

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 249 – Don't Go To Egypt Through The Fire In Zion (Isaiah 31:1-9)

1. Was it smart for Israel to look to the Egyptians for help?

No: *“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord” (Isaiah 31:1)!*

- Don't trust in men (**Psalms 118:8-9, Psalms 146:3, Proverbs 26:22-28, Jeremiah 9:4, Jeremiah 17:5, Micah 7:5-8, Matthew 7:15-20, and I John 4:1; cf. Numbers 23:19**).
- As the last chapter established, this was true of trusting Egypt (**Isaiah 30:2-3**) and we'll read that again (**Isaiah 36:1-7**).
- Israel did well when they trusted in God rather than horses, etc. (**Psalms 20:7-8**).

2. Did God rise up against those who helped evildoers?

Yes: *“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord! Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity” (Isaiah 31:1-2).*

- God is knowing and wise (**I Samuel 2:3, Job 36:5, Jeremiah 10:6-7, and Romans 11:33-36**).
- He will bring evil [Strong's # 7451adversity; grief; misery; etc.] for a reason (**Joshua 23:14-16 and I Kings 14:7-10**).
- Once pronounced, not recalled (**Jeremiah 4:27-28, Jeremiah 44:29 and Zechariah 1:6**).
- Guilt by association (**Joshua 7:1-26, I Timothy 5:22, and II John 9-11**).
- Egypt shouldn't have tried to “help” the people that belong to God (**Ezekiel 29:6**).
- We see this true of Egypt by the Assyrians (**Isaiah 20:1-5**) and again later to others (**Jeremiah 44:29-30**).

3. Did the Lord view the Egyptians as an almighty people who couldn't fail?

No, the opposite of such is what God said: *“Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together” (Isaiah 31:3).*

- Men would do well to consider their place in comparison to the Almighty (**Isaiah 13:6-7 and Revelation 1:8; cf. Job 33:13, Job 38:1-3, Job 40:1-8, Jeremiah 18:1-10, Romans 9:20, and I Corinthians 10:22**).

4. In what ways did Isaiah say the Lord was likened to a lion and a flying bird?

“For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it” (Isaiah 31:4-5)

- Imagery of likening God’s actions to those of earth’s creatures is used throughout the Bible (**Exodus 19:4, Deuteronomy 32:11-12, Numbers 24:8-9, Jeremiah 50:44, Hosea 11:10, Amos 3:8, Luke 13:34**, etc.).
- Point is, when God defends His people, no one is going to get to them (**Psalms 125:1-3**).
- The key however is, they needed to trust in Him for His deliverance (**Psalms 37:39-40**).

5. Did God want those who revolted against Him to turn back to Him?

Yes: *“Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted” (Isaiah 31:6)*.

- This, ultimately, was/is God’s plea with all of humanity (**Isaiah 55:7, Jeremiah 3:10-14, Ezekiel 18:31-32, Hosea 14:1, Joel 2:13, Acts 26:18-20**, and **I Timothy 2:4**, and **II Peter 3:9**).

6. If they did turn back to God, what would they cast away?

The sinful idols they made for themselves: *“For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for a sin” (Isaiah 31:7)*.

- Turning to God requires one to turn from his or her sins (**Proverbs 28:13, II Chronicles 7:14, Ezekiel 33:14-16, Matthew 3:8, John 8:1-1-11**, and **Acts 3:19**).
- This including them walking away from idolatry (**Hosea 14:7-9**) for the Lord was/is certainly opposed to idolatry (**Exodus 20:1-6, Deuteronomy 7:23-26, I Kings 9:6-9, I Corinthians 6:9-10**, and **I John 5:21**).

7. Was it the sword of a mighty man that devoured the Assyrians who were invading Israel?

No: *“Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited” (Isaiah 31:8)*.

- It was the Lord’s doing (**Isaiah 10:12-19**).
- Specifically, He sent an angel as far as the sword was concerned (**II Kings 19:32-35** and **Isaiah 37:33-36**).
- The flight and the death followed (**II Kings 19:36-37** and **Isaiah 37:37-38**).

8. Were the Assyrians going to see the deliverance of God and bravely stand against Him?

No: “And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem” (Isaiah 31:9).

- God can cause any nation to fear (**Exodus 23:27-30** and **Ezekiel 30:13**).

9. Where is the fire and furnace of the Lord?

Zion, which is in Jerusalem (**Psalms 135:21** and **Zechariah 8:3**), so both references are essentially the same: “And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem” (Isaiah 31:9).

- **Isaiah 4:3-6** and **Zechariah 2:4-5**.
- The Lord is a consuming fire (**Deuteronomy 4:24** and **Hebrews 12:29**).