

Is. 30:9 For this is a rebellious people, false sons, Sons who refuse to listen To the instruction of the Lord;

Isaiah was to record the prophecy of verse 8 because of the sin within the land (v.9). They refused *to listen To the instruction of the Lord*—the Mosaic Law.

Is. 30:10 Who say to the seers, "You must not see visions"; And to the prophets, "You must not prophesy to us what is right, Speak to us pleasant words, Prophecy illusions.

The people desired that the prophets continue to speak, but that they speak anything but the truth—even *Prophecy illusions*. In other words, their desire was to appear righteous without being proven guilty by the truth. This mindset is running rampant within Christendom today; for in many cases, unity is emphasized at the expense of truth.

Is. 30:11 "Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, Let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."

The people desired that the prophets *turn aside from the path* (speak anything but the truth) and relate nothing *more* to them *about* Jehovah. This would allow them to cease thinking about Jehovah and determine for themselves what "truth" was to be. History has proven, however, that when absolutes are disregarded, society self destructs, as will be the case here as well. Even in our day, postmodernism (the belief that absolutes do not exist) is influencing our society at a rapid pace. Why? Many are fearful of speaking the truth due to a pragmatic mindset that favors acceptance and political correctness over standing for what is right.

Is. 30:12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, "Since you have rejected this word, And have put your trust in oppression and guile, and have relied on them,

In verses 12-17, Isaiah addresses the results of their rejecting God's *word* (the words of the prophets) and embracing *oppression and guile* (v.12). The price of trusting Egypt rather than Jehovah would be huge.

Is. 30:13 Therefore this iniquity will be to you Like a breach about to fall, A bulge in a high wall, Whose collapse comes suddenly in an instant.

The sin of rejecting the words of God's prophets for the purpose of relying upon Egypt is compared to *a breach... A bulge in a high wall*. This *breach* would cause the *wall* to *collapse...suddenly*, just as Judah and Jerusalem would *collapse...in an instant* at the hands of the Babylonians (in 586 BC). Note: The Babylonians overthrew the Assyrians and carried Judah to Babylon in three waves (606 BC, 597 BC, 586 BC). However, in 586 BC, when the Babylonians burned *Jerusalem* and the temple (*the house of the Lord*), it was done swiftly due to a lack of resistance from the Judean *men of war* (read 2Kings 25:1-24). Thus Isaiah's words were fulfilled to the greatest degree possible.

Is. 30:14 "And whose collapse is like the smashing of a potter's jar; So ruthlessly shattered That a sherd will not be found among its pieces To take fire from a hearth, Or to scoop water from a cistern."

The rebellion of the Hebrew people would result in the Jewish state being *shattered* into very small *pieces* (as when a *potter's jar* is smashed). This points to the destruction brought about at the hands of the Babylonians. The Jews were held captive in Babylon for seventy years, in fact, until the Persians overthrew the Babylonians in Daniel 5.

Is. 30:15 For thus the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has said, "In repentance and rest you shall be saved, In quietness and trust is your strength." But you were not willing,

Judah's only hope was *repentance* (turning from her sinful ways) and *rest* (resting in God's grace to protect and sustain them—Hebrews 4:9-10), along with *quietness and trust*. God desired that they discard their own schemes and trust Him (through *repentance* and faith) to remove the Assyrian oppression. He had desired the same for Ahaz in Isaiah 7:3-4, but Ahaz refused. The people refused as well—*But you were not willing* (v.15).

Considering the preceding, we can conclude the following: The Assyria threat found its origin in Ahaz's indifference to Isaiah's message due to inadequate faith (Isaiah 7:3-12). After Ahaz's death, and during King Hezekiah's early reign, Assyria remained Judah's threat because of the nation's indifference to Isaiah's message. Therefore, the nation initially learned nothing from Ahaz's lack of faith and original mistake. Scary!

Even though *the angel of the Lord* would destroy many of the Assyrian troops (2Kings 19:35-37; Isaiah 37:36-38) once King Hezekiah walked in obedience, the southern kingdom failed to consistently walk with Jehovah and eventually fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC.

Is. 30:16 And you said, "No, for we will flee on horses," Therefore you shall flee! "And we will ride on swift horses," Therefore those who pursue you shall be swift.

