

Isaiah 30B-33

- So Judah is on the brink of God “plowing their field
 - They entered into a covenant with Egypt instead of relying on God
 - So God pronounces their coming judgment, when Assyria will siege Jerusalem
 - But every lowing comes to an end and is followed by sowing and harvesting
 - And Isaiah tempers his message of judgment with a moment of redemption...

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.

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.

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.

Is. 30:21 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.

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!”

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.

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.

Is. 30:25 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.

Is. 30:26 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.

- By now, we should be very familiar with this recurring theme of Isaiah
 - The theme of the coming Kingdom and Israel's restoration in that kingdom

- Let's run through the familiar details
 - No more weeping
 - The Lord answering the cry of Israel
 - No longer hiding Himself, your eyes will see Him (v.20)
 - You will walk in His ways perfectly (sinlessly)
 - No more idols (v.22)
 - Harvest of plenty (seed motif again)
 - No darkness and the light of the world far brighter
 - Israel healed
- All signs of the Lord's return and Israel's healing and restoration
 - But not yet
 - This period waits for God's judgment first (v.18)
- In conjunction with this future restoration, we also know that God's judgment falls on the nations that have assembled to destroy Israel in that time
 - And Isaiah has something to say for their future as well

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;

Is. 30:28 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.

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.

- For the most part, this passage is easy to understand so long as we leave it in the immediate context of Isaiah's earlier statements
 - This is the judgment that occurs when Christ returns to Earth
 - But there are a couple of noteworthy details to consider

- Isaiah says they will have songs they sing
 - As in the night of the festival
 - That phrase is generally understood to reference Passover
 - Which is a festival that memorializes a single night's event
 - Hymns are commonly song on that night, as you can see in Matthew 26:30
 - Where Jesus and the disciples sing a hymn at the end of the Passover meal
- Then Isaiah once again weaves references of the future with references of the present day judgment
 - In vs. 27-29 the focus was the judgment against the nations of the Tribulation
 - Now in vs. 30-33 Isaiah moves his focus back to Assyria

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.

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

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.

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.

- How do we know that Isaiah wasn't talking about Assyria the whole time?
 - Look at v.28 where he references nations and peoples
 - And again in v.29, the result of the Lord's deliverance is the nation going to the mountain of the Lord and to the Rock of Israel
 - This never happened after the Lord delivered Israel from Assyria

- There was no national coming to faith in the Messiah
- But after Christ's Second Coming, this is to be the result as we have already studied
 - So now we know that this references the future event
- But in vs.30-33 we see specific references to Assyria coming to defeat in battle
 - In v.33, Topeth (which means a burning place) is the same name for the Valley of Hinnom on the south side of Jerusalem
 - This valley is the place evil kings of Judah offered human sacrifices to pagan gods
 - It was also a place where garbage was burned continually
 - The combination of burning garbage and human remains led Jews to associate the valley with hell
 - Ge-hinnom is the Hebrew name which we have come to pronounce hell
 - This place has long been prepared for the king of Assyria
 - The word for "long" is actually yesterday in Hebrew
 - Literally, it says this place was prepared yesterday for the king
 - Meaning it has been his destiny from the beginning
 - Rabbinical traditional has taken this verse to mean that Hell was created on the second day of creation
 - Since the second day of creation was the first day to have a "yesterday," then it was the second day of creation when Hell was created
 - They go on to conclude that this is why that Day 2 is the only day that has no record of God saying anything is good in Genesis 1
 - In a final warning to Israel against seeking protection from Egypt, Isaiah writes chapter 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!

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.

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.

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,
 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."

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.

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

Is. 31:7 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.

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.

Is. 31:9 "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.

- The book of woes continues...
 - They relied on horses and chariots and think themselves strong
 - But they don't look to the truly strong and Holy One
 - But in v.2 God assures Israel that He is wise enough to bring disaster both against their adversaries (after all, God brought them in them in the first place)
 - And against those in Israel who turn their back on Him

- Isaiah mocks the Egyptians as men not gods and therefore insufficient to solve a God-created problem
 - The Assyrians were God's appointed instruments of destruction
 - Their kings went beyond his instructions and pursued into Judah against God's instructions
 - Yet God was able to turn that disobedience to suit His own purposes in using Assyria to discipline Judah
 - And God promises to prevent the Egyptians from offering any help
 - Because God is determined to fight the battle alone, to His own glory
- In the end He protects Jerusalem because He has need for it to remain until His Son is born and dies there
 - So in v.6 he calls upon Judah to return to Him so they may be included in the rescue
- Now Isaiah draws a contrast between the present day unfaithful leadership within Judah to a future time when it will be ruled by perfection...
 - Another familiar theme...but with some new details

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

Is. 32:2 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.

