

Isaiah 34:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

Analysis

God casting the lot and measuring with His hand demonstrates divine sovereignty in judgment—nothing is random or arbitrary. The "perpetual possession" and dwelling "from generation to generation" emphasizes eternal judgment. This ironic inheritance contrasts with Israel's promised land; Edom's "inheritance" is permanent desolation. The language of lot-casting recalls Joshua's land distribution, but here God distributes judgment rather than blessing.

Historical Context

Lot-casting was used for dividing the Promised Land (Joshua 14-19). Isaiah uses this imagery ironically—God divides desolation with the same sovereignty He divided blessing.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty in judgment demonstrate His perfect justice?
2. What does the permanence of this judgment teach about the eternal consequences of rejecting God?
3. How should the contrast between judgment and blessing motivate our gratitude for grace?

Interlinear Text

וְיָרַא	יְלַקֵּת	לְקֹדֶשׁ	לְקֹדֶשׁ	לְקֹדֶשׁ	לְקֹדֶשׁ	לְקֹדֶשׁ
H1931	And he hath cast	H1992	the lot	for them and his hand	hath divided	
	H5307		H1486		H3027	H2505
לְבָם	בְּקָרִים	עַד	עוֹלָם	וְיִרְשֶׁת	זַרְעָם	זַרְעָם
H1992	it unto them by line	it for	ever	they shall possess	from generation	
	H6957	H5704	H5769	H3423		H1755
בָּהּ:	יִשְׁכְּנֹו	זַרְעָם				
from generation	shall they dwell		H0			
H1755	H7931					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 34:10 (Parallel theme): 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.

Acts 17:26 (Parallel theme): And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;