

Isaiah Chapters 63-64 Summary - John Karmelich

Title: The "ticked off" Jesus and what that means for us!

When most people think of Jesus, they tend to picture a "sun-tanned carpenter" going around Israel and doing miracles while forgiving people of their sins. The only time we ever read Jesus being angry, was when He chewed out their religious leaders in essence for ignoring how God is to be worshipped. We all realize He'll forgive ALL our sins for trusting in full His payment, but it still doesn't explain why when Jesus returns, He's angry and does a literal one-man war against Israel's enemies! If you've studied end time stuff, we think of Jesus just ruling from Israel after the "Revelation bad stuff" and whoever's alive at that must deal with it! I also realize the prophet Amos 3:7 wrote, "God does nothing except what He reveals to His servants the prophets!"

One of the things that always puzzled me is I thought when Jesus returns, He will come to the spot that He left from in Israel. Yet, in these chapters we read of Jesus first returning to Edom (Jordan today) as He literally is a "one man wrecking crew", destroying Israel's enemies there. I thought, why there, and why just them, let alone returning to Israel to rule? I'm well aware there's a "play on words" as Edom is the word for red and the Messiah is described as having red-stained garments. Still, why there and why then? I also wondered given all the Jewish hatred in history why is that generation worse to deserve all that? I realize God's God and if He wants to wipe out Israel's enemies at any time in history, He can do that! So, what's the deal here? Remember God made an unconditional promise that He'd rule the world one day from Israel. To be honest, many people won't like it! God wiping out one of Israel's traditional enemies "across the street" is the reminder to the world He's not to be messed with! Bottom line, Jesus returns there first and then to the land of Israel in triumph! Oh, one more thing, Chapter 63 states Jesus will wipe out all of Israel's enemies, so it's not just an "anti-Edom thing"!

The short version of these two chapters is describing the fact (not the reason) when Jesus returns Edom (again Jordan today) is a "pit-stop" before returning to the land of Israel. Most of these two chapters is Isaiah praising God for this to occur and even chewing out the Israelites for not "getting it", as they for the most part historically have turned their backs on God. Remember Isaiah wrote this before they got taken into captivity, yet Isaiah describes Solomon's temple as being destroyed as the Babylonians did a complete job of that about hundred years after Isaiah wrote this!

Again, I pondered why Edom and why is God more mad at them on that day than all others throughout history? First, we live in an era of instant information around the world. Jesus "wiping out" an enemy of Israel by himself, would certainly make everyone else think twice about taking Him on. Even when there's a large attack on Israel as part of the Revelation saga, you'd think people would learn not to take God on! I can understand (but disagree) with atheists. I have a hard time understanding why someone wants to fight God in a battle. To state a famous quote, "Your arms are too short to box with God"! It leads to the other question, of why Edom versus everyone else historically who tried to wipe out Israel as a nation? It's a reminder that if there is no hell, the world is an unfair place to live! One reason that I'm convinced the Bible is the Word of God is that 30% of it is predictions, many of which already did come to pass. Therefore, I trust in God's end time promises given that history.

OK John, you're preaching to the choir about trusting God. If I believe all that will occur one day, how does any of it affect my life here and now? It comes back to what God calls us to do, use our lives as a witness for Him! If Jesus is going to rule the world one day people need to know that to avoid hell, let alone ending up like those in Jordan when Jesus returns! Consider that the first thing Jesus did after He

was resurrected was give a seven-mile (while walking) Bible study focusing on prophecy (Luke 24:13-25). Just saying if Jesus can open people's hearts to Him by explaining how the Old Testament applies to Him, it should be a lesson for us on witnessing to people!

With all that out of my system, time for details! It opens by asking who's coming from Edom? Again, that refers to the land just east of the Southern Kingdom of Israel. Remember, Isaiah wants to comfort the Jewish nation that despite their sins and turning from Him, He'll keep His unconditional promise to rule the world from Jerusalem, so He wants us to take comfort in the fact the battle belongs to Him. He alone will defeat Israel's enemies and win in the end. OK, good for Israel one unknown day. How does any of that affect me and all I'm dealing with? Think of it as a reminder that God will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). If God's keeping His unconditional promises to Israel, doesn't that indicate He will ALSO keep His unconditional promises to us Christians? The good news for them is also good news for us who are putting our trust in Jesus for our salvation!

Bottom line, the first six verses of Chapter 63 ask "who is this coming from Edom?" It's obvious that's a Messianic reference as Verse 6 says, "I trampled the nations in my anger". No human would be able to do that by themselves. So, it's messianic! By Verse 7 Isaiah focuses on prayer and praise for all this. The underlying point is the Israelites when Isaiah lived turned from God, just as we battle with our old nature to live as He desires. The related point is God is doing this because He made the unconditional promise that He'd rule the world from Israel, and let's be honest, it means conquering those who aren't crazy for that to happen! Verse 10 even mentions the Holy Spirit that He was grieved by Israel turning from the fact they were called to be a witness for God despite all the miracles they've seen!

All this leads to what hopefully is an obvious question. If the rest of the text here in Chapter 63 and 64 is a big prayer of gratitude for what God's going to do one day, why pray for it to happen? My favorite Bible prayer is in Daniel 9, where he knew God said the Babylonian captivity ends after 70 years, yet it is the focus of his prayer to ask God to forgive His people for their sins. I love that prayer because God literally interrupts that prayer to answer it. I'm convinced God loves when we say how grateful we are for guiding us closer to Him and asking for forgiveness even though we KNOW He's already done that in our lives. In effect that's the rest of the text of these two chapters. Begging God for forgiveness and thanking Him for what He will do in our lives DESPITE all our sins of not living as He desires. I know God forgives when we ask! Asking makes us aware of our sins and turning to Him for forgiveness is a reminder of our gratitude for Him and a reminder that like Isaiah are called to use our lives as a witness for Him no matter the results. Remember Isaiah got rejected by His own people for what he said. Text outside the bible states Isaiah was sawn in two by an Israel king for what he preached. Does that mean a horrible death is awaiting us as well? Some are called to be martyrs for Jesus. To me that's an easier life than being asked to preach Jesus our entire lives no matter what!

OK now that I scared everybody half to death, let me talk a bit more about the text! Among the things Isaiah states is that the Israelites in that day (again when Jesus shows up) is they'll recall how God did lead Israel in history. In other words, these events whenever they occur will make it obvious the Bible is the Word of God and He does keep His unconditional promises to that nation! By Chapter 64 we're back to begging God to "keep His word". Again, it reminds me of Daniel 9 prayer, (about a 100 years later) in that both cases we ask God to keep His unconditional promise. Why? It gets our focus on the things He wants to accomplish (again on His timing)! Even if this never occurs in our lifetime, we are still using our lives to get our focus on God and use our lives for His glory! Of course, I can recite the specifics of the 63-64 prayer and praise, but the key thing for us to realize is God WILL do all that He said He will do on His timing. Our job is to be a witness for Him and use our lives to glorify Him.

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on one of the links below. It is still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for you reading this. The rest of this email is links to questions you may have. If you're new here, realize you're always welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again for reading this!