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## Isaiah 34

The best exegetical aid to ISAIAH 34 and 35 is given in D&C 133. Ibn Ezra explains that this prophecy revolves around the Messianic period, or in other words, it is eschatological. Cheyne suggests that the subject of this chapter “is the Divine judgment upon the world.” Division into kingdoms of glory will be a vital part of that judgment. Govett says: “The opening verses of [ISAIAH 34] are an appeal to ‘ALL NATIONS’ to listen. It is, therefore, some prophecy that concerns the whole world. Therefore it is yet future, since nothing has occurred that at all comes up to the descriptions of the text.” From the Sperry Symposium we read: “The Lord revealed to Isaiah that as the Millennium begins dramatic physical changes will occur on the earth and in the heavens ... It may be that the changes on the earth, of which Isaiah spoke, will cause the heavens to appear to move above the inhabitants of the earth as if the stars in the heavens are actually falling” (*The Sperry Symposium Voices of Old Testament Prophets: The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, p.71). When the earth is moved back into the presence of God, as we discussed in ISAIAH 24:20, these phenomena would be seen under that light (see Brigham Young, JD, 17:143). Principles of Eternal Marriage are laid out. About ISAIAH 34 & 35 Bishop Lowth says: “These two chapters make one distinct prophecy; an entire, regular, and beautiful poem, consisting of two parts: the first containing a denunciation of Divine vengeance against the enemies of the people or church of God; the second describing the flourishing state of the church of God...” Nägelsbach suggests that some of the same sublime language that we find in the second half of Isaiah can be found in these chapters. Nyman suggests that the last two verses of ISAIAH 34 better belong with ISAIAH 35. Perhaps more than the last two, as we shall see, seem to point to the glorious promises to those who abide the highest law, even that of Celestial glory.

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vv. 1–8. Our beloved Prophet Joseph Smith encouraged us thus: “When I contemplate the rapidity with which the great and glorious day of the coming of the Son of Man advances, when He shall come to receive His Saints unto Himself, where they shall dwell in His presence, and be crowned with glory and immortality: when I consider that soon the heavens are to be shaken, and the earth tremble and reel to and fro; and that the heavens are to be unfolded as a scroll when it is rolled up; and that every mountain and island are to flee away, I cry out in my heart, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!” (TPJS 29). Elder Wilford Woodruff taught: “Let the Saints read the revelations of God, and they will see that there are important events at our doors. Let us hearken and wake up, and be doing the things required of us. Let the missionaries first get their lamps trimmed and burning, and then go among the people, and go with the Spirit of God and the salvation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (JD 4:149a).

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**1 ¶ COME** near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; ✓ the world, and all things that come forth of it.

✓ the fulness thereof

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The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “and all that dwell in her” for the last clause. The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Attend nations, and

hearken ye chiefs. Let the earth hear and the inhabitants thereof—The world and the people who are therein.” Instead of *come forth of it*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *dwell in it* (Lamsa) / *inhabitants* (BPE). This reminds us of “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken” (ISAIAH 1:2a). The whole earth or nations (*Idumea*) and peoples [ⓂⓁⓂⓂ], are invited to hear and heed and *turn to God*. NASB has, “Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples! Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it.” It is as if the Lord is giving us *one last chance to become a disciple of Christ*, while it is still possible. We are in this earth to find out what it is that we *truly love* (Alma 41). ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “Men should act upon the principle of righteousness, because it is right, and is a principle which they love to cherish and see practiced by all men. They should love mercy, because of its benevolence, charity, love, clemency, and of all of its lovely attributes, and be inspired thereby to deal justly, fairly, honorably ...”<sup>1</sup> That is, indeed, what repentance is all about. Realizing that *wickedness never was happiness* (Alma 41:10b). I hear the invitation of a loving Father. It solicitously summons us to partake of the good fruit of the tree of life and lay hold of the plan of happiness. Do you feel the pain of our Father who is pleading with us?

¶ Alexander explains that *nations* (ⓂⓁⓂⓂ)<sup>2</sup> and *peoples*

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<sup>1</sup> JD, Vol.1, p.119, Brigham Young, February 27, 1853.

<sup>2</sup> ⓂⓁⓂⓂ is also translated as *gentiles* at times.

(אֲמִים) are “poetical equivalents.” ¶ *And fullness*, וְכָל-הָאָרֶץ. Young writes: “Employing language reminiscent of the twenty-fourth Psalm, Isaiah speaks of the earth and ‘its fullness, the world and its issue.’”

¶ *And all things that come forth of it*, וְכָל-צִמְצָאֶיהָ.

Of this, Henderson writes: “Though צִמְצָאִים is used in several instances metaphorically of children ... yet is seems here to be employed literally to denote the various productions which spring out of the earth. Whatever exists on the face of the globe is summoned to witness the execution of the Divine wrath.”

Wildberger has: “Mother earth causes young green plants to sprout (הוֹצִיאָה, Genesis 1:12), and the plants that sprout forth from it are thus called the צִמְצָאִים ([everything] that sprouts).” Gill has, “Which may either be understood of those that dwell in it, as the Targum interprets it; of the people that are in it, as the Septuagint and the Oriental versions; and so the phrase may denote the original of them, being of the earth, earthly, and to which they must return again; and may be designed to humble men, and hide pride from them; or else the fruits of the earth, trees, and everything that spring out of it, which are called upon to hear the voice of the Lord, when men would not; and so is designed to rebuke the stupidity and sluggishness of men to hearken to what is said to them, even from the Lord, when upon the brink of destruction.” ¶ FROM D&C 133:

“HEARKEN, O ye people of my church, saith the Lord your God, and hear the word of the Lord concerning you—The Lord who shall suddenly come to his temple; the Lord who shall come down upon the world with a curse to judgment; yea, upon all the nations that forget God, and upon all the ungodly among you” (D&C 133:1–2)

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**2 For the indignation of the LORD [is] upon all nations, and [his] fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.**

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The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For the wrath from before the presence of the Lord is upon all the nations, and the slaughter upon all their hosts: He hath condemned them and delivered them over to the slaughter.” The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “Because the wrath of the Lord is against all the nations, and his anger against this number of them to destroy them and deliver them up to slaughter.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓝ) has, for the last half, “He hath killed them, and delivered them to slaughter.” ¶ *Upon all nations* עַל-כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם. Or rather, *upon all the nations*. The expression is translated *against / upon / with / on all the nations* by many including the ABP {LXX (Ⓣ)},

ASV, BBE, Darby, ERV, ESV, GNB, GW, HCSB, ISV, JPS, LITV, NASB, RV, and YLT. Alexander says that כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם “is the strongest expression possible in Hebrew for *all nations*.” ¶ *Destroyed them*. The expression הַחֲרִימָם (from the root חָרַם) is quite an interesting one. It is often used in the scriptures of something that is *banned* or *dedicated to the Lord* and cannot be redeemed but must be sacrificed or totally destroyed or annihilated. Birks says that this is a *curse* and the literal rendering of the verse is: “he hath devoted them to a *cherem* חָרַם, or curse of utter destruction.” Several exegetes have pointed out the certainty of its accomplishment rendering it in the prophetic past tense: “*he hath utterly destroyed them &c.*” The vision is spoken of as if it was already accomplished, for all things are present to the Lord, both future and past and present, in one eternal round. I was asked that if God knew the future, did that not mean that He controlled it and thus we did not have true moral agency. In helping this individual understand, I asked, “Would you say that God controlled your past because He knows your past?” “No, of course not,” came the response. I explicated that God can see the future with the same ease that He can see the past as all things are present unto Him. In latter-day Scripture we read: “The same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes” (D&C 38:2); “...where all things for their glory are manifest, past, present, and future, and are continually before the Lord” (D&C 130:7); and “all things are present with me, for I know them all” (Moses 1:6). ¶ FROM D&C 133: “Go ye out from Babylon. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. Call your solemn assemblies, and speak often one to another. And let every man call upon the name of the Lord. Yea, verily I say unto you again, the time has come when the voice of the Lord is unto you: Go ye out of Babylon; gather ye out from among the nations, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (D&C 133:5–7).

