

1. In this section, we shift from the LORD's judgment against the nations to the LORD's judgment against Israel. In chapters 28-33, we read six *hoy!* woe poems, interrupted with single *hen* behold refrain.
 - a. Woe to Ephraim's leaders
 - b. Woe to David's camp
 - c. Woe to prideful created things
 - d. Woe to rebellious children
 - e. Woe to those seeking help from not-the-LORD
 - f. BEHOLD, a savior-king will reign!
 - g. Woe to the destroyer/betrayer

These woes set the scene for Israel's sins that the LORD is going to judge, and the behold sets the scene for the hope to come as well. Israel is being judged for its pride and its reliance on not-the-LORD for its safety and protection, for behold, a true king who will bring deliverance to Israel and remove her sin will reign! We are then introduced to the fourth and final king mentioned in the opening verse of Isaiah, King Hezekiah. Hezekiah, in the face of all the bad decisions Israel has made and is being judged for, acts in a way that is righteous before the LORD. Rather than find hope in the nations for their protection, he prays for deliverance and gets just that. Hezekiah achieves miraculous success, leading the reader to ask, *is this the promised savior-king?* But, as quickly as his rise is depicted, so is his fall. He resists the temptation to ally with Egypt before, but now is allying with Babylon. As a result, Isaiah proclaims that Babylon will destroy Jerusalem at a later time when his own children who are not yet born will be taken away and castrated, which indeed happened about 100 years later. The final words of this pre-exile book contain Hezekiah's response to Isaiah's prophecy about the imminence of Babylon's destruction: *Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days.* In the midst of all this, it is important to remember the key tenets of Isaiah's introduction: 1) the purpose of God's judgment is to purify Jerusalem, and to bring the holy seed and messianic king to the nations.

2. Faith
 - a. Hebrews
 - i. 11:1 → Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen
 - ii. 11:13 → These [people] died in faith without receiving the promises
 - iii. 11:39 → And all these [people], though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised
 - iv. 12:1-2 → Therefore...let us...look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith
 - b. Summary of the promises in Isaiah thus far:
 - i. A remnant will return to Zion, which the nations will stream toward to receive the instruction of the LORD, who will be with them there
 - ii. God will send a savior-king who will heal illnesses, atone for sins, and deliver from death all who wait for him from all nations
3. Read 28:1-6
 - a. There are two crowns described here:

- i. Proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim who will be swallowed up
 - ii. The LORD is a crown of glory worn by the remnant
 - 1. If you go back to 4:2-6, the branch of the LORD will be glorious and will be the pride and honor of the remnant
 - b. The LORD is also raising up a strong and mighty one against her, which we can say based on 8:7-8 is Assyria, which in both passages is described as floodwaters washing through the land; ultimately this floodwater takes the proud crown away
- 4. Read 28:7-13
 - a. Vs.1-6 talk about the northern Kingdom, 7ff goes back to Judah; however, we do not see a contrast being made, but a comparison – *these also*
 - b. The priests and prophets are drunk and are failing at teaching the people
 - c. Not only are they failing, but they are mocking the LORD
 - d. The LORD in return is going to use their words to mock and rebuke them
 - e. People of strange lips and with a foreign tongue will speak to Ephraim for God announcing rest, but they did not hear it—instead they fell backward
- 5. Read 28:14-22
 - a. Isaiah then rebukes these scoffers who made a covenant with the devil
 - b. LORD has laid a sure foundation that will annul the deal, execute justice
 - i. By inserting this refrain, Isaiah is drawing our attention to it in contrast to its surroundings. A sure foundation has been laid in the midst of the unsure foundation of the leaders who seek protection through other means—the point is the LORD is the only protection!
 - ii. 8:13-17 – Isaiah’s call to Ahaz was to trust the LORD for protection, which Ahaz did not, and we saw what happened there
 - iii. Romans 9:27-10:13
 - 1. Why are some Jews who pursue righteousness by the law unsaved? Because... they did not pursue by faith!
 - c. Lies and falsehood
 - i. They have made lies a refuge (15) but hail will sweep it away (17)
 - ii. They have taken shelter in falsehoods, but the waters will overwhelm the shelter (17)
 - d. Strange lips and foreign tongue (11 vs. 21)
 - i. The LORD’s deed is strange
 - ii. The LORD’s works are foreign
 - iii. Mount Perazim and Valley of Gibeon – 1 Chron. 14:8-17
 - 1. What is the key to David’s success? He inquired of the LORD and obeyed what was told to him
- 6. Read 28:23-29
 - a. This section speaks generally about the wisdom of the LORD—life has various circumstances that require discernment to maneuver through; the teachings that the drunk priests and prophets mocked are the source of the LORD’s instructions to his people to be wise
 - b. JSB: “When a farmer breaks up soil, overturns it, and levels it, his activities seem destruction but are in fact wise and ultimately life-giving. So too God has a purpose as he breaks up and levels nations.”

