

# Sermon Study Questions

**Sunday, March 22, 2026**

1. Read Isaiah 34-35
2. After having Assyria square in its crosshairs for past few chapters, Isaiah now turns his attention to the whole world (v.1). In doing so, he goes on to specifically address Edom, which typifies the world. What does the bible mean by *world* in this context? Why is Edom identified as typifying the world? What other nations in Scripture are used to typify the world?
3. These two chapters are taken together to deliver the bad news to the world (ch.34) and then the good news (ch.35). In that regard, we have here a statement of the Law (ch.34) and the gospel (ch.35). The bad news comes in two parts, telling the nations that God is enraged at them and will judge them. Why is He enraged at them? What are some of the ways His judgment expressed in the here and now? (Think about what we've seen in Isaiah, as well as what we see in places like Romans 1 and the book of Revelation). How will His judgment be expressed at the end of the age?
4. Isaiah also makes it clear that the bad news is certain. What does he allude to in the text that makes it certain?
5. Though it is not pleasant to hear bad news, why in general is it important to hear bad news? In thinking about the bad news of ch.34, why is it critical that the nations hear this specific bad news?
6. Sometimes there isn't anything you can do about the bad news, but the bad news is just bad news. But the bad news of ch.34 isn't like that as it is followed by the good news of ch.35. In order to introduce the good news Isaiah uses the imagery of an arid, dreary, doom-filled desert (34:11-15) suddenly becoming a lush and fruitful garden (35:1). In v.2 Isaiah says "They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God," followed in v.4 by him saying that God will come and save you." So, this incredible change is brought about by God coming to His

people visibly in order to save them. This is a clear reference to the incarnation. How do we know this is what Isaiah is talking about? Look at v.4-6 then at Matthew 11:1-6.

7. Seeing Jesus changes everything! Even though Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, we still see Him. How? In v.3-4 we see the change that seeing Him brings about in this life. How is this change described? How has seeing Him changed the way you see life, death, yourself, your circumstances, world events, and other people?

8. Seeing Jesus doesn't just change things for us in this life, but it also changes our destiny (v.9-10), as seeing Him (i.e. embracing Him by faith as He is set forth in the gospel), leads us into the New Creation. How is this New Creation described? How does one become a part of it?

9. V.8 gives us a promise, but also gives an invitation to the nations to enter into Zion, saying it "shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk in the way." Is this saying that living a holy life gets a person into heaven? (I really hope none of you say, "Yes"). So, knowing it's not saying that, what is Isaiah saying here? How are sinners made clean so that they can pass over this highway to Zion?

10. Pray!

#### **Reading of Law: Hebrews 12:1-2**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

#### **Prayer of Confession:**

Our Father in Heaven, you are a God who is full of grace and mercy; a God who remains faithful even when we are faithless. We thank you this morning for our Savior, Jesus Christ, as He is our righteousness and the One who enables to stand faultless in your presence. As your Word says, it is from His fullness have we have all received grace upon grace. And yet for as wonderful as

our Savior is we confess we are prone to take our eyes off of Him and focus on ourselves. We confess that we are easily entangled with all kinds of sins, whether in word, in thought, or in deed. We sin by omission, failing to do what you command, and we sin by commission, doing what you forbid us to do. These sins are no small thing, but they bring shame to you and pain to us and to those whom we love. Moreover, we weigh ourselves down with all manner of weights, filling our lives with things that don't profit us, but instead hinder us in the life of faith and make us less fruitful in our kingdom work. Father, forgive us, cleanse us, and sanctify us, for our heart's desire is to be free from these weights and sins so as to run with endurance the race that is set before us. Please give us this grace for the glory of your name and the name of your Son Jesus, who has been given the name above all names; the only name given among men by which we may be saved. It is in His name, the mighty name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

### **Assurance of Forgiveness: I Cor.1:4-9**

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus,<sup>5</sup> that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge--<sup>6</sup> even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you--<sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you<sup>a</sup>wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>8</sup> who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>9</sup> God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Heidelberg Catechism: Lord's Day 29**

Q78. Do, then, the bread and the wine become the real body and blood of Christ?

A. No, but as the water in Baptism is not changed into the blood of Christ, nor becomes the washing away of sins itself, being only the divine token and assurance thereof, so also in the Lord's Supper the sacred bread does not become the body of Christ itself, though agreeably to the nature and usage of sacraments it is called the body of Christ.

[1] [Matt. 26:29](#). [2] [1 Cor. 11:26–28](#). [3] [Ex. 12:26–27](#), [43](#), [48](#); [1 Cor. 10:1–4](#).

Q79. Why then does Christ call the bread His body, and the cup His blood, or the New Testament in His blood; and the Apostle Paul, the communion of the body and the blood of Christ?

A. Christ speaks thus with great cause, namely, not only to teach us thereby, that like as the bread and wine sustain this temporal life, so also His crucified body and shed blood are the true meat and drink of our souls unto life eternal; but much more, by this visible sign and pledge to assure us that we are as really partakers of His true body and blood by the working of the Holy Spirit, as we receive by the mouth of the body these holy tokens in remembrance of Him; and that all His sufferings and obedience are as certainly our own, as if we ourselves had suffered and done all in our own person.

[1] [Jn. 6:51–55](#) (See Question 76). [2] [1 Cor. 10:16–17](#) (See Question 78).

#### **NT Reading: Matthew 11:1-6**

When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities. <sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we <sup>b</sup>look for another?" <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."