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**3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.**

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The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “Therefore their wounded and dead shall be cast out, and the stench of them shall ascend; and the mountains shall be drenched with their blood.” Instead of *melted*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *drenched* (Lamsa) / *contaminated* (BPE). I cannot help but think that this verse makes allusions to being cast out of the presence of God—so that those who do wickedly will not behold the face of the Lord. Gill notes, “... the great

number of the slain upon the mountains, and the great quantity of blood shed there; which should run down in large streams, and carry part of them along with it, as large and hasty showers of rain wash away the earth, and carry it along with them.” Alexander explains: “*And their slain shall be cast out.* The Hebrew word strictly means *their wounded*, and is so translated in the Septuagint and some other versions. But usage gives it the specific sense of *wounded mortally*, and for the most part in battle. *Cast out*, *i.e.* unburied. This suggests the several ideas of contemptuous neglect, of a multitude too vast to be interred, and perhaps of survivors too few to perform the duty (compare ISAIAH 14:18–20). They shall not lie unburied merely for a time, but until they rot upon the ground... *And their corpses ... their stench shall go up ...* With reference to the same revolting circumstance, Lucan calls a battlefield *olentes agros* (compare Amos 4:10, Joel 2:20).” Delitzsch points us to Ezekiel and the times of Gog and Magog related to the Second Coming: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog” (Ezekiel 39:11). **FROM D&C 133**: “Calling upon the name of the Lord day and night, saying: O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. And it shall be answered upon their heads; for the presence of the Lord shall be as the melting fire that burneth, and as the fire which causeth the waters to boil. O Lord, thou shalt come down to make thy name known to thine adversaries, and all nations shall tremble at thy presence—When thou doest terrible things, things they look not for; Yea, when thou comest down, and the mountains flow down at thy presence, thou shalt meet him who rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, who remembereth thee in thy ways” (D&C 133:40–44).

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**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.

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*And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “All the pleasant (or, ‘beloved’) host of heaven shall be dissolved, and they shall be blotted out from beneath the heavens, as it is said concerning them in this book.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And all the powers of the heavens shall waste away; and the heaven shall be rolled up like a scroll.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ)

has, “And all the host of the heavens shall pine away, and the heavens shall be folded together as a book.” Here is an example where the DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓢ) is quite different than the Masoretic text (Ⓜ). The latter (Ⓜ) reads: “**And all [the] host [of] the heavens shall be dissolved,**” וְנִמְקוּ כָּל-צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם, while the DSS (Ⓢ) has: “**And the valleys shall split and all [the] host [of] the heavens shall fade away,**” וְהָעֵמְקִים יִתְבַּקְעוּ וְכֹל צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם יִבוּלוּ. The Accordance DSSB–C has **fall away** (יְפֹלֵוּ) rather than **fade away** (Logos). ¶ *And all the host of heaven.* Victor Ludlow says, “The ‘host of heaven’ could refer either to heavenly bodies (sun, moon, stars, etc.) or to celestial beings (spirits, angels, etc.) in God’s presence... [and relating to the latter] or there will be fewer beings in the Lord’s presence (since his spirit children come to earth to acquire mortal bodies and some do not return to him).” Ludlow is speaking in a permanent returning, for we know that all return at least once to the Father: “Now, concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection—Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life” (Alma 40:11). Yet another possible meaning is that before the final judgment the spirit world will be made empty and dissolved. ¶ *And the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.* The Book of Revelation contains these words: “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled [spoken of the righteous martyrs of the faith]. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places” (Revelation 6:11–14). ¶ **Scrolling together or scrolling apart?** There seems to be two ways of looking at the topic of the scrolls being rolled together as either being scrolled or spread out from the scrolled position: (I.) Alexander says: “The best explanation seems, however, to be that proposed by Pfeiffer in his *Dubia Vexata*, to wit, that as God is elsewhere described as having stretched out the heavens like a curtain, their destruction or any total change in their appearance would be naturally represented as a rolling up of the expanse.” Cowles likewise explains: “The rolling together of the heavens as a scroll, parchment, or map, is rolled up, is the natural counterpart of the figure which appears both in

Psalms 104:2, and in ISAIAH 40:22: ‘That stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.’ Reversing the process to indicate a general dissolution of the frame-work of nature ...” So also Jenour, who writes: “The books of the ancients were written upon dyed skins, or parchment, and when not in use were rolled round a roller, something like large maps in modern times... Of the force of this image, the manner in which maps mounted upon a spring roller are made to coil themselves up, may serve to give us some idea.” Next we see the scroll being extended rather than gathered: (II.) Elder Orson Pratt taught: “The curtain of heaven will be unfolded as a scroll that is rolled up. You know how our great maps are rolled out to expose their contents to the people; and the Lord has said the heavens shall be unfolded as a scroll that is rolled up in unfolded. What will be seen when this takes place? Our Saviour, our Redeemer, will unveil his face. That Being who was born in Bethlehem—that being who has saved the world by offering his own life, how will he appear? Will he come as a common man? or how will he make his appearance? He will appear as a being whose splendour and glory will cause the sun to hide his face with shame.”<sup>3</sup> Hoyt W. Brewster suggested: “Following an outpouring of tumultuous events preceding the Second Coming, a period of silence—described as half an hour in length—will occur in heaven ‘and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled’ (D&C 88:95; see also JST, Revelation 6:14; Isa. 34:4). The curtain of heaven is symbolic of the barrier which separates the earth and her inhabitants from the presence of God. Commenting on ISAIAH 34:4, Elder Orson Pratt said: ‘... School children, who are in the habit of seeing maps hung up on the wall, know that they have rollers upon which they are rolled up, and that to expose the face of the maps they are let down. So will the curtain of heaven be unrolled so that the people may gaze upon those celestial beings who will make their appearance in the clouds’ (JD 16:328).”<sup>4</sup> ¶ Elder Moses Thatcher taught: “When the universe shall roll up like a scroll, the earth melt with fervent heat, and mountains run down like wax, unregenerate man, full of pride, will learn what God hath in reserve for those who hate Him and despise His works. As this earth was cleansed by a literal baptism of water, so will it be purified by a literal baptism of fire, and all the proud and those who love iniquity, will be burned up, even as stubble is consumed by fire. Happy then will ye be if you have been tried as gold in the furnace seven times heated. Better welcome

a few trials now, that tend to increase your love of God and of your fellow man, than to go heedlessly like the dumb brute, to the sacrifice. Let us pray only for deliverance from such trials as harden the heart and wither the soul, but not from such as, bearing patiently, testify of integrity. What matters trials, persecutions, scorns, scoffs and contempt so long as we remain true to God, and the covenants we have made with Him and each other? So long as we violate neither these nor our consciences, which should be void of offense, we are safe” (JD 26:211–212). President Brigham Young puts the time of these events at the end of the Millennium: “... for when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed, *after the termination of the thousand years’ rest*, he will summon the armies of heaven for the conflict, he will come forth in flaming fire, he will descend to execute the mandates of an incensed God, and, amid the thunderings of the wrath of Omnipotence, roll up the heavens as a scroll, and destroy death, and him that has the power of it.”<sup>5</sup> This dissolving heat seems to take place both at the very end of the Millennium as well as before its commencement. Revelation 16:9 is one example of the dissolving heat associated with the Second Coming; Revelation 20:14 is an example for the final fire as the earth is transformed into its Celestial glory. ¶ The face of the Lord shall be seen by the righteous. We read in the chapter summary for D&C 88:62–73, *Draw near unto the Lord, and ye shall see his face.*” And in D&C 88:68, “Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.” This seems to be an allusion to both those who have their calling and election made sure<sup>6</sup> in this life, as well as all of the righteous who will see the Lord in His coming. We also read: “And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together. And another angel shall sound his trump, saying: That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ready to be

<sup>3</sup> JD, Vol.8, p.51, Orson Pratt, April 8, 1860.

