

Chapter 59 of Isaiah told us of Israel's unfaithfulness, but ended with God's faithfulness to save them and His promise to judge their enemies who are His enemies as well. Chapters 60 through 62 told us of the coming Kingdom of God. The first six verses of 63 tell us what will take place between the salvation of the Jewish people and the setting up of the kingdom, in other words, the details of the promise given through Isaiah in 59:19b. <sup>19b</sup> *For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the LORD drives along.* Isaiah 59:19b (NIV) What imagery of Jesus' zeal for justice!

<sup>1</sup> *Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save."* Isaiah 63:1 Edom was in what is today Jordan. Edom was settled by the older twin brother of Jacob whose name was Esau but was also called Edom. The name comes from Adam, which means "red." Bozrah means sheep pen. It is a small village today near Petra. Much of what I will share in this sermon is speculation, trying to understand the Bible's prophetic details of the end-times.

The Edomites were often enemies of Israel. This passage may be using Edom to refer to all of the enemies of the Lord, in which case Armageddon and Edom would be the same. However, I'm going to present a different scenario. Since Bozrah was the capitol of Edom, I believe it is speaking of that literal location in today's Jordan.

When we look at the passages about Armageddon, that final battle of the world gathered against Jesus, Joel chapter 3, and Revelation 19, there are a number of terms that show up in this chapter of Isaiah. Common terms include, treading the winepress, wrath of God, all the nations, and great quantities of blood. The problem I encountered is that Edom is southeast of Israel and Armageddon is in northern Israel.

Isaiah chapter 34 gives us this same language of this Day of Vengeance but says the slaughter takes place in Edom (Isaiah 34:6). <sup>6b</sup> *For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom.* Isaiah 34:6b (ESV) Whenever I find what appears to be contradictions, I search for the way to bring it all together into a more complete picture (2 Timothy 2:15). Those who don't believe the Bible just say it is proof that the Bible isn't inspired by God. Those of us who do believe it is inspired by God seek to understand what points we are missing. One side says they know it all. The other says they need to know more (Proverbs 22:4).

For example, the gospels list a different group of women going to Jesus' tomb (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1). The skeptic says, "Aha! See the error." The believer says, "Oh, that woman was there also." To the believer it is proof that the writers didn't collaborate to make up a story. To the skeptic, it is evidence they fabricated the story. We see the same thing but come to different conclusions. Actually, both conclusions are faith based

**Commented [PW1]: Isaiah 34:6 (ESV)**  
<sup>6</sup> The LORD has a sword; it is sated with blood; it is gorged 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, a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

**Commented [PW2]: 2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV)**  
<sup>15</sup> Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

**Commented [PW3]: Proverbs 22:4 (ESV)**  
<sup>4</sup> The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life.

**Commented [PW4]: Matthew 28:1 (ESV)**  
<sup>1</sup> Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

**Commented [PW5]: Mark 16:1 (ESV)**  
<sup>1</sup> When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.

as neither of us were there. It helps to know that Jewish writers often only included the individuals they thought were essential to their account.

In our first verse, we are confronted with a question from the watchman on the wall in the last chapter (Isaiah 62:6). We are quickly given an answer. Who is this, coming from Edom in splendid clothing stained red, marching in great strength? He is the One giving the revelation to Isaiah. He is the One who is speaking in righteousness. He is mighty to save. The angel told Joseph to name the child Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). We know He will eventually save this world from the forces of evil. He is the ultimate superhero who rescues us.

Right now, Jordan/Edom is mostly Muslim, but it is a fairly safe haven for Christians as far as Middle Eastern countries go. We are welcomed to visit Petra. Refugee camps there are sometimes infiltrated by radicals, but Jordan keeps a close eye on it. So why would there need to be a slaughter in Edom? As we watch Russia in league with Iran invading Syria, we are seeing end-time predictions fall into place (Ezekiel 38:14-16). Russia now has a base from which to invade Israel. But this situation in Jordan doesn't quite seem to fit prophecy, at least not yet. Things can change suddenly as we have recently seen.

*<sup>2</sup> Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress?*

Isaiah 63:2 The watchman asks Jesus why His splendid apparel is red like someone who has trod the winepress? Now we have a clear link to the battle of Armageddon.

*<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. <sup>13</sup> He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. Revelation 19:11-13 (ESV) <sup>15</sup> From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. Revelation 19:15 (ESV)*

If we weren't sure He is Jesus from the description in verse one, we now know He is Jesus from this cross-reference. Jesus is the Word made flesh (John 1:14). His apparel is red because it is dipped in blood. He has fought the nations of the world at Armageddon. But if I understand these passages correctly, the battle is not over.

