

**Does God Really Intervene Today?  
Why Do We Insist on Planning Over Faith Instead of in Faith?  
Isaiah 31:1–9**

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*Proverbs 3:5–6*

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.” (NASB95)*

This message is clear and unambiguous. It was clear in 705 BC and it is clear today. But you wonder if Jews working for King Hezekiah understood it to read like this: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean entirely on your own understanding but have a really good plan. In all your ways acknowledge Him and hedge your bets with a really good plan, and He will make your paths straight and your plan clear.”

In chapter 31 we find out that yes, Isaiah has not dropped the topic of Judah turning to the nations for protection. He takes the content he has just provided in chapter 30, and now gives us the executive briefing version.

All the prophets hammer this point constantly and it carries on into the New Testament as well to include the warnings we see not to be linked up with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14.)

Now though Isaiah ties going to Egypt, equals rejecting God. This is a warning for us as well. When we turn to the world for answers rather than the Lord, we are rejecting Him in favor of the world.

*Isaiah 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!” (NASB95)*

Isaiah had warned earlier in chapter 30 about doing this. He revealed the top-secret negotiations going on in two locations in Egypt for all to hear. Hezekiah’s ambassadors went ahead with the plan. The agreement has moved forward, and Isaiah’s warning went unheeded. He essentially doubles down and uses the term no one wants to hear connected to yourself from a prophet...woe. This is the fourth time in this section that Isaiah uses it.

## Woes So Far

1. The first woe to the drunkards of Ephraim and was judgment upon Samaria and Jerusalem. (Isaiah 28)
2. The second woe was to Ariel and is all about the coming fall, oppression and deliverance of Jerusalem. (Isaiah 29)
3. The third woe is to the rebellious children who were connected to Egypt and seeking help from the world. (Isaiah 30)
4. The fourth woe is directed against those who negotiated the deal and those who are relying on it. The ones who went to Egypt. (Isaiah 31)

Here is what Isaiah is really talking about. The leadership could rest wholly upon the Lord and His strength and might, confirming their relationship with Him as His people. Or they could commit idolatry by running off to Egypt. “Idolizing the Egyptians, and making court to them, as if happy were the people that had the Egyptians for their friends and allies. They go down to Egypt for help in every exigence, as if the worshippers of false gods had a better interest in heaven and were more likely to have success of earth than the servants of the living and true God.” (Henry 1994, 1137)

This will not be the last time that God’s people will enter highly questionable alliances with the world. We do it all the time. In the last days, Israel will enter an alliance with the Beast for protection from the world. *“And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”* (Daniel 9:27, ESV). The signing of this deal will mark the beginning of the Tribulation. The breaking of this deal halfway through the Tribulation marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

What is it that is the driving factor behind seeking help from Egypt?

Horses and chariots. We look at that today and go hmm. But for a Jew in 705 BC, we are talking about the latest high-tech weaponry available. There is a problem with that...YAHWEH said don’t do it...ever.

*Deuteronomy 17:16*

*“Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’”* (ESV)

Moses laid out for the nation how they are supposed to do warfare.

*Deuteronomy 20:1–4*

*“But if you go out into battle against your enemies, and you see cavalry and riders and a people greater than you, you shall not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God is with you, who made you go up from the land of Egypt. And it will be when you draw near for battle, and, approaching, the priest will speak to the people. And he will say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel. Go today into the battle against your enemies. Let not your heart be faint; do not be frightened or broken to pieces or turn from their face. For the Lord your God is proceeding with you to fight with you against your enemies to preserve you.’”* (Lexham Press 2020, Deut 20:1-4)

But the destiny of a country does not rest upon either horses or missiles, and when any people feel that special weapons can relieve them of dependence upon God, they are on the road to destruction. This is not to say that weapons and faith in God are mutually exclusive in a fallen world, but it is to say that commitment to God’s ways, with whatever that may mean for weapons in a given situation, is primary. (Oswalt 1986, 571)

Do not look to Egypt for help. Do not rely on their technologically and numerically superior forces. Do not rely on those who have been trained to fight with these high-tech weapons. Faith should be in the Lord and His ability to protect them.

Instead, rejection of the Lord in favor of Egyptian military assistance is tantamount to idolatry in YAHWEH's eyes.

Assyria **is** coming. Who does Judah trust? YAHWEH or Egypt.

For us, fill in the blank. XXX is coming. Who do we trust? The Lord or the world?

