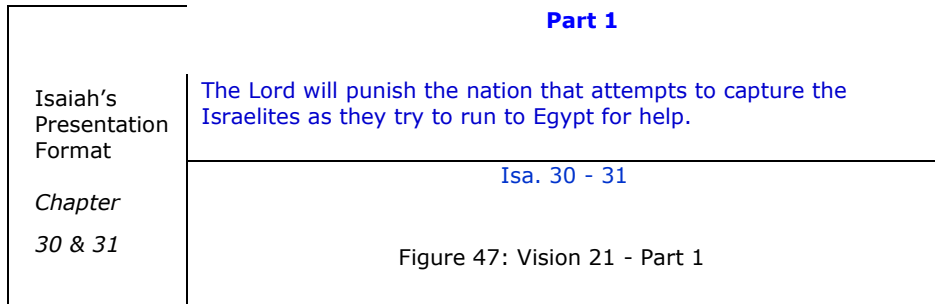


# The Prophecies of Isaiah <sup>49</sup>

## Lesson 20

### Vision 21 – Part 1

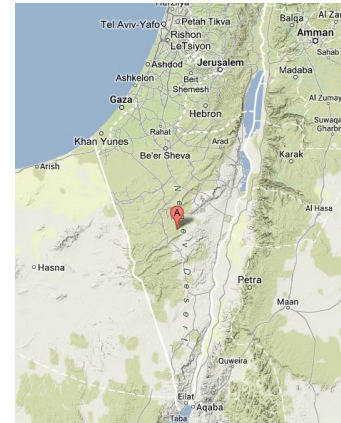
As Vision 20 ends, the distressed Jews are running down to Egypt for help but they are captured on the journey and returned to Jerusalem for a ransom. Vision 21 is an oracle directed at the people of the country that captures the Jews as they flee and her attempt to redeem them for a price.



### Negev's Oracle – Vision 21

**Isaiah 30:6a** The oracle concerning the beasts of the Negev.

The Negev sits south-southwest of the Dead Sea. Throughout the centuries, it has been claimed by both the Jews and their cousins, the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. When Jacob returned to his homeland after being in the Mesopotamia area for twenty years, he and his twin brother tried to live together on the same land. After Jacob's sons killed Shechem and his sons for defiling Jacob's daughter Dina, Jacob moved south and encroached on Esau's stake of land. Esau did not complain; he picked up his family and moved further down into the Negev, crossing the mountain ridge and settling in the valley of the Arabah.



Map 24: The Negev (Negeb)

This oracle concerns the beasts of the Negev, not true beasts, but human beings who act like beasts and prey on others.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Pending Extermination**

**Isaiah 30:6b** Through a land of distress and anguish, From where *come* lioness and lion, viper and flying serpent, They carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys And their treasures on camels' humps, To a people who cannot profit *them*; <sup>7</sup> Even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty. Therefore, I have called her "Rahab who has been exterminated."

The land of the Negev is full of distress and anguish. Most of the land is dry and deserted. Isaiah speaks of the "lioness and lion, viper and flying serpent," who "carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys and their treasures on camels' humps." He is talking about the

<sup>49</sup> All Scriptures in this lesson entitled "The Prophecies of Isaiah" are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, Copyright (C) 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1988, by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

men and women who act like beasts in their efforts to survive. The people of Israel will take all their riches and treasures to Egypt searching for help, but Egypt cannot help them. The people of the Negev will hamper the efforts of the people of Israel and will be exterminated. The Lord tags them with the name, Rahab. Most commentators attach the name Rahab to Egypt in this passage but it really refers to the people who seek refuge and help from Egypt. The extermination mentioned in the vision refers to the people of the Negev, not the Egyptians. Egypt has not been stripped from her land or exterminated, but the people of the Negev have been removed from the land and one day they will return only to be totally annihilated by the Lord for their barbaric actions against the Lord's nation of Israel. When the Southern Kingdom mistakenly reaches out to Egypt during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, she will survive her mistakes and go into exile with the promise of returning to occupy the land after 70 years have passed. The Edomites of the Negev hope for the same results but they have not been given the same promise. In Isaiah 11:13 & 14, the Lord promises:

**Isaiah 11:13** ... And those who harass Judah will be cut off; ... <sup>14</sup> And they will swoop down on the slopes of the Philistines on the west; Together they will plunder the sons of the east; They will possess Edom and Moab; And the sons of Ammon will be subject to them.