7. Read 29:1-10
 - a. *Ariel* – a poetic name for Jerusalem, which means altar of God
 - b. The LORD is going to raise up nations who will fight against Jerusalem; however, these enemies in reality will be like small dust or passing chaff
 - c. Jerusalem all the while is going to be intensely humbled
 - d. The LORD sets up Jerusalem's enemies against her, surrounding her, but in a moment shifts to punish those he propped up
 - i. This concept of inevitable disaster only to see foreign enemies disappear is repeated often in Isaiah – 3:25-5:6; 8:6-8, 22-9:1
 - e. Nevertheless, the LORD is the source of their deep sleep, continuing the theme we saw in ch.6 where the LORD is going to harden their hearts temporarily, but ultimately geared toward their final redemption
8. Read 29:11-14
 - a. Seems odd: is God happy or upset? With who?
9. Read 29:15-24
 - a. These people are not relying on their maker; instead on themselves
 - b. In that day
 - i. The deaf will hear, blind will see, meek will have joy in the LORD and the poor will exult the Holy One of Israel
 - ii. For those who fail to execute justice will cease
 - c. Through the mention of the Hebrew patriarchs four times, the addendum of vs.22-24 clarifies that this vision of renewal and restoration is not just for Judah, but for all Israel
10. Read 30:1-7
 - a. Zoan is a city in northern Egypt; Hanes is a city in southern Egypt
 - b. The people are seeking help from Egypt—time and time again Israel tries to return to the safety of Egypt—freedom can be a hard adjustment
 - c. How does the LORD describe Egypt's help?
 - i. Shame, disgrace, worthless, empty
 - ii. Rahab who sits still
 1. Goldingay: since this Rahab is spelled differently, it is not about the prostitute in Joshua, but based on its usage in Psalm 87, it is a poetic name for Egypt
11. Read 30:8-18
 - a. These rebellious children go out of their way to avoid hearing the truth
 - b. They do not want to hear about the Holy One of Israel, so in response, the Holy One of Israel speaks
 - c. BUT... those who repent and rest will be saved
 - i. This is God's mercy that he is gracious to show
 - ii. This is God's justice that blesses all who wait for him
12. Read 30:19-26
 - a. There will be a teacher who will show the way
 - i. At the end of Joshua, as the prophet gives his final charge to Israel, he says (23:6): *Be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right nor to the left.*