The southern kingdom of Judah possessed a large quantity of swift *horses* (Isaiah 2:7). *Egypt* possessed an abundance of *horses* as well (read Isaiah 31:1, 3). Judah could now, with the help of the Egyptians, trust in the strength and speed of *horses* rather than in God who created the *horses*. Their lack of faith would eventually (during the days of the Babylonians) cause them to face an interesting state of affairs. Instead of their *swift horses* saving them from their enemy, their enemy (the Babylonians) would *be swift* as they pursued the Hebrews fleeing from Jerusalem. From 2Kings 25:4-5 we find that Isaiah's prophetic message was exact.

Is. 30:17 One thousand shall flee at the threat of one man, You shall flee at the threat of five; Until you are left as a flag on a mountain top, And as a signal on a hill.

Sin handicaps faith and snuffs out one's ability to stand in battle. *One thousand* Jews would *flee at the threat of one* Babylonian soldier. This is quite different from what could have been had they obeyed (read Leviticus 26:8 and Joshua 23:10). The sin of the nation, therefore, would result in only a few refugees surviving—*Until you are left as a flag on a mountain top, And as a signal on a hill*. Jerusalem would stand *as a signal*, and reminder, to refrain from trusting man rather than God. Jeremiah addressed this same issue later in the nation's history (read Jeremiah 17:5). Examine 2Kings 25 and note that only a small number of Jews were allowed to remain in the land.

Is. 30:18 ¶ Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.

Verses 18-26 deal with the manner in which God will bless the redeemed Jews during the Millennial Kingdom (note that He *waits on high to have compassion* on them—v.18). *God* (because He *is a God of justice*) must first punish sin. After a lengthy season of time (the period of disobedience followed by repentance), He will bring blessing. Consequently, because the

word "long" (last phrase verse 18) can be interpreted "wait," the Jews who wait for *God* (as *God* waits for the nation to repent) will be blessed. The notes associated with Isaiah 40:31 tie in well here.

The Lord most certainly is *gracious* and desires *to have compassion on* all His people. Tie this in with 2 Peter 3:9 and 1 Timothy 2:3-4.

Is. 30:19 O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.

All redeemed Jews, including those living in *Jerusalem* in Isaiah's day, will experience much joy during the Millennial Kingdom.

Is. 30:20 Although the Lord has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher.

God will also provide teachers (the word "Teacher" is in the plural in the Hebrew) to guide His people during the Millennium.

Is. 30:21 And your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

God's people will not only be taught by godly teachers (v.20), but also know exactly where to *walk*, for the Spirit will direct and guide their every step (v.21).

Is. 30:22 And you will defile your graven images, overlaid with silver, and your molten images plated with gold. You will scatter them as an impure thing; and say to them, "Be gone!"
Because of godly teachers (v.20) and the leading of the Holy Spirit (v.21), the Hebrew people will view their idols as *impure* and discard them.

Is. 30:23 ¶ Then He will give you rain for the seed which you will sow in the ground, and bread from the yield of the ground, and it will be rich and plenteous; on that day your livestock will graze in a roomy pasture.

The land will flourish with agricultural productivity during the Millennium.

Is. 30:24 Also the oxen and the donkeys which work the ground will eat salted fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.

The animals used to *work the ground will eat* a delicious diet because of the abundance of food in the land.

Is. 30:25 And on every lofty mountain and on every high hill there will be streams running with water on the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

Streams of water will run from *every lofty mountain and...every high hill* during the Millennium. This will occur in conjunction with *the day of the great slaughter* —when Jesus returns and defeats the enemies of the Jews at His Second Coming.

Is. 30:26 And the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, on the day the Lord binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.

Once the Lord heals the Jewish nation (at the end of the Tribulation) and takes them into the Messianic Kingdom, *the light of the moon will be as strong as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days.* The notes associated with Isaiah 24:23, 35:7, and 60:19-20, however, confirm that the light of *the moon* and *the sun* will be vastly inferior to that of God's glory present in the Kingdom.

Is. 30:27 ¶ Behold, the name of the Lord comes from a remote place; Burning is His anger, and dense is His smoke; His lips are filled with indignation, And His tongue is like a consuming fire;

Verses 27 and 28 describe what Jesus will do to the Gentile nations at His Second Coming. Christ will display supernatural power when He returns to defeat Israel's enemies (v.27), as is also confirmed by Isaiah 34, Isaiah 63, Habakkuk 3, and Revelation 19:11-16.