*Isaiah 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." (NASB95)*

No matter what happens when we ignore the truth about who God is and why we should rely on Him, He "also is wise..." Those from Judah who have run off to Egypt for help are foolish. Even though what they do is foolish, YAHWEH continues to be wise. Disaster is in store for those who have acted foolishly. This upcoming disaster will exhibit the wisdom of God and expose the foolishness of those who ran off to Egypt.

Ambassadors and politicians routinely misspeak. (Lie.) God does not.

His wisdom is also reflected in that what He says will not be retracted or changed. Jesus reiterated this simple fact in Matthew 5. *"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I didn't come to destroy them, but to fulfill them, because I tell all of you with certainty that until heaven and earth disappear, not one letter or one stroke of a letter will disappear from the Law until everything has been accomplished."* (Matthew 5:17–18, ISV)

*Numbers 23:19*

*"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (NASB95)*

No matter how much wisdom we attribute to those who are political and business leaders, the Lord is the one who is truly wise, not them and not us. When they seek answers that are not from the Lord, it is foolishness. The same goes for us. It is of the world. "The Lord does not take back, he is unchangeably what he has revealed himself to be and will never be untrue to his promises or his standards. He is, therefore, the inveterate foe of the wicked/'wrong-doers'." (Motyer 1996, 255)

He abides by what He has spoken. Herein is a characteristic of wisdom indeed! If one speaks and then later must retract His words, He has evidently spoken without full knowledge. (Young 1969, 375)

There is a problem though, this wise God was not sought or consulted. The words He has stated in the past, such as what we saw in Deuteronomy 17:16, He will not retract. Because He was not sought by those who were behind this, God Himself will rise up against them and against those who they sought out for help. He will remember His words from the past since they didn't. God does not wink.

Because God knows the beginning from the end (Isaiah 46:10, Revelation 22:13) He has the complete picture and is fully capable to guide and direct us as well as speak into our situation. Our wisdom and knowledge is highly limited, even Google has its limitations. God is omniscient, Google is not. "The Father is omniscient in Jeremiah 17:10. The Son is omniscient in John 16:30; 21:17; and Revelation 2:23. The Holy Spirit is omniscient in 1 Corinthians 2:10–11." (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 21)

The world system, embodied by Egypt as a type of the world, is who Judah has looked to for help. God's view of Egypt is simple, He refers to them as "the workers of iniquity."

### Isaiah 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.” (NASB95)*

Isaiah is still asking the question, who do you trust? Who do we trust? The statement here in verse 3 is Isaiah's way of showing just how incredibly foolish the leaders of Judah are by seeking help from Egypt.

The words here in the Hebrew show the extreme contrast. *“...Egyptians are men and not God.”*

Flesh is not spirit. Man is not God. The lie of the serpent from Genesis 3:5 that *“you will be like God...”* is exactly that, a lie. In our fallen nature, we assume we can make decisions and do things on our own. I mean after all, work is outside of God's purview, right? If we were to listen to our culture, God is only interested in us for about an hour and a half on Sundays, and then only peripherally. He's just a friendly old man in the sky. This is just more of the lie of the enemy piled up on top of the lie that we are autonomous and can make decisions in a vacuum that do not have any impact whatsoever on our future or the future of anyone else eternally. The *“Egyptians are men and not God...”* and neither are we.

### Luke 12:4-5

*“I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!” (NASB95)*

Judah has a serious problem; they did not have a correct perspective on who God really is. They do not truly fear Him much less worship Him. They are too involved with self and the world to have time for Him or to trust Him or listen to Him. They trusted in the world system for solutions to their problems. They trusted in Egyptians. Who are our Egyptians? Who do we trust more than we trust the Lord?

They trusted in horses. A horse is simply a tool. It is not eternal; it is an animal. A horse is simply a tool that can be lost, killed or destroyed. Talk about trusting in the wrong things. All worldly things are. But here is the rub, many of us have trusted in our own version of the Egyptians and we are trusting in a thing to carry us through as well. That thing could be a job, a relationship, a person, a bank account or anything else we have substituted for the Lord.

Here, the Lord is reminding Judah and us, that He wants to be our go-to, and quite honestly, there is no other go-to to go to.

Because of misdirected loyalties, the people of Judah are being referenced in the same light as those from Egypt. All it takes for YAHWEH to take action is Him simply stretching out His hand, implying this is minimal effort. *“Jehovah, who is God and spirit, only requires to stretch out His hand (an anthropomorphism, by the side of which we find the rule for interpreting it); and the helpers, and those who are helped (i.e., according to the terms of the treaty, though not in reality), that is to say, both the source of the help and the object of help, are all cast into one heap together.”* (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 328)

There are lessons to be learned and King Hezekiah will take this message to heart as later, when the Assyrian army is at the gate, he will tell the people of Jerusalem, *“Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria nor because of all the horde that is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him. With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.”* (2 Chronicles 32:7-8, NASB95) This realization turns on the message being communicated here in chapter 31 that resting on Egypt is resting on an arm of flesh, not the arm of the Lord.

