

**Isaiah 33:20 – 34:4, 8**

Haftarah for the ending chapters of the Book of Exodus.

**Isaiah 33:20** - "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, 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."

(This verse was also included earlier in the haftarah for **Exodus 38-39**)

solemnities = *mow`ed* - appointed feast days

habitation = *naveh* - abode, habitation, also the Temple (see above)

tabernacle = *ohel* - tent, specifically here the tent that formed part of the Tabernacle covering

stakes and cords - terms relating to the Tabernacle construction

The church, Christ's body, members in particular, knit together in love by pins and cords that cannot be broken.

Contrast with this:

- **Jeremiah 10:20** - "My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains."

**Isaiah 33:21** - "But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."

- **Ezekiel 47:1-5** - "Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. ... a river that could not be passed over

- **Joel 3:18** - "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim."

"wherein shall go no (war)galley with oars" - it is a spiritual river of life, God's presence. But also, no invading enemy will be able to use it to attack.

**Isaiah 33:22** - "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us."

The Targum is, "the Lord is our Judge, who brought us by his power out of Egypt; the Lord is our teacher, who gave us the doctrine of the law from Sinai; the Lord is our King, he will redeem us, and take vengeance of judgment for us on the army of Gog;"

**Isaiah 33:23** - "Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey."

Better as the NET has it: "Though at this time your ropes are slack, the mast is not secured, and the sail is not unfurled, at that time you will divide up a great quantity of loot; even the lame will drag off plunder."

The Targum agrees with this nautical metaphor: "at that time (when vengeance shall be taken on Gog) the people shall be broken with their own strength, and they shall be like to a ship whose ropes are broken; and there is no strength in their mast, which is cut down, that it is not possible to spread a sail on it; then shall the house of Israel divide the substance of the people, the multitude of a prey and spoil; and although the blind and the lame are left among them, they also shall divide the multitude of the prey and spoil."

But really, I think this is referring to the Tabernacle that has fallen down.

ropes = *chebel* - from a root that means to twist - a rope, or cord

mast = *toren* - a pole, could be a mast of a ship or a pole holding up an ensign or banner.

sail = *nec* - usually translated standard or ensign, but really it's the pole on which the banner is hung.

**Isaiah 33:20** - "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords (*chebel*) thereof be broken."

- **Jeremiah 10:20** - "My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains."

The idea is that when the Tabernacle of David is again raised up ...

- **Amos 9:11** - "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:"

...and God's final victory is achieved:

- **Zephaniah 3:8** - "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

...like at Israel's departure from Egypt, when they "spoiled" the Egyptians, there will be so much valuable loot that even the lame will be able to find and collect the plunder.

Rashi - the lame: Israel, who were weak until now.

**Isaiah 33:24** - "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

"This shows that sin is the sickness meant" - *John Gill's Exposition*

The Targum and other sages apply this to the times of Messiah.

### **God's fury against Edom / The Flesh**

**Isaiah 34:2** - "For the indignation of the LORD is on all nations, and his fury on all their armies: he has utterly destroyed them, he has delivered them to the slaughter."

- **Revelation 16:4** - "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

- **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."

**Isaiah 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."

It's interesting that this is the haftarah for the end of Exodus, when the Torah scroll would be rolled back up.

**Isaiah 34:8** - "For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy (or the cause) of Zion."

The long-delayed day of retribution and vindication would arrive at last, the balancing of the books, the making right or every wrong.

The Targum has "the year of recompense, to take vengeance of judgment for the injury of Zion."

Compare **Isaiah 61:2** - "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;"

Jesus stopped before quoting this part of the passage at the Nazareth synagogue. It was to come.

God's anger (day) is short-lived, his mercy is infinite (year)