Is. 30:28 And His breath is like an overflowing torrent, Which reaches to the neck, To shake the nations back and forth in a sieve, And to put in the jaws of the peoples the bridle which leads to ruin.

Jesus will overpower *the nations* (all unbelieving Gentiles) at His Second Coming.

Is. 30:29 You will have songs as in the night when you keep the festival; And gladness of heart as when one marches to the sound of the flute, To go to the mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel.

The word "*songs*" is actually "song" in the Hebrew. The Old Testament confirms that festivals were to be a time of celebration and rejoicing (Exodus 23:14-17). It is for this reason that Jesus

sang a *hymn* with His disciples on the night of the Passover (Matthew 26:30). Therefore, a song will be sung when the believing remnant of the Jews are rescued at Christ's Second Coming.

Is. 30:30 And the Lord will cause His voice of authority to be heard. And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger, And in the flame of a consuming fire, In cloudburst, downpour, and hailstones.

Just as verses 27 and 28 dealt with what happens to the Gentile nations at the Second Coming, verses 30-33 describe what will happen to Assyria (especially Assyria's king) in Isaiah's day. The Lord will display matchless power against the Assyrians (as is also confirmed by Isaiah 36-37), the same type of power that He will display against the nations at His Second Coming.

Is. 30:31 For at the voice of the Lord Assyria will be terrified, When He strikes with the rod.

When the *Lord*...strikes the Assyrians, they will be terrified.

Is. 30:32 And every blow of the rod of punishment, Which the Lord will lay on him, Will be with the music of tambourines and lyres; And in battles, brandishing weapons, He will fight them.

The Lord will lay on the Assyrian king the rod of punishment. The Assyrian king is Sennacherib.

Is. 30:33 For Topheth has long been ready, Indeed, it has been prepared for the king. He has made it deep and large, A pyre of fire with plenty of wood; The breath of the Lord, like a torrent of brimstone, sets it afire.

Topheth, located just outside Jerusalem, is the valley of...*Hinnom* where *Molech* (a false god) was worshipped by the kings of Judah (2 Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 7:31-32; Jeremiah 19:4-6). Initially, garbage continually burned at *Topheth*; but later it continually burned with human sacrifices due to the worship of *Molech*. After the return from the Babylonian captivity, this valley was again used for burning all sorts of wastes. *Gehenna*, a Greek word used to make reference to *hell* (Matthew 5:22, 29 and etc.), is a transliteration from the Hebrew "gi-hinnom," or the "valley of Hinnom." Therefore, *Topheth* (the valley of Hinnom in Hebrew, or *Gehenna* in Greek) points to hell, the temporary holding place of unredeemed mankind until they are judged at the *great white throne* and thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

According to Isaiah 30:33, God prepared hell (*Topheth*) by making it deep and large, filling it with wood; and His breath..., like a torrent of brimstone, sets it afire. As God prepared hell for all the unredeemed, He prepared it for the unredeemed king of Assyria as well, King Sennacherib, a man that is discussed in more detail in chapters 36-37.

Isaiah 31

Is. 31:1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, And rely on horses, And trust in chariots because they are many, And in horsemen because they are very strong, But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the Lord!

Isaiah continues dealing with the futility of trusting in *Egypt*. He pronounces a *Woe* against those who trust the Egyptians rather than the Lord.

Is. 31:2 Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster, And does not retract His words, But will arise against the house of evildoers, And against the help of the workers of iniquity.

God, being wise..., will bring disaster upon the house of evildoers as well as the workers of iniquity (those who form an alliance with Egypt) and, in the process, bring disaster upon the Egyptians. Because God always fulfills His word (*does not retract His words*), He will fulfill to the greatest degree possible what He promised in Isaiah 30.

Is. 31:3 Now the Egyptians are men, and not God, And their horses are flesh and not spirit; So the Lord will stretch out His hand, And he who helps will stumble And he who is helped will fall, And all of them will come to an end together.

