

**Is. 34:1** Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

Continuing in his poetic style, Isaiah proclaims God's call for the nations and peoples of the earth to hear His message. Obviously, all the peoples being addressed could not hear the message at that time; they didn't have television and satellites to make that possible. The message from God was pertinent to them nonetheless; and, if I am correct, then those to whom it would be applicable would get the opportunity to hear this message as the scripture is proclaimed throughout the world.

**Is. 34:2** For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

**Is. 34:3** Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

This very much sounds like what is usually referenced as the battle of Armageddon to me. Revelation 19 describes this as a time when the vultures are called to the great supper of God to feast on the armies of the Antichrist that will be slain in the battle.

*Revelation 19:17-18* And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

Revelation 14 references this as a time of great bloodshed; so much blood is shed that it reaches the horses bridles.

*Revelation 14:20* And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

The following verses just help cement the timeframe in my understanding.

**Is. 34:4** And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.

We know that these events haven't occurred yet, and Revelation 6 associates these events with events that occur just before Jesus returns as King. (See journal on Revelation.)

*Revelation 6:13-14* And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

**Is. 34:5** For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

**Is. 34:6** The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

“my sword” = the Word of God

*Revelation 19:15* And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

*Hebrews 4:12* For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword....

The sword in verse 5 is connected to a curse, a pronouncement of judgment; this also affirms that He is speaking of His Word. How is the Word personified? In Jesus.

*John 1:1&14* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

The Sword, The Word, will be bathed (fill, satiate) in the heavens. Every eye will see Him.

*Revelation 1:7* Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.

*Revelation 19:11-13* And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

I have always been taught that the Lord would return to earth at the Mount of Olives; Zechariah 14 was always quoted and tied in to Acts 1 in teaching this scenario. For a long time I stayed confused about how that could be true and still make sense of other verses that indicate He is coming from Bozrah.

*Zechariah 14:3-4* Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

*Acts 1:9-12* And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

I finally realized that I needed to listen to the Word and not to men. Zechariah is stating that the Lord will stand on the Mount of Olives and cause a great valley to form leading into Jerusalem. It doesn't say it is the first place His foot will touch. The verses in Acts are emphasizing that just as Jesus left in a cloud, He will come in a cloud. Just as Jesus left visibly, He will return visibly. It does not say that He will return first to the Mount of Olives; it is just describing how He will return—not where.

The land of Idumea is the same as the land of Edom. Bozrah was the capital of Edom. Edom is also the location of Petra, where many believe the remnant of Israel will be preserved through the last part of the tribulation. This appears to be supported by the prophet Micah:

*Micah 2:12* I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.

The book of Daniel also informs us that the lands of Edom, Moab, and most of Ammon (most of what is today called Jordan) will not be subject to the Antichrist.

*Daniel 11:41* He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

Jesus' return to planet earth will be to the cries of His people for salvation; and if the major remnant is located at Petra/Bozrah, it would make sense for Him to go there first. Finally, Isaiah 63 began to make sense to me. (Much of my understanding came with the help of Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum and his essay on THE CAMPAIGN OF ARMAGEDDON found at [www.raptureready.com](http://www.raptureready.com).) I admit that there is much I still don't understand and look forward to more study on the subject.

The Hebrew defines "sacrifice" (v6) as "slaughter." I believe this is a reference to the enemies that Jesus will kill as He rescues the remnant being preserved there.

**Is. 34:7** And the unicorns 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.

Both Easton's Bible Dictionary and Webster define the *unicorn* as a very powerful animal of ancient times; the Hebrew references a wild bull. This verse seems to be saying that even the mightiest in the land will have their blood spilled when God's day of judgment comes.

**Is. 34:8 For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.**

Why is this judgment coming? To exact God's vengeance on the nations for their treatment of His people and the nation of Israel. This vengeance is directed to all nations, but verse 5 indicates that He will strike Edom first.

**Is. 34:9 And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.**

**Is. 34:10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.**

As a result of this first battle of the last stand of the Antichrist and his armies, the land of Edom will be wasted. I'm not sure what would cause water to turn into pitch (asphalt, called bitumen in its soft state; what we would call tar). The dust will become like sulphur. Both of these substances facilitate fire and heat; they also bring to mind the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19). The land of Edom will become totally uninhabitable and will remain that way throughout the millennium. I think the phrase "none shall pass through it for ever and ever" is a direct reference to one of the reasons for its judgment. When the Israelites had asked permission to pass through the land of Edom on their journey from Egypt to Canaan, but they were forbidden passage (Joshua 11).

**Is. 34:11 But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.**

**Is. 34:12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing.**

**Is. 34:13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls.**

**Is. 34:14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.**

**Is. 34:15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.**

These verses continue to describe the total devastation of Edom. It will become a land for the wild animals. Never again will this land support men or be a royal kingdom of princes and nobles.

**Is. 34:16 Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.**

**Is. 34:17 And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.**

Verse 16 is beautiful. It is an affirmation from God through His prophet that He is establishing a book for His people--a book that would affirm His truth, that book being the Word of God, the Bible. Every prophecy given by God will come to pass just as He has foretold. Just as the animals in the previous verses have mates/companions, each of God's prophecies will have a fulfillment. These prophecies have come from the mouth of God, and He will ensure their fulfillment.

God is the one that has given this land to the animals, and they will possess it without interference from man from that point on.

I continue to be amazed at the many witnesses of His truth that God gives man. He is making every effort to get us to accept Him as our Lord, to get us to turn to Him in repentance and recognize Him as The Authority in heaven and on earth. He has been so careful to provide so many details and has been so patient and longsuffering in His desire to enjoy fellowship with us. In contrast, I can look back over my own life and see how easily I have lost patience with those I love most and reacted in anger or frustration instead of love. What an awesome God we have!!!