

Isaiah Lesson 30

Isaiah Chapter 30

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Introduction: Last week in chapter 29, we found further warning of impending chastisement against Judah and Jerusalem. The reason for the impending chastening was due to failure to comply with God's commandments.

Chapter 30 is a warning to Judah against seeking help from Egypt rather than turning to God for their help. God sends Isaiah to indict Judah for their spiritual rebellion against Him. The chapter concludes with an assurance of victory over Assyria. Throughout the chapter, you will find that there is much truth and wisdom that are relevant to us.

I. Do Not Go Down to Egypt

Isa 30:1 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

Isa 30:2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

God's indictment against sinful Judah continues. The woe is to God's rebellious children of Judah. These take counsel from strange gods. They sought counsel from anyone but Jehovah God. They wanted nothing to do with Him. An example of a people "that cover with a covering" would be willing and able to cast an idol without giving any thought to the Lord.

Judah had become idolaters. In so doing, they compounded their sin. In addition to their rebellion and idolatry, Judah sought help from Egypt rather than from her God. The Assyrian invasion was impending, and they knew it. Therefore, they sought counsel and an alliance with Egypt, but they refused to ask the same from their God. Their actions were an insult to Jehovah God.

Isa 30:3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

Isa 30:4 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

Isa 30:5 They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit

them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

God warned them and clearly identified the consequences of their sin. If they continued in the course that they chose for themselves, they would soon reap the effects of their actions. Pharaoh's strength would bring them shame. Trusting the neighboring country of Egypt would bring confusion.

1Co 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Psa 44:15 My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

It is not clear if the king in Judah (Hezekiah) had sent ambassadors to Egypt. What is clear is that some had gone seeking an alliance with Egypt. As it turned out, the Egyptians either could not or would not assist Judah against the looming Assyrian invasion. The fact that they had approached Egypt for help turned out to be an embarrassment and disgrace. It backfired on them.

Isa 30:6 The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.

Isa 30:7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still.

The foregoing woe is reiterated in different form.. A warning was issued against those who traveled on beasts (perhaps horses) headed to the south (Egypt). Though they carried gifts to the Egyptians, they would not or perhaps could not help Judah. The results of Judah's futile attempt to enlist Egyptian help was that it was in vain. Egypt would do nothing.

II. A Rebellious People

Isa 30:8 Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever:

Isa 30:9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD:

The prophet was instructed by God to note the rebellion of Judah by recording it in a document. That record was a witness against them in perpetuity. This was God's assessment of His own people.

(1) They were rebellious against their God.

(2) They were lying not only amongst themselves, but unto God.

(3) They refused to pay heed to God's Word.

God gave Judah the opportunity to repent of their actions. With no repentance in sight, He began to make preparation for their judgement.

Isa 30:10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

Isa 30:11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Judah's attitude toward the preachers God had sent was for them to tone it down. Seers were another term for prophets. They received the mind of the Lord whether in forthtelling or in foretelling the Word of God. They didn't like the negative tone of the prophets preaching against their sin and warning of impending judgment, so they applied pressure on the prophets to be more positive ("prophesy not unto us right things").

They wanted the prophets to preach smooth sermons and if necessary to even stretch the truth or eliminate the truth altogether. They were tired of hearing about sin, repentance, and getting right with God. They did not want to hear about God's judgment. They wanted to hear uplifting sermons, sermons on the power of positive thinking, sermons which made them feel good.

Some of Judah were more direct. They warned the prophets to get out of the way and out of their sight in order to eliminate any thoughts of God altogether. They, in so many words, warned the prophets of God to resign—leave, go away. They were tired of hearing about "the Holy One of Israel." They wanted a preacher who was more in tune with the times. Those old-fashioned fundamentalist prophets were an affront to them.

III. Judah's Iniquity Would be as a Breach Ready to Fall

Isa 30:12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

Isa 30:13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

Isa 30:14 And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.

God had a message for them. Though they disdained hearing about the Holy One of Israel, God threw back in their faces that very title. Because they despised His Word and relied upon their own ill-gotten gain by which they had tried to secure Egyptian help, God had an announcement for them. Because of their iniquity (their rebellion against their God), their reliance on the ungodly, their rejection of His Word through the prophets; judgment was about to fall upon them like an unstable masonry wall falling over.