<sup>4</sup> Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, p.117.

<sup>5</sup> JD, Vol.1, p.118, Brigham Young, February 27, 1853 (emphasis added).

<sup>6</sup> See Elder Marion G. Romney, “Making Our Calling and Election Sure,” October 1965 General Conference.

burned. And he shall sound his trumpet both long and loud, and all nations shall hear it. And there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour; and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled” (D&C 88:92–95). ¶ *And all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling [fig] from the fig tree.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And all their armies shall come to an end, as the fading leaf from the vine, and as the withering fig from the fig-tree.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And all the stars shall fall like leaves from a vine and as leaves fall from a fig tree.” Instead of *falling [fig]*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *premature* (Lamsa) / *green* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And from the fig tree,” but not, *as a falling [fig]*. In D&C the Lord warns us: “Abide ye in the liberty wherewith ye are made free; entangle not yourselves in sin, but let your hands be clean, until the Lord comes. For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig-tree” (D&C 88:86–87). FROM D&C 133: “And so great shall be the glory of his presence that the sun shall hide his face in shame, and the moon shall withhold its light, and the stars shall be hurled from their places” (D&C 133:49).

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5 For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

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The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Because my sword is revealed in heaven; behold, it shall be uncovered upon Edom, and upon the people which I have condemned to judgment.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “My sword hath drunk deep in the heaven; behold it shall come down on Idumea and on the people justly doomed to destruction.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “For my sword shall be sharpened in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon the Edomites and upon a people that is condemned in judgment.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “For my sword is inebriated in heaven: behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my slaughter unto judgment.” In the DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓣ) we have *shall be seen*, תראה, while the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *shall be bathed*, רִיָּתָהּ. Jennings says: “... we shall see another single symbolic representative of all those nations in Edom, which, by

its close relation to ‘Adam,’<sup>7</sup> fits perfectly as a symbolic name for all the nations. It is a fearful picture of bodies unburied, scattered in such numbers that the air is rendered fetid with the stench; and the very mountains are melted by the blood. It is evidently intended to impress the mind with the awful ‘severity of God,’ when He thus arises to judge the earth.” ¶ Gill, speaking about the sword, says: “That is, the sword of the Lord, as it is called in the next verse (ISAIAH 34:6), and it is he that is speaking; it designs the vengeance of the Lord, the punishment he will inflict on the wicked, said to be ‘bathed in heaven,’ because determined and prepared there.” Calvin suggests: “But why does he say that it is *in heaven*? ... Here the Prophet looks at the ... decree of God, by which he appoints and determines everything before it is executed ...” Similar to things created spiritually before they are created physically. That is, the thought that precedes the action.<sup>8</sup> ¶ FROM D&C 133: “For he shall make bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of their God. Wherefore, prepare ye, prepare ye, O my people; sanctify yourselves; gather ye together, O ye people of my church, upon the land of Zion, all you that have not been commanded to tarry [i.e., leave Babylon and go to Zion]” (D&C 133:3–4). Also see D&C 135:45–48; 133:50–51). ¶ Monte S. Nyman points out: “The Lord ... used the language of ISAIAH 34:5 in the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants in referring to the day of his coming (see D&C 1:12–14).”

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6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, [and] with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

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*The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, [and] with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The sword before the presence of the Lord is filled with blood, it is fattened, it is fattened with the blood of kings and rulers, it is fattened with the kidneys of princes.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “The sword of the Lord hath been glutted with blood; it is pampered with suet (Brenton and NETS, ‘fat’)—with the blood of he-goats and lambs, and with the suet (Brenton and NETS, ‘fat’) of goats and rams.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has,

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<sup>7</sup> That is, אָדָם vs. אָדָם.

<sup>8</sup> In the case of men, this is why in the Book of Mormon we read about the importance of controlling our thoughts, not just our words and our actions.

beginning with the second clause, “It is made thick with the blood of lambs and buck goats, with the blood of rams full of marrow.” Lowth well points us to Ezekiel 39:16–17; and Revelation 19:17–18 (see JST 18a), *the great supper of the Lamb*, with figures that are very similar. Barnes explains: “With the blood of lambs and goats — These were the animals which were usually offered in sacrifice to God among the Jews. And to speak of a sacrifice was the same as to speak of the offering of rams, lambs, bullocks, etc. Yet it is evident that they denote here the people of Idumea, and that these terms are used to keep up the image of a sacrifice. The idea of sacrifice was always connected with that of slaughter, as the animals were slaughtered before they were offered. So here, the idea is, that there would be a great slaughter in Idumea; that it would be so far of the nature of a sacrifice that they would be devoted to God and to his cause. It is not probable that any particular classes of people are denoted by the different animals mentioned here, as the animals here mentioned include all, or nearly all those usually offered in sacrifice, the expressions denote simply that all classes of people in Idumea would be devoted to the slaughter.” Henderson says: “The idea introduced in the preceding verse is illustrated in this by language borrowed from the slaughter of sacrificial victims—a figure which the prophets frequently employ when setting forth the destruction of a people by war.” Alexander suggests: “The allusion is not to the fatty part of the blood or to the fat combined with it (Gesenius), but to fat and blood as the animal substances offered in sacrifice.”

Whitehouse says: “The fat of the kidneys of rams reminds us of Leviticus 3:4, 10, 15.” ¶ *For the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Because there is a slaughter before the Lord in Bozrah, and a great sacrifice in the land of Edom.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Because there is a sacrifice for the Lord in Bosor, and a great slaughter in Idumea.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, instead of sacrifice, *victim* (victim, Vulgate Ⓔ).

Regarding *in Bozrah* בִּצְרָה. ISBE has: “בִּצְרָה ‘sheepfold.’ The capital of Edom, a city of great antiquity (Genesis 36:33; 1 Chronicles 1:44; ISAIAH 34:6; 63:1; Jeremiah 49:13; Amos 1:12). It may be identical with Buṣeirah, which lies about 7 miles Southwest of Tufīleh, on the main road to Petra.” So, while the Isaiah, as inspired by the Lord, uses an actual place in Edom, the whole world or Idumea is meant—much the same way as when the word is applied to mystic Babylon. Elder McConkie wrote: “In two graphic passages outlining the destructions incident to the Second Coming, Isaiah speaks of the sword of judgment falling upon Idumea or Edom, and in one of them he specifies that the Lord’s garments shall be red as he comes from Bozrah (ISAIAH 34; 63), all of which

destructions are confirmed by latter-day revelation (D&C 133), as also is the fact that Idumea is the world. (D&C 1:36).”<sup>9</sup> Some have suggested that those who are not righteous will have to pay for their own sins—and be sacrificed in Bozrah, so to speak. Even after the *uttermost farthing* or sore sufferings have been paid, I cannot imagine that we would be any less dependent on the Savior’s atoning sacrifice if we are to inherit even the least degree of glory in the mansions of our God. At the end, we are fully dependent on the Savior. ¶ **FROM D&C 133:** “And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the wine-press alone, and have brought judgment upon all people; and none were with me; And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment; for this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart” (D&C 133:50–51, and again see, D&C 133:3–4).

