

A Trek Through Isaiah 26 - 30:1-33

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Isaiah said Yahweh is Lord of history; true security is found in Him.

Is this true? Six woes introduce the greatest of Isaiah's interim fulfillments.

Today: Fourth woe part 1

<u>The Lord of History (28:1 - 37:38)</u>					
1st Woe: The word of God and the purpose of God 28:1-29	2nd Woe: Is anything too hard for the LORD? 29:1-14	3rd Woe: Spiritual transformation 29:15-24	4th Woe: Faithlessness and faithfulness 30:1-33	5th Woe: All things new 31:1 - 32:20	6th Woe: Home at last 33:1 - 35:10
Historical Epilogue 36:1 - 37:38					

The fourth woe: Faithlessness and faithfulness 30:1-33

Appearance of Egypt and Assyria: focus changes to current events.

- Likely dated around 701 BC: Hezekiah on the throne of Judah. At the urging of Babylon, Judah has revolted against Assyria. But Babylon and her other allies have been defeated, and Assyria has taken Judah's outer fortresses. The only earthly hope appears to be an alliance with Egypt.

Isaiah will apply the principles from the first woe. (Is 28)

- Looked at Samaria and Jerusalem.
- Yahweh's people relied on their own devices rather than on Him so He will bring judgment on them.
- He uses nations to accomplish His purpose.
- His chastisements will be exactly what is required to achieve 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 Yahweh rejected
- V18-26 The promises of Yahweh kept
- V27-33 Assyria is no threat

Egypt is no hope 30:1-7

Godless plan 30:1-2

Isaiah 30:1–2 (LSB): Woe to the rebellious children,” declares Yahweh, “Who execute counsel, but not Mine, And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit, In order to add sin to sin,

2 Who go down to Egypt—But did not ask Me—To find strength in the strong defense of Pharaoh And to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!

- Watching the Judean envoys go to Egypt
- rebellious children.
 - Alliance with Egypt was strictly forbidden. Dt 17:16 You shall never again return that way.
- Who execute counsel, but not Mine...,not of My Spirit...did not ask Me
 - Both planning and acting
 - Apart from Yahweh
- and make an alliance
 - 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 Yahweh. (Is 4:5)
- go down to Egypt... To find strength in the strong defense of Pharaoh And to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt!
 - To Egypt. The oppressor that Yahweh had delivered them from
 - Seeking security in man rather than in Yahweh
 - Denying Ps 91:1-2 He who abides in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to Yahweh, “My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!”
- In order to add sin to sin,
 - May refer to Judah’s immediate actions: not trusting Yahweh, going to Egypt
 - Or longer term: Hezekiah is repeating Ahaz’ error.

Disastrous result 30:3-5

Isaiah 30:3–5 (LSB): Therefore the strong defense of Pharaoh will be your shame And the refuge in the shadow of Egypt, your dishonor.

4 “For their princes are at Zoan And their messengers reach 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.”

- V4 For their princes are at Zoan And their messengers reach Hanes. Diplomatic activity
- V3, Shame...dishonor
 - Because they had seen Yahweh’s work and should have known better
 - Because Egypt will fail them. Egypt’s army defeated by Assyria.

Vain effort 30:6-7

Isaiah 30:6–7 (LSB)

6The oracle concerning the beasts of the Negev. Through a land of distress and anguish, From where come lioness and lion, viper and flying fiery serpent, They carry their wealth on the backs of young donkeys And their treasures on camels' humps, To a people who cannot profit them;

7Even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty. Therefore, I have called her "Rahab who has ceased."

- V6a Much effort
 - An oracle concerning the beasts of the Negev
 - Isaiah sees the Judean caravan carrying treasure to Egypt to buy their assistance.
 - 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.
 - Through a land of distress and anguish, From where come lioness and lion, viper and flying fiery serpent,
 - A sad picture: reversing the steps of the exodus. Dt 8:14-15 ...Yahweh 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...
- V6b-7 Empty goal
 - To a people who cannot profit them; even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty
 - No profit for their labor.
 - Egypt's help is vain (without substance) and empty (without contents)
 - Rahab who has ceased.
 - Rahab: Crocodile of the Nile, great sea monster in Canaanite mythology.
 - Ceased: once active, now still.
 - Big Mouth who does nothing

The word of Yahweh rejected 30:8-17

The written witness 30:8

Isaiah 30:8 (LSB): Now go, write it on a tablet before them And inscribe it on a scroll, That it may be in the time to come As a witness forever.

