

# Ezekiel 35—Esau and Jacob: The Ultimate Family Feud

## Memory Verse

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

## Review

In chapter 34 we saw God promising to bring Israel back into the land and to change the ecology: the land of Israel would become fruitful and productive. Although the promises in Ezekiel chapter 34 will find their complete fulfilment in the 1,000 year Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ, their fulfilment has already begun, with many Jews already regathered back to Israel, and the land already becoming fruitful. We will see these promises of a bright future for Israel reiterated and expanded upon in chapter 36. Now in Ezekiel chapter 35 the focus turns to Edom (Mount Seir), where the Edomites are judged because of their ancient hatred of Israel.



## **Ezekiel 35—Esau and Jacob: The Ultimate Family Feud**

In some of the previous chapters in Ezekiel we have seen God judging the nations surrounding Israel. God now speaks through Ezekiel focusing on the nation of Edom. The Edomites were cousins of Israel, being descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob. We'll see that the ancient hatred that began with Esau—who was angry enough with his brother Jacob to want to kill him—continues to this very day, with the Arabs (including those descended from Ishmael) still hating the Israelites, and their life's ambition continuing to be to wipe Israel off the map. We see a powerful lesson concerning the painful and tragic consequences of unforgiveness, especially in a family setting.

We also learn in chapter 35 that even though Israel temporarily left the land to go into captivity, God didn't: *The Lord was there (35:10)*. God has chosen the Land of Israel to be His dwelling place and that will never change. Here is a breakdown of chapter 35:

- v 1-4 God pronounces judgement on Mount Seir
- v 5-9 The first reason for judgement—the ancient hatred
- v v 10-13 The second reason for judgement—jealously
- v 14-15 The world will rejoice when Edom is judged

### **Ezekiel 35:1-15 NKJV**

**Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it, <sup>3</sup> and say to it, ‘Thus says the Lord God:**

**“Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against you; I will stretch out My hand against you, and make you most desolate; <sup>4</sup> I shall lay your cities waste, and you shall be desolate. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.**

**<sup>5</sup> “Because you have had an ancient hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end, <sup>6</sup> therefore, as I live,” says the Lord God, “I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. <sup>7</sup> Thus I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it the one who leaves and the one who returns. <sup>8</sup> And I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those who are slain by the sword shall fall. <sup>9</sup> I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; then you shall know that I am the Lord.**

**<sup>10</sup> “Because you have said, ‘These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess them,’ although the Lord was there, <sup>11</sup> therefore, as I live,” says the Lord God, “I will do according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. <sup>12</sup> Then you shall know that I am the Lord. I have heard all your blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘They are desolate; they are given to us to consume.’ <sup>13</sup> Thus with your mouth you have boasted against Me and multiplied your words against Me; I have heard them.”**

**<sup>14</sup> ‘Thus says the Lord God: “The whole earth will rejoice when I make you desolate. <sup>15</sup> As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom—all of it! Then they shall know that I am the Lord.” ’**

## God pronounces judgement on Mount Seir (vs 1-4)

Ezekiel 35:1-4 NKJV

Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it, <sup>3</sup> and say to it, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

“Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against you; I will stretch out My hand against you, and make you most desolate; <sup>4</sup> I shall lay your cities waste, and you shall be desolate. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.

v 2 **Set your face against Mount Seir:** **Mount Seir**, located south of Israel and on the eastern side of the Jordan river and dead sea, was home to the Edomites, the descendants of Jacob’s brother Esau. This is the second time Ezekiel has spoken against the Edomites (see Ezekiel 25:12–14).

### The history of the Edomites and their hatred towards Israel

While Israel was wandering for forty years, God would not allow Israel to attack Edom, as they were relatives. However, when Israel very kindly and gently asked to pass through the land belonging to the Edomites, the Edomites harshly refused. Israel then had to turn around and go the long way around.

Numbers 20:14-21 NLT

While Moses was at Kadesh, he sent ambassadors to the king of Edom with this message:

“This is what your relatives, the people of Israel, say: You know all the hardships we have been through. <sup>15</sup> Our ancestors went down to Egypt, and we lived there a long time, and we and our ancestors were brutally mistreated by the Egyptians. <sup>16</sup> But when we cried out to the Lord, he heard us and sent an angel who brought us out of Egypt. Now we are camped at Kadesh, a town on the border of your land. <sup>17</sup> Please let us travel through your land. We will be careful not to go through your fields and vineyards. We won’t even drink water from your wells. We will stay on the king’s road and never leave it until we have passed through your territory.”

