

ISAIAH

Chapter 30

Woe to the Obstinate Nation

“Woe to the obstinate children,” declares the LORD, “to those who carry out plans that are not mine, forming an alliance, but not by my Spirit, heaping sin upon sin; ² who go down to Egypt without consulting me; who look for help to Pharaoh’s protection, to Egypt’s shade for refuge. ³ But Pharaoh’s protection will be to your shame, Egypt’s shade will bring you disgrace. ⁴ Though they have officials in Zoan and their envoys have arrived in Hanes, ⁵ everyone will be put to shame because of a people useless to them, who bring neither help nor advantage, but only shame and disgrace.” ⁶ An oracle concerning the animals of the Negev: Through a land of hardship and distress, of lions and lionesses, of adders and darting snakes, the envoys carry their riches on donkeys’ backs, their treasures on the humps of camels, to that unprofitable nation, ⁷ to Egypt, whose help is utterly useless. Therefore I call her Rahab the Do-Nothing. ⁸ Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the days to come it may be an everlasting witness. ⁹ These are rebellious people, deceitful children, children unwilling to listen to the LORD’s instruction. ¹⁰ They say to the seers, “See no more visions!” and to the prophets, “Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions. ¹¹ Leave this way, get off this path, and stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!” ¹² Therefore, this is what the Holy One of Israel says: “Because you have rejected this message, relied on oppression and depended on deceit, ¹³ this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant. ¹⁴ It will break in pieces like pottery, shattered so mercilessly that among its pieces not a fragment will be found for taking coals from a hearth or scooping water out of a cistern.” ¹⁵ This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. ¹⁶ You said, ‘No, we will flee on horses.’ Therefore you will flee! You said, ‘We will ride off on swift horses.’ Therefore your pursuers will be swift! ¹⁷ A thousand will flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you will all flee away, till you are left like a flagstaff on a mountaintop, like a banner on a hill.” ¹⁸ Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him! ¹⁹ O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you. ²⁰ Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. ²¹ Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is

the way; walk in it.”²² Then you will defile your idols overlaid with silver and your images covered with gold; you will throw them away like a menstrual cloth and say to them, “Away with you!”²³ He will also send you rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and the food that comes from the land will be rich and plentiful. In that day your cattle will graze in broad meadows.²⁴ The oxen and donkeys that work the soil will eat fodder and mash, spread out with fork and shovel.²⁵ In the day of great slaughter, when the towers fall, streams of water will flow on every high mountain and every lofty hill.²⁶ The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when the LORD binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.²⁷ See, the Name of the LORD comes from afar, with burning anger and dense clouds of smoke; his lips are full of wrath, and his tongue is a consuming fire.²⁸ His breath is like a rushing torrent, rising up to the neck. He shakes the nations in the sieve of destruction; he places in the jaws of the peoples a bit that leads them astray.²⁹ And you will sing as on the night you celebrate a holy festival; your hearts will rejoice as when people go up with flutes to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.³⁰ The LORD will cause men to hear his majestic voice and will make them see his arm coming down with raging anger and consuming fire, with cloudburst, thunderstorm and hail.³¹ The voice of the LORD will shatter Assyria; with his scepter he will strike them down.³² Every stroke the LORD lays on them with his punishing rod will be to the music of tambourines and harps, as he fights them in battle with the blows of his arm.³³ Topheth has long been prepared; it has been made ready for the king. Its fire pit has been made deep and wide, with an abundance of fire and wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of burning sulfur, sets it ablaze.

30:1 *Woe.* See note on 28:1–35:10. (CSB)

He is concerned about keeping the people loyal in the faith and arousing them to their common danger from the king of the Assyrians, who was harassing the people. But the people, on the contrary, were always looking for alliances, and it is against this attempt of theirs that the prophet is constantly speaking. For they were planning to ally themselves with the king of the Egyptians against the king of the Assyrians and, turning their backs on God, the supreme Protector, they sought refuge with men. (Luther)

obstinate children. See 1:2 and note. (CSB)

Judah. (TLSB)

The Hebrew word רַיִו means disobedient and self-willed and describes those who have turned their heart away from the decree of their excellent king. It is as if he were saying: “You renegade children, who ought to be children but are

apostates.” You may well believe that they found it very difficult to put up with this scathing rebuke. (Luther)

plans ... not mine. See 29:15 and note. (CSB)

Of their own design, not God’s plan. (TLSB)

This is the deliberation of those who do not want to believe and obey the prophet and Hezekiah but say: “Our king is a fool who does not want to protect us, and that prophet will lead us astray. Let us look for outside help from the king of Egypt.” Therefore the prophet replies: “You carry out *a plan, but not Mine*, and you seek protection, *but not of My spirit*, but rather in opposition to Me.” (Luther)

alliance. After Shabako became pharaoh in 715 B.C., the smaller nations in Aram (Syria) and Canaan sought his help against Assyria. Judah apparently joined them (see 20:5 and note). (CSB)

With Egypt, hoping to withstand Assyria. The Lord could get Israel out of Egypt (Ex 14–15), but He could never get Egypt out of Israel (Nu 11:1–6). (TLSB)

my Spirit. Who spoke through his prophet. (CSB)