When high, unstable, masonry walls fall, they often bulge first in the middle and then burst into collapse. So was the impending judgment of God against Judah. Though the analogy is of a broken wall of a city (the primary defensive system of that day), the application is to the iniquity of Judah. Though they had turned to the Egyptians for help, that rebellion and affront against Jehovah would come down upon them like a broken wall. God's judgment would be so thorough that Judah would be broken into pieces too small for any use. Their rebellion and backsliding would blow up in their face.

Isa 30:15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

Isa 30:16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

Isa 30:17 One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

God continued to warn Judah through Isaiah. If Judah had returned to their God and rested (i.e., trusted in) on Him, they would have been saved from the impending judgment. If they had turned in quiet submission to their God, making Him their confidence and strength, He would have delivered them. God noted, “and ye would not.” The sin of Judah was their willful rebellion against God. They would not turn back to Him. Rather, they said, No.

Judah, after considering the impending judgement of God and the nearing invasion by their enemies came to conclude that their best option was their horses. They would escape danger on their horses to Egypt for refuge and help. Their reliance was upon their swift horses. Yet, God warned how that the Assyrians would be even more swift. What in fact was going to happen is that a handful of enemy soldiers would put one thousand men of Judah to flight. The thought is of an utter rout.

When the Assyrians were through, Judah would be left like a “beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.” The word translated as beacon (Nrt to'-ren) basically refers to a flagpole. An ensign on a hill refers to a flag. The thought is that Judah would be left like a lonely flagpole on a hilltop. The point is of military defeat.

IV. The Lord Will Be Gracious

Isa 30:18 And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

Isa 30:19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

At this point, the tone of the prophecy changes abruptly. Though the prophecy to this point has been pointed and laced with dire warning, now God foretells of His grace and mercy which He intends for His people. God is patient. He would wait for Israel to repent that He might be gracious to them and exalt them with blessing. He desired to shed His mercy upon them. Though He is a God of judgment, He also is a God of mercy and grace. Thus, “blessed are all they that wait for him.”

If Judah would repent and return to their God, they would find Him gracious, merciful, and willing to bless them again. He remains the same God to this day. Though, He is a God of judgment, He longs to bless His people and be merciful

to them. Both the holiness and love of God are apparent. There evidently was a fortress at Jerusalem called Zion. It may be where the men of Judah holed up when Rabshekah appeared outside the wall of Jerusalem, threatening them.

In that day God foretold how they would weep no more. "He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee." Implicit here may be a foreview of the great prayer of Hezekiah when threatened by Rabshekah. See II Kings 19:15-19. God heard that prayer and answered it the same night.

2Ki 19:15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

2Ki 19:16 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

2Ki 19:17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,

2Ki 19:18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

2Ki 19:19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

V. God Promises To Let the People See Their Teachers

Isa 30:20 And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

Isa 30:21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

God would chastize Judah by the Assyrians because of their sin but would not utterly destroy them or deport them. During the Assyrian invasion and threat, the population of Judah was forced to subsist on rationed bread and water. They were times of crisis. As God delivered them, the teachers (i.e., prophets) whom

they consigned to dark corners would be removed therefrom and teach them God's Word.

They had to go through hard times of chastisement before they would listen. Those that repented would receive guidance from the Lord during their crisis. e. The greater thought is that because they had returned to their God and the hearing of His Word, they would receive divine guidance. God would direct their paths.

Pro 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

Pro 3:6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Isa 30:22 Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

Isa 30:23 Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Isa 30:24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

In the day of their repentance and return to their God, the prophet foretold how that Judah would turn from their idols. The day was coming when Judah would utterly repudiate their idolatry. They would desecrate the idols of silver and gold they had previously worshiped. This came to pass in some measure during the reign of Hezekiah and more fully after the Babylonian captivity. One thing that came to pass in Judah from the Babylonian captivity is that they were cured of idolatry. Never have Jews to this day again dabbled with idolatry.