<sup>18</sup> But the king of Edom said, “Stay out of my land, or I will meet you with an army!”

<sup>19</sup> The Israelites answered, “We will stay on the main road. If our livestock drink your water, we will pay for it. Just let us pass through your country. That’s all we ask.”

<sup>20</sup> But the king of Edom replied, “Stay out! You may not pass through our land.” With that he mobilised his army and marched out against them with an imposing force. <sup>21</sup> Because Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through their country, Israel was forced to turn around.

Later on, once Israel was established in the land, there was a long history of conflict between the Edomites and the kings of Israel (and Judah), during the reigns of: Saul (1 Samuel 14:47), Solomon (1 Kings 11:14–22), Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:1–23), Jehoram (2 Kings 8:21), and Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:17).

The prophet Amos tells us why there was such discord between Edom and Israel.

Amos 1:11 NKJV

Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because he pursued his brother with the sword, and cast off all pity; His anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.”

“Edom held on to **anger** and **wrath** when they should have long before put it away. For this, the judgment of God is coming against them. We need to learn to give our **anger** and **wrath** to God, and let Him be our avenger.” (David Guzik) We’ll come back to this thought later.

v 2-3 **Set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it, <sup>3</sup> and say to it, ... I am against you; I will stretch out My hand against you:** If you put yourself in the Israelite’s shoes, this is encouraging. The Edomites had joined with the Babylonians and had killed as many Israelites as they could, including those who were trying to escape. They also took the opportunity to occupy the southern part of Israel. Here God is saying that this strong enemy would be defeated and humiliated. As they measured out to others, so it would be measured back to them (see Luke 6:37-38)—we will come back to this principle later.

v 2-3 **Against ... against ... against ... against:** God repeats the word **against** four times in three verses. God wanted the Edomites to understand that they were doomed because He was against them. For those who persist in unforgiveness, God will be against them. Why? Because God is by nature forgiving. It’s our sinful nature that is unforgiving. For a believer to not forgive means that they are being dominated by their sinful nature.

v 4 **I shall lay your cities waste:** The Edomites rejoiced to see the cities of Judah laid waste by the Babylonians. Little did they know that their day was coming. Again, remember the words of Jesus, “For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (Luke 6:38). The Edomites are a great example of what happens when we don’t show mercy to others by refusing to forgive them; the evil they wanted for others came right back on them.

v 4 **Then you shall know that I am the Lord:** Never forget why God does what He does: His overarching purpose is always to bring people back into relationship with Him. God doesn’t just want people to know about Him, but also to know Him in the sense of being in relationship with Him. At the very least though, all the Edomites would know about God, and that He is the only true God.

### **The first reason for judgement: the ancient hatred (vs 5-9)**

#### **Ezekiel 35:5-9 NKJV**

“Because you have had an ancient hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end, <sup>6</sup> therefore, as I live,” says the Lord God, “I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. <sup>7</sup> Thus I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it the one who leaves and the one who returns. <sup>8</sup> And I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those who are slain by the sword shall fall. <sup>9</sup> I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; then you shall know that I am the Lord.

v 5 **Because you have had an ancient hatred:** “The Edomites were the descendants of *Esau*; the Israelites, the descendants of *Jacob*. Both these were brothers; and between them there was contention even in the womb, and they lived generally in a state of enmity. Their descendants kept up the ancient feud: but the Edomites were implacable [unable to be appeased]; they had not only a *rooted* but *perpetual enmity* to the Israelites, harassing and distressing them by all possible means.” (Clarke)

v 9 **I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; then you shall know that I am the Lord:** “Edom could not escape the application of the Abrahamic covenant, which explains the strong language and the irrevocable judgment on her. When a nation gives itself over to perpetual hatred of Israel, then there is no other alternative than perpetual desolation from God.” (Feinberg)

Genesis 12:3a NKJV

I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you;...

This is still true today. God’s promises don’t change. Any person, organisation, or country who sets themselves against Israel sets themselves against God.

v 5 **And have shed the blood of the children of Israel:** “The victims are not merely Judeans who may have fallen to Edomite soldiers participating in Nebuchadrezzar’s campaign; the bloodguilt was incurred by searching out and slaughtering fugitives.” (Block)

v 5 **At the time of their calamity:** How do I know if I really hate someone, if I haven’t forgiven someone, if I have a grudge against someone? I will, at least have the desire to, kick them when they’re down and look to take advantage of their difficult circumstances to make life harder for them.

Consider what the Edomites did to the Israelites. As we read, we should ask ourselves the question, “Do I have any negative or bitter thoughts towards others who have hurt me when they are down (even though I may not act on them)?”