**7 And the unicorns reem [רְאָמִים] shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.**

*And the reem shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “And the mighty men shall be slain with them, and the rules, and the princes.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Therefore the fatlings shall fall with them, namely the rams and the bulls.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓔ) has, “And unicorns / buffalo (BPE) shall fall with them, and bullocks with the bulls.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And the unicorns shall go down with them, and the bulls with the mighty.” Rather than the KJV *unicorns*, the JST has *reem*, which appears to be a transliteration of the Hebrew רְאָמִים, meaning, *wild bull*. So also YLT, “And come down have reems with them, And bullocks with bulls, And soaked hath been their land from blood, And their dust from fatness is made fat.” Except, just as *deer* can be singular or plural, so *reem* in English can stand for the plural or the singular. The Masoretic text (Ⓔ) has the plural, רְאָמִים. Gesenius describes it as: “a wild animal, fierce and untamed, resembling an ox, as a wild ass resembles an ass... possessed of horns, with which it prostrates everything (Deuteronomy), and injures men (Psalm 22:22).” ¶ Calvin says, “I have preferred to follow those who explain it to mean *bulls*, which it means also in Psalm 50:13, though in this passage the Prophet employs the word *bulls* to denote metaphorically those who are very strong and

<sup>9</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., p.374.

powerful.” Whitehouse leads us to an interesting book by Delitzsch, “We know now,” says Delitzsch, “by the cuneiform inscriptions and the pictorial representations on the Assyrian sculptures, that the **רָאִים** is the Assyrian *rimu*, that strong-horned, fierce-looking wild bull, skilled in climbing the mountains, whose colossal and formidable likeness was placed by the Assyrian kings before the entrance of their palaces to ward off and terrify the approaching enemy.”<sup>10</sup> ¶ The fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith transliterated the word from the Hebrew (rather than provide a translation) may well mean that this animal, like some mentioned in the Book of Mormon, are no longer known and are extinct. For instance, Cheyne, leaning on a Mr. Houghton and on Delitzsch suggests the reem is an “auroch<sup>11</sup> or wild bull [which] is now extinct.” Else, it could be that the animal, such as the Rimu, was not well known. ¶ We have seen elsewhere in Isaiah that sometimes figures are given for different classes of people. Gill writes: “With the lambs, goats, and rams; that is, either the rhinoceros, as some, there being no such creature as the unicorn; or the buffaloes, as others; these ‘shall fall,’ as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it, they shall be slain, as well as the rest; meaning, that along with the common soldiers, and inferior officers, the general officers should fall; and so the Targum, ‘and the mighty shall be slain with them.’” The *Geneva Bible Translation Notes* likewise suggest: “The mighty and rich will be as well destroyed as the inferiors.” Barnes adds: “Here it represents that portion of the people which was strong, warlike, and hitherto unvanquished, and who regarded themselves as invincible.” Henderson supposes: “According to the Scripture representations, the **רָאִים** were strong and fierce, and were therefore appropriately used in a figurative sense to denote powerful and formidable enemies, especially those of elevated rank, such as princes or rulers.” No doubt, whatever the precise meaning in terms of animals, those various classes of people who have fought against the Lord and Zion are meant. ¶ *And shall come down, יִרְדוּ*. Gill explains it as “Shall be subdued, humbled, destroyed.” Keith writes: “‘Shall come down’ is, ‘shall fall, shall perish.’” HALOT describes **יִרְדוּ** as something which flows or runs down a hill or mountain, such as water. Here, it is blood that comes down. So much blood as to melt the mountains [see ISAIAH 34:3, 5]. Alexander has, “To *come down* in the first clause is by some explained as meaning to come down to the slaughter (Jeremiah 50:27, 51:40); by others to fall or

sink under the fatal stroke (Zechariah 11:2).” ¶ *And their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.* The Targum (**Ⲯ**) has, “And their land shall be drunken with their own blood; and their dust made fat with their own fat.” The LXX (**Ⲙ**) reads, “And the land shall be drenched with blood, and glutted with their suet (Brenton and NETS, ‘fat’).” The Lamsa Peshitta (**Ⲫ**) has, “And the land shall be soaked / *drunk* (BPE) with their blood, and the soil enriched with their fatness.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲉ**) has *ground* instead of *dust*. In other words, the soil would be filled with blood, which was considered ‘fatness’ in relationship to sacrifices. Wildberger explains: “**עַפְרֵה** does not mean ‘dust’ here, as it normally does elsewhere; the word refers to the fine, loose soil into which moisture could soak quite easily ...”

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### 8 For [it is] the day of the LORD’s vengeance, [and] the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

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The Targum (**Ⲯ**) has, “For it is the day of vengeance before the presence of the Lord; the year of recompense, to take vengeance of judgment *on account* of the ignominy of Zion.” The LXX (**Ⲙ**) reads, “For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year for a judicial retribution to Sion.” Instead of *controversy*, the Peshitta (**Ⲫ**) has *cause*. The Douay-Rheims (**ⲉ**) has *judgment* instead of *controversy*. Ibn Ezra explains: “This verse shows that the prophecy refers to the Messianic period [although] some believe that it was fulfilled already in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, after the conquest of Zion.” Calvin well says: “What was formerly said about the Edomites must undoubtedly be extended to the enemies of the Church.” ¶ *Day of the LORD’s vengeance*. Wildberger says: “...the **יְהוָה (ל) יוֹם** has its roots in the thought world

connected with holy war [and ...] a **יְהוָה יוֹם** (day of vengeance)...does not simply suggest that an emotional desire to take vengeance has been quieted but that a balance has been achieved once again, which alone can guarantee that all will be well... Such an explanation is supported by the parallel term **שְׁלוּמִים** (retribution) ...[punishment] is not an end in itself, but rather the means toward a goal...” ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “Our Heavenly Father does not always reveal to his children the secret workings of his providences, nor does he show them the end from the beginning; for they have to learn to trust in him who has promised to fight our battles, and crown us with victory, if we are faithful as was faithful Abraham. The contest which we have now on hand is chiefly against sin in ourselves ... Then let us fight on, ‘For it is the day of the Lord’s

<sup>10</sup> Delitzsch, Friedrich (1883). *The Hebrew language viewed in the light of Assyrian research*. Williams and Norgate: London, pp. 6–7.

