

## Woe #4—A Doomed Foreign Policy

---

### Isaiah 30

Isaiah delivers six “woes” in chapters 28-33. Isaiah 30 records “Woe” #4. It is a “woe” upon Judah’s rebellious foreign policy of trusting Egypt instead of trusting God.

The main question of Isaiah 30 is “Whom will you trust, God or Egypt?”

**I. INCREASING of sin** (v. 1—“...*that they may ADD SIN TO SIN*”). They compounded their sin by adding sin on top of sin (cf. 1 Sam. 12:19).

---

Sin reproduces more sin. Once someone starts down the path of sin, one sin leads to another. When one sin is committed it requires more sins to cover the first one. David committed adultery, then committed murder. The second sin is usually easier to commit the first sin. And it gets easier the next time and goes from bad to worse.

---

**A. First sin—Turning** from God / rebellion (vs. 1, 9). What did Israel do with “*rebellious children*” in the Old Testament (Dt. 21:18-21)?

➡ It appears Hezekiah may have considered trusting Egypt to help against an invasion from Assyria (cf. 36:1-10). But Isaiah objected to this plan.

1. Sin begins when we turn from God toward something else.
2. By consulting with Egypt (type of the world), the Jews took their eyes off the only One who could save them.
  - Asking for counsel is good, but ask counsel from God first. Seeking counsel from a horoscope, Ouija board, or worldly psychologist is wrong (Ps. 1:1; 118:8-9 cf. Josh. 9:14; 2 Chron. 16:11-12).

**B. Further sin—Trusting** in Egypt (v. 2 cf. 31:1; Jer. 17:5; Dt. 17:16).

- Seeking Egypt’s help was a symptom of a deeper problem—Judah’s rejecting the word of God.
1. Why seek they help of their former enemy, Egypt, when God saved them from Egypt? What an insult in the face of God.

2. Why would a Christian turn to the world for help when God has delivered us from the world?
  - “...*cover with a covering...*” Covers are used for protection (blanket, roof, umbrella, tarp). Israel was seeking protection from Egypt instead of trusting God to protect them.
    - ➔v. 12—“...*despise this word, **and** trust in oppression...*”

C. **Fruits of sin** (vs. 3-7).

1. **Disgrace** (v. 3). Shame.
2. **Disorder** (v. 3) Confusion.
3. **Disappointment** (vs. 5-7). They would not get any help from Egypt. Egypt was just a “*shadow*” (v. 3 cf. 2 Kings 18:21).

---

Verses 6-7 describe Judah’s caravan carrying “protection” money through the wilderness to Egypt, a “*land of trouble and anguish.*” Zoan and Hanes (v. 4) were cities in the Nile Delta. [see [History of Conflicts Between the North Versus the South \(Isa. 30.6\)](#).doc]

This is one of the saddest pictures in the Bible. Judah’s delegation traveling down to Egypt was a reversal of Israel’s route when it came out of Egypt—A dangerous trek described in Deuteronomy 8:15—“*that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water.*” Yet, Judah forgot this, rebelled against God and risked the lives, riches and treasures to trust in a nation that could not profit them (v. 7 cf. Ps. 60:11-12). God’s counsel to Israel is “*sit still*”—wait on God (v. 7b cf. v. 15; 40:31).

How many today, instead of trusting God, risk their wealth, families, and happiness on things that can never help them.

---

- ➔ **APPLICATION** (vs. 1-3): When a Christian has a problem with a passage of Scripture, they should first pray to the Lord for help to understand it. However, the first thing many Christians do is seek counsel from “scholars” who recommend translations based on Egyptian manu-

scripts (Alexandra). This never solves the problem and only leads to more confusion.

## II. **INSCRIPTION of Isaiah** (vs. 8-14).

➡ Isaiah had a “sign-waving ministry” (vs. 8-9).

---

God told Isaiah to write on a table. It was a large sign, like a placard, for all to read (cf. Hab. 2:2). Isaiah carried this “protest” sign as he walked around Jerusalem.