*<sup>3</sup> "I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me; I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath; their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained all my apparel. Isaiah 63:3 The winepress was Armageddon, a great valley where numerous wars in history have been fought. Today it is a rich farmland. Though Jesus brings us with Him (Revelation 19:14), He alone does the fighting, just as He did when the armies came against King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:15-17). But there may be an additional winepresses in the Kidron Valley and Bozrah.*

**Commented [PW6]: Isaiah 62:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest,

**Commented [PW7]: Matthew 1:21 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

**Commented [PW8]: Ezekiel 38:14-16 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> "Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say to Gog, Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day when my people Israel are dwelling securely, will you not know it?

<sup>15</sup> You will come from your place out of the uttermost parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great host, a mighty army.

<sup>16</sup> You will come up against my people Israel, like a cloud covering the land. In the latter days I will bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

**Commented [PW9]: John 1:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Commented [PW10]: Revelation 19:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

**Commented [PW11]: 2 Chronicles 20:15-17 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> And he said, "Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.

<sup>16</sup> Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Jeruel.

<sup>17</sup> You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you."

*<sup>4</sup> For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. <sup>5</sup> I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me.* Isaiah 63:4-5 Some people will be troubled by the vengeance of God and the bloody scene described in Isaiah, Joel, and Revelation. We would like to think the best of others and be merciful. That is a good thing. Mercy and grace are wonderful attributes. But we should understand that these armies that have gathered to fight against God will be the epitome of evil. They will see the Lord from heaven and be determined to try and kill Him. They want nothing to do with goodness and righteousness. There is no struggle in their hearts. They have chosen to take a stand against their Creator and reject the salvation offered to them. To offer grace to those who have given themselves over to evil can become enabling of that evil (Proverbs 3:7). Discernment is so important.

**We struggle with the wrath of God because we don't recognize the horror of sin.** What is the consequence of one sin? Let's look at the first one (Genesis 3:6). Eve disobeyed God. What was the result? All the pain and suffering throughout the ages of mankind! If we could erase all that and put you or me in her place, would it be any different? If we erased all the consequences of sin to this day and could start again, sinless, it wouldn't take long to equal the suffering and pain of our times. Think of it, every person violated, every heart broken, every loved one lost to death, every sickness and injury, every malnourished child, all of it and more, including the crucifixion of our Maker, all are the compounding repercussions of one sin.

People refuse the Holy Spirit's conviction and harden their hearts against seeing sin's damage in their own lives, or, once they have seen it, become hardened and refuse to repent. Would heaven be heaven with them present? If they refuse to be changed by the Holy Spirit, they would infect heaven with the same suffering we have on earth. That is why those who reject the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts must be separated from God and the heavenly realm (Matthew 7:23). And from where will their torment come? It comes from being with one another. I wish it wasn't so. God wishes it wasn't so. But He will not force His will upon them. He can only offer grace and give them faith to repent, but they must choose to apply it. I realize some may not agree with this, but I would ask you to consider that it is God's will that none perish (2 Peter 3:9)? How could God be love if He merely determined they were doomed without giving them the opportunity to repent and enabling them to do so (1 John 4:8)?

This understanding helps me as I read these horrific passages. God is just. He's also loving and merciful. That is why He calls that day of vengeance the year of redemption, or we could translate it "the year of the redeemed." The world will be redeemed from evil that has ruled it for so long. It is for the sake of the redeemed and for His glory that He rids the world of evil. Satan's authority in the earth will be suspended. And this is where Bozrah comes in. Why does Jesus have to go from Armageddon to Bozrah?

**Commented [PW12]: Proverbs 3:7 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

**Commented [PW13]: Genesis 3:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

**Commented [PW14]: Matthew 7:23 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

**Commented [PW15]: 2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

**Commented [PW16]: 1 John 4:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Remember Bozrah means "sheep pen." It is a town just outside of Petra. Many believe that the saints of the tribulation will be miraculously cared for in Petra for the last three and a half years of the tribulation, during God's wrath on the earth (Revelation 12:6). Edom, Ammon, and Moab somehow escape the anti-Christ's hand (Daniel 11:41). It may be that the anti-Christ, hearing of the defeat at Armageddon, sends forces to wipe out God's sheep pen. That would account for the slaughter of the forces gathered against those kept by God at Petra.