- Tablet. For public display. Perhaps just "Rahab".
- Scroll. For a complete witness. The teaching about the interim fulfillment (woes 1-4)
- Witness. For Judah. For the church 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.

First explanation: refusal to hear God's word 30:9-12

Isaiah 30:9–12 (LSB): For this is a rebellious people, false sons, Sons who are not willing to listen To the law of Yahweh,

10 Who say to the seers, "You must not see," And to those who have visions, "You must not behold visions for us of what is right, Speak to us pleasant words, Behold visions of illusions.

11 "Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, Cease speaking before us about the Holy One of Israel."

- Why the witness
- V9 False sons
 - Rebellious. Refusing to obey.
 - False sons. Not true to their heritage.
 - Not willing to listen to the law of Yahweh
- V10-11 Exchanging truth for falsehood
 - Who say to the seers, "You must not see," And to those who have visions, "You must not behold visions for us of what is right;
 - Do not see truth
 - Speak to us pleasant words, Behold visions of illusions. ,
 - Not stop preaching. Speak pleasant words of illusion
 - Get out of the way, turn aside from the path
 - Leave the way of truth
 - Cease speaking before us 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."

Consequences of refusing to hear 30:13-14

Isaiah 30:12–14 (LSB):

12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, “Since you have rejected this word And have put your trust in oppression and deviousness and have relied on them,

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

14 Whose breaking is like the breaking of a potter’s jar, So ruthlessly shattered That a potsherd will not be found among its pieces To take fire from a hearth Or to scoop water from a cistern.”

- V12 Diagnosis
 - Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel
 - Judah did not want to hear God’s appeal to them.
 - Thus they would hear His word of discipline.
 - you have rejected this word
 - The prophet’s appeal
 - [you] have put your trust in oppression and deviousness
 - Preventing the preaching of the truth
 - By suppression
 - By misinformation .
- V13-14 Two pictures of coming destruction
 - V13 a wall bulging out and about to collapse.
 - Obvious sign of imminent failure.
 - Sudden & irreversible
 - V14 a potter’s vessel smashed
 - Completely shattered. No useful fragments remain.
 - Speaking of the nation. Not speaking of the believing remnant.

Second explanation: Rejecting true security 30:15

Isaiah 30:15 (LSB): For thus Lord Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, has said, “In repentance and rest you will be saved, In quietness and trust is your might.” But you were not willing,...

- Lord Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. Sovereign. Holy. Their God
- Has said. Through all the prophets up to Isaiah
- In repentance and rest you will be saved, In quietness and trust is your might.
 - The way of true security
 - Structure of three word pairs
 - Repentance...rest. Returning to Yahweh. Resting in Him
 - Quietness...trust. Rather than ceaseless activity.
 - Saved...might. Saved from conquest. Strength to resist
- But you were not willing. Sad response of self-sufficiency

Consequences of rejecting true security 30:16-17

Isaiah 30:16–17 (LSB): 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 standard on a hill.

- V16a The nation’s solution:
 - No: rejecting the way of faith
 - We will flee upon horses...We will ride upon swift horses
 - Horses from Egypt.
 - Cavalry and chariots the premier military weapons of the day
 - Trading the Almighty God for the latest tech
- V16b-17 Three results obtained
 - You shall flee...those who pursue you shall be swift
 - Getting what they asked for
 - Fleeing rather than standing firm.
 - Swift but pursuers will be swifter.
 - A thousand will flee at the threat of one man
 - 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 Yahweh had given them up?
 - left as a flag on a mountain top And as a standard on a hill. Lonely. Visible to all

The promises of Yahweh kept 30:18-26

- In view are both intermediate and ultimate restoration of God's people.

Yahweh waits 30:18

Isaiah 30:18 (LSB): Therefore Yahweh waits with longing to be gracious to you, And therefore He is on high to have compassion on you. For Yahweh is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who wait for Him.

- Yahweh waits with longing to be gracious to you.
 - Waits with earnest expectation and longing.
 - As the father of the prodigal in Lk 15:20. He longs for his son but he waits for him to return before he shows compassion.
 - God longs to give grace, but the nation is rebellious, therefore discipline must come before grace.
- He is on high to have compassion on you
 - For the sake of His name. As Ez 36:22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came.
- For Yahweh is a God of justice
 - Justice. Also right judgment.
 - God discerns the right time to extend mercy and grace.
 - He is able to extend mercy and grace in spite of sin. How? See the book of the Servant.
- How blessed are all those who wait for him.
 - Wait. Same word as above.
 - Exhortation to be faithful and wait for God to deliver at the proper time.
 - As 1 Pet 5:6-7 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, CASTING ALL YOUR ANXIETY ON HIM, because He cares for you..
- Here is OT faith
 - Yahweh eagerly waits to have compassion on His people.
 - At the proper time He will remove their sin, demonstrating His righteousness, and show them His grace.
 - Wait for Him

V19-22 Transformed people

Isaiah 30:19–22 (LSB): 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 The Lord has given you bread of distress and water of oppression; He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will see your Teacher.