---

- A. The REBUKE he wrote (vs. 8-9). *“This is a rebellious people...”*  
 Rebellion characterized the Jews since God brought them out of Egypt (Num. 14:9; 20:10). They were **disobedient** (rebellious/stubborn—1 Sam 15:23), **deceitful**, and **deaf** to God’s Word (like America today).
- B. The REFUSAL of Judah (vs. 10-11). The people did not want to hear God's Word. They insisted on four things:
1. *“...see not...”* (v. 10). *“Seers”* could “foresee” the future. Judah did not want to be told what the future held for them. They closed their eyes to coming judgment.
  2. *“...speak unto us smooth things...”* (v. 10). They wanted “soft” messages that would not disturb their comfort zone. “Isaiah, don’t rock the boat! Be nice. Tell how good we are!”
    - The unsaved always prefer a positive message over a negative message of rebuke. Be politically correct. Don’t ruffle anyone’s feathers.
  3. *“...prophecy deceits...”* (v. 10). They preferred a lie to the truth. They would rather have their ears tickled with a lie than hear the truth (Jer. 5:31; 2 Tim. 4:3).
    - “Truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it” —Flannery O’Connor
  4. *“Get you out of the way...”* (v 11). They want Isaiah to put away his “protest sign” and quit street preaching. They wanted Isaiah and God to stay out of the public view. Don’t we see this same attitude in the world today?

C. The RETRIBUTION from the Lord (vs. 12-14). Isaiah pictures people hiding behind a wall for protection. The wall seemed strong, but it was cracked and about to collapse upon them in tiny pieces (*“sherd”* cf. Job 2:8).

- Today people hide behind walls of religion... philosophy... pleasures... good works. But these “walls” will begin to bulge and break into smithereens under the judgment of God. The only protection from God’s judgment is the blood of Christ!

### III. INVITATION of the Lord (vs. 15-21).

A. God’s offer to **RESCUE** (*“...ye shall be saved...”*) and **restore** (v. 19—*“...dwell in Zion at Jerusalem...”*)

- Rescuing someone from drowning is often hindered by the drowning person struggling against the lifeguard. They should just relax let the rescuer do his job.
- God’s admonition to Judah was *return* and *rest* (v. 15). In modern terms God was telling them to chill! Isaiah would later write they who wait on the Lord will renew their strength (40:31). There are times when it is best to rest and wait on the Lord instead of taking matters into our own hands.

B. Judah’s answer to **REJECT** (v. 15—*“...ye would not.”* / v. 16—*“...No...”*).

1. Failed exit strategy (v. 16). It is futile to try to run from your problems. They’ll follow you and eventually catch up to you.
2. Reversal of God’s promise (v. 17 cf. Lev. 26:8; Dt. 32:30).
3. God’s patience (v. 18). **Who is waiting for whom?** (*“...therefore will the Lord wait... blessed are all they that wait for him.”*)

---

Put yourself in the shoes of Judah— The enemy (Assyria) is posed to attack. The situation doesn’t look good. You are in a crisis. You are overwhelmed. What do you do? Will you work out your problem in your own wisdom and ability? Do you seek help or counsel from the world? Or, do you simply *rest* and *wait* upon the Lord to help?

Waiting is not passive—Waiting is active. It is not a matter of folding our hands and waiting for *something*. It's a matter of lifting our hands and waiting on *Someone*. God is patiently waiting to see if you will wait for Him! It is as if God “folds His arms and patiently taps His foot” and waits for us to get to the point where we pray, “God, I can’t handle this. I’m turning it over to You. Help!” Then God says, “*Finally!* That's what I've been waiting for! Now I can work!”

Fanny Crosby wrote in *Rescue the Perishing*:

Though they are slighting Him, *still He is waiting,*  
*Waiting* the penitent child to receive;

*“The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him”* (2 Chron. 16:9; cf. Ex. 14:13-14).

God will not act until we wait and trust Him to act. God will not move on our behalf until we rest our cause upon Him. God is saying, “Quit looking to the world to help you out! I’m the answer to your problems. Stop trying to dig yourself out the hole you’ve dug for yourself. Trust Me to get you out of your predicament. Wait on Me.”

If you find yourself asking, “*How long, O Lord?*” God’s answer may be, “Whenever you're ready to trust Me.”

Your choice—**Who are you going to trust?** To whom do you turn for help in crisis? Are you going to trust the wisdom of this world? Are you going to trust your own ingenuity—What strings you can pull? What doors you can knock down? **Or**, will you humbly confess, “Lord, I’m in a mess. I’m stuck. Right now I return and rest my case upon You to help me.” (Ps. 27:14; 37:7; 62:5; 130:5).