Judah’s plan is contrary to God’s will. (TLSB)

HEAPING SIN UPON SIN – that is, “in this your plan fails; you will not be saved but aggravate preceding sins by following sins.” By that harshness of reproof he desires to terrify them. (Luther)

30:2 Hezekiah did this (see 2Ki 18:21). (CSB)

shade. A metaphor for a king as one who provides protection (see Jdg 9:15; La 4:20). The Lord should have been Israel’s “shade” (cf. 49:2; 51:16; see Ps 91:1; 121:5). (CSB)

Throughout Ps, the shadow of the Lord is where His people are to seek shelter (Ps. 17:8; 36:7; 91:1). Again, the exact opposite is pictured here. Pharaoh’s shade is deceptive; only the Lord can shield Israel (Ps. 121:5) (TLSB)

REFUGE – Hebrew ‘oz, used in Ps. 84:5 but translated “strength,” where the person whose strength, or refuge, is in the Lord is to be praised. The exact opposite situation is at work here. To seek refuge in anyone or anything else is bound to fail (cf Ps 46:7, 11) Cf. Dt 17:16. (TLSB)

shelter in the shadow of Egypt! Throughout Ps, the shadow of the Lord is where His people are to seek shelter (Ps 17:8; 36:7; 91:1). Again, the exact opposite is pictured here. Pharaoh’s shade is deceptive; only the Lord can shield Israel (Ps 121:5). (TLSB)

30:3, 5 *shame ... disgrace*. Cf. 20:4–5; see Jdg 9:14–15 and notes. (CSB)

That is, “Do not rely on man, else you will be deceived. Do not rely on any man; you will know by example and from experience that, unless you call upon God alone, the world plays you false and deceives you. But speak thus: ‘Dear God, Thou alone wilt provide and accomplish everything.’ And if you do wish to rely on man, do not do so absolutely, but rely absolutely on God.” *The protection of Pharaoh* represents all human confidence. (Luther)

30:4 OFFICIALS – Members of Pharaoh’s administration. (TLSB)

Zoan. Ironically, where the Israelites once served as slaves; see 19:11 and note. (CSB)

City in northern Nile Delta, also referred to as Tanis. (TLSB)

envoys. Messengers from Pharaoh. (TLSB)

Hanes. Possibly Heracleopolis Magna, about 50 miles south of Cairo, or perhaps a city in the Nile delta, close to Zoan. (CSB)

City in southern Egypt. Together with Zoan in the north, this indicates that a powerful dynasty is in control of the land. (TLSB)

30:5 PUT TO SHAME ...PEOPLE USELESS TO THEM – The Egyptians cannot help Judah. (TLSB)

This is what they have accomplished: nothing but shame. They have received no help but only what leads to shame and disgrace. They have procured no help and achieved nothing more than that people who were disappointed by the king of the Egyptians, who could have helped them, were ridiculed all the more by the king of the Assyrians. So it might happen to us when we boast of anyone, in whom we might be disappointed if we needed him. (Luther)

30:6 *oracle*. See 13:1 and note. (CSB)

Also translated “burden.” Hebrew *massa*’ (cf Zec 9:1; 12:1). It emphasizes that what the prophets spoke were words of the Lord and not their own words. The translation “burden” emphasizes that the prophet must deliver a word of judgment. (TLSB)

ANIMALS OF THE NEGEV – Pack animals trudging through the desert that lay between Egypt and Israel. (TLSB)

He has already prophesied against their plans. Now he attacks their costly treasures which they take to the king of Egypt on beasts of burden and at very great expense, and all for nothing. These are threats against asses and elephants that were carrying the gifts down to the king of the Egyptians. He calls them “beasts of the southland,” because they are to carry these gifts there. These most wretched pack animals go into a land of trouble which was to be laid waste by the king of Assyria. This is a land of anguish because the people do not rely on God. (Luther)

Negev. The dry region in the southern part of Palestine (see Ge 12:9 and note; cf. Jdg 1:9). (CSB)

hardship and distress. Perhaps it was necessary to use back roads because the Assyrians had control of the main coastal road (see Dt 8:15; Jdg 5:6). (CSB)

LIONS AND LIONESSES, OF ADDERS – his road to Egypt is a desolate one through the desert, where the lions and vipers are. It is as though the prophet were saying: “They travel by dangerous routes, because there really are lions and lionesses there. Since they have departed from God, they walk the lions’ way and follow the serpents’ path.” For the ungodly are themselves lions and vipers, as Christ calls them a brood of vipers (Matt. 23:33). Those who refuse to hear the Word of God from the prophet Isaiah are following dangerous routes. (Luther)

This land of the Negeb was filled with lions, adders (or snakes), and fast moving (“flying”) fiery serpents, which would make travel through it nearly impossible. The irony is that Israel has chosen this path in search of safety. (TLSB)

darting snakes. See 14:29. (CSB)

That is, fiery serpent with a poisonous breath, as in the desert. (Luther)

30:7 *Rahab.* † A sea monster, here symbolic of Egypt. See 51:9–10; Job 3:8; 9:13; Ps 87:4. The name itself means “storm,” and also “arrogance.” See 27:1 and note. (CSB)