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.

22 And you will defile your graven images overlaid with your silver, and your molten images plated with your gold. You will scatter them as an impure thing and say to them, “Be gone!”

- V19-21 God’s word regained
 - V19 O people ...inhabitant
 - The believing remnant.
 - V19 in Zion, in Jerusalem
 - Repeated for emphasis.
 - In the place foretold.
 - Contrast with the fate of Nineveh and Babylon
 - V19 you will weep no longer
 - Jerusalem will be rebuilt, full, fruitful
 - Final fulfillment in Rev 21:3-4 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
 - God will dwell with His people
 - No more tears.
 - V19 He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry
 - Their sin will be dealt with, so Yahweh can show grace.
 - V19 when He hears it, He will answer you..
 - First by the promises in His word given through the prophets
 - Later by fulfilling His promises
 - V20 The Lord has given you bread of distress and water of oppression
 - Food given to prisoners.
 - Refers to the present tribulation.
 - V20 your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will see your Teacher.
 - Your Teacher. Yahweh.
 - Will no longer hide Himself. As in the present tribulation.
 - V21 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 word will be heard, guiding them, and willingly obeyed.
 - As a shepherd speaking to his sheep, keeping them in the right way.

- V22 Idols gone
 - And you will defile your graven images overlaid with your silver, and your molten images plated with your gold.
 - No longer regard them as holy.
 - You will scatter them as an impure thing
 - Break into pieces and scatter.
 - impure thing. As touched by a menstruating woman.
 - and say to them, "Be gone!"
 - Exclamation of rejection reflecting a holy heart.

Transformed land 30:23-25a

Isaiah 30:23–25 (LSB): Then He will give you rain for the seed which you will sow in the ground, and bread from the produce of the ground, and it will be rich and fat; 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 And it will be that on every lofty mountain and on every lifted up hill there will be streams running with water...

- Creation restored
- V23 he will give
 - Gifts of grace
- V23 rain
 - Plentiful water
- V23 the produce of the ground, and it will be rich and fat.
 - Rich harvest
- V23 graze in a roomy pasture
 - Ample safe grazing.
- V24 salted fodder ... winnowed,
 - The best
- V25 streams running with water
 - Plentiful water even in the high ground
 - Contrast the current arid land.

World city brought down 30:25b

25 ...in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

- Downfall of the world city (1) the day of the great slaughter (2) when the towers fall.

Heavens transformed 30:26a

Isaiah 30:26 (LSB): 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...

- In the end times.
- Glory of the heavens restored
- As Ro 8:21 the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God

People healed 30:26b

26 ...on the day Yahweh binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.

- Yahweh binds up the fracture of His people
 - Picture of a physician treating a wounded man
 - Referring to the brokenness caused by sin.
- and heals the bruise He has inflicted
 - Wounds from the chastisement
 - From Yahweh.

Assyria is no threat 30:27-33

God's people turn away from Him, but He does not turn from His people when they are threatened.

Isaiah starts with the far-future day of Yahweh and moves to the near-future destruction of Assyria

The day of Yahweh 30:27-30

Isaiah 30:27–30 (LSB): Behold, the name of Yahweh comes from afar; Burning is His anger and heavy 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 of worthlessness, And to put in the jaws of the peoples the bridle which staggers one to ruin.

29 You will have songs as in the night when you set yourself apart as holy for the festival, And gladness of heart as when one marches to the sound of the flute, To go to the mountain of Yahweh, to the Rock of Israel.

30 And Yahweh will cause His splendid voice to be heard, And the descending of His arm to be seen in raging anger, And in the flame of a consuming fire In cloudburst, downpour, and hailstones.

