

Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—Book of Woes: Allying With Egypt (c. 704–702 BC)

Isaiah 30

Woe Against Trusting Worthless Egypt

- 1 “Woe to the rebellious children,” declares the LORD,
“Who execute a plan, but not Mine,
And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit,
In order to add sin to sin;
- 2 Who proceed down to Egypt
Without consulting Me,
To take refuge in the safety of Pharaoh
And to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!
- 3 “Therefore the safety of Pharaoh will be your shame
And the shelter in the shadow of Egypt, your humiliation.
- 4 “For their princes are at Zoan
And their ambassadors arrive at Hanes.
- 5 “Everyone will be ashamed because of a people who cannot profit them,
Who are not for help or profit, but for shame and also for reproach.”

6 The oracle concerning the beasts of the Negev.

- Through a land of distress and anguish,
From where *come* lioness and lion, viper and flying serpent,
They carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys
And their treasures on camels' humps,
To a people who cannot profit *them*;
- 7 Even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty.
Therefore, I have called her
“Rahab who has been exterminated.”
 - 8 Now go, write it on a tablet before them
And inscribe it on a scroll,
That it may serve in the time to come
As a witness forever.
 - 9 For this is a rebellious people, false sons,
Sons who refuse to listen
To the instruction of the LORD;
 - 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.
 - 11 “Get out of the way, turn aside from the path,
Let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel.”
- 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,
- 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,
 14 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."

15 For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said,

"In repentance and rest you will be saved,
 In quietness and trust is your strength."
 But you were not willing,
 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.
 17 One thousand *will flee* at the threat of one *man*;
 You will flee at the threat of five,
 Until you are left as a flag on a mountain top
 And as a signal on a hill.

God's Future Grace Will Transform Judah

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.

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.

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.

21 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.

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!"

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.

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

25 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.

26 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.

God's Plan to Destroy Assyria

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;
 28 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.
 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.
 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.
 31 For at the voice of the LORD Assyria will be terrified,
When He strikes with the rod.
 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.
 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.

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Isaiah 31–32

Woe Against Reliance on Egypt Rather Than God

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!
 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.
 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.

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,

And he 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.”

- 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*.

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

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

- 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.
- 9 “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.

God’s Exalting of a Righteous King

32:1 Behold, a king will reign righteously
And princes will rule justly.

- 2 Each will be like a refuge from the wind
And a shelter from the storm,
Like streams of water in a dry country,
Like the shade of a huge rock in a parched land.
- 3 Then the eyes of those who see will not be blinded,
And the ears of those who hear will listen.
- 4 The mind of the hasty will discern the truth,
And the tongue of the stammerers will hasten to speak clearly.
- 5 No longer will the fool be called noble,
Or the rogue be spoken of *as* generous.
- 6 For a fool speaks nonsense,
And his heart inclines toward wickedness:
To practice ungodliness and to speak error against the LORD,
To keep the hungry person unsatisfied
And to withhold drink from the thirsty.
- 7 As for a rogue, his weapons are evil;
He devises wicked schemes
To destroy *the* afflicted with slander,
Even though *the* needy one speaks what is right.
- 8 But the noble man devises noble plans;
And by noble plans he stands.

Complacent Women of Jerusalem Must Lament

- 9 Rise up, you women who are at ease,
And hear my voice;
Give ear to my word,
You complacent daughters.
- 10 Within a year and *a few* days

You will be troubled, O complacent *daughters*;
For the vintage is ended,
And the *fruit* gathering will not come.

- 11 Tremble, you *women* who are at ease;
Be troubled, you complacent *daughters*;
Strip, undress and put *sackcloth* on *your* waist,
12 Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine,
13 For the land of my people *in which* thorns *and* briars shall come up;
Yea, for all the joyful houses *and for* the jubilant city.
14 Because the palace has been abandoned, the populated city forsaken.
Hill and watch-tower have become caves forever,
A delight for wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks;

Future Transformation of Israel

- 15 Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high,
And the wilderness becomes a fertile field,
And the fertile field is considered as a forest.
16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness
And righteousness will abide in the fertile field.
17 And the work of righteousness will be peace,
And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.
18 Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation,
And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;
19 And it will hail when the forest comes down,
And the city will be utterly laid low.
20 How blessed will you be, you who sow beside all waters,
Who let out freely the ox and the donkey.

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