Title given to Egypt elsewhere in Scripture (Ps 87:4; 89:10). In Jb 26:12–13, Rahab is a powerful sea monster. But here, Rahab sits still; trusting in Egypt is “a striving after wind” (e.g., Ec 1:14). (TLSB)

The name means that Egypt was filled with loud and arrogant boasts about her power and ability - in this instance, her boast about the power to protect Judah. (PBC)

רַהַב: Egypt sits still, that is, it will completely ignore you and will not protect you. Therefore you must give up relying on men and on Egypt, because Egypt will

certainly do nothing to protect you. Egypt will surely not bother to preserve you. In the Scriptures Egypt is quite often referred to as *Rahab*, that is, “pride” (cf. Ps. 87:4). (Luther)

30:1–7 The Lord had rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt; He forbids them from returning there for refuge. Like the stubborn children of Israel, when we believe that human governments can help and profit us more than the Lord, we are guilty of idolatry. Though the help of people and nations may prove worthless, the help Jesus offers takes away our sin and shame, providing eternal protection. • Merciful Lord, though we often act as stubborn children, graciously remove our shame and disgrace for Jesus’ sake, and teach us to find refuge in You. Amen. (TLSB)

30:8 *write it*. Probably the name “Rahab the Do-Nothing.” (CSB)

Isaiah received a similar directive in 8:1. (TLSB)

There was a similar command in chapter 8:11 above. This is customary procedure with the prophets: When the ungodly refuse to believe the bare Word, the prophets add an external sign. So Jeremiah, getting no results when he predicted the Babylonian captivity, wore a chain around his neck as an external sign (Jer. 27:2). So here the writing drawn on the tablet is a sign. Thus in our time the Word is read and taught by means of the tongue, the pen, songs, and paintings as a witness to the ungodly. So he says here: *Write it on a tablet*, or “slate.” *In a book*, that is, “on a sheet.” *Inscribe*, “engrave.” (Luther)

MAY BE AN EVERLASTING WITNESS – *That it may be for the time to come*, that is, “the future,” so that this may be a prophecy. So you should openly write it before their eyes, so that their descendants might inherit the warning of their parents, who were cut off because of their unbelief, and this might serve them as a perpetual witness to frighten all descendants. By means of this alarm he wants to deter the ungodly from their malice. (Luther)

Permanent record of this oracle so that it will not be forgotten. (TLSB)

30:9 *rebellious people*. See v. 1; see also 1:2 and note. (CSB)

In this way the descendants will see the ungodliness of their forefathers, who nevertheless believed themselves to be very godly. Here, too, you have a general characterization of the ungodly. *Disobedient, lying children*, not true children but such as contradict the Word and refuse to hear it. (Luther)

The theme of rebellious children continues (cf 1:2–4; 30:1). Israel does not have “ears to hear” the Lord’s Word (cf Dt 6:4; Mt 11:15). (TLSB)

30:10 *seers*.† See 1Sa 9:9; 2Ki 17:13. (CSB)

See no more visions. Cf. Am 2:12. (CSB)

Things that may not be true, but are easier to hear. (TLSB)

That is, the prophets, **נִבְיָאִים**. “To see” is to prophesy. *See not*, that is, “And to the observers,” that is, the preachers. “To see” and “to observe” is to preach. *What is right*, as if to say: “Speak, but only what pleases us.” And this false teaching the prophet calls true. *What is right*, as if the prophet were saying: “I preach to you what is right, namely, faith and upright conduct. They, however, want to hear their own ideas from us, and they want to go off to the right or to the left. (Luther)

Tell us pleasant things. As false prophets do (1Ki 22:13; Jer 6:14; 8:11; 23:17, 26). (CSB)

Things to their liking, easy prophecies. (TLSB)

Because the flesh thoroughly detests the Word of faith, which kills the flesh, presumption, and all things hypocritical. (Luther)

Things to their liking, easy prophecies. (TLSB)

These people do not want to do away with religion. They only want a religion that fits their own thoughts, hopes and desires. What a perversion! No human eye can perceive the greatness of God’s glory and grace: no human ear has ever heard the counsel of God in heaven and in eternity; no human mind on its own can conceive the truth of God (Is. 64:4; 1 Cor 2:9). (PBC)

PROPHECY ILLUSIONS – “fraud, that which deceives.” The ungodly do not say this, that these things are illusions. On the contrary, they call it truth. But the prophet uses this word “illusions,” which they do not want to hear, to agree with their way of looking at it. (Luther)

Things that may not be true, but are easier to hear. (TLSB)

30:11–12, 15 *Holy One of Israel.* See 1:4 and note. (CSB)

30:11 GET OFF THIS PATH – that is, “Lead us off the true way.” And yet as far as their public image is concerned, they say that they are on the true path. (Lu)

They wanted to hear no more of His holiness, that attribute being the one which sinners dread most. So the people not only rejected the Lord themselves, but demanded that His true servants join them in their apostasy. (Kretzmann)

