

• *Judeans asked Egypt for help*

The Judeans turned to Egypt for help when they were threatened by the Assyrians. They rushed off hastily on their horses to get help from the Egyptians.

¹⁶*'You said, "No, we will flee on horses." '*

• *When we do not put our faith in God, we fail*

But it did no good. When we run from our enemies to put faith in something other than God, our enemies might move more swiftly than we do!

*'Therefore you will flee!
You said, "We will ride off on swift horses."
Therefore your pursuers will be swift!'*

• *Fear*

We shall be gripped with fear.

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.'*

God's restoration comes at the time of his choosing - unbelief delays His blessing

God's restoration comes at the time of his choosing. Unbelief delays the blessing of God. 'Therefore Yahweh will wait until he is to be gracious to you', says Isaiah. It means that God will be gracious to us eventually but waits until the timing is right. He wants us to thoroughly learn the folly of what we have done.

¹⁸*Therefore Yahweh will wait until he is to be gracious to you;
and therefore he rises to show you compassion.
For Yahweh is a God of judgement.
Blessed are all who wait for him!*

God waits for us to come to the point of prayer

Since God is delaying his graciousness, it will come but we have to do some waiting as well.

God waits until we come to the point of prayer.

¹⁹*O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will not weep at all. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you.*

When we turn to God in this way, we discover how gracious he is

When we turn to God in this way, we discover how gracious he is.

²⁰*Although the Sovereign Lord gives you adversity as your bread and affliction as your water, your Teacher will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see your Teacher. ²¹Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'*

• Fellowship with God is the basis of Christian life

He answers prayer. He teaches us. He gives us close and intimate guidance. The secret of the Christian life is fellowship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the source and fountain of living for God – speaking to him and listening to him.

We will repudiate the foolish way we lived before

When we turn to God in this way, we will repudiate the foolish way we lived before.

²²Then 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!' We will hate the foolish things we have done.

God will provide for us

God will provide for us. Sin leads to 'adversity as your bread and affliction as your water' but restoration leads to abundant provision for whatever stage we are at in our relationship with God.

²³He 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. ²⁴The oxen and donkeys that work the soil will eat well-flavoured fodder, sifted with both fork and shovel.

• God will meet our needs

Eventually it will be the provision of the new heavens and earth. For the moment it will be provision for whatever is our calling from God. He will meet our needs.

God will defend us

God will defend us.

²⁵And there will be, on every high mountain and every lofty hill, brooks running with streams of water, in the day of great slaughter, when the towers fall

• In days of adversity, there will be refreshing waters

(the reference is to towers used to attack the fortified walls of cities^{□1}). In days of adversity when towers fall, in places which are normally dry (hilltops) there will be refreshing waters. God will give victory (in his own way; we cannot dictate to him) over every kind of enemy.

^{□1} see 2:15; 29:3

Creation will be rescued

Creation will be rescued.

²⁶And there will be the light of the moon shining like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, on the day when Yahweh binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.

• Fulfilment of promises

The fulfilment of such promises as these comes fully and finally only in the new heavens and earth.

God will give protection when we trust Him

Verses 18–26 have been painting a vast and panoramic picture of all that God will do to rescue his people. In 30:27–33 there is a picture of something that will happen soon. The Lord will soon come to rescue Israel from the Assyrians. **God will give protection when we trust him.** 'Assyria' (or whatever its equivalent might be in our lives) will be no threat to us.

²⁷See, the Name of Yahweh comes from afar, with burning anger and dense clouds of smoke; his lips are full of wrath, and his tongue is a consuming fire.

• *God's 'name' will appear – obviously present*

God's 'name' (his magnificent character) will appear. The God who has seemed to be absent will suddenly be obviously present. His character will become obvious. He will come like a mighty warrior with lips and tongue and breath. He will be like a storm, like a fire, like a farmer shaking pebbles in a sieve.

*²⁸His breath is like a rushing torrent,
rising up to the neck.
He shakes the nations in the sieve of worthlessness;
he places in the jaws of the peoples
a bit that leads them astray.*

• *The people of Judah will rejoice*

The people of Judah will rejoice as if they were enjoying one of their annual festivals when they went to the mountain of the Lord in Jerusalem.

*²⁹And you will have a song
as on the night you celebrate a holy festival;
and joy of hearts
as when people go up with flutes
to the mountain of Yahweh,
to the Rock of Israel.*

• *The Assyrian army will be destroyed by His command*

By his mighty word of command the Assyrian army will be destroyed like a pile of wood or a sacrifice in Topheth, in the Valley of Hinnom, a place where children were sometimes sacrificed to the Ammonite god Molech.

*³⁰Yahweh will cause people to hear the voice of his majesty
and will make them see his arm coming down
with raging anger and aflame of consuming fire,
with cloudburst, thunderstorm and hail.
³¹For by the voice of Yahweh, Assyria will be shattered,
Assyria whom he used as a rod to shatter others.
³²Every stroke Yahweh lays on them
with his chosen rod
will be to the music of tambourines and harps,
as he fights them in battle with the blows of his arm.
³³For Topheth has long been prepared;
it has been made ready for the king.
He has made its fire pit, deep and wide,
with an abundance of fire and wood;
the breath of Yahweh,
like a stream of burning sulfur,
sets it ablaze.*

• *All persecutors of God's people will eventually be punished for what they have done*

The king of Assyria (Sennacherib) will face the fire of God's anger. All persecutors of God's people will eventually give an account, suffer the penalty of what they have done and be destroyed in God's everlasting fire. The universe will eventually see the abolition of evil, and the new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells. Ancient Judah had a foretaste of it in the reduction of the Assyrian threat to nothing. Yahweh will wait until he is to be gracious. The extermination of evil is part of his grace.



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