<sup>11</sup> *Aurochs*: “A species of ox, whose bones are found in gravel and alluvial soil” (Webster’s 1828 dictionary).

vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.’ He has commenced it with this, our once happy nation, and he will continue until Jesus shall rule and reign triumphantly in the midst of his Saints, over sin, death, and hell. The Lord is gracious and is waiting for us to purify ourselves, and thus be better prepared to receive the providences of God when he arises to shake terribly the earth, and bring to pass the perfect deliverance of his people. ‘For the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.’”<sup>12</sup> Edward Young well says, regarding *vengeance* נִקְמָה: “It is not mingled with malice and evil as is the case with human vengeance. It is a quality that in God is divine and praiseworthy and in the execution of which God is honored and glorified.” In the Book of Mormon we read: “For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard” (3 Nephi 21:20–21). Rawlinson says: “(compare with ISAIAH 61:2; 63:4) In all three places the ‘day’ of God’s vengeance is contrasted with the ‘year’ of his recompense, to show how infinite is his mercy, how short-lived, comparatively speaking, his anger. Mr. Cheyne well compares the concluding clauses of the second commandment, where ‘retribution is declared to descend to the third and fourth generation, but mercy to the thousandth.’” ¶ *Controversy of Zion*, לְרִיב צִיּוֹן. Cowles explains: “The original word [*controversy*, רִיב] is often used for a case litigated in court. So here, the Lord comes down to sit on his throne of judgment and adjudicate the case between his people and their foes.” ¶ FROM D&C 133: “And now the year of my redeemed is come; and they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them according to his goodness, and according to his loving kindness, forever and ever” (D&C 133:52).

vv. 9–17. Destruction of Idumea would be like that of Sodom and Gomorrah and left in total desolation. Wild animals would possess the land. Because we know that the earth will be converted into its paradisiacal glory at the time of the Lord’s Second Coming, instead of wild animals, this may be an allusion to the state of those humans in the spirit world who do not come forth in the first resurrection. There would be a precise line of separation between those who inherit kingdoms of glory, as if separated by a line and plummet. Those who ruled this earth with unrighteousness will no longer

have any rule. ISAIAH 34:14–17 seem to follow the same vein, but well may be symbolic of the blessings awaiting those spirits who were disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and who are to be exalted—who now would have peace, the joy of eternal marriage and whose names would be written in the book of life.

Indeed, as HALOT mentions, “the meaning of צִיָּים is uncertain” and can even mean *inhabitant* or dweller and even a ship or vessel! (HAL, Gesenius). Much of translation is based on context, and Isaiah may well have hidden the context from those *unholy hands on the Bible*.<sup>13</sup> שָׁעִיר can be associated with rain and fertility (HAL). Likewise, קָרָא usually means *call* but can also mean cry. In D&C the word *cry* is used in the Lord’s commandment that we invite others unto Christ. Perhaps, some of the other expressions have been corrupted in the original and certainly my theory cannot be proven. The Lord has commanded the gathering of His disciples and it has been done through the Holy Ghost.

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9 ¶ And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.

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The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And the rivers of Samaria (the Royal Polyglot has כְּחֶלְתָּא דְרוּמִי, ‘the rivers of Rome’) shall be turned into pitch, and her dust into brimstone, and the land shall become burning pitch.” The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “And its torrents shall be turned into pitch, and its land into sulphur.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓤ) has *ground* instead of *dust*. Barnes paints a vivid mental picture: “The idea here is, that there would be as great and awful a destruction as if the streams everywhere should become pitch or resin, which would be set on fire, and which would fill the land with flame. This image is very striking, as we may see by supposing the rivers and streams in any land to flow not with water, but with heated pitch, turpentine, or tar, and that this was all suddenly kindled into a flame... The image is evidently taken from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:25–28), an image which is more fully used in reference to the same subject in Jeremiah 49:17–18: ‘And Edom shall be a desolation; ... as in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.’ The ruin shall be

<sup>12</sup> JD, Vol.11, p.13 – p.14, Brigham Young, 11 December 1864.

<sup>13</sup> I have a two-volume book entitled *Unholy Hands on the Bible: An Introduction to Textual Criticism*. It is clear that such unholy hands began their work centuries before our present Bible was constituted as such, and the corruption does not just come from modern critics.

as entire as if all the soil were turned into brimstone, which should be ignited and left burning.” ¶ Cowles suggests: “By a new figure the prophet sets before us Idumea burning after the manner of ancient Sodom, its rivers covered to pitch and its dust to brimstone, and one all-imbosoming<sup>14</sup> conflagration covering the whole land and utterly refusing to be extinguished.” Wade likewise has: “The description that follows (suggestive of a conflagration caused by the ignition of bitumen) was perhaps inspired by the proximity of Edom to the site of Sodom and Gomorrah (see Genesis 19:24): cf 13:19; Jeremiah 49:18.” Faussett points us to a scripture in *Rain in Due Season*: “And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath” (Deuteronomy 29:23).

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**10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.**

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The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And its land shall be like pitch burning day and night, and which shall not be extinguished: for a long time the smoke of it shall ascend. During its generation it shall be desolate.” Alexander writes, “These sublime and fearful images are copied in the book of Revelation (14:10–11), but it does not follow that the copy, though inspired and prophetic, was intended to determine the sense of the original.” Delitzsch has: “The unquenchable fire (for which compare ISAIAH 66:24), and the eternally ascending smoke (cf., Revelation 19:3), prove that the end of all things is referred to. The prophet meant primarily, no doubt, that the punishment announced would fall upon the land of Edom, and within its geographical boundaries; but this particular punishment represented the punishment of all nations, and all men who were Edomitish in their feelings and conduct towards the congregation of Jehovah.” Gill makes allusions to Babylon, “The land shall be no more manured<sup>15</sup> and cultivated, nor the city rebuilt; when Babylon is once fallen, it shall never be raised up again, but always remain desolate (Revelation 18:2).” ¶ Parry, Parry and Peterson well say: “When Christ comes to destroy the world (Edom) at his second coming, the effects of this destruction will last ‘for ever and ever,’ for the world will be renewed and become a

paradisiacal sphere during the Millennium. ‘None shall pass through it for ever and ever’ for the same reason—that state of the earth will no longer exist.” In D&C we read: “For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name. Wherefore—Eternal punishment is God’s punishment. Endless punishment is God’s punishment” (D&C 19:10–12).

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**11 But the cormorant<sup>✓</sup> and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.**

✓ or, pelican

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*But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it:* The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And for a long period fowls and porcupines, ibises and crows shall dwell therein.” Regarding the *cormorant* or עֵרָב, it is translated as *raven* in Genesis 8:7; Leviticus 11:15; Deuteronomy 14:14; Psalm 147:9; Job 38:41). *Oreb* עֵרֵב is also the name given to one of the princes of the Midianites (see Judges 7:25; 8:3; Psalm 83:11). It is not untypical for Isaiah to give us a figure of wild animals being the only ones left to inhabit what previously was the abode of the prideful in Babylon or Idumea. ¶ As Linda & I visited Jerash, one of the torn down ruins in our 2012 trip to Israel and Jordan, I did see one such example. What had been in its heyday a magnificent Greco-Roman city was now destroyed. A shepherd came through with his goats and these ate grass among the ruins for just a few minutes and then they all moved on. It reminded me of Isaiah’s prophecies. ¶ Yet, this mention of wild animals may well represent those spirits who are not worthy to come forth in the first resurrection but must remain until the resurrection of the unjust. As the wild animals inhabited destroyed Babylon, so now the disobedient continue to inhabit spirit prison until the end of the millennial day. ¶ *And he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And the line of devastation shall be extended over her, and the plummet of desolation.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And over it shall be stretched a line of devastation; and in it the onocenturs (NETS, ‘donkey-centarus,’ Brenton, ‘satyrs’) shall dwell.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has for the second half, “Line of the sword, and there shall be no rejoicing in it.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, “And a line shall be stretched out upon it, to bring it to nothing, and a plummet, unto desolation.” ¶ *Confusion ... emptiness* קוֹ-תְהוֹ וְאִבְנֵי-בְהוֹ. A definite play on words on

<sup>14</sup> Something that is covered. See last acceptance in 1828 Webster.

