

(The Word for Today) Isaiah 34:4 - Part 3

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith explores Isaiah 34's prophetic message of judgment and the hope of restoration for Jerusalem and its people.

Duration: 25:59

Scripture: Isaiah 34:4, Isaiah 34:16-17, Matthew 24:35

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the future events that will occur before the glorious kingdom age. He emphasizes that there will be a period of great tribulation and God's wrath and judgment will be poured out upon sinners. The prophet calls for everyone to listen and warns that this judgment will be universal on the earth. Pastor Chuck also mentions the significance of the global community and the one world government that is being established. He concludes by mentioning that the next chapter will delve into the darkest days of man's history, the battle of Armageddon, but assures that there is hope and blessing on the other side.

Transcript

Welcome to The Word for Today. The Word for Today is a continuous study of the Bible taught by Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently teaching from the Old Testament, and if you're following along in your Bible, we'll be continuing today in Isaiah chapter 34, beginning with verse 4, as we continue with an in-depth message entitled, Woe to the Nations.

And now with today's study, here's Pastor Chuck. Where is the one that was counting the towers, developing the strategy to take the city? And 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 going to hear it, you're not going to 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. The prophet begins to

wax poetic and enters into poetic speech 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 loose, talking again in the poetic terms of the ship. They could not well strengthen their mast.

The cables that held up the mast 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 the great spoil divided, and the lame take the prey. And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick. People that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

God's blessing. Inhabitant will not know sickness. Now the prophet saw the dark days that were going to come.

And 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 going to come out on the other side. Now we get that as we move into chapter 34, because we're going to 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 34.

Really, the way that these chapters are coming out, it's sort of, in a way, a little difficult because you're going to be in darkness for a week. It won't be until next week we get into chapter 35 that we come out into the light. So we're going to leave you in the darkness of the tribulation in chapter 34.

I'm glad that you already know chapter 35 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 calls.

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.

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 buzzword today among the politicians and all.

It's a significant buzzword because we're moving into that one world government and the global community and all. And 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.

Now I've said before that this word indignation in the Old Testament is the equivalent of tribulation in the New, the great tribulation. And 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 going to 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. 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 the princes and of the kings and of the mighty men of the earth as it speaks of this horrible carnage that is going to take place.

In Revelation 19, 17, I saw the angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice saying to all of the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together under the supper of the great God. That is 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.

And so this battle of Armageddon ending in this horrible carnage when the blood will flow to the horse's bridle for the length of fourteen furlongs or fourteen hundred furlongs. So here is a mention of that. His fury is 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.

It is figurative speech and yet it is speaking of this horrible time when when the blood will flow to the horse's bridles and 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. And 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 hosts 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 Basra and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

Now these references to Idumea and to Basra 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 Abraham the whole earth will be gathered together against Israel. And so this chapter deals with these nations and of

which Idumea becomes the sort of classic example for the Idumeans that have always been the perpetual enemy of Israel throughout history. They are representative of those nations that are perpetual enemies to the people of God or enemies to the people of God to Israel.

And thus God said I will bless those that bless you. I will curse those that curse you. And 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 the Sower of the Lord is filled with blood, fat and so forth.

Basra the great slaughter in the land 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. God is now moving in judgment for his people.

And 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 thereof shall become burning oil or pitch.

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 and reading that thought to himself covered it with pitch. That's interesting.

If there's pitch knowing that it is tar there must be oil over there. And that's what caused Rockefeller to go over there and start drilling for oil. And thus the vast oil reserves were discovered by him reading the Bible.

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. And 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 Hula Valley which is the upper Galilee region where the headwaters of the Jordan River come.

The Banias River and the Dan River and the Chutzpahni River all three join together to make the Jordan River. The word Jordan means down from Dan. And so the tribe of Dan was up there in the north.

The river came down from Dan and so the Jordan. But it's actually made up of three rivers and the one the Banias comes right out of the base of Mount Hermon. In the place known as Banias 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 Banias where the Banias 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 have flowed down into the Dead Sea and would have wrecked horrible ecological damage on Israel. And 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 and who were trying to come in and to blow up the pipeline and the men were destroyed. But and Israel was saved from this holocaust that would have 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 will go one further step as they turn the oil into the stream beds. The stream 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 or by day. The smoke thereof shall go up forever, forever being figurative speech I'm sure. From generation to generation it shall lie waste.

None shall pass through it forever and ever. And so it speaks of the area that will be made so desolate. But the wild animals and the cormorant, the bittern, the owl, the raven, the deer, the sheep, the raven will dwell in it, will stretch the line of confusion on the stones 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 the 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 beast of the desert shall meet with the wild beast of the island and the hairy ones shall cry to his fellows. 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, everyone with their mate. Now having given this prophecy of horrible desolation and all, he then declares, seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read.

At that time he's saying just hey, 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 and we realize what an amazing book the Bible is, speaking of future events before they ever take place.

And 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. Now one of these days we'll have another Bible lesson and we will be looking back on these events and I'll say, you see, this is what Isaiah was talking about. You see right there he was talking about and now you see it over there, the rivers of pitch.

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. And 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 going to 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.

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 and all and it's usually thought in the terms of destruction. Laying out the lines where you're going to build but this is the laying out of the line for where you're going to destroy the land the line for destruction.

I've divided it unto them by line and they shall possess it forever from generation to generation. They shall dwell there in that is the wild animals and all and not be a dwelling place for man. So that desolation that will follow the great battle of Armageddon when God destroys the armies of man.

Pastor Chuck Smith will return with a few closing comments but first I'd like to remind you that today's message is available in its unedited form on cassette or CD. Simply write or call and ask for ordering details on tape or CD number C3257. Again that's tape or CD number C3257.

Well Christmas time is soon approaching and it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season. Buying presents, decorating, cooking, the list grows longer every day. Without realizing it we can easily forget the true meaning of why we celebrate our Lord's birth.

For this reason the word for today would like to present a booklet by Pastor Chuck Smith entitled How Can a Man Be Born Again? And also an audio CD entitled Why? by Pastor Chuck that would be the perfect compliment for Christmas cards and gifts this year. Both resources share the gospel of Jesus Christ and explain the true meaning of Christmas and why a man born 2000 years ago can still affect the world today. And best of all they contain a message leading people to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

And remember the word for today would like to assist you this Christmas in spreading the gospel of Jesus to your family, friends, and co-workers. Please call our customer service department to help you in finding that perfect gift that will reflect the true meaning of Christmas. And if you call right now and mention this radio ad, the word for today will give you a 20% discount on any resource carried by the word for today.

So call the word for today at 1-800-272-WORD or write to us at P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, CA 92628. Once again that number to call is 1-800-272-9673. And for those of you that would like to visit our website you can do so at www.twft.com. Or if you would like to email us you can do so at info@twft.com. Well coming up next time on the word for today, Pastor Chuck will be continuing his fascinating study through the book of Isaiah.

That's coming up next time on the word for today. And now with a few closing comments, here's Pastor Chuck. 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 35th 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. And thus the 35th chapter is one that I cherish.

I just am waiting for God to fulfill this. And He shall. He said it, He'll do it.

And not one word is going to fail. This program is sponsored by the word for today. The radio ministry of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, California.

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