*Isaiah 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.”” (NASB95)*

Judah will be severely humbled by the Assyrian army, but they will not be destroyed. Up to this point Judah has seen the Assyrians operate with impunity in Syria, Ephraim as well as in some of the Philistine cities. They have paid tribute to the Assyrians because of the actions of King Ahaz, and the Assyrians have been dealing with issues elsewhere in their empire, but now their attention has been drawn back to Judah and the surrounding area.

This pending humbling is referenced here in verse 4. Just like a lion growls over his prey, “He would decimate the Judahites, and the shouts of the Egyptian shepherds that the Judahites had hired to protect them would not scare Him off. As a bird that protects its young from other animals, the Lord would protect Judah from its predator, Assyria.” (Constable 2003, Is 31:4)

The prophecy points to Assyria and their pending reign of terror over the cities of Judah.

*2 Kings 18:13*

*“Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.” (NASB95)*

While Sennacherib does this, using siege warfare, Jerusalem is unable to help these surrounding cities as they are too busy trying to make sure they are ready for Assyria. Egypt is nowhere to be seen. The picture is like that of a lion standing over their prey and not allowing anyone to come near. The rulers, or shepherds of Judah who sought out Egypt, will be incapable of being called out to help. The Egyptians will be called out but will also be incapable of helping.

Nothing they do will scare the lion away, the Assyrian army away. “This vivid image may not be appreciated by those unfamiliar with this ancient scene, which probably took place frequently among those caring for sheep. One must picture the lion holding tightly to its prey, while from every direction shepherds appear and try to scare him away. Just as the lion knows how to hold on to its prey, the Lord can hold on to Jerusalem.” (Walker and Martens 2005, 125)

When the rulers of Judah try to assuage the Assyrian army, they will react just like a lion with its kill. Nothing the rulers, the shepherds do, will move that lion away. “The connector so introduces the second half of the simile, the point of comparison. In the same way that a fearless lion focuses on its prey, so Yahweh will face his enemies.” (Ogden and Sterk 2011, 832)

*Isaiah 31:4b*

*“...So will the LORD of hosts come down to wage war on Mount Zion and on its hill.”” (NASB95)*

When the Lord moves to protect His people from the impending attack of Assyria on Jerusalem, He will be the one coming to Mount Zion. He is identified as YAHWEH of Heavenly Armies, a term we have seen Isaiah use before. This is the same picture we saw in chapter 30 pointing to the pending actions of the Angel of the Lord dealing with the Assyrian the first time as a type of what Messiah will do to the Assyrian at the end of the age on the hills of Israel. Verse 5 moves us securely to that.

*Isaiah 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.” (NASB95)*

The simile here is to bring up in our minds eye the vision of smaller birds confronting a hawk or something similar and fearlessly protecting their nest. The Lord says there are four things He will do.

He will protect – גָּנַן (ganon) - to be on the defensive; act against an attack. (Lexham Press 2017)

Enclose, fence in, hedge in, protect. (Holladay and Kohler 2000, 63)

...and deliver – הִצִּיל (hissil) pull out, save; be saved, be secure; save oneself; tear from; remove, withdraw. (Lexham Press 2017)

He will pass over – פָּסָח (pasoh) be lame, limp; limp by, pass by, spare. (Lexham Press 2017)

...and rescue – הִמְלִיט (himlit) flee to safety; save someone; save oneself; leave undisturbed, at rest. (Lexham Press 2017)

The Hebrew syntax of these verbs is interesting since the first and third verbs are infinitives, while the second and fourth verbs are imperfect verbs. NJB tries to mirror this feature by saying “by protecting it, he will save it, by supporting it, he will deliver it.” (Ogden and Sterk 2011, 833)

Yahweh’s deliverance of Jerusalem happens as he passes over it to spare it at the very moment when there are reasons that he should pour out his wrath upon its inhabitants, without sparing anyone. (Wildberger 2002, 224)

Jesus picked up on this imagery when He left the Temple for the last time. *“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’ ” (Matthew 23:37–39, NASB95)*

Indeed, the leadership of Judah is ripe for judgment. The ambassadors have rejected God and run off to the world to seek help from the world and not from YAHWEH. He sees this as a progression of the idolatry that has already been discussed by Isaiah in his prophecies so far.

