

Jerusalem Saved

Isaiah 30:27 – 31:9

By Scott Huckaby

3/19/2023

BIG BEND
BIBLE
FELLOWSHIP

Isaiah 30:27-33 – Judgment on Assyria (NIV)

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 playing pipes go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel.

³⁰ The Lord will cause people 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 rod he will strike them down. ³² Every stroke the Lord lays on them with his punishing club will be to the music of timbrels 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.

v27 – What is it that comes from afar?

The name of the Lord: His reputation, fame & glory in intervening in the affairs of men. While He is *from afar* (heaven), He is close to His people.

When the Lord is angry, what can we expect?

Judgment is coming so the prudent will make sure they are right with the Lord.

v28 – How does God shake the nations?

shakes the nations in the sieve of destruction: The sieve or winnowing implement which filters out all but those given an opportunity to repent. This brings to mind...

Luke 22:31 – *the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.*

What does it mean that Satan wanted to sift Peter as wheat (Luke 22:31)?

Peter seemed to be in the same predicament as Job when Satan sought to put him to the test (Job 1—2). Satan wished to shake Peter’s faith so forcefully that he would fall, proving that God’s faithful servant was lacking.

Sift as wheat is a metaphor that could also be expressed as “shake someone apart” or “break a person down.”

Amos 9:9 – *For I will give the command and will shake Israel along with the other nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, yet not one true kernel will be lost*

Was Peter’s faith shaken by Satan?

Jesus assured Peter...

Luke 22:32 – *I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers* (NLT).

Peter’s leadership role in the early church proved that the Lord’s prayer for Peter was answered.

- Jesus did not promise to remove Peter’s impending test. On the contrary, He predicted that Peter would fail the test by denying Christ three times (Luke 22:34).
- Trials are to be expected in the Christian life. “*We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,*” say the missionaries in Acts 14:22.
- God uses these experiences for our good (Romans 8:28), to refine our character and strengthen our faith (1 Peter 1:6–7; James 1:2–4,12), and to make us more like Jesus (Romans 8:29).
- When Satan comes after us, we should remember that Jesus Christ always lives to intercede for us (Hebrews 7:25, John 17:9, 11, 15).

How did Peter’s threefold denial of Jesus serve to make him a better disciple?

Before Peter’s threefold denial, he was overconfident, trusting in his own strength (Luke 22:33). But after being sifted like wheat, Peter learned that failure is possible because the flesh is weak (see Mark 14:38).

- Now that he understood how easy it is to fall, Peter would have compassion and mercy for others while helping them avoid the same mistake.

Why would God cause people to be led astray (or to err NKJV)?

So that they would suffer the consequences they deserve from being estranged to God. This is a pattern with God; His judgment is often just turning people over to themselves...

Romans 1:28 – *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting*

Does God tempt people to sin?

James 1:13 – *Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*

Temptations to sin do not originate with God. We tempt ourselves (Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:13) or we are tempted by others or fallen angels (Matthew 4:1, Ephesians 6:12). But God uses our temptations for our growth...

James 1:3 — *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into various trials; Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

God uses such tests to prove—and increase—the strength and quality of our faith and to demonstrate its validity (vv. 2-12). So, when we face temptations, God’s purpose is to prove our faith and produce character. That is a high, good, noble motive.

v29 – Who will sing?

Judah will sing because in this case God’s judgment is their salvation. Boldness and joy in the day of judgment are precious gifts from God.

What is the mountain of the Lord?

This is a reference to the Millennial Kingdom when Messiah Jesus rules the earth from Jerusalem.

Daniel 2:35b – *the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

All deliverance for Israel points to their ultimate deliverance when the Messiah returns.

v30 – How would the Lord will cause people to hear his majestic voice?

When we understand how God’s perfect judgment exalts His justice and His righteousness, we see the glory of the judgment of the LORD.

The descent of His arm – He is taking action on behalf of His people by bringing *fire* and a *storm* (either literally or effectively)

v31 – What will be the impact of the Lord’s judgment?