<sup>15</sup> That is, fertilized.

תְּהִי־וְנִבְהִי, “without form, and void” as found in Genesis 1:2. The GNB paraphrase has: “The LORD will make it a barren waste again, as it was before the creation.” HCSB renders it: “*The LORD* will stretch out a measuring line and a plumb line over *her* for her destruction and chaos.” The JPS: “He shall stretch over it the line of confusion, and the plummet of emptiness.” Redak and Ibn Ezra (in Rosenberg) believe that while the line and plummet are often used to build, that in this instance they will be used to destroy. So also Gill, “He, that is, God, as Kimhi interprets it; the allusion is to builders, that make use of the line and plummet, as to build, so to pull down, that they may know what is to be pulled down, and how far they are to go; see 2 Kings 21:13 and hereby it is signified, that as the destruction should be entire, nothing should be left but confusion and emptiness; and all should become ‘tohu’ and ‘bohu,’ [תְּהִי־וְנִבְהִי] ... so likewise that it should be by line and level, by rule and measure; or according to the rules of justice and equity.” Calvin says, “And to make it more clear that this is Isaiah’s natural meaning, we read the same word in the Prophet Malachi, who lived a long time afterwards. That passage may be regarded as an approbation of this prophecy. ‘If Edom shall say, We have been diminished, we shall therefore return and rebuild the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of Hosts, They shall indeed build, but I shall pull down, and they shall call them the borders of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord is angry for ever. And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, Let the Lord be magnified on the borders of Israel’ (Malachi 1:4–5). What Isaiah had foretold more obscurely, Malachi explains with greater clearness. The latter declares that ‘the Edomires shall build in vain,’ and the former that ‘they shall stretch an empty cord.’ As if he had said, ‘In vain shall the masterbuilders bestow their exertions on rebuilding the cities;’ for builders make use of cords and plummets in all their measurements. He therefore shews that the efforts of those who shall intend to restore the land of Edom will be fruitless; for his meaning is, that they shall be destroyed in such a manner that they cannot at all recover from that destruction ...” ¶ One gets the impression that once the weight is attached to the line, and the line is dropped, everything is moved or destroyed to make room for the unimpeded passage of the weight upon the line. But beyond that, more than a line that destroys buildings that have to come down, I sense a virtual fence through which there is no passage. Something like the void or gap between the kingdoms of glory. Elder Melvin J. Ballard taught: “The question is often asked, ‘Is it possible for one who attains Telesstial Glory in time in the eternal world to live so well that he may graduate from the Telesstial and pass into the Terrestrial, and then after a season that he may progress from that and be

ultimately worthy of the Celestial Glory?’ That is the query that has been asked, I have just read the answer, so far as the Telesstial group is concerned. ‘Where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.’<sup>16</sup> I take it upon the same basis, the same argument likewise applies to the Terrestrial World. Those whose lives have entitled them to Terrestrial Glory can never gain Celestial Glory. One who gains possession of the lowest degree of the Telesstial Glory may ultimately arise to the highest degree of that glory, but no provision has been made for promotion from one glory to another.”<sup>17</sup> Elder Orson Pratt taught, “But how about these terrestrial, can they come up into the celestial? No, their intelligence and knowledge have not prepared and adapted them to dwell with those who reign in celestial glory...”<sup>18</sup> Finally, in terms of this line and plummet one also has the sense of *exactness* and *precision* within which judgment will take place.

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12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none [shall be] there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

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The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “They said, we are the sons of free men, and they were not willing to accept over them a kingly government; and all her princes shall come to nothing.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The chiefs of it shall be no more; for its kings and its nobles shall be for destruction.” The BPE (Ⓟ) has, “There, they shall not proclaim any kingdom at all, for all their princes shall be for devastation.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓛ) has, “The nobles thereof shall not be there: they shall call rather upon the king, and all the princes thereof shall be nothing.” NASB has: “Its nobles—there is no one there *Whom* they may proclaim king—And all its princes will be nothing.” JPS offers: “As for her nobles, none shall be there to be called to the kingdom; and all her princes shall be nothing.” Barnes offers a couple of suggestions: “A more correct rendering of this would be, ‘As to the nobles, they shall call them, but there shall be there no kingdom.’ The idea is, that the kingdom would be desolate; there would be no people to rule. Or, there will be no nobles there who shall survive the destruction, and who can undertake the government of the state.” Cowles prefers the AV rendition and explains: “In harmony with the context which represents the land as utterly void of men and peopled only with such animals as dwell in the most dismal solitudes, this verse must be taken as a way of saying,

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<sup>16</sup> “And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end” (D&C 76:112).

<sup>17</sup> Ballard, Melvin J. “Three Degrees of Glory,” Discourse pronounced at the Ogden Tabernacle, 22 September 1922, p. 37.

<sup>18</sup> JD, Vol.15, p.323, Orson Pratt, January 19, 1873.

not that there was an actual call from the people to their princes to assume the reins of government, but that there was neither government, princes, nor people to call them.” Calvin states: “To those stately nobles who vaunted themselves so much, he says in mockery, that they shall be princes without subjects.” All this probably means that those who have ruled through abuse of power will have no one to rule in the eternities.

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**13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, [and] a court for owls.** ✓

✓ or, ostriches, HEB. daughters of the owl

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The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And in her palaces shall spring up thorns, *and* the nettles, and the brambles in their fortified city: and she shall become a habitation for dragons, a place for the daughter of the ostrich.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And in their cities shall spring up brakes; and brambles shall be its fortresses: and they shall be cots for Sirens (NETS, ‘habitation of sirens’), and for the ostrich’s court.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And thorns and nettles shall grow up in its houses, and the thistle in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be the habitation of dragons, and the pasture of ostriches.” Following the same ideas as ISAIAH 34:11a, only wild beasts shall inhabit what used to be the courts of the mighty and great and spacious buildings of those who mockingly pointed their fingers towards the Lord’s servants (1 Nephi 8:33). After sharing my experience about Jerash, Jordan, above, I read this quote in Barnes about Petra, Jordan, which we also visited: “‘I would,’ says Stephens, when standing amidst the ruins of Petra, the capital of Idumea, and with this passage of Isaiah in his eye, ‘I would that the skeptic could stand as I did, among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book, and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ancient city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as one risen from the dead; though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the hand-writing of God himself, in the desolation and eternal ruin around him.’ (*Incidents of Travel in Egypt*, etc., vol. ii. p. 76.)” Once again, this all seems an allegory for the desolation of the spirit prison.

