

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 30

Chapters 28-35 of Isaiah: The six “woe” passages and their message

Judah’s rebellion against the Lord in favor of trusting foreign nations
cannot cancel the **promises of God** for the remnant of Israel.

Chapters 28 & 29

Chapter 28: 1-13 address **Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom)**.

Chapter 28:14 through 29:24 teach the principles behind the Lord’s dealings with **Judah** and **Jerusalem**. The evil decisions of their rulers result in a destruction that is nearly complete. There is a veiled reference to their pact with Egypt. Yet the last section of chapter 29, verses 17-24, looks forward to the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom.

Chapter 29

Chapter 29 continues the sequence of judgment followed by hope. The chapter consists of two such sequences:

Present judgment		Future blessing
Verses 1-4		Verses 5-8
Verses 9-16		Verses 17-24

The chapter begins with the second woe, this time directed not at Ephraim but at **Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah**.

Verses 1-4 pronounce the **judgment** on Jerusalem.

Verses 5-8: the prophet abruptly switches to the **vindication and deliverance** of Jerusalem (Ariel).

In *verses 5-6*, the Lord will shortly destroy the besieging armies in single night. (see **Isa 37:36**).

In *verses 7-8*, the destruction of the armies of Assyria and her allies is but a foretaste of the battle of Armageddon in the day of the Lord. See **Zech 12:6-9**.

Let's read **Isa 29:9-24**.

Verses 9-14: describes the self-imposed **famine for the word of God** in Judah.

After pronouncing woe on Assyria, Isaiah returns to Judah and her blindness.

They chose to blind themselves to the Lord's word. See the falsehood and deception in **Isa 28:15**. ↑

So the now the Lord will do the blinding. He will shut the eyes of the prophets, and put a hood over the seers. He will seal up His word to all of them, whether they can read or not. ↑

See **Amos 5:11-12** for more on the famine of the word of God.

The "entire vision" in verse 11 refers to Isaiah's prophecy about what the LORD is about to do both to Judah and to Assyria.

The sealed book is the same thing as the tablet in chapter 8 and chapter 30. See **Isa 30:8-11**.

He will deal with them marvelously. See the Lord's unusual task and extraordinary work in **Isa 28:21**. Later on, Habakkuk will describe the invasion of the Babylonian army in similar fashion . See **Hab 1:5-6**.

Jesus quotes verse 13 when He condemns the leaders of Jerusalem in His day: the Pharisees and scribes. See **Matt 15:1-9**.

In verse 14, the wise men are the leaders of the pro-Egypt faction who thought they were wiser than God and the Lord's prophet. ↑

Verses 15-16: The third woe.

They thought that the Lord was blind to their schemes and deceptions. But they were the ones who were blind and self-deceived. See **Psalm 94:7-11**. ↑

They had lost their senses. Isaiah uses the image of **the potter and the clay** to great effect, here and elsewhere in His prophecies. See **Isa 45:9; 64:8**. Paul also uses this image to describe the patience, mercy, and sovereignty of the Lord. **Rom 9:19-21**.

Verses 17-24: the blessings in the Messianic Kingdom.

Jerusalem is under siege by the armies of Sennacherib. Yet in the midst of this terrifying judgment, Isaiah gives hope to the Jews. The Lord will fulfill His promises to the descendants of Abraham and Jacob.

Judgment does not get the final word; blessing does. **Hos 6:1-3**

The blessings in verses 17-24 operate on two levels: the natural realm and the spiritual realm.

Verse 17 describes how nature will be transformed when the Messiah comes. On the natural level, this refers to the great flowering and productivity of the promised land. On the spiritual level, this refers to the waters of salvation, and the outpouring of the Spirit on their descendants. See **Isa 44:3-4**.

Verse 18 describes how the eyes of the physically blind and the ears of the physically deaf will be healed when Christ returns. **Isa 35:5**.

The Lord will also undo the curse of **Isaiah 6:10**, which had to do with spiritual blindness and deafness.