Assyria will be beaten down: In the near view, Isaiah saw the judgment of the LORD against Assyria. Judah had no

business trusting in Egypt for help against the Assyrians, but they should have trusted the LORD instead, because the LORD would take care of the Assyrians.

- This was exactly the case... 2 Kings 19:35 describes how God sent the angel of the LORD and killed 185,000 Assyrians in one night.

v32 – Why is music associated with the judgment of God?

As music stirs the soul, so does the judgment of God.

v33 – What was Tophet?

Tophet was a place in the Valley of Hinnom, just outside of Jerusalem’s walls (Jeremiah 7:31).

- The Valley of Hinnom served as Jerusalem’s garbage dump, and the combination of disgusting rubbish and smoldering fires made it a picture of hell.
- The Hebrew word for hell (gehenna) comes from the word for the Valley of Hinnom.

Therefore, God says He has a special place in hell for the Assyrian king.

- But God also had a special judgment for him on earth. 2 Kings 19:36-37 says when the Assyrian king returned home after attacking Judah, his own sons murdered him as he worshipped in the temple of Nisroch his god.

How is eternity in hell a fair punishment for sin?

Those who take issue with an eternal hell often have an incomplete understanding of three things: the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of sin.

Why is the nature of God so hard for humans to grasp?

We tend to see God as a kind, merciful Being whose love for us overrides and overshadows all His other attributes.

- While God is loving, kind, and merciful, He is first and foremost a holy and righteous God.
- God is so holy; He cannot tolerate sin.
- He is not only a loving God—He is love itself! But He hates all manner of sin (Proverbs 6:16-19).

Why is sin always directly against God?

When David sinned by committing adultery with Bathsheba and having Uriah murdered, he responded with an interesting prayer:

Psalms 51:4 – *Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight...*

God’s eternal, holy, perfect, and infinite character has been offended by our sin. Although to our finite minds our sin is limited in time, to God—who is outside of time—the sin He hates goes on and on.

- Our sin is eternally before Him and must be eternally punished in order to satisfy His holy justice.

How does the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 reveal the justice of an eternal hell?

The rich man never said, “How did I end up here?” That question is never asked in hell. He does not say, “Did I really deserve this? don’t you think this is a little extreme? A little over the top?” He only asks that someone go to his brothers who are still alive and warn them against his fate.

- Everyone in hell will have a fully informed, acutely aware, and sensitive conscience which becomes his own tormenter.

What was God’s provision to keep us from the eternal consequence of our sin?

Because God is just and righteous, He cannot allow our sin to go unpunished. Someone has to pay for it. In His great mercy and love, God sent His Son Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sins by dying on the cross for us.

How could Jesus pay the penalty of everyone’s sin?

Jesus’ death was an infinite death because He is the infinite God/man, paying our infinite sin debt, so that we would not have to pay it in hell for eternity.

2 Corinthians 5:21 – *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

If we confess our sin and place our faith in Christ, asking for God’s forgiveness based on Christ’s sacrifice, we are saved, forgiven, cleansed, and promised an eternal home in heaven.

Isaiah 31:1-9 – God will deliver Jerusalem (NIV)

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord. ² Yet he too is wise and can bring disaster; he does not take back his words. He will rise up against that wicked nation, against those who help evildoers. ³ But the Egyptians are mere mortals and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out his hand, those who help will stumble, those who are helped will fall; all will perish together. ⁴ This is what the Lord says to me: “As a lion growls, a great lion over its prey— and though a whole band of shepherds is called together against it, it is not frightened by their shouts or disturbed by their clamor— so the Lord Almighty will come down to do battle on Mount Zion and on its heights. ⁵ Like birds hovering overhead, the Lord Almighty will shield Jerusalem; he will shield it and deliver it, he will ‘pass over’ it and will rescue it.” ⁶ Return, you Israelites, to the One you have so greatly revolted against. ⁷ For in that day every one of you will reject the idols of silver and gold your sinful hands have made. ⁸ “Assyria will fall by no

human sword; a sword, not of mortals, will devour them. They will flee before the sword and their young men will be put to forced labor. ⁹ Their stronghold will fall because of terror; at the sight of the battle standard their commanders will panic,” declares the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

v1 – What were the two sins of Judah?