- b. The LORD is going to restore things to how it was for those who remain waiting for him, healing the wounds inflicted by his blow
13. Read 30:27-33
- a. The name of the LORD comes from afar, with lip and tongue... (28:11)
 - b. The LORD's anger is directed toward Assyria
 - c. What is Israel's response to this turn of events against Assyria?
 - i. Singing!
 - ii. Assyria's downfall will mean Israel's salvation
14. Read 31:1-9
- a. Why is Egypt not worthy of being Israel's help? Egypt is not God
 - b. Goldingay: "In the OT, 'flesh' does not carry the connotation of sinful, as it does in Paul; it simply designates human beings and animals as characterized by the weakness that attaches to something created, which does not carry dynamic life in itself."
15. Read 32:1-8
- a. A king will reign, and princes who are subjected hierarchically to the king will govern with justice, and these governors will be a refuge for those who need it most
 - b. Righteousness → justice
 - c. JSB: "The nation was blind to God's message, initially because they refused to listen to it, and subsequently because God compounded their inability to hear... That fateful decision will be reversed in the end of days."
16. Read 32:9-20
- a. Although it seems to be randomly calling out the women, we have spent the last several chapters dealing with the rulers and leaders who were almost exclusively men in this time—the gender of the rebuke to the leaders is assumed
 - b. What is the indicator that all this calamity will cease to continue occurring?
 - c. Day of the LORD will consist of restoration for the land as well
 - d. Righteousness → peace, calmness/quietness and confidence/security/trust
 - e. These results seem nice, but how do we become righteous?
 - i. FAITH!
 - ii. Hab. 2:4 *The righteous shall live by his faith* contrasted with the puffed up one
 - 1. Rom. 1:17 *Righteousness of God is revealed beginning and ending in faith, as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith*
 - 2. Gal. 3:11 *The righteous shall live by faith* in regards to Christ redeeming us from the curse of the law so that Gentiles would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith
 - 3. Heb. 10:38 *But the righteous one shall live by faith* in regards to the need to persevere through trials
 - iii. The source of peace, security, and justice might be righteousness, but the source of righteousness is faith

17. Read 33:1-9
 - a. We are not given the identity of this destroyer/betrayer, but we can safely speculate that it is Assyria due to the context, and the fact that *spoiler alert* Assyria is about to be overthrown in the next few chapters
 - b. Isaiah prays a Psalm of Lamentation
 - i. Call out to God
 - ii. Request for Divine Intervention
 - iii. Basis for Confidence in God's Intervention
 - iv. Description of Current Affairs
18. Read 33:10-16
 - a. The LORD responds to Isaiah's psalm
 - b. Isaiah's basis for confidence in the LORD is that he will be exalted and lifted up, and the LORD is saying, yes I will
 - c. The burning is going to happen against Judah's enemies but also to those in Zion; not everyone in Zion though, who? The sinners in Zion
 - d. Who can dwell with the fire? Those described as righteous and just
19. Read 33:17-24
 - a. The LORD is still responding to Isaiah's psalm with quite an image of Zion-to-come
 - b. After the judgment comes to an end, the LORD will save them, he will heal their illnesses, and forgive their sins
20. Read 34:1-17
 - a. Ch.34-35 serve as a summary of everything we have read so far
 - b. It may seem out of place that the discussion on the LORD's universal anger toward all nations transitions abruptly to Edom, who was not featured in the oracles against the nations in the second section, but Isaiah follows the pattern of Ezekiel, Amos, and Obadiah by using the historical people Edom as a representative of humanity. In Hebrew, Edom is spelled identically to *Adam*, which translates into mankind.
21. Read 35:1-10
 - a. In this day of the LORD, the hardening that once caused the blinding and deafening will be reversed so much so that Israel's redemption is indicated by their ability to see and hear the workings of the LORD.
 - b. The highway is marked as holy; we have already seen that there will be a remnant in Zion who themselves are holy
22. Intro to King Hezekiah based on 2 Kings 18-20, 2 Chron. 29-32, and Isaiah 36-39
 - a. Hezekiah became king when he was 25 years old, and reigned for 29 years, whose maternal grandfather was Zechariah. The very first thing he did as king was repair the temple and to instruct the priests to consecrate everything. The reason he did all this was because everything about the temple had been defiled by the evil actions of the people and their disobedience to the LORD's commands, and he believed this was causing the LORD's judgment to fall on Judah. The total process took sixteen days, after which the priests offered proper sacrifices to the LORD, and when the congregation brought their offerings, there was so much abundance the grain lasted for months.