STOP CONFRONTING US WITH HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL – “Do not tell us about the Holy One of Israel, our Protector, but speak to us about the well-armed king of Egypt, who will help us. Dear sir, shut up about your God.” Our

descendants, too, will see this their ungodliness as though it were written on a tablet. Under a pretense they order us to preach the Gospel, and yet they in fact bring action against it. (Luther)

30:12 WHAT THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL SAYS – Because you *despise this Word*. He threatens them with a punishment which applies to all the ungodly, that suddenly and unexpectedly destruction will come upon them and that their solace will vanish ever so quickly. It is as if he were saying: “This is your iniquity, that you have despised the Word and that you put your hope in chicanery. Your fate will be like that of a man who stands on top of a wall to look out for the enemy when the walls collapse under him and crush him.” That will be the fate of those who trust in chicanery. The very thing in which they trust will be their downfall, just as he who depends on the wall is struck down by it. (Luther)

oppression. Especially in their domestic policy (see 1:15–17, 23; 5:7; 29:21; 58:3–4; 59:3, 6–8, 13). (CSB)

To resort to oppression is to put the worst construction on everything. Oppressors and perverse men, such people the Gospel has with it. (Luther)

deceit. Especially in their foreign policy (see vv. 1–2; 29:15). (CSB)

Those who call our Gospel heresy interpret our truth as a lie and our truth and all good things as evil and false. They declare their own falsehoods to be entirely true, as is the case, in fact, with all opponents of the Gospel. The ungodly put their hope and trust in such people, and they take consolation in this slanderous and perverse teaching of theirs. (Luther)

30:13 *breach*. The disaster provoked by this iniquity will come as unexpectedly as when a high wall with nothing but a crack suddenly bulges and collapses in a heap. (TLNB)

like a high wall. Oppression and deceit (v. 12) had been the “wall” they built to assure their safety and prosperity, but it will be shattered to pieces. (CSB)

For the collapse of walls is a crashing fall. As some waters flow and boil up, so a wall in its final collapse crashes down irresistibly—crash, bang, like a river. This is an additional thought regarding the sudden and irretrievable collapse, because the ruin of these people is similar to the wall about to crash and to the unexpected evil. As one does not try to repair a wall when it is at the point of crashing but gets out of its way as fast as possible, so there will be no help for them. (Luther)

The bulging out of the wall indicating that it was about to topple over, whose breaking cometh suddenly, at an instant. Thus the ruin of Judah would overtake the nation with great suddenness because of their idolatrous alliance with Egypt. (Kretzmann)

30:14 BREAKS LIKE POTTERY – As a vessel of a potter is shattered in such a way that not a shard remains, so also the ungodly will be so utterly crushed that not a fragment or anything else will remain of them. Such is the collapse of the ungodly. By means of this illustration he takes the offensive against the ungodly despisers of the Word, and by this most dreadful parable he attempts to turn them away from disaster. There follows an exhortation and a promise and a golden text. (Luther)

Resulting demolition will be as crushing as if one smashed a pot into bits so small as to be completely useless. (TLSB)

shard. Broken piece of pottery. (TLSB)

take fire. No piece large enough to scoop coals from a fire. (TLSB)

30:15 See 26:3. (CSB)

repentance and rest. † Salvation requires a turning from defiant self-will to trusting self-surrender to God. (CSB)

We translate it thus: “If you will sit down and be quiet, you shall be saved.” “Do not lose heart and do not lose your temper. Wait till the storm blows over and keep still.” Now that is a marvelous victory, to conquer by sitting and waiting! Meanwhile the flesh runs and toils and looks for help. (Luther)

QUIETNESS AND TRUST IS YOUR STRENGTH – A right relationship with God brings quietness, the ability to be calm, because one trusts Him to keep His promises. (TLSB)

Trust in God, be patient, and commit everything to Him. In a wonderful way you will see God as your protector. This passage is, therefore, an outstanding, golden, and magnificent promise: “In sitting quietly you shall be saved.” All the experience of the nations bears this out. For the Romans boasted of Fabius that he restored their cause by delaying. “Patience conquers all things,” and Paul says to the Romans (Rom. 12:21): “Overcome evil with good.” We must most certainly believe that the evil man will not remain unpunished and that the godly man will not remain unavenged. In this we sin, however, that we cannot wait for the time of divine vengeance, or when God delays with His vengeance. For God does not leave any sin unavenged, but either punishes one kingdom by another, or one person by another, and protects the upright and true, as the heathen say: “Truth can be opposed but not deposed.” So the godly, protected by the truth of God, are opposed but not driven out. So here, the ungodly are unwilling to wait out the king’s silence and the prophet’s admonitions. Therefore, up to chapter 36, the prophet toils with threats, intimidations, and promises to lead them to silence thereby, saying: “The king is ungodly, he cannot possibly escape punishment.