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**14 The wild beasts ✓ of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, ✓ ✓ and the satyr shall cry to his**

**fellow; the screech owl ✓ ✓ also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.**

✓ Ziim

✓ ✓ Ijim

✓ ✓ ✓ or, night monster

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**FROM D&C 133:** [Gospel taken to all the world and from the desert of Utah to the islands of the sea] “Send forth the elders of my church unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; send forth unto foreign lands; call upon all nations, first upon the Gentiles, and then upon the Jews. And behold, and lo, this shall be their cry, and the voice of the Lord unto all people: Go ye forth unto the land of Zion, that the borders of my people may be enlarged, and that her stakes may be strengthened, and that Zion may go forth unto the regions round about. Yea, let the cry go forth among all people: Awake and arise and go forth to meet the Bridegroom; behold and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour. Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion. And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house. Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon. But verily, thus saith the Lord, let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you; and he that goeth, let him not look back lest sudden destruction shall come upon him. Hearken and hear, O ye inhabitants of the earth. Listen, ye elders of my church together, and hear the voice of the Lord; for he calleth upon all men, and he commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (D&C 133:8–16); “And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice: Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come” (D&C 133:8–16). ¶ Calvin says: “These animals ... it is not fully agreed what is the exact meaning of the Hebrew words; but it would serve no good purpose to give ourselves much uneasiness about them, for it is quite enough if we understand the meaning and design of the Prophet.” The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And there shall meet one another, martens and wild cats, and demons, each shall report with its companion: verily dryads (לַיְלִי, ‘night birds’) shall dwell there, and they shall find rest for themselves.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And demons shall meet onocentaurs; and bellow one to the other. Onocentaurs shall there enjoy repose having found for themselves a place of rest.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “And insane men shall meet in it (BPE, *the spirits shall attack each other*), and demoniacs (BPE, *the evil spirit*) shall cry out one to another.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And demons and monsters

shall meet, and the hairy ones shall cry out one to another, there hath the lamia lain down, and found rest for herself.” Ibn Ezra writes: “לַיְלִיָּהּ *The screech owl*. A bird that flies abroad by night.” Alexander contradicts the view that these animals are related to bad spirits: “Ghosts as well as demons would be wholly out of place in a list of wild and solitary *animals*.” ¶ A careful reading of verses 14–17 makes it clear that those spoken of here are greatly blessed of the Lord. Verse 13, then, completes the description of what would happen to all the places of habitation representing man’s pride. In ISAIAH 34:14, we have a vital transition—but still using some of the same animal elements—in which the great blessings and felicity that await the righteous are described: mainly peace and eternal marriage. Why would the Prophet do that? The answer is quite simple: he had to hide many precious truths from those who would corrupt the Scriptures. ¶ It seems that the inhabitants of the desert may well represent the Saints who first settled in the desert of Deseret or Utah while those of the islands may represent those growing converts in the islands of the sea and other parts of the world. Did not the pioneers find a place of rest in the desert of Utah? Did not many of the descendants of Lehi find a place of rest in the islands of the sea and in the American continent?

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**15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.**

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The view of the Gentile authors is well summarized by Rawlinson who says: “God, who allots to all the nations of the earth their several countries, has now allotted Idumea to the unclean beasts and birds and reptiles which have been mentioned; henceforth it is formally assigned to them as their habitation. It is throughout to be understood that Idumea stands for the world power, which resists God and will be finally abased and put to shame.” Isaiah often changes topics quickly, however. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And the hedgehog shall make its nest there, and shall breed there; partridges shall chirp in the shady *boughs*: surely, the vultures shall be gathered thither, every one with her mate.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “There the porcupine hath made its nest; and the land hath safely kept its young. There the deer have assembled and seen each other’s face.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓛ) has, “There hath the ericius had its hole, and brought up its young ones, and hath dug round about, and cherished them in the shadow thereof: thither are the kites gathered together one to another.”

¶ Jennings recognizes that these words speak about *marriage* but he misses the point completely misquotes

the scripture that in the resurrection they “neither marry, nor are given in marriage” (Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35). ¶ Elder Orson Hyde, speaking of these verses quoted by Jennings about marriage suggests that the parties in question were not righteous enough to be sealed.<sup>19</sup> Elder Orson Pratt was of the same opinion and also explained that there are “Those who never received the everlasting covenant of marriage for eternity; those who have not continued in nor received that law with all their hearts, or who, perhaps have fought against it. They become angels. They have no power to increase and extend forth to kingdoms. They have no wives, no husbands, and they are servants to those that sit upon thrones and rule over kingdoms, and are counted worthy of a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. These, no doubt, were the kind of angels Jesus had reference to when speaking to [the Sadducees and Pharisees].”<sup>20</sup> Finally, Elder Orson Pratt explained the most important point of all: “In that state they do not marry nor give in marriage. Why? Because marriage is an ordinance that has to be attended to here, and unless it is secured in this life for eternity it cannot be secured in the resurrection, for they neither marry nor are given in marriage there. They do not baptize after the resurrection, they do not confirm and administer the ordinances pertaining to this life after the resurrection. All these things have to be attended to here, then we have a claim to the blessings here and hereafter.”<sup>21</sup>

¶ Barnes has: “They shall make their nests there; that is, this shall be their secure, undisturbed retreat.” Which of course is true, those who are so greatly blessed in the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom will be undisturbed. Rawlinson also explains: “*Gather under her shadow*] *i.e.* ‘gather her young ones under her.’” Once again, a statement of felicity and peace and non-disturbance. In terms of the animals depicted, there is much disagreement. Her shadow is an emblem of *protection*.

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**16 Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read the names written therein; no one of these shall fail; none shall want ~~her~~ their mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and ~~his~~ my Spirit it hath gathered them.**

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*Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read the names written therein.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Search ye out the book of the Lord, and seek.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “I counted them and there is not one of them lost.” The

<sup>19</sup> JD, Vol.2, pp.85–86, Orson Hyde, October 6, 1854.

<sup>20</sup> JD, Vol.13, p.187, Orson Pratt, October 7, 1869.

<sup>21</sup> JD, Vol.14, p.243 – p.244, Orson Pratt, August 20, 1871.

BPE (S) has, “Ponder the book of Yahweh and read.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Search ye diligently in the book of the Lord, and read.” ¶ Some have focused on the *book of the LORD* (סֵפֶר יְהוָה) as Scripture. For instance, Faussett explains: “the volume in which the various prophecies and other parts of Scripture began henceforward to be collected together (ISAIAH 30:8; Daniel 9:2).” So also Elder L. Tom Perry taught: “All the standard works of the Church instruct us to read and ponder their sayings. From the Old Testament we read, ‘Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read’ (ISAIAH 34:16). From the New Testament, ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me’ (John 5:39). Nephi, in the Book of Mormon, observes, ‘My soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and . . . profit of my children’ (2 Nephi 4:15). Counsel from the Pearl of Great Price promises, ‘And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived’ (JS—M 1:37). And finally, in the Doctrine and Covenants we read: ‘First seek to obtain my word . . . Study my word which hath gone forth among the children of men’ (D&C 11:21–22). The scriptures are one of our greatest treasures. They contain God’s instructions to His people from the beginning of time. In a world so full of the doctrines of men, how grateful we are to have a sure anchor on which to build our faith!”<sup>22</sup> ¶ Many exegetes have been thrown off by the expression סֵפֶר יְהוָה, *book of Jehovah*. Such an idea has given commentators much trouble. Whitehouse, leaning on Duhm, says: “Duhm . . . declares it to be ‘one of the strangest sentences in all the prophetic writings.’ What is the ‘book’ here meant!” Nägelsbach similarly asks some pointed questions: “But then why does he think this only of this prophecy? Even though elsewhere there is mention of recording *single* prophecies for the purpose of appealing to them afterwards (ISAIAH 8:1; 30:8), still there is nowhere, beside the present, any mention of an entire book that deserved to be called ‘the book of the LORD.’” Finally, Whitehouse, in 1905, himself comes so very close to the prophetic view found in the JST regarding το βιβλίον της ζωης (*the book of life*) “... the phrase should be combined with Psalm 139:16. The expression is a bold poetic appeal to search God’s *book of fate* . . .” (*emphasis added*). The alluded verse in the Psalms reads: “Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” Regarding *book*, TSK for Psalm 139:6 leads us to Revelations 20:12 that makes mention of *the book of life* as does our own LDS

