

**Isaiah 6-39**

God will rule over a new, perfect and eternal creation

**Ch 6-12**

God will rule with goodness and power, replacing human kings

**Ch 13-27**

God will destroy evil and dismantle this creation

**Ch 28-35**

God will instantly reverse bad and sad situations to become happy and glad

**Ch 36-39**

Human kings cannot enable long-term happiness

**Isaiah 34-35 (NIVUK)**

**34** 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!

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is on all their armies.

He will totally destroy<sup>a</sup> them, he will give them over to slaughter.

<sup>3</sup> Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will stink; the mountains will be soaked with their blood.

<sup>4</sup> All the stars in the sky will be dissolved and the heavens rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shrivelled figs from the fig-tree.

<sup>5</sup> My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends in judgment on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

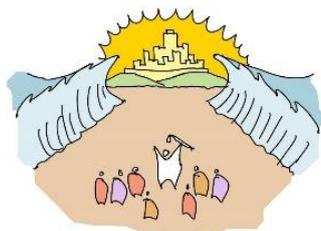
For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution, to uphold Zion's cause.

<sup>9</sup> Edom's streams will be turned into pitch, her dust into burning sulphur; her land will become blazing pitch!



**Sunday 21 December 2025**

**God's 2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus:**

**1. Destruction of enemies...**

**(34:1-17)**

- a slaughter of everyone

- (even skies!)

**Edom**

Edom is the nation that comes from Esau, Jacob's twin brother (Genesis 33:4-16).

Edom was very hostile to Israel during the 1<sup>st</sup> Exodus (Numbers 20:14-21, Amos 1:11-12).

The prophets associate the defeat of Edom with the return God's eternal Davidic king (Amos 9:11-12; Ezekiel 34:23 & 35:1-15).

- desertification

<sup>a</sup> The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the LORD, often by totally destroying them. The ESV opts for *devoted to destruction*.



**Andover  
Bible  
Church**

**Isaiah 28-35**  
 Bad situation  
 ↓  
 God reverses  
 ↓  
 Happy outcome

28:1-6 Ephraim's self-trust ↓ Remnant's God-trust	28:7-13 "God's word is nonsense!" ↓ "I'll give you nonsense!"	28:14-29 "We trust in death!" ↓ "No, you will not!"	29:1-8 Jerusalem besieged ↓ Enemies made to disappear	29:9-24 Blind Judah cannot see God ↓ Judah can see God!	30:1-33 Judah's trust in Egypt leads to disaster ↓ God powerfully rescues Judah and blesses them
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- animals will flourish in place of humans

<sup>10</sup> It will not be quenched night or day;  
 its smoke will rise for ever.

From generation to generation it will lie desolate;  
 no one will ever pass through it again.

<sup>11</sup> The desert owl<sup>b</sup> and screech<sup>b</sup> owl will possess it;  
 the great owl<sup>b</sup> and the raven will nest there.

God will stretch out over Edom  
 the measuring line of chaos  
 and the plumb-line of desolation.

<sup>12</sup> Her nobles will have nothing there to be called a kingdom,  
 all her princes will vanish away.

<sup>13</sup> Thorns will overrun her citadels,  
 nettles and brambles her strongholds.

She will become a haunt for jackals,  
 a home for owls.

<sup>14</sup> Desert creatures will meet with hyenas,  
 and wild goats will bleat to each other;  
 there the night creatures will also lie down  
 and find for themselves places of rest.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> He allots their portions;  
 his hand distributes them by measure.  
 They will possess it for ever  
 and dwell there from generation to generation.

**35** The desert and the parched land will be glad;  
 the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

**2. ...then a journey through a luxurious desert! (35:1-10)**

<sup>b</sup> The precise identification of these birds is uncertain.

<u>31:1-9</u> Judah trust in human Egypt ↓☆☆ God brings divine power to rescue	<u>32:1-8</u> Oppressed by injustice ↓☆☆ Ruled by a righteous King	<u>32:9-20</u> Judah faces judgement for her complacency ↓☆☆ God gifts his Holy Spirit	<u>33:1-24</u> Judah suffers under an unjust destroyer ↓☆☆ God rescues Judah and becomes her forever-King!	<u>34:1-35:10</u> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus</b> God brutally destroys <i>all</i> enemy nations... (34:1-17) ...and leads his people through a <i>verdant</i> wilderness! (35:1-10)
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Like the crocus, <sup>2</sup> it will burst into bloom;  
 it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

- **verdification!**

The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,  
 the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;  
 they will see the glory of the LORD,  
 the splendour of our God.

- **visible God!**

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the feeble hands,  
 steady the knees that give way;

<sup>4</sup> 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.’

<sup>5</sup> Then will the eyes of the blind be opened  
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

- **no disabilities!**

<sup>6</sup> 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.

- **oasisification!**

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> And a highway will be there;  
 it will be called the Way of Holiness;  
 it will be for those who walk on that Way.

- **easy and safe travel!**

The unclean will not journey on it;  
 wicked fools will not go about on it.

<sup>9</sup> No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast;  
 they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,

<sup>10</sup> and those the LORD has rescued 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.

- **celebrations!**



Isaiah 1-5 <b>Introduction</b> How can one be spared judgement and live happily ever after?	Isaiah 6-39 <b>New Creation</b> God will rule over a new, perfect and eternal creation	Isaiah 40-55 <b>New relationship</b> God will restore his people from exile to a permanent relationship	Isaiah 56-66 <b>Who</b> God will choose the humble and reject the proud
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**Main usage of ‘desert’: testing period now**

The main way the Bible uses *desert* motif is to describe a *period of testing* for God’s people. This testing often includes gruelling conditions (sand, heat, sweat, scarcity of provisions) the believer is to endure in faith, as part of preparation to enter God’s ‘promised land’.

- Israel’s journey to Canaan  
Numbers 1-36; Deuteronomy 1-11; Joshua 5
- Believers’ journey to the New Creation  
Psalm 95; 1 Corinthians 10; Hebrews 3-4, Revelation 12:6, 12:14, 17:3.

(Jesus also faced testing in the wilderness in Matthew 4 and Luke 4. Unlike Israel, he did not enter a ‘promised land’. Rather, Jesus went through Israel’s desert-test and passed, becoming Israel’s faithful representative and enabling their redemption.)

**Alternate usage of ‘desert’: the upgradedness of eternal life**

Isaiah 35 uses the *desert* motif in a different way, describing how *upgraded* the 2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus will be compared to the 1<sup>st</sup> Exodus.

This alternate usage of *desert* is not describing the current experience of a believer, but instead uses metaphor to describe how much better eternal life will be compared to life in our current cursed world (e.g. deserts in this creation have sand that is ‘coarse, and rough, and irritating, and it gets everywhere’).

Perhaps a modern analogy for this upgrade would be flying long-haul in 1<sup>st</sup> class instead of in economy class!

This *upgraded desert* motif appears mainly in Isaiah, e.g. 40:3-5, 43:19-20, 49:8-11, 51:11, but also appears in e.g. Hosea 2:14-15.

**For reflection**

Diagnostic

1. The Bible is often extremely clear about *judgement day* and *eternal life*, but Christians rarely reflect on these doctrines. For what reasons might this be? What about for you personally?

Devotional

2. Are there parts of Isaiah 34-35 that struck you? Are there parts you need God’s help to hear?

3. What parts of life in this cursed creation do you look forward to God *decisively reversing*?