When the Lord returns to set up His kingdom, Judah will be all right and survive but Edom will lose her land along with Moab and Ammon.

*Near History/Present Day*

### **Witness Forever**

**Isaiah 30:8** Now go, write it on a tablet before them And inscribe it on a scroll, That it may serve in the time to come As a witness forever.

The Lord instructs Isaiah to write His words on a tablet, a large piece of bronze polished to a reflective surface and a scroll, sheets of papyrus glued together to form a long roll. The tablet and scroll will provide the record for all time of the vision which shows the destruction of the people of the Negev and the Lord's support for the Jewish nation.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Rebellious People**

**Isaiah 30:9** For this is a rebellious people, false sons, Sons who refuse to listen To the instruction of the LORD; <sup>10</sup> Who say to the seers, "You must not see *visions*"; And to the prophets, "You must not prophesy to us what is right, Speak to us pleasant words, prophesy illusions. <sup>11</sup> "Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."

The Jews rebel against the Lord and He calls them false sons. These sons claim the right to be on the land but they refuse to listen to the Holy One of Israel. They worship an apostate religion by denying the true prophecies, visions and oracles of the Lord. These are the people who will one day run through the Negev on their way to seek help from Egypt when the great beast of the Revived Roman Empire suppresses them. They will not want to hear the words of the Holy One of Israel in that day.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Holy One's Warning**

**Isaiah 30:12** Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, "Since you have rejected this word, And have put your trust in oppression and guile, and have relied on them, <sup>13</sup> Therefore this iniquity will be to you like a breach about to fall, a bulge in a high wall, whose collapse comes suddenly in an instant. <sup>14</sup> "And whose collapse is like the smashing of a potter's jar; So ruthlessly shattered that a sherd will not be found among its pieces to take fire from a hearth, or to scoop water from a cistern."

The Lord compares people who trust in oppression which is a fraudulent plan to avoid God's true counsel to a potter's jar which is broken into pieces and pulverized until nothing can be found of them. They also trust in guile which means deceit. The doom of those who do not trust in the Lord will come quickly and completely.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Holy One Willing**

**Isaiah 30:15a** For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said, "In repentance and rest you shall be saved, in quietness and trust is your strength."

The Southern Kingdom is still alive and well under Hezekiah's control; however, when his son Manasseh becomes the king, he will take the Southern Kingdom into such sin that all the good kings that follow cannot correct the damage. In spite of all that, the Lord continues to offer salvation to those who will quietly and strongly turn to Him.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Israel Not Willing**

**Isaiah 30:15b** But you were not willing, <sup>16</sup> And you said, "No, for we will flee on horses," Therefore you shall flee! "And we will ride on swift horses," Therefore those who pursue you shall be swift. <sup>17</sup> One thousand shall flee at the threat of one man, you shall flee at the threat of five; until you are left as a flag on a mountain top, and as a signal on a hill.

The Lord is willing to save, but Israel is not willing to be saved. Rather, Israel trusts in her own abilities and the Lord threatens her with two passages out of Deuteronomy and Leviticus.

**Deuteronomy 32:30** " How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had given them up?

**Leviticus 26:7** 'But you will chase your enemies, and they will fall before you by the sword; <sup>8</sup> five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword.

One day Israel will be the final "as a flag on a mountain top, and as a signal on a hill," signifying victory but not until she turns to the Lord.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Lord Waits**

**Isaiah 30:18** Therefore the LORD 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; How blessed are all those who long for Him. <sup>19</sup> O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. <sup>20</sup> Although the Lord has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher.

The Lord sees Israel's rebellion, yet He is willing to wait for them. His compassion will one day overflow on Jerusalem; however, until that day, the Lord will bring upon them affliction and subjugation. When the time is right, He will show Himself to the whole nation and He will become its Teacher. This passage is not speaking of the Lord's coming as a child to grow and then die on the cross for the sins of the world; it is speaking about the Lord's Second Coming to reign as their Teacher and King. Isaiah will die during the reign of king Manasseh who will turn the hearts of Israel away from the Lord to such an extent that the

nation will reject the Lord when He comes as a babe. But when He comes to reign as their King, Israel will turn from the wicked ways learned under Manasseh.