In verse 23, Isaiah points out that the day when Judah returned to her God, He would bless their crops. They would prosper financially. Though there may have been limited fulfillment of this promise in the days of Hezekiah, Josiah, and some periods of the restoration, it would seem that the greater fulfillment will not be accomplished until the Messiah sits upon His throne at Jerusalem. Further details are given of the full blessing of God upon the land in the day of the return of Judah to their God.

Isa 30:25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

Isa 30:26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

The day was coming when God would restore the rains to the land as noted in verse 23. Rivers would be full of life-sustaining waters. It would happen “in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.” There likely was a limited fulfillment of this when the Assyrians departed from Judah with their tails between their legs upon the slaying of 185,000 of their soldiers by God. The greater fulfillment of this likely will take place at the conclusion of the Tribulation.

Isa 30:27 Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

Isa 30:28 And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err.

The tone of the prophecy again turns to God’s judgment. However, now the target thereof seems to be the enemies of Judah. Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire. There likely is a dual fulfillment here. The immediate context is of God’s destruction of the Assyrian forces which had invaded Judah. See verse 31-32. The ultimate fulfillment undoubtedly is of the Day of the Lord when Christ indeed comes from far (i.e., heaven) to judge the forces of the antichrist in Israel.

In that day, He certainly will come burning with anger with heavy judgment against the wicked. Again, the immediate application is to the impending judgment against the Assyrians and the demise of 185,000 of their soldiers. The analogy of the foe being in water to their chin suggests dire straits. God would sift them with the sieve of their vanity. He would place a bridle upon their jaws to turn them away from their error even as an unbroken horse is bridled. The greater

application likely is to Christ and His return at Armageddon. The tone is of fierce judgment against the enemies of the Jews.

Isa 30:29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.

Isa 30:30 And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming destruction impending against the Assyrians (and the antichrist later), God then foretold the peace and rejoicing which would come to His people in that day. The greater thought is of the joy of a Jewish holy day. Jewish feasts always began the evening before and were ushered in with songs and psalms. This was especially so at the feast of the Passover, which is thought to be alluded to here. The mention of a pipe refers to a flute-type of instrument.

The picture is of Jews ascending to Jerusalem for the high holy seasons of Passover in the Spring and the Day of Atonement in the Fall. When God delivered His people, there would be rejoicing and festivities like unto Passover and other feast days. This likely happened in some fashion when the Assyrian army was destroyed. It will be even more so in the day when Christ returns.

God's judgment is described. This may have an allegorical fulfillment in the destruction of the Assyrians, though there is no record in the biblical text of such events as the voice of the Lord being heard, lightning, windstorms and hailstones. However, all those things will take place during the Tribulation. The victory undoubtedly looks forward to the day when Christ returns in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2Th 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Isa 30:31 For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.

Isa 30:32 And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the LORD shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it.

Isa 30:33 For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

The prophecy now returns to the short term and the impending invasion of the Assyrians. The prospect is of the coming destruction of the Assyrian army when the angel of the Lord “smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand” (II Kings 19:35). A ground staff refers to a flag pole stuck into the ground as an ensign for a conquering king. The reference is clearly to the advancing Assyrians.

The phrase, “the LORD shall lay upon him” speaks of how that God would allow the Assyrians to advance. They would do so with musical instruments. Yet, God would take that same staff of the Assyrians and fight against them with it. The greater thought is that God would allow the Assyrians to advance into Judah with pomp and circumstance. Yet, He would thrash a rod against the Assyrians. God would beat them with their own rod of arrogance.

In verse 33, Tophet is another name for the valley of Hinnom, just outside the walls of the old city of Jerusalem. Implied here is that God had prepared this place for the destruction the Assyrian army. The king mentioned may be Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Inhabitants of Jerusalem from time past had used this area to burn their garbage. Fire was not uncommon to this site.

Though the Assyrians were not burned to death, that metaphor is used here. God slew them that fateful night with a single angel. By the “breath of His lips” He slew the wicked that night. There also likely is a hint of how Jesus will slay the wicked at Armageddon.

Isa 11:4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Of interest is that Tophet (the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna) was also an apt symbol and metaphor of hell. Certainly, it is deep and large. Like a stream of brimstone, God has kindled the fires thereof.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.