

# Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

## Bible Study Notes: Isaiah Chapter 33 - 35

4/16/14

### Chapter 33 Study Notes

#### Distress and Help - Verses 1-12

**1** Woe to you, O destroyer, you who have not been destroyed! Woe to you, O traitor, you who have not been betrayed! When you stop destroying, you will be destroyed; when you stop betraying, you will be betrayed. **2** O LORD, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress. **3** At the thunder of your voice, the peoples flee; when you rise up, the nations scatter. **4** Your plunder, O nations, is harvested as by young locusts; like a swarm of locusts men pounce on it. **5** The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. **6** He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure. **7** Look, their brave men cry aloud in the streets; the envoys of peace weep bitterly. **8** The highways are deserted, no travelers are on the roads. The treaty is broken, its witnesses are despised, no one is respected. **9** The land mourns and wastes away, Lebanon is ashamed and withers; Sharon is like the Arabah, and Bashan and Carmel drop their leaves. **10** "Now will I arise," says the LORD. "Now will I be exalted; now will I be lifted up. **11** You conceive chaff, you give birth to straw; your breath is a fire that consumes you. **12** The peoples will be burned as if to lime; like cut thorn bushes they will be set ablaze."

**33:1** The "destroyer" is Assyria. Assyria continually broke its promises, but demanded that others keep theirs. It is easy to put ourselves in the same selfish position, demanding our rights while ignoring the rights of others. Broken promises shatter trust and destroy relationships. Determine to keep your promises; at the same time, ask forgiveness for past promises you have broken. Treat others with the same fairness that you demand for yourself.

**33:2** These are the words of the righteous remnant who were waiting for God to deliver them from their oppression.

**33:5** When Christ's kingdom is established, Zion (Jerusalem) will be the home of justice and righteousness because the Messiah will reign there. As a light to the world, the new Jerusalem will be the Holy City (Revelation 21:2).

**33:9** These fruitful, productive areas would become deserts. Lebanon was known for its huge cedars. Sharon was very fertile. Bashan was very productive in grain and cattle. Carmel was thickly forested.

#### Distress and Help - Verses 13-24

**13** You who are far away, hear what I have done; you who are near, acknowledge my power! **14** The sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling grips the godless: "Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?" **15** He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes, who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil-- **16** this is the man who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. His bread will be supplied, and water will not fail him. **17** Your eyes will see the king in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar.

**18** In your thoughts you will ponder the former terror: "Where is that chief officer? Where is the one who took the revenue? Where is the officer in charge of the towers?" **19** You will see those arrogant people no more, those people of an obscure speech, with their strange, incomprehensible tongue. **20** Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken. **21** There the LORD will be our Mighty One. It will be like a place of broad rivers and streams. No galley with oars will ride them, no mighty ship will sail them. **22** For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; it is he who will save us. **23** Your rigging hangs loose: The mast is not held secure, the sail is not spread. Then an abundance of spoils will be divided and even the lame will carry off plunder. **24** No one living in Zion will say, "I am ill"; and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven.

**33:14-16** These sinners realized that they could not live in the presence of the holy God, for he is like a fire that consumes evil. Only those who walk righteously and speak what is right can live with God. Isaiah gives examples of how to demonstrate our righteousness and uprightness: We can reject any gain received through extortion and bribes, refuse to listen to plots of wrong actions, and stay away from evil. If we are fair and honest in our relationships, we will dwell with God, and he will supply our needs.

## Chapter 34 Study Notes

### Judgment Against the Nations - Verses 1-17

**1** Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! **2** The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their armies. He will totally destroy them, he will give them over to slaughter. **3** Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the mountains will be soaked with their blood. **4** All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree. **5** My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends in judgment on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed. **6** The sword of the LORD is bathed in blood, it is covered with fat-- the blood of lambs and goats, fat from the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in Edom. **7** And the wild oxen will fall with them, the bull calves and the great bulls. Their land will be drenched with blood, and the dust will be soaked with fat. **8** For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution, to uphold Zion's cause. **9** Edom's streams will be turned into pitch, her dust into burning sulfur; her land will become blazing pitch! **10** It will not be quenched night and day; its smoke will rise forever. From generation to generation it will lie desolate; no one will ever pass through it again. **11** The desert owl and screech owl will possess it; the great owl and the raven will nest there. God will stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of desolation. **12** Her nobles will have nothing there to be called a kingdom, all her princes will vanish away. **13** Thorns will overrun her citadels, nettles and brambles her strongholds. She will become a haunt for jackals, a home for owls. **14** Desert creatures will meet with hyenas, and wild goats will bleat to each other; there the night creatures will also repose and find for themselves places of rest. **15** The owl will nest there and lay eggs, she will hatch them, and care for her young under the shadow of her wings; there also the falcons will gather, each with its mate. **16** Look in the scroll of the LORD and read: None of these will be missing, not one will lack her mate. For it is his mouth that has given the order, and his Spirit will gather them together. **17** He allots their portions; his hand distributes them by measure. They will possess it forever and dwell there from generation to generation.

**34:5** The Edomites shared a common ancestry with Israel. The Israelites were descended from Jacob; the Edomites from Jacob's twin brother, Esau. Edom was always Israel's bitter enemy. The destruction of Edom mentioned here is a picture of the ultimate end of all who oppose God and his people.

**34:16** Isaiah referred to the prophecies that God commanded him to write down as the "scroll of the LORD." Whoever lived to see the time of Edom's destruction would need only to look to these prophecies to find agreement between what happened and what was predicted. Prophecy predicts and history reveals what has been in God's mind for all time.

## Chapter 35 Study Notes

### Joy of the Redeemed - Verses 1-10

1 The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, 2 it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God. 3 Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; 4 say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." 5 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. 6 Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. 7 The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. 8 And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. 9 No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, 10 and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

**35:1-10** In chapters 1-34, Isaiah has delivered a message of judgment on all nations, including Israel and Judah, for rejecting God. Although there have been glimpses of relief and restoration for the remnant of faithful believers, the climate of wrath, fury, judgment, and destruction has prevailed. Now Isaiah breaks through with a vision of beauty and encouragement. God is just as thorough in his mercy as he is severe in his judgment. God's complete moral perfection is revealed by his hatred of all sin, and this leads to judgment. This same moral perfection is revealed in his love for all he has created. This leads to mercy for those who have sinned but who have sincerely loved Jesus and put their trust in him.

**35:1-10** This chapter is a beautiful picture of the final kingdom in which God will establish his justice and destroy all evil. This is the world the redeemed can anticipate after the judgment when creation itself will rejoice in God. Chapter 34 spoke of great distress when God will judge all people for their actions. Chapter 35 pictures the days when life will be peaceful at last and everything will be made right. Carmel and Sharon were regions of thick vegetation and fertile soil. They were symbols of productivity and plenty.

**35:8-10** This "Way of Holiness" is the way that righteous pilgrims will take from the desert of suffering to Zion (Jerusalem). It is found only by following God. Only the redeemed will travel God's highway; they will be protected from wicked travelers and harmful animals. God is preparing a way for his people (those who walk in his ways) to travel to his home, and he will walk with us. God never stops at simply pointing the way; he is always beside us as we go.