“Don’t let the tyranny of self-sufficiency rob you of a miracle from God!”

---

➡ Several of God's attributes are mentioned in verses 12-18: He is HOLY (vs. 12, 15); PATIENT (v. 18); GRACIOUS (vs. 18-19—

God helps when we don't deserve help); MERCIFUL (v. 18) and JUST (v. 18).

C. God's prophesy to **RESTORE** (vs. 19-26).

➤ Just as there are consequences for sin, likewise there are blessings for obedience. Notice six things God promises Judah for trusting Him. [These promises will be fulfilled when Christ returns to set up His millennial Kingdom.]

1. Dwell in the land (v. 19 cf. Dt. 3:20).
  2. Weeping will end (v. 19).
  3. Instruction (v. 20 cf. v. 10). Because Israel rejected the teaching of God (vs. 9-11 cf. 29:14), God withdrew it. But when Israel returns to God, God will restore it's teachers.
  4. Guidance (v. 21). Like a compass pointing true north, the Spirit of God constantly guides which way we should take. All we need to do is consult the "compass."
    - 1 Samuel 9:27—"...stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God."
    - Sometimes God leads with a small voice (cf. 1 Kings 19:12). He says, "Go this way," or "Go that way" (cf. Acts 16:6-10). To hear God's voice we must listen intently and quietly. Too often we can't hear God because we are too busy with doing our own thing.
  5. Riddance of idols (v. 22; 1 John 5:21). A disgusting visual—Idols should be seen "*as a menstruous cloth*"—Detestable and disposed of like garbage (cf. 1 Kings 15:13; 2 Kings 18:1-4; 23:4-12; 2 Chron. 15:6; 29:16; 30:14). See also Isaiah 64:6
  6. Healing of the land (vs. 23-26 cf. 2 Chron. 7:14).
    - NOTE (v. 26): Only "*the light of the sun*" will be increased, not the heat. There is a difference between light and heat (cf. Rev. 7:16).
- Verse 25—"the day of the great slaughter" refers to the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21).

**IV. The INDIGNATION of the Lord** (vs. 27-33). Doctrinally these verses apply to *“the day of the Lord”* when Jesus returns.

- *“Indignation”* is mentioned twice (vs. 27, 30). Today, God’s love is emphasized to the exclusion of God’s wrath. God is both, a God of love (1 John 4:8) and a God of wrath (Heb. 10:31; 12:29).
  - *“The Assyrian”* (v. 31) historically is Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Prophetically he is the antichrist (see comments at Isa. 10:5).
- A. The **PLACE** (v. 33). *“Tophet”* was a fire pit in the lowest part of the valley of Hinnom (south of Jerusalem), or Gehenna (N.T word for hell). It was the place that worshippers of Molech used to sacrifice their children to the false god, Molech (2 Kings 16:3; 21:6; 23:10; 28:3; 2 Chron. 33:6; Jer. 7:31-32; 19:9). It will be called *“the valley of slaughter”* according to Jeremiah 19:6-7. It became the city garbage dump. When Jesus wanted to illustrate what hell was like, He pointed to gehenna (Mk. 9:43-48 cf. Isa. 66:24).
- B. The **PREPARATION**—It was a *prepared* place (v. 33 cf. Mt. 25:41). It was prepared *“for the king.”* Undoubtedly this “king” is the antichrist / Satan (Rev. 9:11 cf. Dan. 8:33; 11:36; 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:15).
- C. The **PROPORTION**—It is *“deep and large.”*
- D. The **PAIN**— *“fire... brimstone”* (Luke 16:23, 24, 25, 28; 2 Thess. 1:8). *Brimstone* is burning sulfur, smells like rotten eggs. *Brimstone* is mentioned 15 times in the Bible and connected with fire (Gen. 19:24; Dt. 29:23; Job 18:15; Ps. 11:6; Isa. 30:33; Isa. 34:9; Ezek. 38:22; Luke 17:29; Rev. 9:17, 18; 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8). People who reject “fire and brimstone” preaching, would not like Jesus preaching (Luke 17:29).