We are the godly, God is our zealot, He will not allow us to go unavenged. Therefore *in quietness and in trust shall be our strength.*” This alone you have. Be calm, wait, wait, commit your cause to God, He will make it succeed. Psalm 37:35 has to do with this thought and exhortation: “I have seen a wicked man overbearing.” Look for Him a little at a time; wait, wait. But since this waiting seems long to the flesh and appears like death, the flesh always wavers. But keep faith. Patience will overcome wickedness. And the philosophers say: “Evil defeats itself.” (Luther)

A right relationship with God brings quietness, the ability to be calm, because one trusts Him to keep His promises. (TLSB)

Isaiah provides an important word for our faith here. Repentance is turning away from sin toward God. For the people of Isaiah’s day, it meant turning away from their confidence in themselves and their human alliances and turning toward the Lord who had delivered them so often before. Isaiah urged them to commit everything to the Lord and wait for His deliverance. For God’s people throughout the ages – yes, for us too – God’s prophet tells us the importance of repentance and quiet faith in the power of the Lord of free and faithful grace. As sinful creatures, we are so prone to sin that we need to repent daily – to turn away from our sins and turn toward God in quiet faith. Then wait. Wait. Wait and commit your cause to God. But waiting is so difficult for the sinful human heart that we need this reminder often. The psalmist reminds us of this same principle: “Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this” (Ps. 37:5) (PBC)

YOU WOULD HAVE NONE OF IT – You were disobedient to the king and the prophet. *No!* “By no means, because we would be fools¹³ in our expectation.” (Luther)

30:16 *horses.* See Ps 33:17. (CSB)

Misplaced trust will result in defeat. Cf Mt 26:52. (TLSB)

That is, we will in no wise escape this evil except with the help of horsemen. *Upon swift steeds,* that is, “Let us use dromedaries to seek refuge for our safety with the king of Egypt, who will set us free with his army.” Thus they rely not on the invisible God but on the visible presence of horses, gold, and their own power. *We will go up,* that is, with horsemen. (Luther)

PURSUERS WILL BE SWIFT – Assyrians. (TLSB)

I swear to you by all that is holy that you will not escape. This is a related threat. (Luther)

30:17 *A thousand will flee.*† See Dt 32:30. (CSB)

The punishment of the ungodly is described in a remarkable way. Granted that you are a thousandfold stronger than the Assyrians. Yet the Lord will bring it about that one of the Assyrians will be stronger than a thousand of your men. For it is not number and resources but a brave and strong spirit that will win, and quite frequently a very small army defeats a large one. Thus Maximilian with a small force crushed countless Venetians. And I have heard from some of his soldiers, who said that at first sight of the armies they saw victory before the battle, because in a defeat both soldiers and horses are extremely listless before the battle, so that the size of the army in no way helps to gain the victory. This is so because all resources are for nothing where there is no courageous spirit (something that God gives to all, to the godly as well as to the Gentiles). For the greater the army, the more abominable the flight when panic comes over them. Therefore victory depends on the courageous spirit which God supplies, as we read in the Scriptures. *A thousand shall flee at the threat of one*, that is, he makes matters worse: At one small voice and at the word of one man a thousand will flee. What would happen if he were to unsheath a sword? "At the threat of five a hundred thousand of you will flee." Granted, then, that you may be very well equipped by comparison, yet victory and conquest consists in trust and in fear. And God alone gives them. Look at brave and victorious Julius Caesar. (Luther)

flagstaff ... banner. See 5:26 and note (see also 1:8 and note). (CSB)

Alone and unprotected. (TLSB)

That is, you will be so completely overcome that there will hardly appear to be anything left, as when a fleeing army leaves a solitary banner behind, so that scarcely one sign of your army is to be seen. *Like a signal*, that is, a military banner. This is a threat to the ungodly. Though exceedingly numerous, they will be defeated to such an extent that hardly any remnants may be found. So you see that when panic comes over the enemies, a hundred thousand can be crushed and twenty can capture a city. What is a scared army? Nothing. It is as if it were dead. Therefore God alone is the proper general and soldier, who gives heart and confidence to His own and takes the heart away from His enemies and gives them fear. (Luther)

30:8–17 The Judeans despise the Word of the Lord, preferring illusions rather than truth. Today, we should never despise preaching and God's Word in favor of smooth-sounding illusions that lead to perverseness. We should instead hold the Lord's Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it. Thanks be to God that through the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary's holy mountain, He can return and save all who have wandered from His way. • Be merciful, O God, to those who have turned aside from Your path. Visit them with fatherly correction, that You might restore and save them. Amen. (TLSB)

30:18 *the LORD waits*. He is prepared to be gracious if Judah will receive Him. (TLSB)

longs to be gracious. After punishing Israel, God will once again bless them (cf. 40:2). (CSB)

See how earnestly the prophet impresses upon the people that they should wait, as if to say: “Repent of your plan. God is still waiting to be gracious and not to destroy; for He is long-suffering, though He would have every reason to be angry because of your flight into Egypt.” (Luther)

RISES TO SHOW YOU COMPASSION – that is, He magnifies Himself, and in the greatest patience He promises you mercy and is not injured by your sin. (Luther)

God is glorified when His merciful character is revealed. (TLSB)

LORD IS A GOD OF JUSTICE – He is a God of mercy, because He chastises you by measure. He is not a raging and destroying God but a God of justice and of mercy. (Luther)

BLESSED...THOSE WHO WAIT FOR HIM – Relying on God is, in itself, a blessing. *wait*. Trust that God will work for our good in His perfect timing. (TLSB)

