

## Woe to Those Who Rely on Egypt Yesha'yahu 31:1-9

In my last post, we began to explore a **Woe to the Rebellious Children ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'hayu 30:12-29**. In this post, we conclude our investigation of a **Woe to the Rebellious Children ~ Part 3** in **Yesha'hayu 30:27-33**.

This is the fifth woe in chapters 28-33. The issue again is that **Adonai's** people were trusting foreign nations (in this case, **Egypt**) rather than **Adonai** for help against their enemies.

***<sup>1</sup> Woe to those going down to Egypt expecting help - relying on horses; trusting in chariots, because they have many, and in the strength of their cavalymen - but not looking to the Holy One of Isra'el, not consulting Adonai.***

The "holy war" theme of the **Tanakh** makes it clear that **Isra'el's** safety depended on **Adonai**, not on the size of their army. Examples include the battle of **Jericho** (Joshua 7), **Gid'on's** victory over the **Midyan** (Judges 7-8), and countless other accounts (Psalm 20:7).

***<sup>2</sup> But He too is wise and can bring disaster, and He does not take back His words; He will rise against the house of evildoers and against the help of those who do wrong. <sup>3</sup> Now the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses' flesh and not spirit. So, when Adonai stretches out His hand, both he who helps will stumble, and he who is helped will fall; both will perish together.***

**Isra'el's** attempt to get help from **Egypt** will backfire because **Adonai** will cause both helper (**Egypt**) and helped (**Adonai's** people) to be destroyed. It's as if the **Adonai** is saying, "Why are you looking to the **Egyptians**? They're not going to be able to help you. They're not **Adonai**. They're only men. So, seek Me instead."

Are we reticent to seek the **Adonai**? Our strength comes from our dependence upon **Adonai** alone.

***<sup>4</sup> For here is what Adonai says to me: "As a lion or lion cub growls at its prey and isn't frightened away by the shouts of hordes of shepherds called out against him - their voices do not upset him - so likewise Adonai-Tzva'ot will descend to fight on Mount Tziyon, on its hill. <sup>5</sup> Like hovering birds, Adonai-Tzva'ot will protect Yerushalayim. In protecting it, He will rescue it; in sparing it, He will save it.***

**Adonai** is the only One who can protect His people. In these verses, **Yesha'yahu** uses two images to describe **Adonai's** protection. He is a fearless **lion** on behalf of **Isra'el** against the foreign armies (represented by the shepherds who try to fend Him off). He is also **hovering** over His people as **birds** hover over their prey. The point is that **Adonai** will see to the deliverance of His people.

***<sup>6</sup> People of Isra'el! Return to Him to whom you have been so deeply disloyal! <sup>7</sup> For on that day everyone will discard his idols of silver and idols of gold, which you made for yourselves with your own sinful hands.***

The restoration of **Adonai's** people has two sides: returning to Him, which implies repentance, and rejecting false gods in the form of silver and gold idols. We see this prophecy fulfilled when **Hezekiah** removed the high places, broke the idols, and cut down the groves used in idol worship (2 Kings 18:4).

***<sup>8</sup> Then Ashur will fall by a sword, not of mortals, a sword, not of humans, will devour him; he will flee before the sword, and his young men will be put to forced labor.***

**Adonai** is the real reason **Ashur** will fall. He will use **Bavel** for this task, but **Adonai** is the One who will give Bavel the victory.

***<sup>9</sup> His rock, out of terror, will pass away, and his panicked officers will desert the standard." So says Adonai, whose fire is in Tziyon, whose furnace is in Yerushalayim.*** ~ Isaiah 31:1-9 (CJB)

Though the reference is unusual, the **rock** is probably a reference to the **Ashurim** king. A rock is something that provides shelter and protection, but in this case, the rock will fail to give a defense. The **standard** is a reference to a battle standard used to rally troops. **Tziyon fire** and **Yerushalayim's furnace** may be a reference to the altar fire, but in the context of judgment, it may point to the fire that will come out of **Yerushalayim** to destroy the attacking enemy.

In my next post, we move on to **Yesha'hayu 32**. **Yesha'yahu** takes a brief respite from the **woes** in this chapter, and we will learn of the **Coming of a Righteous King** in verses 1-8.