- We know Isaiah is back to describing the Lord's return to rule on Earth
 - But here we see a curious new detail
 - A king is mentioned, Christ
 - And a prince
 - And we know these are then same person because in v.2 we see "each" referenced, indicating that there is more than one person in view

- And there is in fact both a King and a Prince present in the Messianic Kingdom
- As we said already, Christ is the King
- But who is the prince?
- Look at Ezekiel 34 describing the times of the Messianic Kingdom

Ezek. 34:21 “Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

Ezek. 34:22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

Ezek. 34:23 ¶ “Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

Ezek. 34:24 “And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

Ezek. 34:25 ¶ “I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Ezek. 34:26 “I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

 - The Lord is King among the shepherds but David is prince
 - We should expect this since David will undoubtedly be resurrected to join the kingdom
 - And in that new life he will have a role just as we all will
 - And it will be as Christ's right hand man in His government
 - Another interesting detail is that this time will include both the noble and the fools
 - First, v.5 says that perfect transparency or distinction will be maintained throughout the kingdom time
 - And yet the fools still exist and do what fools do
 - While the noble are perfect in their nobility
 - The contrast here is consistent with what we've seen elsewhere in Isaiah
 - The kingdom is populated by the incorruptible resurrected believers

- But these must rule over the imperfect that still have sin
- This is the very reason for government
 - Without sin, the kingdom would have no government
- Isaiah concludes chapter 32 with a wry call to the women of Israel
 - In light of Judah's coming period of judgment -
 - A period that won't end fully until the Messiah's Second Coming
 - Isaiah says they should begin their mourning now

Is. 32:3 Then the eyes of those who see will not be blinded,
And the ears of those who hear will listen.

Is. 32:4 The mind of the hasty will discern the truth,
And the tongue of the stammerers will hasten to speak clearly.

Is. 32:5 No longer will the fool be called noble,
Or the rogue be spoken of as generous.

Is. 32:6 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.

Is. 32:7 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.

Is. 32:8 But the noble man devises noble plans;
And by noble plans he stands.

Is. 32:9 ¶ Rise up, you women who are at ease,
And hear my voice;
Give ear to my word,
You complacent daughters.

Is. 32:10 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.

Is. 32:11 Tremble, you women who are at ease;
Be troubled, you complacent daughters;
Strip, undress and put sackcloth on your waist,

Is. 32:12 Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine,

Is. 32:13 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.

Is. 32:14 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;

Is. 32:15 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.

Is. 32:16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness

And righteousness will abide in the fertile field.

Is. 32:17 And the work of righteousness will be peace,

And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.

Is. 32:18 Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation,

And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;

Is. 32:19 And it will hail when the forest comes down,

And the city will be utterly laid low.

Is. 32:20 How blessed will you be, you who sow beside all waters,

Who let out freely the ox and the donkey.

- If only you knew what was coming, you wouldn't be living like life was normal
 - You would be mourning now
 - The palace will be abandoned and the crops ruined and the land devastated
 - But in v.15 Isaiah reminds them that once God is ready to pour out His Spirit on them, they will experience justice
 - And peace and confidence forever
 - This reference to the Holy Spirit reaffirms our reading in Zech 12 where we see the Lord bringing the nation of Israel to a moment of national repentance
- And then on to 33, and a new phase in the book of Woes
 - Beginning with a woe pronounced on a mysterious character

Is. 33:1 ¶ Woe to you, O destroyer,

While you were not destroyed;

And he who is treacherous, while others did not deal treacherously with him.

As soon as you finish destroying, you will be destroyed;

As soon as you cease to deal treacherously, others will deal treacherously with you.

- Who do you think Isaiah is talking about here?

- The destroyer is a reference that points us to Satan
 - But taking it one step further, remember that Assyria's siege of Jerusalem is a picture of the Antichrist's siege of Jerusalem in the End Times
 - Then it's reasonable to assume we're looking at the antichrist here more specifically
- Here Isaiah promises that he will come to his fitting end at the Lord's coming
- Then in v.2 Isaiah moves forward to revisit his descriptions of that moment when the Lord frees Israel from the antichrist's armies

Is. 33:2 O LORD, be gracious to us; we have waited for You.

Be their strength every morning,
Our salvation also in the time of distress.

Is. 33:3 At the sound of the tumult peoples flee;

At the lifting up of Yourself nations disperse.

Is. 33:4 Your spoil is gathered as the caterpillar gathers;

As locusts rushing about men rush about on it.