That is to say, they who wait for God are the holy, the good, and the godly. No ungodly man can have this experience and this delay. They always fix time and place for God beforehand, and, beyond that, they forsake God. They depend on what they can feel and hear, not on faith. But the godly wait for God, even when He takes His time. Therefore the blessed are saved. Everything would turn out alright, if you could only wait. Therefore, in all trouble let us wait for God, and we shall be blessed. (Luther)

30:19 *weep no more.* † See 25:8 and note. (CSB)

Because “however quickly you will call on Me, I will hear you and have mercy on you; I will protect you from the king of Assyria, so that you may be the people who will dwell in Jerusalem.” With these words He indirectly hurls insults at the king of Assyria, as if to say: “You, king, though you rage and persecute people, you will accomplish nothing. They will remain in Jerusalem in spite of everything.” (Luther)

AS SOON AS HE HEARS, HE WILL ANSWER – God is not slow to answer prayer; He answers immediately, though not always to our liking or understanding. (TLSB)

“Just pray and cry. At the first cry I will hear you and I will answer you.” Who, I ask, believed these magnificent promises of the prophet? The king, no one else. (Luther)

30:20 *bread of adversity ... water of affliction.* Prisoners' food (see 1Ki 22:27). (CSB)

The Assyrian sieges at the time of Ahaz (734 BC) and Hezekiah (701 BC). (TLSB)

That is, the king of Assyria will think that you are about to succumb to hunger and thirst, but the Lord will give you the bread of adversity, that is, in adversity. The bread is not a bread of adversity, but it is given to people who are in adversity. This is an exceedingly rich promise. The enemy outside thinks that they will perish from hunger. God, however, blesses and multiplies their bread so that they do not suffer hunger. So God protects His own and nourishes them too. "And the Lord will give bread in affliction and water in adversity." (Luther)

teachers. Prophets, like Isaiah. (CSB)

God Himself is teaching His people through these events. (TLSB)

If you believe and wait, He will give you bodily abundance and spiritual abundance besides; He will give you prophets who will make you sure and steadfast. He will not give you a fleeing prophet, who will make you unsure and wavering. (Luther)

hide. Without faith, they could not see that it was God working. (TLSB)

30:21 EARS WILL HEAR A VOICE BEHIND YOU – That is, first the Word is heard, and then peace is given. The teacher and the Word are first seen and heard from the front and face to face; but when it is received, a man then feels the power of the Word of grace. I understand this simply by the analogy of a shepherd who, as he tends the sheep, follows the flock and shouts behind it. It is as if he were saying: "You will have the most faithful shepherds. They will always follow you and keep their eye on you, because they do not precede you but constantly follow you and keep their mind on you." (Luther)

This is the way. Contrast the attitude shown in vv. 10–11 (cf. 29:24). (CSB)

Unlike in v 11, they now want to follow God's direction. Jesus uses this language in Jn 14:6, calling Himself the way to the Father. (TLSB)

That is, with every effort they will lead you on the right way, namely, the way of God's commandments; they will lead you away from impassable places. You will not land on some byway, and they keep on shouting, "Beware of false prophets" (Matt. 7:15). These are very powerful promises, to have such shepherds as will lead their own on the king's highway. It is supreme grace to hear this voice, to hear: "This is the way." (Luther)

30:22 *defile your idols*. In repentance, not in despair as in 2:20 (see note there). (CSB)

They will recognize the idols for what they are and reject them. (TLSB)

After you have had holy teachers, this result follows, that you will cast away all idols, because the cover is narrow and the bed is short¹⁷ and will not at the same time bear Christ and Belial, light and darkness (2 Cor. 6:14–15), the righteousness of God and man’s righteousness, etc. Such contradictions cannot exist in the godly. Therefore they cast away all idols in whom they trusted outside of God. Just so we observe in our time that in the midst of the godly all traditions vanish. Thus he says here: “After you have been instructed in the faith, you will condemn all idols, regard them as nothing, and consider them unclean.” (Luther)

IMAGES COVERED WITH GOLD – It is your gold out of which you make a god for yourself. Shame on you, that out of a creature that is subject to you you make a god for yourself, when you should have placed it under your control. Thus the hypocrites put the very idol that is under them above them, because they want to be justified by it, they fear it, they rely on it, and therefore they treat it as their god. For that reason he says here by way of shame: “The covering of your gold,” or garment, that is, this gold and silver have so great an appearance of piety that this gold seems to be much more distinguished than other gold. (Luther)

unclean things. Graphic reference to menstrual cloth, ceremonially unclean because of blood. (TLSB)

30:23–26 This section foreshadows the eternal blessings of heaven (cf 35:5–7; 65:17–25; Rv 21:23; 22:5). (TLSB)

30:23 *rain ... food ... rich and plentiful*. † The bliss of the redeemed of God is described in earthly terms in vv. 23–26 and also in 35:5–7; 60:17–22; 65:17–25; Joel 3:18; Am 9:13–15; Rev 21:23–26; 22:5. (CSB)

The land will be restored, beginning with rain to make it fruitful. (TLSB)

