

God Protects

Oct.11, 2020

Isaiah 31:1-9

The greatest comfort we have going through this life (and the current Covid-19 pandemic) is that God is a Heavenly Father that watches over us. He is holy, awesome in power, almighty, omniscient, perfectly just and is love. In this week's passage, we see God's protection over a rebellious people.

It gives us hope to know that even on our worst days, God still loves and watches over us.

How often we put our trust in other things and people instead of the Lord. "Woe" should cause us to pause and not skim over what God's Word is saying to us. The fact that we as humans are so enamored with the things of this world, should cause us alarm. Instead of contributing to our spiritual development, idols rob us of our time and energy that ought to be directed toward God.

Isaiah strongly ridicules those of his day seeking help from Egyptians because they are men, not God and horses which are flesh, not spirit. Isaiah compares God's care to the mother bird taking care of her little ones. History proves Isaiah was correct: "Then Assyria will fall, but not by human sword; a sword will devour him, but not made by man" Isaiah 31:8.

A sword made by God Himself will rescue us and those in our nation and world if we will read, accept, and live out the Bible's teachings. The sword that God has made available to us is Jesus, the Christ. (see Hebrews 4:12) [excerpts from Glenn Metts and Don Hicks]

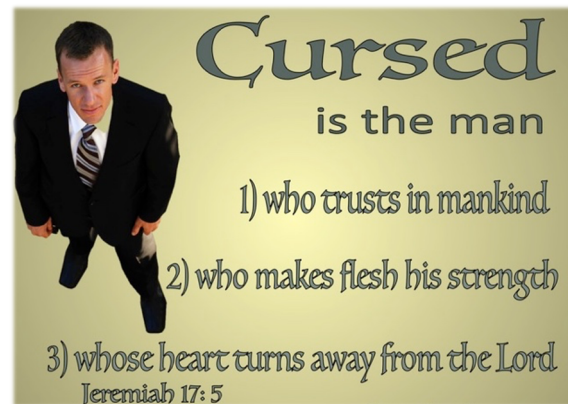
False Hope (Isaiah 31:1-3)

- This passage is a warning "Woe" to the people of Judah who go down to Egypt for help.
 - Judah (King Ahaz) had a fundamental problem: They were turning to foreign nations for protection instead of turning to God.
 - In chapter 7, Judah aligned with Assyria to battle Syria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
 - Now, Judah wanted to throw off Assyria and are about to align with Egypt.
 - Because of the events of Exodus, trusting in Egypt was even worse in God's eyes than trusting Assyria. Yet, King Ahaz is ignoring God's deliverance from Egyptian slavery. Why?
 - Egypt possessed the best war fighting technology – horses and chariots.
 - Ahaz thought if only I have Egypt on my side, they can protect me from Assyria.
 - Clearly the people had turned from God and sought protection from flesh not spirit.
 - The people of Judah were placing their hope in mortal beings – finite and limited.
 - By contrast, God is spirit – unstoppable and eternal.
 - Because of God's wisdom, He will determine judgment.
 - Both Judah and Egypt will fail.
 - Sin cannot be left unaddressed. One can repent and seek God's forgiveness, or one can seek to ignore sin and God.
- **When faced with bad situations, do you turn to God first?**
- **Why are we tempted to turn to other things or other people to solve our problems?**

Isaiah 31:5



The LORD of Heaven's Armies
will hover over Jerusalem
and protect it like a bird protecting its nest.
He will defend and save the city;
he will pass over it and rescue it."



True Faithfulness (Isaiah 31:4-5)

- Judah had been faithless. Contrast that to God's faithfulness.
- When God judges, He does not abandon.
 - God's judgment is meant to bring repentance and restoration.
- The lion is not frightened by shepherds who shout and make noise.
 - The lion is the **"Lord of Hosts"**. No man or army can overcome Him.
 - The Lord will take His stand on the hill of Mount Zion (Jerusalem).
 - In addition to bringing judgment, God would protect the remnant of His people from those who seek to destroy them.
- The second depiction of God is that of a mother bird.
 - The bird will repeatedly put itself between a dangerous enemy and its beloved offspring. God is deeply attached to His people.
 - Jesus used the metaphor of a hen gathering her chicks as He described how He wanted to care for Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37)
- **"defending also He will deliver it"**
 - His rescue of Jerusalem would come in the form of protection.
 - He would block evil from getting to them.
- **"passing over He will preserve it"**
 - The image is one of protection. God is a shield from harm.
 - God's deliverance is faithful and personal.
- **Have you ever been aware of God's unseen hand protecting you in your life?**
- **How does answered prayer affect your relationship with God?**

Repentance Demonstrated (Isaiah 31:6-9)

- The people had **"deeply revolted"** against God. This was an intentional action.
 - They had made a conscious choice to enlist the help of Egypt instead of relying on God.
- Isaiah called on the people to **"turn"**. God's promise of redemption and protection is also a conscious choice. We either turn and accept it, or we reject God's gift to us.
 - When people turn back to God, they **"cast away"** idols of silver and gold.
- The temptation in the Garden of Eden was to become enough like God that Adam and Eve could have control and be independent of Him.
 - *How many people today rely on the stock market and wealth to become independent?*
 - *Do we allow wealth to become an idol that usurps all our time and energy?*
- Instead of independence from God, we should turn to the Lord in repentance.
- The promise of hope and true security comes from the Lord.
 - He is the only one who truly has control of all things. (pandemics, health, wealth, ...)
- **Do you believe God is in control of events in the world today?**
- **How can you share the gospel of Jesus this week?**

Biblical Truth:

God is able to protect His people from enemies.

"Therefore, the Lord waits [expectantly] and longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed (happy, fortunate) are all those who long for Him [since He will never fail them]" Isaiah 30:18

