, those that were studying Jerusalem, those that were making notes as they were preparing to attack the city.] where is the receiver? [The one that received all of the spoil.] where is the one that was counting the towers (33:18)?

Developing the strategy to take the city? Now speaking to those of Jerusalem, he said, “You have”...

You shall not see a fierce people, a people of deeper speech than you can understand; whose stammering tongue, you do not understand. [The foreign language of the Assyrians, “you’re not gonna hear it, you’re not gonna see it.”] Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: your eyes shall see Jerusalem as a quiet habitation, [The enemy has been destroyed.] a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass by (33:19-21).

The prophet begins to wax poetic, and enters into poetic speech of, of this glorious city in the future. God’s future for the city of Jerusalem.

For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, [The Lord rules, the Lord reigns.] the Lord is our king; [We will see the king in His beauty, the Lord is our King.] and he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; [Talking again in the poetic terms of the ship.] they could not well strengthen their mast, [The, the cables that held up the mast were, were loosened, the mast wouldn’t stand.] they could not spread the sail: [Because of the mast being shaky, unstable.] then is the prey of great spoil divided; and the lame take the prey. And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity (33:22-24).

God’s blessing! Inhabitants will not know sickness!

Now the prophet saw the dark days that were going to come. Throughout the scripture, the scripture

deals with those dark days that are coming. But the scripture never ends with the dark days. The scriptures always take you beyond the dark days into those glorious days of light in the future. So yes, going through trials. Yes, you're going to have a lot of problems. There's going to be severe tribulation. But, the day of the Lord is coming, beyond! You're gonna come out on the other side!

Now, we get that as we move into chapter thirty four, because we're gonna move into some of the darkest days of man's history, as we deal with the days of the battle of Armageddon, the great wrath of God, culminating in the battle of Armageddon, as we get into chapter thirty four. Really, the way that the chapters are coming out, it's sort of, in a way, a little difficult, because you're gonna be in darkness for a week. It won't be until next week, and we get in chapter thirty five, then we come out into the light. So we're gonna leave you in the, in the darkness of the tribulation in, in chapter thirty four. I'm glad that you already know chapter thirty five, and you know the end of the story, that we do come out into the glorious kingdom age. But, before that is going to come, there is going to be a period of great tribulation upon the earth, as God's wrath and God's judgment is poured out upon the sinner, upon the iniquity of man. So...

Come near, [The prophet says, "Come near"] ye nations, to hear; hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that are in it; the world, and all of the things that come forth of it (34:1).

He is calling now everybody, the earth, "Everyone listen because this judgment of God is going to be universal on the earth!" We're hearing a lot about global strategy, and the word "global" is a buzz word today among the politicians and all. It's a significant "buzz" word, because we're moving into that one world government, and that global community and all. We're moving into that, and thus it is significant that the prophet calls for the global ear to hearken, to listen. "Come near ye nations, to hear; hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, all that are therein; and all of the things that come forth out of the world."

For the indignation (34:2)

Now I've said before, that this word "indignation", in the old testament, is the equivalent of "tribulation" in the new. The great tribulation. So wherever you read of this indignation, most, in most cases, it is a reference to that period of great tribulation that Jesus said was gonna come upon the earth. So, "The indignation"...

of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he has utterly destroyed them, he has delivered them to the slaughter (34:2).

In the book of Revelation, as it speaks of this tremendous slaughter that is coming, they cry for the birds of the earth to gather together and to feast on the carcasses, of, of the princes, and of the, of the kings, and of the mighty men of the earth, as it speaks of this horrible carnage that is gonna take place. In Revelation 19:17, "I saw the angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice to all of the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that He has prepared for you, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of the horses, and of those that sat upon them, the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." So this battle of Armageddon, ending in this horrible carnage when the blood will flow to the horses' bridle, for the length of fourteen furlongs, or fourteen hundred furlongs.

So here is, is a mention of that. "He is furious against all their armies, He's utterly destroyed them. He has delivered them to the slaughter."

Their slain also shall be cast out, and the smell will come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains will be melted with their blood (34:3).

It is figurative speech, and yet, it is speaking of this horrible time, when the blood will flow to the horses' bridles. The smell of these millions of bodies, as they are going through the process of deterioration.

And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved (34:4),

So this great judgment of God will be cataclysmic. It will not just be confined to the earth, but will be also in the heavens. Great earthquakes, great tornadoes, great meteorite showers that will hit the earth, and destroy. "The host of heaven will be dissolved."

the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. [Jesus spoke about, "the stars of heaven falling, as a fig tree casteth forth its untimely figs."] For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon

Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with a fatness, and with the blood of the lambs and goats, and the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea (34:4-6).

Now these references to Idumea, and to Bozrah and all are figurative, and they are referring to those nations that have opposed themselves to the people of God.

Now God way back, said to Abraham, as a part of His covenant with Abraham, He said, "I will bless those that bless you, and I will curse those who curse you".