### **Images Gone**

**Isaiah 30:**<sup>21</sup> And your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left. <sup>22</sup> And you will defile your graven images, overlaid with silver, and your molten images plated with gold. You will scatter them as an impure thing; *and* say to them, "Be gone!"

It is doubtful that the Southern Kingdom understands this part of the prophecy; she does not participate in idol worship during Isaiah's day. The Northern Kingdom which has fallen to Assyria began its idol worship with the election of Jeroboam as king in 958 BC and continued in that sinful worship until the fall in 722 BC. The kings of the Northern Kingdom had changed the festival dates so their people would not abdicate from the north and return to the south to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem. With the rule of Manasseh, after the death of Isaiah, idols become the main objects of worship in the south. In exile, most of the Jews who are faithful to the Lord will look forward to their return to the Promised Land. When they return, it does not take long for their idol worship to resume and it will continue in some form until the Lord's return. In the end, Israel will finally come to its senses and rid herself of all idols, turning to the Lord as her Savior.

### **Blessed Cattle**

**Isaiah 30:**<sup>23</sup> Then He will give *you* rain for the seed which you will sow in the ground, and bread *from* the yield of the ground, and it will be rich and plenteous; on that day your livestock will graze in a roomy pasture. <sup>24</sup> Also the oxen and the donkeys which work the ground will eat salted fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.

During the 1,000 year reign of the Lord, all the cattle of the world will be a blessing to the people, especially the Jews.

### **Blessed Nature**

**Isaiah 30:**<sup>25</sup> And on every lofty mountain and on every high hill there will be streams running with water on the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. <sup>26</sup> And the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times *brighter*, like the light of seven days, on the day the LORD binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.

During the 1,000 year reign of the Lord, all of nature will be a blessing to the people, especially the Jews. Everyone will see the coming of the Lord. His appearance will be seven times brighter than the sun on the day He gathers Israel to heal and save her.

### **Lord's Coming**

**Isaiah 30:**<sup>27</sup> Behold, the name of the LORD comes from a remote place; Burning is His anger, and dense is *His* smoke; His lips are filled with indignation, And His tongue is like a consuming fire; <sup>28</sup> And His breath is like an overflowing torrent, Which reaches to the neck, To shake the nations back and forth in a sieve, And to *put* in the jaws of the peoples the bridle which leads to ruin.

When the Lord breaks through the eastern skies and glows seven times brighter than the sun, He will be coming from heaven to eliminate all of His enemies through war.

### ***Israel's Song***

**Isaiah 30:**<sup>29</sup> You will have songs as in the night when you keep the festival; and gladness of heart as when one marches to *the sound of the flute*, To go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel. <sup>30</sup> And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard. And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger, and *in the flame of a consuming fire*, In cloudburst, downpour, and hailstones.

When the Lord returns, it will be a great and joyful day for Israel; she will have a song in her heart for the Lord when He is the authority over all the earth. Israel will be able to go to the mountain of the Lord to see "the Rock of Israel." The Rock signifies the divine origin of their Savior and Lord Jesus Christ as in Habakkuk.

**Habakkuk 1:**<sup>12</sup> Art Thou not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? We will not die. Thou, O LORD, hast appointed them to judge; And Thou, O Rock, hast established them to correct.

In Habakkuk, the Jews of the Southern Kingdom are acknowledging the fact that God has sent the Babylonians to take them over. The Habakkuk passage occurs 120 year after this vision to Isaiah. In Isaiah 17:10, the Lord is called the Rock of refuge. In Psalm 31:2, He is called the Rock of strength. In Psalm 89:26 and 95:1, He is call the Rock of ... salvation. When Hannah blesses the Lord in thanks for Samuel's birth she says, "Nor is there any Rock like our God" in 1 Samuel 2:2. David says, " My God, my Rock, in whom I take refuge," in 2 Samuel 22:3. Beyond any doubt, the Lord is the Rock of Israel! Those who are against this Rock will suffer when His arm descends in anger and He sends forth the elements to destroy His enemies.