Psalms 137:7 NLT

O Lord, remember what the Edomites did on the day the armies of Babylon captured Jerusalem. “Destroy it!” they yelled. “Level it to the ground!”

Lamentations 4:21-22 NLT

Are you rejoicing in the land of Uz, O people of Edom [because of God’s judgement of Judah’s sin]? But you, too, must drink from the cup of the Lord’s anger. You, too, will be stripped naked in your drunkenness.

<sup>22</sup> O beautiful Jerusalem, your punishment will end; you will soon return from exile. But Edom, your punishment is just beginning; soon your many sins will be exposed.

Obadiah 10-14 NLT

“Because of the violence you did to your close relatives in Israel, you will be filled with shame and destroyed forever.

<sup>11</sup> When they were invaded, you stood aloof, refusing to help them. Foreign invaders [Babylon] carried off their wealth and cast lots to divide up Jerusalem, but you acted like one of Israel’s enemies.

<sup>12</sup> “You should not have gloated when they exiled your relatives to distant lands. You should not have rejoiced when the people of Judah suffered such misfortune. You should not have spoken arrogantly in that terrible time of trouble [the Babylonian invasion].

<sup>13</sup> You should not have plundered the land of Israel when they were suffering such calamity. You should not have gloated over their destruction when they were suffering such calamity. You should not have seized their wealth when they were suffering such calamity.

<sup>14</sup> You should not have stood at the crossroads, killing those who tried to escape. You should not have captured the survivors and handed them over in their terrible time of trouble.

It's obvious just how much the Edomites hated the Israelites. Whenever something bad happened to them, they would try to make it worse, and would rejoice and gloat over their suffering. It's the same as when the Palestinians give out sweets to each other every time an Israeli is killed in a terrorist attack.

The passage in Obadiah continues by giving a practical and visual example of what Jesus meant when He said, "For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38). It also shows that God's people will eventually win out, no matter how bad the suffering is currently.

Obadiah 15-18 NLT

"The day is near when I, the Lord, will judge all godless nations! As you [Edom] have done to Israel, so it will be done to you. All your evil deeds will fall back on your own heads."<sup>16</sup> Just as you swallowed up my people on my holy mountain, so you and the surrounding nations will swallow the punishment I pour out on you. Yes, all you nations will drink and stagger and disappear from history.

<sup>17</sup> "But Jerusalem will become a refuge for those who escape; it will be a holy place. And the people of Israel will come back to reclaim their inheritance. <sup>18</sup> The people of Israel will be a raging fire, and Edom a field of dry stubble. The descendants of Joseph will be a flame roaring across the field, devouring everything. There will be no survivors in Edom. I, the Lord, have spoken!

v 6 **"I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you.:** Here continues God's, "*If this is what you want, then this is what you will get*" message. Edom loved shedding the blood of the children of Israel (v 5), so their blood would also be shed. Their punishment would fit their crime.

v 8 **And I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines:** In Eastern cultures, to not be properly buried was the worst kind of shame. God promises them that there would be dead bodies everywhere, and that they wouldn't be buried. Again, they got what they gave.

v 9 **I will make you perpetually [forever] desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited:** God promises that their cities would become desolate and uninhabited, forever. Today you can see the literal fulfilment of this prophecy, with Petra and Teman, the main cities of Edom, lying in ruins.

"Edom's sin was perpetual hatred, and Edom's punishment shall be perpetual desolations. Edomites would never return into friendship with the Israelites, but still hate, and molest, and waste them; now for just recompense Edom's cities shall be wasted, and never return to their former glory." (Poole)

### **The second reason for judgement—jealously (vs 10-13)**

Ezekiel 35:10-13 NKJV

"Because you have said, 'These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess them,' although the Lord was there, <sup>11</sup> therefore, as I live," says the Lord God, "I will do according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. <sup>12</sup> Then you shall know that I am the Lord. I have heard all your blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, 'They are desolate; they are given to us to consume.' <sup>13</sup> Thus with your mouth you have boasted against Me and multiplied your words against Me; I have heard them."

v 10 **Because you have said, ‘These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess them:** The “two nations” are either Judah and Israel or Edom and Judah. Either way, the meaning is the same; Edom wanted to appropriate the land that belonged to Judah and Israel.

Try to imagine what the Edomites were thinking. In addition to hating Israel, most of their land was mountainous, and so they were jealous of the flatter land more suitable for farming that belonged to Judah.