Now we are told by intimation at least, in Zechariah, the twelfth chapter, that, "In these last days, the whole earth will be gathered together against Israel." I think that we are approaching that time. The United States, for its own economic purposes, and for our need of oil, is turning its back upon Israel, that has begun to develop of late.

Now right now, there is a, a reuniting of relationships, because they are going along with our strategy. They're not entering the conflict because, strategically, we're afraid that we will lose the support of the Arab nation coalition that is with us against Iraq at the present time. But Israel, though it has not as yet retaliated, notice has not at all said they are not going to retaliate, in fact they say they are! They said, "We'll do it in our time". He's not gonna force the timing of the retaliation on us.

Right now, they're playing a very wise strategic game. It's, it's garnering them millions of dollars, as they are bending to our wishes. That's why conditions are getting better between the United States and Israel, because they're submitting to our wishes. They're not retaliating, they're cooperating with us right now. But the moment they strike out on their own, and say, "You know, we'll take care of ourselves, we'll defend ourselves", then we'll turn against them again. Because it'll break up this fragile coalition of Arab states that are presently with us in the pushing of Iraq out of Kuwait.

Israel is going to do something, and perhaps very soon, that will turn the whole world against it. The thing that I am watching for, and watching carefully for, is an escalation in that conflict that is going on in the Persian Gulf. We see that Saddam Hussein is at the present time, taking desperate measures. The polluting of the waters of the Persian Gulf with the millions of barrels of oil that are dumping in, and polluting and fowling the waters, for years to come. I believe that he is desperate, and I do believe that in desperation he may indeed, put some chemical warheads on those scud missiles. I believe that when he does put chemical warheads on the missiles, and fires them at Tel Aviv, that at that point, Israel will no longer wait. But as they have said, when they do strike, it will be a heavy blow. They're not gonna be playing games. I believe that in retaliation that it is quite possible that Israel will use nuclear warheads, to obliterate Baghdad.

Now that will certainly turn again, the tide of world opinion against Israel. You remember a few years ago, the tide of the world was against Israel because they had the audacity to bomb that nuclear reactor that Hussein was building, in order that he could make nuclear bombs himself. Now we're glad that they did it. We say, "Boy isn't it great that they went in and bombed that place?", you know! The interesting thing, they had the smart bombs in that time, at that time, and they dropped the bombs right down the stacks of those nuclear reactors. They blew up inside, down inside. They, they dropped them right down inside the stacks. The whole world was condemning Israel for that act of, of aggression against Iraq, where they were just protecting their own interests. Now again, God is gonna judge those nations that have turned against Israel. God said, "I will curse those that curse you."

So this chapter deals with these nations and, and of which Idumea becomes the sort of classic example. For the Idumeans have always been the perpetual enemy of Israel. Throughout history they're, they're representative of, of those nations that are perpetual enemies to the people of God, or enemies to the people of God, to Israel. Thus, God said, "I will bless those that bless you, I will curse those that curse you." I challenge you to look at history, and look at those nations that have cursed Israel and see what has happened, and look at those nations that have blessed Israel, and see what has happened. But the final result is yet to come.

So, the day of the Lord's vengeance, verse eight. Well, he lists um, "the sword of the Lord is filled with blood, fat", and so forth. "Bozrah and the great slaughter of Idumea."

The unicorns [verse seven] shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, [God is judging now.] the year of recompenses for the controversies of Zion (34:7-8).

God is now moving in judgment for His people. Verse nine I find extremely fascinating.

The streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, [Or tar, oil, crude oil.] the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land [there shall] thereof shall become burning [oil, or] pitch (34:9).

Pitch which is the oil. It is the tar. It was actually the fact that the Bible mentions that the ark was covered with pitch. Noah built the ark, and he covered it with pitch. Well, Rockefeller, in reading the Bible, in reading that thought to himself, "Covered it with pitch! That's interesting that there was pitch!", knowing that it is tar, "there must be oil over there". That's what caused Rockefeller to go over there and start drilling for oil! Thus, the vast oil reserves were discovered by him reading the Bible!

So, "The streams thereof shall be turned to pitch". That's very interesting in light of what is happening right now. It is interesting also that in the war in 1967, the terrorists, and the Syrians were planning to blow up that oil pipeline that comes across the northern part of Israel, to the coast, to bring the oil Middle East oil, in this big pipeline, flows through Israel under this treaty. They were planning to blow up the pipeline up in the northern portion.

If you know geography of Israel, the northern most portion of the, of the Huleh valley, which is the upper Galilee region, where the head waters of the Jordan river come. The Baniyas River, and the Dan River, and the Hasbani River, all join together to make the Jordan River. The word "Jordan", means "down from Dan".

So the tribe of Dan was up there in the north, the river came down from Dan, and so the "Jor-Dan", down from Dan. But it's actually made up of three rivers, and the one, the Baniyas, comes right out of the base of Mount Herman. In the place known as Baniyas. In the Bible times, it was known as Caesarea-Philippi, where Jesus was with His disciples, at the time of His transfiguration. But right up in that area of Baniyas, where the Baniyas River comes down, they were planning to blow up the pipeline, and dump millions of gallons of oil on down into the Jordan river, that would've flowed down into the Dead sea, and would've wreaked horrible ecological damage on Israel. Then they were planning to just ignite the thing. So you'd have a river of fire. That almost happened!