The words of the scroll refer to God's word, which was a closed book to them in **Isa 29:11-12**.

Verse 19: When the King returns to reign, He will vindicate the afflicted and save the children of the needy, and they will praise His name. He will also crush the oppressor. See **Psalms 72:4 and 74:21**.

Verses 20 & 21: Evildoers will be cut off, particularly those who corrupt justice.

Verse 22-24 give the results of these transformations. The nation of Israel will be redeemed. The Lord will fulfill all His promises to Abraham and Jacob. The end will be glorious and overflowing with blessing.

Shame and fear will be banished forever. See also **Isa 45:17**.

Isaiah uses the figure of many children to describe the redemption of Israel. See also **Isa 49:20-28**.

The people will stand in awe of the Lord, the Holy One of Jacob.

The nation that had once scorned the Lord's word will now be taught by the Lord. **Isa 54:13**. ↑

We will see more about these blessings when we arrive at chapters 32 and 35.

Chapters 30 & 31

Chapters 30 and 31 reveal the foreign nations in chapters 28 & 29 to be Egypt and Assyria. Both chapters **begin with judgment and end with blessing.**

Chapter 30

Chapter 30:1-17 describe the **punishment of Judah** for her alliance with **Egypt.**

Let's **read** verses 1-17 together now.

The fourth woe appears in verse 1. "Woe to the rebellious children", declares the Lord. This sets the tone for verses 1-17. The leaders of the pro-Egypt faction in Judah are the rebellious children.

Verse 1: The Lord's plan for Judah is to deliver her from the Assyrians. See **29:5-8.**

The **alliance with His Spirit** means obeying His word as communicated by His prophets. See **Eze 2:1-5, Zech 7:12.** ↑

Verses 2-5: The pro-Egypt party in Judah sought safety and shelter from Pharaoh and Egypt. But Egypt cannot help them. So instead they will have shame and reproach.

Verses 6-7: Judah sent emissaries with gifts to win over the Egyptians to their defense. These emissaries traveled many miles through dangerous territory. The Negev is a wilderness between Jerusalem and the Egyptian court at Zoan. It would all be for nothing.

Verses 8-11: The Lord details the treachery of rebellious sons in Judah. They refused to listen to the Lord's instruction. They told their prophets not to speak any more of the Holy One of Israel. They only wanted to hear things that were pleasant, even if they were pure fantasy. ↑

Verses 12-17: The Holy One of Israel gets the last word. Because they have rejected His word, and put their trust in extortion and fraud, He will bring disaster upon them. Notice the rich and varied imagery the Lord uses to make His point here.

Chapter 30:18-33 describe **the destruction of the Assyrian armies** and the glories of the **Kingdom**.

The pivotal verse in chapter 30 is **verse 18**. The Lord expresses His heart for the Jews: grace, compassion, justice and blessing.

Verses 19-26 describe the amazing blessings that the Lord will pour out upon His people during the reign of the Messiah. See **Amos 5:13-15** for more.

The "day of the great slaughter" in **verse 25** refers to the battle of Armageddon.

Verses 27-33 prophesy the destruction of the Assyrian armies. Two things are noteworthy here. Verse 28 serves as a foretaste of the battle of Armageddon. Second, there is a jarring contrast between the terrified Assyrian armies and the rejoicing Jewish remnant (verses 29, 32).

Chapter 30 is full of references to **the attributes of God**: His character and nature. **Let's read the chapter again and see how many you can identify.**

Chapter 31

Chapter 31 is the "Readers Digest" version of chapter 30.

Chapter 31 repeats the pattern of chapter 30.

Verses 1-3 predict the destruction of Egypt and the pro-Egypt faction in Judah.

Verses 4-9 foretell the destruction of the Assyrian army and the deliverance of the remnant of Judah.

The key verse in chapter 31 is **verse 6**.

Next Thursday, we will examine chapter 31 in more detail. We will see the parallels between chapter 31 and chapter 30.