

A Trek Through Isaiah 36 - 30:1-33 (Part 1)

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Prayer

Introduction

For today

- The fourth woe: Faithlessness and faithfulness 30:1-33 (Part 1)

(9:35)

Overview

These chapters form the greatest of Isaiah's interim fulfillments.

He had prophesied one world, one people, one God. Now he answers the the question: Is it real?

The test case was the "Egyptian alliance" situation in the days of Hezekiah. Judah was under Assyria. Merodach-Baladan of Babylon was urging alliance against Assyria. Egypt was promising assistance for a revolt. Isaiah's job was to urge the way of faith, trusting in Yahweh rather than in politics.

Structure

- Two sections
 - 28 - 35 Six woes
 - 36 - 37 Epilogue

The fourth woe: Faithlessness and faithfulness 30:1-33 (Part 1)

Judah's leaders seek alliance with Egypt, but Egypt is nothing; depending on her will bring disastrous results. Similarly, Assyria is nothing; they will be defeated. God's people presently reject His word, but His word will be fulfilled.

Applying the principles from the first woe. (Is 28)

- Looked at Samaria and Jerusalem.
- Because of sins, judgment from the LORD would come.
- His chastisements are for the purpose of achieving His will for His people.
- They will not be forever.
- Those who trust and wait for Him will be blessed.

Structure

- V1-7 Egypt is no hope
- V8-17 The word of the LORD rejected
- V18-26 The promises of the LORD kept
- V27-33 Assyria is no threat

Egypt is no hope 30:1-7

- V1-2 **Godless** plan

1 Ah, stubborn children,” declares the Lord, “who carry out a plan, but not mine, and who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin; 2 who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my direction, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!

- Watching the Judean envoys go to Egypt
- V1 stubborn children.
 - Rebellious but still children
- V1 who carry out a plan, but not mine.
 - Both planning and acting
 - Apart from God
- V1 who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit
 - make an alliance: lit weave a covering. Weave relationships into an alliance to provide a covering.
 - Instead of the covering they might have had from God.
- V1 that they may add sin to sin
 - May refer to Judah’s immediate actions
 - Not trusting the LORD
 - Making plans which are not His
 - Making an alliance which is not of His Spirit
 - Going to Egypt without asking for His direction
 - Taking refuge in the protection of Pharaoh.
 - Seeking shelter in the shadow of Egypt
 - Longer term
 - Under Ahaz Judah had sought security in alliance with Assyria rather than trusting in Yahweh.
 - Now under Hezekiah they are repeating the same error, looking to Egypt.
- V2 who set out to go down to Egypt
 - To the oppressor that God had delivered them from.
 - Violating the command in Dt 17:16 You shall never return that way again
- V2 without asking for my direction
 - The LORD was there but they would not come to Him
- V2 to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!
 - Where is true security?

- V3-5 **Disastrous** result

3 Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation. 4 For though his officials are at Zoan and his envoys reach Hanes, 5 everyone comes to shame through a people that cannot profit them, that brings neither help nor profit, but shame and disgrace.”

- V3 Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame
 - False security
- V4 his officials are at Zoan and his envoys reach Hanes.
 - Diplomatic activity.
 - Either Pharaoh’s officials across the land or Judean envoys wandering from city to city.
- V5 neither help nor profit, but shame and disgrace.
 - The promise and result of sin.

- V6-7 Oracle of the beasts of the Negev

6 An oracle on the beasts of the Negev. Through a land of trouble and anguish, from where come the lioness and the lion, the adder and the flying fiery serpent, they carry their riches on the backs of donkeys, and their treasures on the humps of camels, to a people that cannot profit them. 7 Egypt’s help is worthless and empty; therefore I have called her “Rahab who sits still.”

- V6 An oracle on the beasts of the Negev
 - Picture of beasts carrying burdens through the hostile desert to no purpose.
 - For the sake of secrecy, the caravans did not take the direct route between Judah and Egypt but took a longer route south through the wilderness.
- V6 Through a land of trouble and anguish, from where come the lioness and the lion, the adder and the flying fiery serpent,
 - A sad picture: reversing the steps of the exodus.
 - Fulfilling Dt 8:14-15 then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, 15 who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions...
- V7 Egypt’s help is worthless and empty;
 - Egypt is no help.
- V7 Rahab who sits still.
 - Rahab: turbulence, boasting; also crocodile.
 - Sits still: resting.
 - Big Mouth who does nothing