“The fall of Jerusalem made it possible for Edom to exact its revenge on Judah by appropriating a portion of its territory. This is precisely what Edom did by expanding into the Negev.” (Vawter and Hoppe)

v 10 **Although the Lord was there:** The Jews had been temporarily exiled from the land, but someone stayed behind to protect what was theirs—God Himself. Here we have a new name for God revealed to us, JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH—‘The Lord is there’. The land of Israel belongs to God perpetually, which means forever, and God promised long ago to give it to the Israelites. Satan is still using his pawns, the nations around Israel, to try to dispossess Israel from their land even today, but they will never succeed, because God is there protecting what is His, the land that He has claimed for Himself.

“The Edomites wanted the land of Judah (and Israel), and thought that since the Babylonians had taken the Jews out of the land, it was theirs for the taking. They forgot the great truth that even though the Jews were temporarily exiled out of the land, **the Lord was there**. He would guard and preserve *His* land against them. Even when God abandoned the temple regarding the special sense of His presence and glory (Ezekiel 11:23), Yahweh *had not* abandoned the land. It was still His land and He still had a sacred purpose for it.” (David Guzik)

“It is interesting to note that, even in the hour of Judah’s judgment, God is still regarded as being there in the land and is shown to identify Himself with His people.” (Taylor)

“When all conflicts shall be ended, when the scattered shall be gathered, when the tabernacle of the Lord shall be among them; then this which is Zion’s bulwark to-day, shall be her everlasting glory. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH—‘The Lord is there.’” (Spurgeon)

v 11 **I will do according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them:** The hatred against Israel was the evidence of their anger and envy or jealousy. Again, remember what Jesus said, “For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (Luke 6:38). Unfortunately this hatred and jealousy toward Israel is still prevalent in the Arab nations today. When you look at the current situation in the Middle East today, it’s like Ezekiel chapter 35 was written only yesterday—consider the similarities to the situation that exists today—there is:

- anger and envy (Ezekiel 35:11)
  - an ancient hatred (Ezekiel 35:5).
  - a desire to take their land (Ezekiel 35:10).
  - rejoicing in Israel’s bloodshed (Ezekiel 35:6).
  - taking advantage of Israel’s troubles and increasing them (Ezekiel 35:5).
  - acting as if God Himself was not present in the land of Israel (Ezekiel 35:10).
  - speaking against and blaspheming the God of Israel (Ezekiel 35:12).
- (list adapted from David Guzik’s Enduring Word Bible Commentary)

v 12 **with your mouth you have boasted against Me and multiplied your words against Me; I have heard them:** God gives them a message they probably didn't want to hear—"I heard what you said against Me." This is so important to understand. When anyone speaks against Israel, even when Israel is under God's discipline, they are speaking against God, and will be held to account.

The same is also true for the believer; when we speak against another believer we are actually speaking against God, because that believer belongs to God, and God is His shield and great reward (see Genesis 15:1)

Romans 14:4 NKJV

Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

### **The world will rejoice when Edom is judged (vs 14-15)**

**Ezekiel 35:14-15 NKJV**

**'Thus says the Lord God: "The whole earth will rejoice when I make you desolate. <sup>15</sup>As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom—all of it! Then they shall know that I am the Lord."'**

v 14 **The whole earth will rejoice when I make you desolate:** "In their arrogance, Edom rejoiced over the fall of Israel; but one day, the whole earth would rejoice over the fall of Edom!" (Wiersbe)

Why would the whole earth rejoice? Because God's judgements are always fair and the punishment always fits the crime. Just as Edom rejoiced when Israel was made desolate, so God would cause the world to rejoice when He made Edom desolate.

v 15 **Then they shall know that I am the Lord:** Both Israel and Edom would recognise God's sovereignty and give Him the glory.

### **Application: "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord**

v 5 **Because you have had an ancient hatred:** "God's first stated reason for judgment against Edom was their **ancient hatred** of Israel. *God* may long remember a society's sins and one day judge them (as in 1 Samuel 15:1-3). But this is not the place of *man*. For us, God does not want us to hold on to any **ancient hatred** against peoples, races, or nations." (David Guzik)

The example referred to by David Guzik here is the Amalekites. As Israel was wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, there was a time when the Amalekites attacked the Israelites from behind and killed those who were lagging behind; those who were weak and defenseless. It was like a modern day terrorist attack—brutal and senseless. Around 300 years later, God said it was time for Amalek to be punished for what they did. God hadn't forgotten: justice would be served.

