



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

“It May Be ‘from Afar’, but the Lord IS Coming”

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): **Isaiah 30:27-33; 30:1-26; Ps. 96:10-13; Rev. 6:9-11; 2 Peter 3:9**

Isaiah 30 confronts us with a tension that every generation of God's people knows well: the tension between trusting the Lord and trusting what feels safer, faster, and more controllable. Judah is facing a very real threat—the Assyrian war machine is advancing, towns have already fallen, and Jerusalem is next. Into that fear, God speaks through Isaiah, calling His people to trust Him rather than running to Egypt for protection. Egypt looks concrete. Egypt feels practical. Egypt offers horses, armies, and immediate reassurance. Trusting the Lord, on the other hand, feels invisible, slow, and risky.

What makes this passage uncomfortable is that it doesn't let us keep the story safely in the ancient world. It exposes something we still deal with. We all say we trust the Lord—until the pressure rises. Then suddenly, we want backup plans, alliances, and shortcuts that feel more secure. Isaiah 30 reminds us that God is not absent, slow, or indifferent. He may come “from afar,” but He **IS coming**—to rescue AND to set things right.

1. TRUSTING EGYPT FEELS PRACTICAL—UNTIL IT FAILS

Judah's decision to go down to Egypt wasn't framed as rebellion in their minds—it was framed as wisdom. They weren't denying God outright; they were supplementing Him. God says they are carrying out a plan “not from Me” and seeking a covering “not of My Spirit” (*Isa. 30:1*). Egypt becomes the symbol of every solution that looks strong but lacks God's presence. It promises safety but delivers shame. What they lean on ends up cracking like a bulging wall—collapsing suddenly and completely.

The tragedy is that Egypt doesn't just fail spiritually; it fails practically. God calls Egypt's help “futile” and “empty” (*Isa. 30:7*). Even the animals suffer, burdened with treasures carried across a dangerous wilderness for a mission that cannot succeed. That's what false security does—it weighs us down, exhausts us, and ultimately leaves us exposed. Yet how often do we do the same thing? We trust the Lord until fear whispers that we need something more reliable, more visible, more immediate.

2. GOD SPEAKS—BUT WE DON'T ALWAYS WANT TO HEAR

One of the most sobering moments in Isaiah 30 is not God's judgment, but the people's request: “*Speak to us smooth words. Prophecy illusions*” (*Isa. 30:10*). They aren't rejecting prophecy altogether—they're intentionally rejecting truth. They want God's voice on *their* terms. They want affirmation without correction, comfort without repentance, blessing without surrender.

Yet God keeps speaking. He promises that even through adversity, His voice will not disappear. “*Your ears will hear a word behind you saying, ‘This is the way. Walk in it’*” (*Isa.*

30:21). The problem was never that God was silent; it was that His voice didn't align with their plans. Often, it takes pain to soften our hearing. Through hardship, idols lose their shine. What once felt precious gets thrown aside. We finally realize that what we trusted cannot save us—and God's voice becomes clear again.

3. THE LORD COMES FROM AFAR—IN JUSTICE AND JOY

Isaiah 30 ends with a powerful vision: the Lord coming from afar, fully engaged, revealed in fire, breath, voice, and power (*Isa. 30:27–33*). This is not random anger—it is righteous, measured justice. God has been patient. He has waited. But when He comes, He comes decisively. Assyria believes it is marching toward victory, but it is actually marching toward its own end.

What's striking is that God's judgment is paired with worship. There are tambourines, harps, songs of festival joy (*Isa. 30:29, 32*). When the righteous Judge comes, creation rejoices. God sets things right. Oppression ends. Healing begins. He binds up the wounds of His people (*Isa. 30:26*). The same Lord who brings correction also brings restoration. And the question remains: will we trust Him before we are forced to?

CONCLUSION

Isaiah 30 leaves us with a choice that cannot be avoided. God says, "*In repentance and rest is your salvation... but you were not willing*" (*Isa. 30:15*). Will we trust Him—or will we keep running to Egypt? Will we rest—or will we grasp for control? The Lord is not asking us to pretend danger doesn't exist. He is asking us to believe that **He is greater than what we fear**.

Today, the Lord is still coming—sometimes in immediate deliverance, sometimes in patient correction, always in faithfulness. The call is simple but weighty: **Where have you been leaning that isn't Him?** What alliances, plans, or securities have replaced quiet trust? Today, He invites you to lay those down, to stop running, and to rest in Him again. Choose repentance. Choose rest. Choose trust.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Where do you most feel tempted to “run to Egypt” when fear rises?
2. Why do smooth words feel more appealing than truthful ones?
3. How has adversity helped you hear God's voice more clearly?
4. What does “repentance and rest” practically look like in your life right now?
5. How does knowing the Lord “comes from afar” change how you wait on Him?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Father, we confess how easily we trust what we can see instead of trusting You. Forgive us for running to false shelters and leaning on what cannot save. Teach us to rest, to listen, and to wait. Open our ears to hear Your voice saying, “This is the way—walk in it.” Heal what has been broken, remove what we have clung to wrongly, and help us trust You fully. We choose repentance. We choose rest. We choose You. In Yeshua's Name, Amen.