Then Jesus, followed by the saints, marches up the Kidron Valley to take Jerusalem (Micah 2:12-14). This is what the watchman, Isaiah, was prophetically seeing in the beginning of the chapter. That would also be when the Jews see Jesus coming and the remnant of surviving Jews converts and joins the battle against the remaining force of the anti-Christ in Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:5-10). The anti-Christ and false prophet are captured and thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20).

*<sup>6</sup> I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.* Isaiah 63:6 The closing description of God's wrath seems to coincide with the victory over those final forces of the anti-Christ outside the gates of Jerusalem (Revelation 14:20). The Kidron Valley may be what the prophet Joel calls the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2). It is the valley in which the blood of the sacrifices from the altar of God flowed. Then it will flow with the blood of the final forces of the anti-Christ. With those who outright resist God now annihilated, Jesus will set up His throne in Jerusalem. From there He will reign as the King of kings as we have seen in the previous three chapters.

My understanding of the order of these events may be incorrect. Search the Scriptures. Read other opinions written about that time and these passages. God warned Daniel that the prophecies he received would be sealed until the end-times (Daniel 12:4). Of some things we can be certain, Jesus will return for His own. He will judge those who reject His love and grace. He will reign on the earth to give the survivors of the Great Tribulation every reason to receive Him as Lord. When the final judgment examines each and every soul, there will not be one who had a legitimate excuse to reject the salvation Jesus so graciously offers us.

It's not a fantasy. It's the fulfillment of the prophetic passages, many of which have already come to pass. Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would be born of a virgin, minister in northern Galilee, be rejected, be put to death for our sins, buried in a rich man's tomb, rise from death, Gentile nations would put their hope in Him, and that He'd be called Mighty God. Isaiah correctly predicted every one of these unique details of the first coming. These final few chapters we've been studying will just as surely come to pass in as much detail. We'd be foolish to think otherwise.

What difference should this make in our lives today? When I'm wronged, this climax of man's rule of the earth gives me a different perspective. If I have the heart of God, I

**Commented [PW17]: Revelation 12:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

**Commented [PW18]: Daniel 11:41 (ESV)**

<sup>41</sup> He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites.

**Commented [PW19]: Micah 2:12-13 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in its pasture, a noisy multitude of men.

<sup>13</sup> He who opens the breach goes up before them; they break through and pass the gate, going out by it. Their king passes on before them, the LORD at their head.

**Commented [PW20]: Zechariah 12:5-10 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through the LORD of hosts, their God.'

<sup>6</sup> "On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves. And they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem.

<sup>7</sup> "And the LORD will give salvation to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not surpass that of Judah.

<sup>8</sup> On that day the LORD will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD, going before them.

<sup>9</sup> And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.

**Commented [PW21]: Revelation 19:20 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.

**Commented [PW22]: Revelation 14:20 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

**Commented [PW23]: Joel 3:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land,

will long to see those who wronged me come to Jesus and know the same forgiveness that I know. It makes me realize that I don't need to react or try to take things into my own hands. God declares that vengeance is His. He will repay (Romans 12:19). That is because only He knows the heart of any individual. He knows if there is hope or if they will never receive His grace.

It should give us an eternal perspective. This life is a drop in the ocean of eternity. In the end, it won't matter what titles we have or our net worth. Everything is going to change. We don't have to be anxious about ISIS, or the decline of morality in our nation, or world conflicts. We know where it is all headed. Those with humble hearts who are willing to receive the grace and forgiveness offered to us through Jesus' sacrifice will reign with Him over the earth.

Those who resist all goodness and who love violence and power will face the wrath of the Lamb and be defeated. That's what we love about every good story. The bad guy gets what he deserves and the good people live happily ever after. Only our happily ever after is filled with meaning and purpose, new adventures, but most of all with a love which we will forever find to satisfy our deepest longings.

Every one of us is on one side or the other. It depends on what we have done with Jesus, with the conviction of the Holy Spirit. We accept His conviction and realize how evil we have been, or we resist and declare we are just fine without God. We accept the fact that Jesus died for our sins and receive His forgiveness, or we say we don't need it. We let the Spirit of God change us, or we insist we don't need to change. Which will it be for you?

#### Questions

- 1 What are the terms common in the final war?
- 2 Who does the watchman see coming? How do you know?
- 3 Where has this One been?
- 4 What did He do at Armageddon? Why?
- 5 Is God too vengeful? Why or why not?
- 6 Where does He go next? Why?
- 7 Where does He lead His sheep?
- 8 Where might the final winepress be?
- 9 What happens after justice is served?
- 10 What does it mean to us today?

#### Commented [PW24]: Romans 12:19 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."