- V27-28 Yahweh's rage
 - V27 Behold. Pay attention.
 - V27 the name of Yahweh
 - God's character as revealed in His words and deeds
 - The very name that had been ignored, rejected, slandered
 - V27 comes from afar
 - As a violent storm
 - Not God far away. Rather he had been withholding His hand, Assyria had been free to go its own way
 - V27-28 Four pictures of Yahweh's judgment
 - Raging fire
 - Burning is His anger and heavy is His smoke. As at Sinai
 - His lips are filled with indignation. Condemnation of sin.
 - His tongue is like a consuming fire. No mercy
 - As Is 11:4 and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
 - Flood
 - His breath is like an overflowing torrent, Which reaches to the neck.
 - A flood that carries everything before it.
 - Threshing
 - To shake the nations back and forth in a sieve of worthlessness.
 - Separating the worthless chaff.
 - Led astray to destruction
 - And to put in the jaws of the peoples the bridle which staggers one to ruin.
 - A spirit of blindness to the truth.
 - As 2 Th 2:10-12 and with all the deception of unrighteousness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God sends upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,

in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in unrighteousness.

- V29 Rejoicing in the victory
 - You will have songs as in the night when you set yourself apart as holy for the festival
 - Festival. The Passover (the only feast kept at night).
 - As the night of the last plague of the Exodus when Israel was kept safe inside their houses as the judgment descended on Egypt.
 - And gladness of heart as when one marches to the sound of the flute, To go to the mountain of Yahweh, to the Rock of Israel.
 - True joy as pilgrims approached the temple in Jerusalem to worship Yahweh.
- V30 Yahweh's action
 - And Yahweh will cause His splendid voice to be heard, And the descending of His arm to be seen
 - Speech with action
 - in raging anger, And in the flame of a consuming fire
 - In cloudburst, downpour, and hailstones.
 - A violent storm

The end of Assyria 30:31-33

Isaiah 30:31–33 (LSB)

31 For at the voice of Yahweh Assyria will be dismayed, When He strikes with the rod.

32 And every blow of the appointed staff, Which Yahweh will cause to rest upon him, Will be with the music of tambourines and lyres; And in battles, waving 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 Yahweh, like a torrent of brimstone, sets it afire.

- Focus on the immediate threat of Assyria
- As Is 7:8 ...And within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered from being a people.
 - Isaiah exhorting Ahaz to not fear Ephraim and Syria
- V31 dismayed
 - Spirit broken through alarm and fear.
- V31 Strikes with the rod.
 - Hard blows destroying the nation.
- V32 with the music of tambourines and lyres.
 - Re v29 as the remnant sings.
 - Not out of vindictiveness against Assyria
 - Because the cause of good is victorious.
- V33 For Topheth has long been ready
 - Topheth. Burning place.
 - Located in the valley of Hinnon south of Jerusalem
 - The place where unbelieving Israelites had offered their children to Moloch.
 - It became the refuse dump of Jerusalem, where fires burned continually.
 - Picture is of (1) an accursed place (2) a place of burning.
 - has long been ready.
 - Arranged and set in order
 - As Ps 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies
 - 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 Yahweh, like a torrent of brimstone, sets it afire.
 - Picture of a burial pyre in an accursed place, all prepared.
 - Now at the proper time it will be kindled.

Application: Kicking against the goads

Is 30:18 Therefore Yahweh waits with longing to be gracious to you, And therefore He is on high to have compassion on you. For Yahweh is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who wait for Him.

- The Lord waits to be gracious until we are ready to receive His grace.
- He knows the proper time.

Rebellious Saul

Acts 26:14 “And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’

Saul was a young man advancing in Judaism beyond his peers (Gal 1:14). At the execution of Stephen he watched the coats of those throwing stones and heartily approved of his death (Acts 7:58, 8:1).

However, he heard Stephen’s words when he confronted his accusers: ““You men—stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears—are always resisting the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. “And which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; you who received the Law as ordained by angels, and yet did not observe it.” (Acts 7:51-53)

Saul realized that Stephen was right: he tried his best to keep the law, but deep down He knew he coveted what others had, thus violating the tenth commandment “You shall not covet” (Ro 7:7-12), and he heartily approved of the murder of Stephen.

What was his response? Not repentance but doubling down. He began ravaging the church (Acts 8:3), and breathing out threats and murder against the Christians (Acts 9:1), until he was converted on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3)

What was the result for him? Pain: It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ (Acts 26:14)

- Goad. a sharp stick used by the shepherd to prod a rebellious sheep back into line
- The Shepherd will not allow His sheep to stray without consequences.
- Painful to kick against the goads.

God did save Saul and bring him to glory, as he will us if we trust in Him. But we can avoid a lot of pain along the way by following Eph 5:8-10 ... now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of that light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

- Don’t double down.
- Seek to please Him
- Don’t make Him goad you.

References

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