Is. 33:5 The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high;

He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.

Is. 33:6 And He will be the stability of your times,

A wealth of salvation, wisdom and knowledge;

The fear of the LORD is his treasure.

Is. 33:7 Behold, their brave men cry in the streets,

The ambassadors of peace weep bitterly.

Is. 33:8 The highways are desolate, the traveler has ceased,

He has broken the covenant, he has despised the cities,

He has no regard for man.

Is. 33:9 The land mourns and pines away,

Lebanon is shamed and withers;

Sharon is like a desert plain,

And Bashan and Carmel lose their foliage.

Is. 33:10 "Now I will arise," says the LORD,

"Now I will be exalted, now I will be lifted up.

Is. 33:11 "You have conceived chaff, you will give birth to stubble;

My breath will consume you like a fire.

Is. 33:12 "The peoples will be burned to lime,

Like cut thorns which are burned in the fire.

- The nation of Israel opens with a prayer in v.2

- And they ask for the Lord to save them in their time of distress

- This is a short summary of what we've already seen described in Zech 12
- And in response to that prayer, the Lord answers in the following verses
 - At the sound of a tumult or roar, the enemy scatters
 - As God Himself is lifted up
- They gathered for the spoil and yet they themselves will become the spoil
 - And then we see the familiar references in vs.5-6 to Christ's power to rule
 - And the following verses repeat the kind of devastation that will come upon the enemy forces as they are crushed
- But the Lord will be raised up and their plans to destroy will come to nothing
 - Like giving birth to chaff
- Now to end the chapter briefly, consider some of the details Isaiah offers of that time

Is. 33:13 ¶ "You who are far away, hear what I have done;
And you who are near, acknowledge My might."

Is. 33:14 Sinners in Zion are terrified;
Trembling has seized the godless.

"Who among us can live with the consuming fire?
Who among us can live with continual burning?"

Is. 33:15 He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity,
He who rejects unjust gain
And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe;
He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed
And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil;

Is. 33:16 He will dwell on the heights,
His refuge will be the impregnable rock;
His bread will be given him,
His water will be sure.

Is. 33:17 ¶ Your eyes will see the King in His beauty;
They will behold a far-distant land.

Is. 33:18 Your heart will meditate on terror:
"Where is he who counts?
Where is he who weighs?
Where is he who counts the towers?"

Is. 33:19 You will no longer see a fierce people,
 A people of unintelligible speech which no one comprehends,
 Of a stammering tongue which no one understands.

Is. 33:20 Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts;
 Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an undisturbed habitation,
 A tent which will not be folded;
 Its stakes will never be pulled up,
 Nor any of its cords be torn apart.

Is. 33:21 But there the majestic One, the LORD, will be for us
 A place of rivers and wide canals
 On which no boat with oars will go,
 And on which no mighty ship will pass —

Is. 33:22 For the LORD is our judge,
 The LORD is our lawgiver,
 The LORD is our king;
 He will save us —

Is. 33:23 Your tackle hangs slack;
 It cannot hold the base of its mast firmly,
 Nor spread out the sail.
 Then the prey of an abundant spoil will be divided;
 The lame will take the plunder.

Is. 33:24 And no resident will say, "I am sick";
 The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.

- First, to those who are still apostate and without saving faith in the Messiah are called to hear what God has done
 - While those who are near should acknowledge His might
 - This distinction is the outline for the rest of the chapter
 - The believing remnant and unbelieving remnant and their different perspectives based on what the return of Christ means
 - In v.14 the sinners are terrified
 - Asking who can live within consuming fire? No one
 - In contrast, those who walk in righteousness, he will dwell on the heights
 - Isaiah lists some of the characteristics that mark these people
 - These aren't the means to righteousness but the product of righteousness obtained by faith
 - To that one, his eyes see the King

- And yet in v.18 the righteous will ask where is terror?
 - Where is the one who counts towers in preparation for battle?
 - No where because there is no war and no terror
- Specifically, in Isaiah's day the people of Jerusalem were promised to one day not see a people with a strange tongue
 - Because they would be gone, as God promised
- And then weaving in a picture of the future, Isaiah begins to describe what they will see in a future Jerusalem
 - A city which will never be "folded"
 - A place with considerably different geography than today
 - Based on the descriptions of Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 47, the city is many times large than today
 - A mountain with a fifty-square mile plateau
 - Large rivers running out of the Temple both east and west
 - But no ships will use these waters
 - And therefore no war ships as Isaiah implies
 - And from that place the Lord rules as the law giver
 - Most notably, the people of Israel dwelling there are forgiven their iniquity