Judah will be humbled. There is still time to repent but the warning given by Moses are becoming more and more of a reality in the life of the nation. This is reflected in what comes next.

*Isaiah 31:6–7*

*“Return to Him from whom you have deeply defected, O sons of Israel. 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.” (NASB95)*

Once again, we are thrust into the future and the picture of dealing with the Assyrians today is blended with a picture of dealing with the Assyrian tomorrow. The call is to all of Israel. The picture is one of ongoing spiritual warfare. A picture later developed more fully by Paul.

When we surrender to Christ, we are leaving the side of darkness and signing up with the light. Turning back is defection, pure and simple.

*Ephesians 6:10–13*

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” (NASB95)*

The defection of Judah has come up from Isaiah once before, way back in chapter 1.

Isaiah 1:2

*“Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, “Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me.” (NASB95)*

Turn back to him from whom as a nation ye have revolted so deeply. To “make deep their revolting” [the Hebrew idiom] implies that the spirit of their revolts had gone deep into their hearts; that they were terribly in earnest in it; perhaps also with an implication of deep and crafty purpose which the passage, chap. 29:15, involves. (Cowles 1869, 236)

The betrayal that Isaiah is referencing is the betrayal of not looking to YAHWEH for protection but looking to the world instead. As we have already covered, this is not the first time this has happened, nor shall it be the last. The last time thought is in mind as Isaiah continues past verse 6 just as in the reference from Jesus in Matthew 23. There is a point in time yet to come, that Israel will realize what they have done and the betrayal they have subjected YAHWEH to and will as one, return to Him. *“Then I will bring the remaining third into the fire; I will refine them like silver is refined and will test them like gold is tested. They will call on my name and I will answer; I will say, ‘These are my people,’ and they will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’” (Zechariah 13:9, NET)*

The way Isaiah has constructed this also points to the return being sought by the Lord, not truly happening until “that day.” Isaiah clearly means that this will fully happen, as we saw in Zechariah 13, on the day that the remanent realizes they are doomed without Messiah. Seeking assistance from the world does not work, it never has and never will. *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” (1 John 2:15–17, ESV)*

This comparison determines that Isaiah means the day of the Lord, not some interim visitation. The reference is unexpected but at the same time biblically typical in that it keeps ultimate issues in view. Biblical faith seeks to be ready not simply to surmount the next crisis but to stand before God. Therefore, since that day will (too late!) cause people to reject in disgust what they have so long cultivated, the time for decisive action is now. (Motyer 1996, 256)

Judah needs to repent now, not the next time there is another crisis, which there will be many of until the Lord does return.

The time to reject idols is now, those who wait for “*that day*” will be making the move way too late. In “*that day*” they will all be exposed for what they truly are, as ‘no-gods.’

Idol – עֲלִילִים (elile) insignificant, vain; pagan gods (as nonentities). (Lexham Press 2017)

These idols, as works of people’s own hands, will prove to be worthless and ineffective (cf. 17:7–8; 2:20; 27:9). Then there will be a general repentance by the remnant of Israel (cf. 25:9), and all opposing powers will be nullified. This will then be the final outcome of all history! (Widyapranawa 1990, 195)

Just as in chapter 30, we see these idols being discussed at the end of the age are overlaid with silver and gold. This implies that the gods being worshipped are not so much actual statues, but cash, money, dinero. The world system of the Beast will be based on only those who worship the Beast to be able to buy and sell. They are the only ones who will be able to economically enjoy the “benefits” and of course that also means they have accepted the mark of the Beast and fully identified with it as well as the Dragon.

*Revelation 13:3–4*

*“One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?”” (ESV)*

When Messiah returns, the entire economic system collapses and with it the system of worship that went along with it. As the remnant repents, they reestablish the relationship with YAHWEH, they repent and return to Him.

... the renewal of their relationship with God will enable them to see their idols of silver and gold for what they are and reject them. The relationship of events here illustrates again the complex problem of human sinfulness and the need for God to initiate any positive change. (Briley 2000-, 47)

Just as will happen shortly in the history of Judah, at the end of the age, God’s people will look to Him in the face of overwhelming odds. Unlike the problem Isaiah sees with the present day, where they respond inappropriately, in the future the response will be appropriate - repentance. The Lord will not disappoint.

*Revelation 19:11–16*

*“Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.” (ESV)*

*Isaiah 31:8–9*

*“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. “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.” (NASB95)*

How will the Assyrian fall at the end of the age? A lot like the way the Assyrian army will be ravaged in the near future for Isaiah. The weapon systems of Man will have nothing to do with either one of these problems. Both are resolved by YAHWEH.