God will provide for their physical needs through the earth. (TLSB)

That is, not only will you have this, that you are nourished and that you grow rich in the city alone, but with the king dead and slain you will succeed out in the fields, as Moses said (Deut. 28:6): “Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.” (Luther)

In that day. Cf. 29:18; see notes on 10:20, 27; 26:1. (CSB)

cattle will graze. † Cf. 32:20 and note. (CSB)

Your work of seeding and harvesting will be blessed, and your cattle will be so blessed that they graze in the richest and most fertile fields. Most abundantly and amply He will give you everything. These are very great promises of God. *And the oxen etc.* This is a symbol of the exceeding abundance and fruitfulness of your harvest. Your cattle will eat mixed barley and wheat where formerly they had eaten stubble. Now in that fruitfulness you will give them everything, and He will air out their fodder with winnowing forks and fan, with a winnowing fork and a winnowing basket. It belongs to the granary and to the barn. (Luther)

30:24 *mash*. Seasoned, tasty fodder. (CSB)

Not stubble, but choice feed. (TLSB)

winnowed. High quality, harvested feed. (TLSB)

30:25 *day of great slaughter*.† Cf. 24:1; 34:2, 6. Assyria's fall (v. 31) is one illustration. (CSB)

When Assyria falls. (TLSB)

He wants to instill faith in them, as if to say: "God will bring about a great slaughter of the enemies *when the towers fall*, that is, the tyrants and important persons." For in this time countless troops perished, something that no one saw except the prophet Isaiah. In the accustomed manner of Scripture he calls all important and leading men *towers*, since they stand like towers among the buildings. (Luther)

ON EVERY HIGH MOUNTAIN – Here you see the supreme abundance for the stomach and for the conscience of those who believe God. So he says here: "I will see to it that even on the highest mountains, which are otherwise barren, there will be the highest fertility. (Luther)

30:26 *moon ... brighter*. The darkness will be past: Night will be like the day, and day will be illumined with sevenfold light. (CSB)

Brightness and joy multiply. (TLSB)

That is, in that time the day and the night will be exceedingly bright, much brighter than before. Now everything that was gloomy hitherto becomes clear, as we see that in times of danger our emotions and fears sap the strength of our body and they are in the dark, as it were. So you see it in the story in Judges 5:31, in the song after victory. So all things are sad and cloudy and dark for those who are in danger. Again, in happy times, when the heart is enlarged, all things become bright and joyful and it appears that one day is seven days. This is an exaggeration of the emotions of the joyful, who are surrounded by supreme joy

and nightly vigils. Hence we must believe that on the day that the king of Assyria was defeated a great joy arose, so that one day was brighter than seven days strung together and the night seems like the day. (Luther)

binds up the bruises ... heals the wounds. Israel was bruised politically because of the sins of the people (see 1:6; 61:1; Jer 33:6). (CSB)

Restoration of God's people is depicted as physical healing. (TLSB)

In that day when the Lord has set them free from the bonds and blows of the king, then this will happen to them. This is an example of exalted faith in the prophet, which in extreme peril does not forsake men, but consoles them to trust in God. (Luther)

30:27 *the Name.*† The revelation of God, displaying his power and glory. (CSB)

God's personal name, Yahweh. God personally comes with all His power, might, and glory. (TLSB)

Now he describes the coming slaughter of the king, as if to say: "Look, the king is already drawing near; he is besieging you." (Luther)

anger ... clouds of smoke. The language of theophany (a manifestation or appearance of God). God is portrayed as coming in a storm (see v. 30; see also 28:2; 29:6; Ps 18:7–15 and notes). (CSB)

That is, this our God will not only fight for us, but with supreme wrath and anger He will also devour the king. These are extremely vehement words. (Luther)

LIPS ARE FULL OF WRATH – hat is, He comes forth with the most serious threats on His lips and His countenance. I think that this depicts God's wrath from our point of view. He who would believe God to be such a protector of His own would not easily forsake Him when the adversaries are in pursuit. (Luther)

30:28 HIS BREATH IS LIKE A RUSHING TORRENT – He snorts as Paul is said in Acts 9:1 to have breathed threats. These are all signs of anger and of the wrathful God against our enemies, as if to say, "Who will destroy them with snorting? (Luther)

rising up to the neck. The army of Assyria was similarly described in 8:8 (see note there). (CSB)

This is a comparison. As no one can escape from the stream as high as the neck, so no one will escape God's anger. (Luther)

NATIONS IN THE SIEVE – God destroys the world, yet carefully preserves His people as a sieve keeps the desired material while the rest drops away. (TLSB)

As a flood scatters everything so that one may be flung here, another there, so God's wrath shatters all their strength and power. This happened when the angel killed one hundred eighty-five thousand for that king (2 Kings 19:35). (Luther)

God destroys the world, yet carefully preserves His people as a sieve keeps the desired material while the rest drops away. (TLSB)

bit. Cf. 37:29. (CSB)

To bring them under His control. (TLSB)

It is called a *bridle that leads astray* when one person comes one way, and another a different way. (Luther)