footnotes (these point to Revelation 17:8, also making mention of *the book of life*). Lange mentions *the book of life* (even though his translator greatly objects). ¶ The JST gives us the necessary guidance, as it becomes clear that yet another meaning is *the book of life*. The LDS Bible Dictionary reads in part: “In one sense the book of life is the sum total of one’s thoughts and actions—the record of his life. However, the scriptures indicate that a heavenly record is kept of the faithful, whose names are recorded, as well as an account of their righteous deeds.” In the book of Revelation we read: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Revelation 3:5). Alma writes: “And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things; and behold, their names shall be blotted out, that the names of the wicked shall not be numbered among the names of the righteous, that the word of God may be fulfilled, which saith: The names of the wicked shall not be mingled with the names of my people; For the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life, and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand” (Alma 5:57–58a). In D&C 128 we have: “And further, I want you to remember that John the Revelator was contemplating this very subject in relation to the dead, when he declared, as you will find recorded in Revelation 20:12—*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* You will discover in this quotation that the books were opened; and another book was opened, which was the book of life; but the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; consequently, the books spoken of must be the books which contained the record of their works, and refer to the records which are kept on the earth. And the book which was the book of life is the record which is kept in heaven (D&C 128:6–7a). ¶ *No one of these shall fail; none shall want their mate.* The LDS *Old Testament Student Manual* has, “Of those whose names are recorded in the heavenly book, ‘no one of these shall fail’ (ISAIAH 34:16). The promise that ‘none shall want [lack] their mate’ (JST, ISAIAH 34:16) is particularly interesting to Latter-day Saints since we know that only through the ordinance of celestial marriage can we have our mate eternally.”<sup>23</sup> The Targum (T) has, “No one of them shall fail, none shall tarry for her mate.” The LXX (G) reads, “They have not

<sup>22</sup> Perry, Elder L. Tom. Back to Gospel Basics. General Conference, April 1993.

<sup>23</sup> *Prophecies of the Dispensation of the fullness of Times, Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi*, (1982), 161–69.

had occasion to seek each other.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “No one of these shall fail, none sought for her mate.” The S, as well as the other ancient texts, are closer to the JST than the Masoretic text (M). The M has *her* and the Prophet has corrected this to be *their* meaning that both men and women who are worthy would not be lacking a mate. Wade (also see Whitehouse) also comes very close to the JST: “The Hebrew is defective and . . . should be rendered as there, *none shall want her mate.*” Calvin says, “Not one of those; that is, of the animals; for the Hebrew writers employ these terms, אִישׁ (ish) and אִשָּׁה, (ishshah,) not only for men and women, but for males and females of any species.” But indeed these very well may have been given to represent precisely **husband and wife** (אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה). Regarding the Book of Life the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Until we have perfect love we are liable to fall and when we have a testimony that our names are sealed in the Lamb’s book of life we have perfect love and then it is impossible for false Christs to deceive us” (TPJS). ¶ *For my mouth it hath commanded, and my Spirit it hath gathered them.* For my mouth (פִּי) is the mouth of the Lord, for whom Isaiah speaks through Divine Investiture; *and my spirit* (רוּחִי) (M *and his spirit* רוּחוֹ) is the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. ¶ The Targum (T) has, “For by His Word they shall be gathered together, and by His pleasure they shall be brought together.” The LXX (G) reads, “For the Lord hath issued orders to them; and his spirit hath brought them together.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “But he with his own mouth has commanded, and his spirit it has gathered them.” The BPE (S) has, “But commanded with his mouth, and his Spirit gathered them.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Not one of them was wanting, one hath not sought for the other: for that which proceedeth out of my mouth, he hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.” Ibn Ezra says: “*my mouth*: the decrees that come from the mouth of the Lord.” Slotki/Rosenberg make Ibn Ezra’s comment clearer: “The prophet is speaking in the name of God.” Horsley well explains: “For the mouth of Jehovah itself hath commanded, and his Spirit itself hath gathered them.” Henderson also believes it to speak of **Jehovah**: “הוּא [he] is the pronoun used emphatically for הוּא, and may therefore admit of פִּי [mouth] in the construct state.” Skinner says, “The change of person is harsh.” It is clear indeed that it is Jehovah who is spoken of here. ¶ Gladly, we have the JST who has it in first person. Isaiah is speaking for Jehovah through Divine Investiture. It is the Spirit of the Lord who invites each person to come unto Christ and to gather with His Church. ¶ **FROM D&C 133**: “And the graves of the saints shall be opened; and they shall

come forth and stand on the right hand of the Lamb, when he shall stand upon Mount Zion, and upon the holy city, the New Jerusalem; and they shall sing the song of the Lamb, day and night forever and ever. And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, the Lord sent forth the fulness of his gospel, his everlasting covenant, reasoning in plainness and simplicity—To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord’s errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight. And by the weak things of the earth the Lord shall thrash the nations by the power of his Spirit. And for this cause these commandments were given; they were commanded to be kept from the world in the day that they were given, but now are to go forth unto all flesh—And this according to the mind and will of the Lord, who ruleth over all flesh. And unto him that repenteth and sanctifieth himself before the Lord shall be given eternal life” (D&C 133:56–62). Also see again, D&C 133:5–7.

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17 And ~~he hath~~ **I have** cast the lot for them, and ~~his hand hath~~ **I have** divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation ~~shall~~ they **shall** dwell therein.

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*And I have cast the lot for them, and I have divided it unto them by line.* The Targum (T) has, “And He by his Word hath cast the lot for them; and by His will He hath divided *it* unto them by line.” The LXX (G) reads, “And he will himself cast the lots for them, his hand hath meted the place for them to feed.” Alexander comments: “An evident allusion to the division of the land of Canaan, both by lot and measuring-line (see Numbers 26:55–56; Joshua 18:4–6.) As Canaan was allotted to Israel, so Edom is allotted to these doleful creatures.” Young says: “. . . it is His own hand that divides for them by the line. The division will be exact and precise, as it should be, for it has been measured by the measuring line. Inasmuch as God Himself has made the allotment, it cannot be changed by man at will. It is a permanent arrangement which will endure for ever.” Indeed, the JST makes it clear that it is the Lord who is speaking in this verse through Isaiah, once again, through the principle of Divine Investiture. The division of the kingdoms of glory once again seems to be the subject. There will be no mistake made. ¶ *They shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation they shall dwell therein.* The LXX (G) reads, “For a long time you shall inherit it. For generations of generations let them rest therein.” Calvin says: “[for these animals]

there hath been granted a secure and permanent habitation, from which they cannot be easily banished or driven out; because God hath allotted it to them as their portion by inheritance ... If he shall be pleased to give us a peaceable habitation for a long time in one place, it will only be by his special favor that we shall dwell there ... Besides, if we acknowledge that a residence in this or that country has been appointed to us by God, we may dwell in it with safety and composure; for if he keeps wild beasts in possession of the place which he has allotted to them, how much more will he preserve men, for whose sake he created heaven,

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earth, the seas, and all that they contain?" Precisely, if this be an allegory of animals and no humans intended, how much more to humans who have been faithful will the Lord provide an eternal habitation with their beloved spouses and children. Furthermore, the habitations in each of the kingdoms of glory will be forever.

26 October 2011

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