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help: (1) the sin of trusting in Egypt and their military might, and (2) the sin of not looking to the Holy One of Israel.

- Judah trusted in chariots (*because they are many*) and horsemen (*because they are very strong*) but they couldn’t seem to find a reason to trust in the Lord.

Had Judah abandoned their faith?

Judah still had faith but it was in Egypt rather than God. Everybody lives by faith... if it not in God it is something that takes the place of God: science, government, themselves, etc.

Psalm 20:7 – *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.*

What does it mean to seek the Lord?

It means to look to the Lord for help with this problem of the Assyrians rather than try to take matters in your own hands.

v2 – Why should Judah seek the Lord?

Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster: Isaiah called them to remember the reasons. They should trust God more than the Egyptians or their armies because He is wise, brings disaster, and fulfills His promises... He will *arise against the house of evildoers* and those who help them.

v3 – Why was Judah wrong about their trust in Egypt?

Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit: The Egyptians and their armies were not as mighty as they seemed to be. All the LORD must do to topple them, along with all who trust in them, was to stretch out His hand.

v4 – To what was the Lord’s protection of Judah likened?

As a lion roars: As a lion is the king of beasts, the Lord is the King of kings even when there is a multitude of kings conspiring against Him and His people...

Psalm 2:2-4 – *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.” He who sits in the heavens shall laugh*

How do we see the kings of the earth conspiring together?

Globalism is the trend that is accelerating in our day. The WEF seems to be the most influential forum for the globalist elite and many of these policy makers want to cull humanity to reverse global warming. The WHO is seeking to centralize pandemic response and totalitarian control is growing.

v5 – How would the Lord’s deliverance of Judah from Assyria be *like birds flying about*?

The picture is of a mother bird protecting her young. So, God will defend Jerusalem with the ferocity of a lion, and also with the tender care of a bird. The combination of the two images is powerful.

- As birds flying about which come from above, and also seem to be everywhere at once... the omnipotence & omnipresence of God.

v6 – How had the children of Israel revolted against God?

By trusting in worldly deliverance rather than their Creator-God. This puts them in the same category as unbelievers... indeed, most were in fact idolatrous unbelievers.

What does it mean to return to God?

Return to Him: Repentance means turning towards God, and away from anything we have put in God’s place (idols of silver and idols of gold — sin, which your own hands have made).

Why should we repent and turn to God?

Because of how great God is, because of how terrible the alternatives to serving Him are, we should feel compelled to return to Him.

v7 – When would Judah throw away their idols?

The clue here is, “in that day” which often looks forward to the Millennial Kingdom when they as a nation will reject anything that distracts them from Jesus.

v8 – How would Assyria fall?

Then Assyria shall fall by a sword not of man: This was fulfilled exactly. The Assyrian army devastated most the land of Judah, and camped on the outskirts of Jerusalem. But 2 Kings 19:35 describes how God simply sent the angel of the LORD and killed 185,000 Assyrians in one night.

How would Assyria’s young men *become forced labor*?

The weakened Assyria would be conquered by the Babylonians who would force their young men into their service.

How would Assyria respond to the judgment of God?

In fear, being afraid of that which represents Him, His people (His *banner*).

What does it mean the Lord’s fire and furnace is in Jerusalem?

For millennia, Jerusalem has been an important city, often commanding the attention of much of the world, and the city figures prominently in both biblical history and prophecy.

- It was and is the capital of Israel where their two temples have been.
- It is where the Son of God died on our behalf and rose again.
- It is where the Messiah would rule from during the Millennial Kingdom.
- It will be replaced with a New Jerusalem our home during the Eternal State.

What applications come to mind from our discussion?

- God’s judgment is often just turning people over to themselves... this reinforces our inability to save ourselves.
- God doesn’t originate temptations but He uses them to grow us.
- Hell is a terrible place with no escape for all eternity, embrace God’s provision before it’s too late.
- Don’t trust in worldly things which fails us, trust in the Lord who never does!
- Our distance from God is always our own fault, repent and grow closer!