*Near Prophecy*

### ***Holy One's Warning and Promise***

**Isaiah 30:31** For at the voice of the LORD Assyria will be terrified, *When* He strikes with the rod. <sup>32</sup> And every blow of the rod of punishment, Which the LORD will lay on him, Will be with *the music of tambourines and lyres*; And in battles, brandishing weapons, He will fight them. <sup>33</sup> For Topheth has long been ready, indeed, it has been prepared for the king. He has made it deep and large, A pyre of fire with plenty of wood; The breath of the LORD, like a torrent of brimstone, sets it afire.

Now the Lord turns from the prophecy of His coming to the present situation with Assyria. She has her eyes on the Southern Kingdom, but that is not part of the Lord's plan. He has sent her to take the Northern Kingdom and she has accomplished that task. When she begins to focus on Jerusalem, the Lord will punish her for being greedy.

In 701 BC, twenty-one years from this prophecy, Assyria will surround Jerusalem to take her captive. In the valley of Topheth, the Lord will prepare the fire and send the torrent of brimstone to breathe on the Assyrians and send them away from the city. Topheth means to drum. In the Topheth valley, when the Israelites will offer children as human sacrifices, the priests will instruct men to beat the drum to drown the cries of the little ones being sacrificed. In that same valley, the Lord will strike the Assyrian king and his army and send them home without conquering Jerusalem. The history of this event is recorded in Isaiah chapters 36 – 39.

*Near Prophecy*

### ***Warning to Israel***

**Isaiah 31:1** Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, *And* rely on horses, And trust in chariots because they are many, And in horsemen because they are very strong,

But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD! <sup>2</sup> Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster, and does not retract His words, but will arise against the house of evildoers, And against the help of the workers of iniquity.

The Lord is warning Israel in advance against making an alliance with Egypt instead of looking to Him for salvation and safety. The alliance with Egypt will bring disaster from the Lord Who considers the alliance a blatant sin.

*Near Prophecy*

### **Warning about Egypt**

**Isaiah 31:3** Now the Egyptians are men, and not God, and their horses are flesh and not spirit; So the LORD will stretch out His hand, And he who helps will stumble And he who is helped will fall, And all of them will come to an end together.

The Lord warns Israel that neither Egypt nor any other country is in a position to help her. If a nation tries to help Israel, that nation will feel the wrath of the Lord.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Warning Concerning War**

**Isaiah 31:4** For thus says the LORD to me, "As the lion or the young lion growls over his prey, Against which a band of shepherds is called out, Will not be terrified at their voice, nor disturbed at their noise, So will the LORD of hosts come down to wage war on Mount Zion and on its hill." <sup>5</sup> Like flying birds so the LORD of hosts will protect Jerusalem. He will protect and deliver *it*; He will pass over and rescue *it*.

In this passage, the Lord promises that Jerusalem will be safe forever, and so it will. Even when the Lord exiles the Jews during the days of Nebuchadnezzar, Jerusalem is left intact and safe.

*Far Prophecy*

### **Warning to Return**

**Isaiah 31:6** Return to Him from whom you have deeply defected, O sons of Israel. <sup>7</sup> For in that day every man will cast away his silver idols and his gold idols, which your hands have made as a sin.

The Lord knows that Israel will run to Egypt for help in spite of His warning; nevertheless, He warns her to return to Him and cast away all her sinful idol worship.

*Near Prophecy*

### **Warning to Assyria**

**Isaiah 31:8** And the Assyrian will fall by a sword not of man, And a sword not of man will devour him. So he will not escape the sword, And his young men will become forced laborers. <sup>9</sup> "And his rock will pass away because of panic, And his princes will be terrified at the standard," Declares the LORD, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

When Assyria attempts to take Jerusalem, the Lord will protect the city and cause the destruction of the Assyrian army; their slaughter will be detailed in Isaiah chapter 37. The strength of Assyria will be crushed that day and the king will return to his home ashamed. His attempt to capture Jerusalem will cause him to feel the burning wrath of the Lord.