*2 Kings 19:32–35*

*“Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.” And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.” (ESV)*

This is a type of destruction which will fall upon the Assyrian at the end of the age.

*Zechariah 14:12–15*

*“But this will be the nature of the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will decay while they stand on their feet, their eyes will rot away in their sockets, and their tongues will dissolve in their mouths. On that day there will be great confusion from the LORD among them; they will seize each other and attack one another violently. Moreover, Judah will fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered up—gold, silver, and clothing in great abundance. This is the kind of plague that will devastate horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all the other animals in those camps.” (NET)*



Remember the contrast we say earlier in this chapter? The Egyptians are men and not God and they cannot help you. God is Spirit and is not Man and the weapons of His warfare are not ones we would consider. The warfare being considered is one that Paul also discussed. *“We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.” (2 Corinthians 10:3–4, NLT)*

Spiritual warfare requires spiritually weapons. As believers, we all have access to those weapons through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Judah thought the solution to what they perceived as a physical army coming to attack them was to seek out the power of this world to be used and combat the power of this world evidenced in Assyria. YAHWEH though is letting His people know that what we many times see outwardly as a physically based war, has spiritual based roots. The army and those in it are listening to a fallen divine being who lies to them and tells them they are supermen. They are not and God’s people do not need to engage the services of another group of unbelievers to defend them against unbelievers. We don’t either.

*1 John 4:4*

*“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” (ESV)*

*Philippians 4:13*

*“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” (ESV)*

*Romans 8:28 – 39*

*“And we know that for those who love God, that is, for those who are called according to his purpose, all things are working together for good. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that the Son might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined, he also called; and those whom he called, he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. What, then, can we say about all of this? If God is for us, who can be against us? The one who did not spare his own Son, but offered him as a sacrifice for all of us, surely will give us all things, along with his Son, won’t he? Who will accuse God’s elect? It is God who justifies! Who is the one to condemn? It is the Messiah Jesus who is interceding on our behalf. He died, and more importantly, has been raised and is seated at the right hand of God. Who will separate us from the Messiah’s love? Can trouble, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, or a violent death do this? As it is written, “For your sake we are being put to death all day long. We are thought of as sheep headed for slaughter.” In all these things we are triumphantly victorious due to the one who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor anything above, nor anything below, nor anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of God that is ours in union with the Messiah Jesus, our Lord.” (ISV)*

For us today as we face the Assyrian army trying to destroy us, our homes, our way of life, our worship we need to remember this. The one on our side is greater. He is the God of the Universe. He has conquered the grave. He has conquered Satan. He is at the right hand of the Father and He has purchased us with His own blood so that we can be with Him forever. Why worry?

For Judah, the One who rescued them from Egypt, the One who made them to cross the Red Sea on dry land, the One who dealt with Jericho, He is for Judah.

Is Judah faithful? Not entirely so. Are there problems with their faith and with their loyalty to Him? Yes, but He says He will save them from this enemy and He is saying this to them before it happened. He does indeed do so.

Because of that, we know that the promises He has made to the Church, He will fulfill...literally. What happens to the Assyria of Isaiah’s time? The Assyrian army that attacked Judah and showed up at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Angel of the Lord on the hills of Jerusalem.

We see that Assyria as an empire is doomed. The “young men will become forced laborers.” This is what normally happens to a conquered people. The army is destroyed and those who would have been in the army either become mercenaries for the conqueror or slaves. What is the impact of finding 185,000 dead?

“Its rock-like army will run away in terror, its officers will abandon their flag in panic,” says the LORD, whose fiery presence is in Zion, whose furnace is in Jerusalem. (Ogden and Sterk 2011, 837)

In 612 B.C. Nineveh was so thoroughly destroyed that it was never rebuilt and soon became a pile of sand. For centuries the location of Nineveh was unknown, so completely had it been destroyed, but in 1845 it was located by archeologists. The lesson to be learned was that God’s prophecies of judgment may be delayed in fulfillment but in God’s time will be completely fulfilled. (Walvoord 1990, 306)

The fall of the Assyrian Empire is a prototype of the fall of all who oppose God and His plans for His covenant people. (Martin 1985, 1055)

Assyria of Isaiah’s time will fall in a little more than 100 years after being humbled by YAHWEH on the hills of Jerusalem. The Assyrian’s destruction yet to come at the end of the age will also be as thorough and complete. Isaiah continues into chapter 32 to describe for us the future that Judah looks forward to. The one after the Assyrian of the future is dealt with.

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