

Woe to the Rebellious Children ~ Part 1

Yesha'yahu 30:1-11

In my last post, we concluded our examination of a **Woe to Ari'el (Yerushalayim) ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'yahu 29:13-24**. In this post, we begin to explore a **Woe to the Rebellious Children** in **Yesha'yahu 30:1-11**.

1 "Woe to the rebellious children," says Adonai. "They make plans, but the plans are not mine; they develop alliances, but not from my Spirit, in order to pile sin upon sin.

This is the fourth woe in chapters 28-33. The **rebellious children** were **Adonai's** chosen people who sought help from a foreign nation rather than from **Adonai** Himself.

2 They go down to Egypt but don't consult Me, seeking refuge in Pharaoh's protection, seeking shelter in Egypt's shadow.

The plan was to ally with **Egypt** to counter the **Ashurim** threat. **Seeking shelter** implies the relationship with **Egypt** would not be as equal partners; **Adonai's** people would be the junior partner. This arrangement involved the payment of annual tribute as well as the forfeiture of an independent foreign policy. The description of **Egypt** in this prophecy fits with the time of **King Hezekiah** of **Y'hudah** and may indicate the threat of an invasion by **Sennacherib** in 701 BCE. Rather than preserving **Isra'el's** glory, it would lead to shame because **Egypt** was an unreliable ally.

3 But Pharaoh's protection will bring you shame, shelter in Egypt's shadow will lead to disgrace. ⁴ Though his princes are at Tzo'an, and his envoys have reached Hannes,

Yesha'yahu emphasizes the futility of **Hezekiah's** diplomatic overtures to **Egypt**. **Tzo'an** was an important city, formerly a capital of **Egypt**, mentioned in this verse because it was the residence of Pharaoh's wisest advisers. This is the only mention of **Hannes** in the Bible. According to extrabiblical sources, it "was an important regional capital" identified with Heracleopolis Magna. ¹

5 they all are disappointed with a people that doesn't help them, who give no assistance and no advantage, only disappointment, and disgrace.

Adonai had declared, **Be still and know that I am God** (Psalm 46:10). "If you want to be strong, sit still, and look to Me."

6 A prophecy about the animals in the Negev: In a land of trouble and anguish, of lionesses and roaring lions, of vipers and poisonous flying serpents, they carry their riches on donkeys' backs and their treasures on camels' humps to a people who will not help them.

The **Negev** was the wilderness region south of the southern Israeli city of **Be'er-Sheva**. It was on the way to **Egypt**. Nomadic peoples and various animals such as those listed in the first part of this verse populated this area. The people who carried their wealth on the backs of donkeys describe those who took tribute to **Egypt** to buy protection against the **Ashurim** threat. **Yesha'yahu** saw this as a waste of money.

7 For Egypt's help is worthless, pointless; so I call her "Arrogance Doing Nothing."

Several English translations use **Rahab** verses **Arrogance**. Although not mentioned in any known text outside the Bible, **Rahab** is comparable to the chaos monster **Livyatan**, which also takes the form of a twisting serpent (Job 26:12-13). **Rahab** is also used synonymously for **Egypt**. For instance, in Psalm 87:4, the major nations are listed as subject to the power of **Adonai**. **Rahab**, **Egypt's** metaphorical name, is paired here with

¹ HCSB Study Bible.

Bavel in terms of importance. Here the prophet taunts an impotent **Egypt/Rahab's** ability to help **Isra'el** or stop **Ashur**. ²

8 Now go, inscribe it on a tablet, write it for them in a scroll, so that on the final day it will be a witness forever and ever.

Yesha'yahu is told to write **Adonai's** indictment against the people of **Yerushalayim** so that all who followed would know that **Adonai's** judgment against her was justified.

9 For this is a rebellious people; they are lying children, children who refuse to hear the Torah of Adonai.

The **rebellious people** did not obey **Adonai's** instruction, which refers to His law and perhaps to His prohibition against entering into alliances with other nations.

10 They say to the seers, "Do not see!" to those who have visions, "Do not tell us the visions you have as they really are; but flatter us, fabricate illusions! 11 Get out of the way! Leave the path! Rid us of the Holy One of Isra'el!" ~ Isaiah 30:1-11 (CJB)

More tickling of the ears? People want to hear pleasant things, not the hard stuff that prophets like **Yesha'yahu** told them. True prophets warned them of coming judgment and urged them to restore their relationship with **Adonai**, but they responded by declaring they wanted nothing to do with this **Adonai**. The **Holy One of Israel** is one of **Yesha'yahu's** favorite titles for **Adonai**, appearing more than 25 times in his book. It emphasizes **Adonai's** distaste for sin.

In my next post, we continue to explore the **Woe to the Rebellious Children ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'yahu 30:12-26**.

² The IVP Bible Background Commentary – Old Testament.