- b. Then, Hezekiah ordered a special Passover since the people had failed to observe it in so long. He sent the news throughout all the tribes of Israel—some tribes laughed and refused to come, but others who had previously had conflict with Judah, came for “the power of God was at work in Judah to unite them.”
- c. At the Passover, there were not enough priests and people were offering sacrifices before they were cleansed. Things got disorderly but Hezekiah interceded for them because their hearts were in the right place, and the LORD cleansed them. Following this cleansing, the people went out and removed their idols from Jerusalem—the high places, the sacred pillars, the asherah poles, and the bronze snake of Moses.
- d. A few years later, Assyria marched again Ephraim and overtook it. Assyria deported the northern kingdom’s inhabitants to Assyria and totally captured Samaria because they did not obey the LORD’s commands. As Sennacherib, king of Assyria’s army approached Judah, Hezekiah rebuilt and strengthened the walls of his city and built more weapons of war, and sent requests to Sennacherib asking what he would want to withdraw his army. Sennacherib demanded gold and silver, and Hezekiah gave it to them, even stripping the gold and silver from the doors of the temple to give to them. He also encouraged his people to be courageous because Assyria only has men, but Judah has men and the LORD. Hezekiah sent three of his officials out to meet with Sennacherib’s general commander. Sennacherib blasphemed against the LORD in his taunts to Judah and in response, angel of the LORD went out and killed 185,000 brave warriors.
- e. At a later time, Hezekiah got terminally sick and Isaiah told him to put his affairs in order. Hezekiah prays and before Isaiah had even gotten to the courtyard, the word of the LORD came to Isaiah to return to Hezekiah. Isaiah tells him in three days he is to go to the temple to be healed through the application of pressed figs to the infected area. Hezekiah asks for a sign that this is true and Isaiah tells him the LORD will turn back the shadow on the sundial ten steps. Hezekiah does so, is healed, and attributes the healing to the LORD in a prayer of praise. Following his healing, when several ambassadors from Babylon came, the LORD left him to test the intentions of his heart, and he utterly failed, showing them all his treasures and state secrets. When Isaiah rebuked him for doing this, saying that his own children who had not yet been born, would be taken away to Babylon as eunuchs, Hezekiah pronounced that the word Isaiah spoke was good for he though, “why not, if there will be peace and security during my lifetime?”

23. Structure of 36-37

- a. 36:1-3 & 37:8-9 → Assyria invades Judah, sends messengers to Jerusalem
- b. 36:4-20 and 37:10-13 → Rabshakeh’s message to Hezekiah
- c. 36:21-37:4 and 37:14-20 → Hezekiah responds with prayer in the temple and seeks Isaiah
- d. 37:5-7 and 37:21-35 → Isaiah responds with a divine promise of salvation
- e. 37:36-38 → Immediate promises fulfilled

24. Comparison between Hezekiah and Ahaz

- a. 37:2 shows Hezekiah in the face of foreign conquest from Assyria at precisely the same spot Ahaz was in the face of foreign conquest from Syria and Ephraim in 7:3
- b. Both Davidic kings dismayed—Ahaz' heart shakes, Hezekiah tears clothes
- c. Isaiah tells both to not be afraid (7:4, 37:6)
- d. Isaiah gives both a sign (Ahaz 7:10-17, 8:18; Hezekiah 37:30, 38:7, 22); however, Ahaz refused to ask for a sign, but Hezekiah did ask
- e. The result for Jerusalem will be decided by the king's response
- f. Isaiah speaks to both that a remnant is promised (7:3, 22; 37:31-32)
- g. This will be accomplished through the zeal of the LORD (9:7; 37:32)
- h. In these foreign conquest passages, Hezekiah is presented as a model king who truly waits on the LORD's salvation and lives in a faithful manner, contrasted with Ahaz who is not