The Israelis caught the men who were trying to come in and to blow up the pipeline, and the men were destroyed, and Israel was saved from this holocaust that would've been, had they carried out that plan. But that is mentioned here as a strategy of war! So it is interesting that they are using oil as a strategy for warfare now, but it'll go one further step as they turn the oil into these stream beds. "The streams shall be turned into pitch", oil, "the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land shall become burning pitch."

It will not be quenched by night nor by day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: ["For ever", being figurative speech I'm sure.] from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. [So it speaks of the area that will be made so desolate.] But the wild animals, the cormorant, the bittern, the wolf, the raven will dwell in it: will stretch the line of confusion, on the stone of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, all of her princes shall be nothing. Thorns [Weeds, and all] will grow up in that area where the palaces were, and in the fortresses: it will be a habitation of [Demons, actually] dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the hairy one shall cry to his fellow; [The demons] the screech owl shall rest there, and find herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather her shadow: [In other words, it'll be inhabited only by wild animals.] and under the shadow there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate (34:10-15).

Now having given this prophecy of horrible desolation and all, he then declares...

Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read (34:16):

At that time he's saying, "Hey just get this book out and read it. You'll find out. You know, you'll see it now, and just read about it then." It's interesting how that so many times as we read the Bible, the daily events come alive. We realize what an amazing book the Bible is, speaking of future events, before they ever take place. Here's the challenge, that when these things happen, "Then seek out the book of the Lord", and it

is interesting that it is referred to as, "the book of the Lord", the Bible, "and read".

because not one of these things shall fail (34:16),

Now one of these days, we'll have another Bible lesson, and we will be looking back on these events, and we'll say, "You see, this was what Isaiah was talking about. You see right there what he was talking about! Now you see it over there, the rivers of pitch.", and the whole thing. "Not one of these shall fail." Not one of the scriptures. Not one word that God has said shall fail. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will never pass away". God's word is certain! God's word is steadfast! God's word is sure! Not one word of this prophecy shall fail! As God said, "I said it and I will do it." That which He was talking about, He has already done. We've seen that. That's one of those that's already checked off.

none shall want her mate: for my mouth it has commanded, and his spirit it has gathered them. [God said, "Not anything is gonna be lacking, it will all come together, there won't be any missing pieces, for I have commanded, and my Spirit is putting it together."] And he has cast the lot for them, and his hand has divided it unto them by line (34:17):

Now the line was usually used in the matter of construction. You, you set out your lines for the corners of the buildings and so forth, and all. It's usually thought in the terms of construction. Laying out the lines where you're gonna build. But this is the laying out of the line for where you're gonna destroy. The line for destruction. "I've divided it unto them by line."

and they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation they shall dwell therein (34:17).

That is, the wild animals and all, and not be a dwelling place for man. So that desolation that will follow that great battle of Armageddon, when God destroys the armies of man.

As I say, don't wait all week in darkness. Go ahead and read on. You're allowed to do that you know. Come out into the light of chapter thirty five. Thirty five is a very special chapter to me. God has used this chapter to minister to my own soul in an hour of great need, in an hour of great sorrow. God ministered to me through the thirty fifth chapter. It's become one of my favorite chapters because of the way the Spirit of God used it to minister to my heart, at a time of great need in my own life, personally. Thus the thirty fifth chapter is one that I cherish. I just am waiting for God to fulfill this. He shall! He said it, He'll do it. Not one word is going to fail!

Again, I'd like you to join with me as we hold up our troops that are over in the Persian Gulf, and that whole situation there. Let's pray together.

Father, we take comfort in the fact that You are in control, and that You work out Your will in spite of man. Lord, our hearts are concerned for our men that are there, as we are now hearing more and more, the seeming necessity to deploy the land troops, in order to drive the Iraqi's out of Kuwait. Lord we've been warned, and told that this is going to be costly in lives, the expenditure of lives. Thank You Father for those men that are over there risking their lives, hazarding their lives, and some of them, giving their lives for this cause. Lord we do feel that it is a righteous cause, given the character of Saddam Hussein. So we ask Lord, your blessing upon our troops. That in this hour of care, hour of war, the hour of facing a formidable foe, that they might turn in their hearts to You, and seek Lord, Your salvation. May they open their hearts to Jesus Christ. Lord we thank You for the thousands of letters that have been sent from Christians, encouraging these men, giving them the plan of salvation. Encouraging them to turn their hearts, and their lives over to you. Lord we, we thank You for those reports that we hear of the men that are accepting and those that are being baptized, and those who are committing their lives. Lord, we thank You for the fact that it has stirred our nation, and people are going back to church, and people are seeking You. But God, accomplish in this now Your purposes. Be with our men, minister to them Lord by Your Spirit. Encourage them, in Jesus' name, Amen.