1 Samuel 15:2-3 NKJV

Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. <sup>3</sup> Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'



Notice how only God has the right to take revenge—*I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel*—because He is the Judge of the earth (see Genesis 18:25), and only He can administer perfect justice.

Just like the nation of Israel didn't have to worry and fret about how to get back at Amalek for what they did to them, so we can leave our situations in God's hands (example of a situation in our family). With regard to any injustice that happens to us, we can rest assured that God will do for us what He did for Israel: *I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel*. God, the judge of the earth, knows how to do what is right, so trust Him.

Genesis 18:25 NLT

Surely you wouldn't do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn't do that! *Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?*

God, because He is perfectly holy, must judge every sin. No sin will go unpunished, and no innocent person will be condemned. The Scriptures give clear instructions regarding forgiveness and the letting go of grievances.

Romans 12:19-21 AMP

**Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath;** for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay (requite), says the Lord. [Deuteronomy 32:35]  
20 But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. [Proverbs 25:21, 22]  
21 **Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good.**

**“Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good”** (v 19): This principle is so important as it has such serious ramifications for us personally: if we are overcome by evil it will destroy our lives. We must let go of past hurts by choosing to forgive others who have sinned against us; otherwise we will be destroyed as we are overcome by evil—a root of bitterness will corrupt and destroy us, as well as those around us.

Hebrews 12:14-15 NLT

Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. <sup>15</sup> Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.

There are many in today's world who live like the Edomites, remaining perpetually angry and bitter because of their refusal to forgive. I believe this is one of the reasons for the current surge in mental health issues like depression and anxiety. The hurt may be due to some bad thing the other person did to us, or it could be when someone didn't fulfil their responsibility toward us and we feel neglected and abandoned—the breakdown of the family unit is causing much pain. Whatever the cause, holding onto past hurts will cause us to become like the Edomites who didn't experience God's mercy and forgiveness because of their unmerciful and unforgiving attitude towards others: again, remember, as we measured out to others, so it will be measured back to us” (see Luke 6:37-38). For the believer, our salvation is secure, but there are always the practical consequences of sin. Refusing to forgive is a sure way to make both our lives and the the lives of those around us miserable.

**“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath”**(v 19): Here is another important principle: if we try to get back at people ourselves, then we hinder God's plan for their discipline or punishment. We must leave the way open for God to discipline or judge them: God's discipline will always be more effective—and probably more severe—than ours. Also, in the meantime, as we wait for God's justice to be served, we are free from the serious and debilitating effects of unforgiveness on our spiritual, emotional, and physical health.

Another application to this is the constant persecution that Israel and the church endured and endures. Throughout the centuries, saints have committed their souls to God, trusting that He will make all things right, and He will. Consider the following scriptures.

1 Peter 4:19

Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

Psalms 58:10-11 NLT

The godly will rejoice when they see injustice avenged. They will wash their feet in the blood of the wicked. <sup>11</sup> Then at last everyone will say, "There truly is a reward for those who live for God; surely there is a God who judges justly here on earth."

Revelation 6:9-11 NLT

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal [during the seven year Tribulation], I saw under the altar the souls of all who had been martyred for the word of God and for being faithful in their testimony. <sup>10</sup> They shouted to the Lord and said, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they have done to us?" <sup>11</sup> Then a white robe was given to each of them. And they were told to rest a little longer until the full number of their brothers and sisters—their fellow servants of Jesus who were to be martyred—had joined them.

The bottom line is that God promises to make things right, that there will be justice, that those who hurt us will not get away with their crimes. ***Once we understand this, we can let go and let God, literally.*** Our innate desire to see justice done will be satisfied because we know that God will get the job done perfectly. Someone said, "Though the mills of God grind slowly; Yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, With exactness grinds He all."

Of course, our greatest desire is that the offender will repent and accept God's gift of forgiveness and escape God's wrath, just like all believers have, because Jesus has already been punished for all sins. We'll conclude by reading some verses that deal with forgiveness.

Matthew 6:14-15 NLT

"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. <sup>15</sup> But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Luke 6:37-38 AMP

Judge not [neither pronouncing judgment nor subjecting to censure], and you will not be judged; do not condemn and pronounce guilty, and you will not be condemned and pronounced guilty; **acquit and forgive and release (give up resentment, let it drop)**, and you will be acquitted and forgiven and released.

<sup>38</sup> Give, and [gifts] will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will they pour into [the pouch formed by] the bosom [of your robe and used as a bag]. **For with the measure you deal out [with the measure you use when you confer benefits on others], it will be measured back to you.**

Colossians 3:12-15 NLT

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.