The Egyptians would be defeated because they were mere men...And their horses mere flesh. Only God can bring victory in the truest sense of the word. The Egyptians were defeated by the Assyrians in Valley of Eltekeh (the notes associated with Isaiah 30:5, 7, and 36:1 add further input); and the Assyrians soon afterwards took every fortified city in Judah with the exception of Jerusalem. Therefore, both Egypt and Judah reaped negative consequences from this alliance and eventually came to an end together in that they became subjugated nations.

Is. 31:4 ¶ For thus says the Lord to me, "As the lion or the young lion growls over his prey, Against which a band of shepherds is called out, Will not be terrified at their voice, nor disturbed at their noise, So will the Lord of hosts come down to wage war on Mount Zion and on its hill."

Note: Some commentators view verse 4 as teaching that God, as a lion, would defend Jerusalem and defeat the Assyrians. I think something else is going on here. Could it be that God, as a lion, advanced against Jerusalem to make sure that the alliance between Egypt and the Judeans would fail, securing the Assyrian takeover of forty-six fortified cities within Judah and leaving Jerusalem standing by herself? I think this is the better fit. With this in mind, consider the following.

We discovered earlier (in Isaiah 29:1-4) that God judged Jerusalem by allowing the Babylonians to overthrow the Assyrians and come against the southern kingdom of Judah. The Babylonians eventually burned Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC and exiled the Jews to Babylon. In Isaiah 31:4, however, we understand that Jehovah came against Jerusalem as a lion before the Babylonians overthrew the Assyrians. He did so as a result of the alliance that Judah made with Egypt in Isaiah's day. In fact, He not only allowed the Assyrians (under Sennacherib) to defeat the Egyptians at Eltekeh, but also allowed Assyria to take forty-six fortified cities in Judah, leaving Jerusalem alone to defend herself. This is the context and meaning of the phrase, "So will the Lord of hosts come down to wage war on Mount Zion and on its hill" (v.4). Obviously, Jehovah, "As the lion," brought judgment against Jerusalem for her alliance with Egypt.

Is. 31:5 Like flying birds so the Lord of hosts will protect Jerusalem. He will protect and deliver it; He will pass over and rescue it.

In Isaiah 31:5-9, Isaiah prophesies that after God's judgment is completed (the judgment against Jerusalem mentioned in Isaiah 31:4), He, Like flying (hovering) birds, would protect..., deliver..., and rescue...Jerusalem. (Note that it is Jerusalem that God protects in verse 5, but Jerusalem that He came against in verse 4.) The context here is God's protection that Jerusalem received in relation to the Assyrians before the Babylonians overthrew Assyria, protection that is described in much detail in 2Kings 19 and Isaiah 37. Both 2 Kings 19:35-37 and Isaiah 37:36-38

relate how *the angel of the Lord* (the second Person of the Trinity that we know to be Jesus) killed 185,000 of the Assyrian troops. Therefore, Assyria destroyed many cities in Judah but was unsuccessful in taking *Jerusalem*. After *Jerusalem* was miraculously delivered, she soon fell into sin and never totally recovered. Therefore, the Babylonian captivity, which came not so long after Assyria was overthrown by the Babylonians, was additional judgment that the southern kingdom received for her blatant disobedience. This historical background is essential for proper interpretation.

Is. 31:6 Return to Him from whom you have deeply defected, O sons of Israel.

Isaiah encouraged Judah to repent and *Return to God*, even though she had *deeply defected*.

Is. 31:7 For in that day every man will cast away his silver idols and his gold idols, which your hands have made as a sin.

The by-product of repentance would be the cessation of idolatry—a trust in Jehovah alone. This finally occurred later in King Hezekiah's reign, and the Lord brought deliverance. Verse 8 confirms the same.

Is. 31:8 And the Assyrian will fall by a sword not of man, And a sword not of man will devour him. So he will not escape the sword, And his young men will become forced laborers.

When King Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem trusted in Jehovah alone, the Assyrians fell, not *by a sword* belonging to *man*, but by the power of *the angel of the Lord*, the second Person of the Trinity that we know to be Jesus Christ (2 Kings 19:35).

Is. 31:9 "And his rock will pass away because of panic, And his princes will be terrified at the standard," Declares the Lord, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

Note the word "*furnace*." Isaiah plays with terms associated with "Ariel" (the notes associated with Isaiah 29:1 address this subject). God would eliminate the Assyrian aggression against *Jerusalem*, which obviously came to fruition just as Isaiah had prophesied.