The reference being either to wild horses, which must be kept in subjection with force, or to the manner in which prisoners were sometimes fettered, the prisoners in either case being forced into destruction, as a just punishment upon them. Over against this destruction we have the deliverance of Israel, the people of God. (Kretzmann)

30:29 *sing ... holy festival.* Perhaps the Passover, alluded to in 31:5 (cf. Mt 26:30). (CSB)

God's coming does not terrify the faithful. They sing with joy as when they go to the temple. (TLSB)

God will deal in a very tragic way with the enemies. Thus in dramatic words the prophet here describes the victory of his own and the slaying of the king of Assyria, as if to say: "On that day of victory through the angel you will go through the city rejoicing and singing, as you are wont to sing in the nights of the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Trumpets." (Luther)

mountain of the LORD. Zion, where the temple was (see 2:2–4 and note). (CSB)

To the temple. (TLSB)

Rock. God himself (see 17:10 and note). (CSB)

Not Zion, but God. He is Israel's true Rock. (TLSB)

In other words, Israel, the Church of God, is in the midst of its glorious worship, while round about it Jehovah is carrying out His punishment upon the

adversaries of His people. “God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.” Ps. 46, 5. (Kretzmann)

30:30–31 *voice*. Associated with thunder in Ex 20:18–19; Ps 29:3–4. (CSB)

rod ... appointed staff. The means God uses to defeat the Assyrians (cf 11:4). (TLSB)

He copiously describes the Lord’s anger against the enemies, and he blends the gladness of God’s people with the “majesty,” or splendor of victory, His majestic voice. Perhaps He hurled them down in thunder and lightning. (Luther)

30:30 *arm coming down*. See 9:12, 17, 21; 51:9 and notes. (CSB)

Namely through flashes of lightning and bolts of thunder. *In the threatening*. As He killed the kings of the Egyptians and the nations in the Book of Joshua, and Sodom and Gomorrah, so He will slay them with thunder. He will destroy with a storm, that is, with a cloudburst. In this way we will attack the king with thunder, lightning, hail, and rain. This is the divine victory of God.

cloudburst ... hail. See 28:2. (CSB)

30:31 *voice of the LORD will shatter*. Cf. Ps 29:5–9. (CSB)

Fulfilled in 37:36 (cf 2Ki 19:35). (TLSB)

That is, the thunder of the Lord. (Luther)

30:32 *his punishing rod*. See 11:4 and note. (CSB)

He insults them as if with some dance. God will strike them in such a way that the strokes of the rod will be felt for some time. (Luther)

music of tambourines. After a great victory the women rejoiced with singing and dancing (see Ex 15:20–21; 1Sa 18:6). (CSB)

God’s people praise Him as they see Him act. (TLSB)

He is mocking them, as if to say: “Just wait, God will fight too and beat the timbrels and blow the horns.” I think this refers to thunder and lightning. (Luther)

BLOWS OF HIS ARM – The Hebrew word **הִנְיֹפֵהוּ** means “scattered,” where an army is driven to flight in various places. These are different forms of fighting, when the thunder strikes down a group here, the lightning there, and the hail at a third place. (Luther)

Using His power. (TLSB)

30:33 God's judgment is described as a sacrifice in 34:6; Jer 46:10; Ezk 39:17–20. (TLSB)

Topheth. A region outside Jerusalem where children were sacrificed to Molech (see 2Ki 23:10; Jer 7:31–32; 19:6, 11–14), the god of the Ammonites (see 1Ki 11:7). Thus it was a place of burning. (CSB)

Hbr similar to “Topheth,” site in the Hinnom Valley southwest of Jerusalem where children were burned in sacrifices (cf Jer 19:6, 10–15). (TLSB)

It was the place where garbage was deposited and burned, and it became known as Gehenna in the NT. The place became a synonym for hell in the discourses of Jesus. (PBC)

All say that here the punishment of hell is set forth. I believe this to be true allegorically, but historically he is speaking concerning the manner in which the king is to be punished, as if to say: “Our Lord God will prepare a shambles for the king when He comes.” (Luther)

king. Of Assyria. (CSB)

BEEN MADE DEEP AND WIDE - which they will not be able to avoid. (Luther)

ABUNDANCE OF FIRE AND WOOD – He will prepare a holocaust for him, and for this He will supply sufficient wood by means of thunder and lightning. (Luther)

burning sulfur. See 1:31; Ge 19:24 and notes. (CSB)

Fire that cremates corpses. (TLSB)

He alludes to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, cities which He destroyed by His breath and with fire and brimstone. (Luther)

In a sudden and terrible destruction, in the last great act of the Lord's avenging punishment. The believers are secure in the hands of God, though all the powers of earth and hell be arrayed against them. (Kretzmann)

30:18–33 After a time of destruction, the Lord will be gracious to His people, binding them up and healing them in mercy. God's people should view adversity as the Lord's teaching tool. In adversity, we learn to walk in the way of the Lord and hear His Word. He has been merciful to all by sending His Son. In Jesus, the Father gives His people healing from the brokenness of our sin. • Gracious Lord, have mercy on us, especially in

times of adversity. Open our eyes to see You, and give us faith to wait for You in quiet confidence. Amen. (TLSB)