25. Read 36:1-12

- a. Numerous times thus far, Isaiah has predicted that Judah would be conquered, but not Jerusalem (1:5-9, 8:8, 29:1-24)
- b. Assyria message to Judah is "who are you trusting?" because Egypt, who Judah's leaders previously allied themselves with, will only pierce the hand of those who lean on them
- c. Assyria questions why Judah would dispose of all the temples to other gods and commit themselves exclusively to the LORD—weak position!
- d. Assyria finished by posing a peculiar question: how can you say you trust in the LORD when the LORD is who told me to come up and destroy you?
- e. Hezekiah's officials ask that they speak in a different language so the Judahites would not hear him—what the Rabshakeh did was call into question everything we know about Hezekiah's reign up to this point.
- f. Hezekiah's centralization of the temple stems from Deut. 12

26. Read 36:13-22

- a. The Rabshakeh rightfully calls into question the power of the other worthless gods; but, he mistakenly groups the LORD together with them
- b. I imagine these officials shaking in their sandals at the intimidating message they just heard—the utter fear they must have had, but they followed their instructions, they did not respond, only listen to report back

27. Read 37:1-13

- a. Hezekiah responds by going into the temple and requesting the presence of Isaiah who tells Hezekiah to not fear and to trust in the LORD—the basis of Isaiah's message to Hezekiah is that Assyria has blasphemed against the LORD
- b. When Assyria heard a rumor, they sent a message to Hezekiah again calling into question the LORD's deliverance
- c. This message, along with the previous one, are deemed blasphemous—ESV renders the word "revile" but blaspheme is a better rendering

28. Read 37:14-20

- a. Rather than react, Hezekiah presents the message before the LORD and prays—this is a king, unlike Ahaz, whose priorities are in the correct order

- b. His prayer is essentially: Assyria has grouped you together with all these other worthless gods who have failed. Please deliver us so all the nations will know that you are not worthless but instead are the Most High
29. Read 37:21-35
- a. The LORD declares his own power as the basis for carrying out his plan
 - b. The basis of Isaiah's message to Hezekiah is that Assyria has blasphemed against the LORD
 - c. JSB: "The poem attributed to Isaiah here resembles his prophecies throughout chs 1-33; note especially the emphasis on Zion, the criticism of haughtiness of the foreign empire, the phrase *Holy One of Israel*, the use of imagery taken from Assyrian propaganda, the notion of the remnant of Judah from whom Israel will be renewed, and especially the doctrine of the inviolability of Zion."
30. Read 37:36-38
- a. Blasphemy is serious business; Assyria's blasphemy is utterly silenced
 - b. How the LORD promised the king of Assyria would die comes true
 - c. JSB: "According to Assyrian records, Sennacherib was assassinated in 681 BCE, two decades after the events described here; history has been telescoped to make a theological point."
31. Read 38:1-8
- a. This conclusion to the contrast with Ahaz is rather odd—first, Hezekiah asks for a sign that the LORD will heal him (cf. Kings and Chronicles) and the sign is that the shadow on the dial of Ahaz will be turned back
 - b. Vs. 6 → chronology → this happened before 37:36-38. This is evidence of the strategic, thematic, literary composition of Isaiah by his followers
 - c. Whereas before he was faced with death as a nation and he responded with prayer and faith with the confidence of a sign, so not he faces death personally and responds the exact same way: faith and prayer, with the confidence of a sign
 - d. Because of Hezekiah's faith, the people are spared at least during his reign. 6:10-13 stated a cleansing judgment will come to Jerusalem, yet each time the enemy has been judged instead—judgment is still coming
32. Read 38:9-22
- a. Hezekiah writes about the LORD's deliverance and healing, consistent with the model of psalms of thanksgiving
33. Read 39:1-8
- a. Babylon comes to celebrate with Hezekiah and gains access to his kingdom, resulting in Isaiah's rebuke that Hezekiah's own future sons will be carried off to Babylon as Eunuchs, along with all of Judah's treasure
 - b. Hezekiah was not concerned with his future sons, just his own contentment in the fact that the remainder of his reign as king would be marked by peace and security
 - c. It is important though to note that the Babylonian exile is not Hezekiah's fault—Going back to chapter 6, it is the LORD's plan to issue a cleansing judgment on Jerusalem