The word of the LORD rejected 30:8-17

- Structure
 - V8 written witness
 - V9-14 first explanation and consequences
 - V15-17 second explanation and consequences

- V8 The written **witness**

8 And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever.

- V8 write it before them on a tablet
 - For public display.
 - Short passages like v1-5, 6-7.
- V8 and inscribe it in a book,
 - For a permanent witness
 - The complete teaching of Isaiah up to this time.
- V8 that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever
 - For Israel.
 - For the church Re 1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

- V9-12 First explanation: refusal to **hear** God's word

9 For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the Lord;
 10 who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right; speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions, 11 leave 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, "Because you despise this word and trust in oppression and perverseness and rely on them,

- V9 Description of the wicked
 - rebellious
 - lying
 - unwilling to hear the instruction of the Lord
- V10-11 Unwilling to hear
 - who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right;
 - Silencing truth
 - speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions,
 - Not stop preaching
 - Speak flattering word that did not point out sin
 - Unbelievers like religion, but not the gospel.
 - leave the way, turn aside from the path,
 - Walk as false prophets
 - let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."
 - Stop preaching about a holy God.
 - Remove the God of truth from the minds of the nation.
 - Re Ps 14:1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
- V12 Description of the wicked
 - Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel
 - Cannot get rid of God by not wanting to hear His word.
 - The nation wanted God to cease; God will make the nation cease.
 - you despise this word
 - Count as nothing
 - [you] trust in oppression and perverseness
 - Preventing the preaching of the truth
 - Refusing to submit to the LORD.

- V13-14 Consequences of refusing to **hear**

13 therefore this iniquity shall be to you like a breach in a high wall, bulging out and about to collapse, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant; 14 and its breaking is like that of a potter's vessel that is smashed so ruthlessly that among its fragments not a shard is found with which to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern."

- Two pictures of the coming destruction
- V13 a breach in a high wall, bulging out and about to collapse, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant;
 - High wall
 - bulging out and about to collapse.
 - Warning of imminent failure.
 - whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant
 - Irreversible
 - Sudden
 - Complete
 - Picture of self-destruction
- V14 a potter's vessel that is smashed
 - Picture of divine judgment
 - No useful fragment remaining.
- Not speaking of the believing remnant.

- V15 Second explanation: Rejecting true **security**

15 For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength." But you were unwilling...

- V15 the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel
 - Sovereign
 - Holy
- V15 The way of true security
 - Structure of three word pairs
 - Returning..,trust
 - Returning to the LORD
 - trusting in Him rather than in alliances.
 - Rest...quietness
 - Rather than ceaseless activity.
 - Saved...strength
 - Saved from conquest
 - Strength to resist
- V15 The nation's response
 - But you were unwilling

- V16-17 Consequences of rejecting true **security**

16 and you said, “No! We will flee upon horses”; therefore you shall flee away; and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. 17 A thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill.

- The nation’s solution: We will flee upon horses...We will ride upon swift steeds
 - Obtain horses from Egypt and flee the approaching danger.
- Three results obtained
 - You shall flee away...your pursuers shall be swift
 - Fleeing rather than standing firm.
 - Being overtaken and caught.
 - A thousand shall flee at the threat of one;
 - As Dt 32:30 How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had given them up?
 - like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain
 - Lonely
 - Visible to all

(10:00)

Discussion

We will break into three groups to discuss today's passage:

1. **Godless plan...disastrous result 30:1-7**
 - a. **Weaving a covering**
 - b. **Neither help nor profit, but shame and disgrace.**
 - c. **Back to Egypt**
2. **Refusal to hear 30:8-14**
 - a. **The written witness**
 - b. **Let us hear no more about the Holy One**
 - c. **The collapsed wall**
 - d. **The broken jar**
3. **Rejecting true security 30:8, 15-17**
 - a. **The written witness**
 - b. **We will ride upon swift steeds**
 - c. **You shall flee**
 - d. **Your pursuers shall be swift**
 - e. **A thousand shall flee**
 - f. **Left like a signal on a hill**

In your group, please discuss

- **See:** Something about God that you see in the passage
- **Know:** The effect that this view of God has upon you.
- **Respond:** A way to respond to what you have seen and come to know.

For next week:

- The fourth woe: Faithlessness and faithfulness 30:1-33 (Part 2)

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