
ISAIAH 30: 1 "Woe to the rebellious children", says the LORD, "who take counsel, but not from me; and who make an alliance, but not with my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin,

The Jews reproved for their reliance on Egypt, Isa 30:1-7. Threatened for their obstinate adherence to this alliance, Isa 30:8-17. Images the most elegant and lofty, by which the intense gloriousness of Messiah's reign at the period when all Israel shall be added to the Church is beautifully set forth, Isa 30:18-26. Dreadful fall of Sennacherib's army, an event most manifestly typical of the terrible and sudden overthrow of Antichrist; as, unless this typical reference be admitted, no possible connection can be imagined between the stupendous events which took place in Hezekiah's reign, and the very remote and inconceivably more glorious displays of Divine vengeance and mercy in the days of the Messiah, Isa 30:27-33.

Verse 1

And that cover with a covering "Who ratify covenants" - Hebrews "Who pour out a libation." Sacrifice and libation were ceremonies constantly used, in ancient times by most nations in the ratifying of covenants: a libation therefore is used for a covenant, as in Greek the word σπονδη, for the same reason, stands for both. This seems to be the most easy explication of the Hebrew phrase, and it has the authority of the Septuagint, εποιησατε συνθηκας.

ISAIAH 30: 2 who set out to go down into Egypt, and have not asked my advice; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt!

ISAIAH 30: 3 Therefore the strength of Pharaoh will be your shame, and the refuge in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

ISAIAH 30: 4 For their princes are at Zoan, and their ambassadors have come to Hanes.

Verse 4

Hanes - Six MSS. of Kennicott's, and perhaps six others, with four of De Rossi's, read חנם chinnam, in vain, for חנם Hanes; and so also the Septuagint, who read likewise יגעו yageu, labored, for יגיעו yaggiu, arrived at.

ISAIAH 30: 5 They shall all be ashamed because of a people that can't profit them, that are not a help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach."

Verse 5

Were - ashamed - Eight MSS. (one ancient) of Kennicott's, and ten of De Rossi's, read חביש hobish, without א aleph. So the Chaldee and Vulgate.

But a shame "But proved even a shame" - Four MSS. (three ancient) after כי ki, add אם im, unless, which seems wanted to complete the phrase in its usual form.

ISAIAH 30: 6 The burden of the animals of the South. Through the land of trouble and anguish, of the lioness and the lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they carry their riches on the shoulders of young donkeys, and their treasures on the humps of camels, to an unprofitable people.

Verse 6

The burden - מַשָּׂא massa seems here to be taken in its proper sense; the load, not the oracle. The same subject is continued; and there seems to be no place here for a new title to a distinct prophecy.

Does not burden of the beasts of the South in this place relate to the presents sent by Hoshea king of Israel to the South - to Egypt, which lay south of Judea, to engage the Egyptians to succor him against the king of Assyria?

Into the land of trouble and anguish "Through a land of distress and difficulty" - The same deserts are here spoken of which the Israelites passed through when they came out of Egypt, which Moses describes, Deu 8:15, as "that great and terrible wilderness wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water. "And which was designed to be a kind of barrier between them and Egypt, of which the Lord had said, "Ye shall henceforth return no more that way," Deu 17:16.

Shall not profit them - A MS. adds in the margin the word לָמוּ lamo, them, which seems to have been lost out of the text: it is authorized by the Septuagint and Vulgate.

ISAIAH 30: 7 For Egypt helps in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I called her Rahab who sits still.

Verse 7

Their strength is to sit still "Rahab the Inactive" - The two last words, הֵם שָׁבֵת hem shabeth, joined into one, make the participle pihel הַמְּשַׁבֵּת hammeshabbeth. I find the learned Professor Doederlein, in his version of Isaiah, and note on this place, has given the same conjecture; which he speaks of as having been formerly published by him. A concurrence of different persons in the same conjecture adds to it a greater degree of probability.

ISAIAH 30: 8 Now go, write it before them on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever.

Verse 8

For ever and ever "For a testimony for ever" - לְעַד לעד. So the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and Septuagint, in MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2: εἰς μαρτυριον, which two words have been lost out of the other copies of the Septuagint.

ISAIAH 30: 9 For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the LORD's law;

ISAIAH 30: 10 who tell the seers, "Don't see!" and to the prophets, "Don't prophesy to us right things. Tell us pleasant things. Prophecy deceits.

ISAIAH 30: 11 Get out of the way. Turn aside from the path. Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."

ISAIAH 30: 12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, "Because you despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely on it;

Verse 12

In oppression "In obliquity" - בעקש beekesh, transposing the two last letters of בעשק beoshek, in oppression, which seems not to belong to this place: a very probable conjecture of Houbigant.

ISAIAH 30: 13 therefore this iniquity shall be to you like a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly in an instant.

Verse 13

Swelling out to a high wall "A swelling in a high wall" - It has been observed before, that the buildings of Asia generally consist of little better than what we call mud walls. "All the houses at Ispahan," says Thevenot, Vol. II., p. 159, "are built of bricks made of clay and straw, and dried in the sun; and covered with a plaster made of a fine white stone. In other places in Persia the houses are built with nothing else but such bricks, made with tempered clay and chopped straw, well mingled together, and dried in the sun, and then used: but the least rain dissolves them." Sir John Chardin's MS. remark on this place of Isaiah is very apposite: Murs en Asie etant faits de terre se fendent ainsi par milieu et de haut en bas. "The walls in Asia being made of earth often cleave from top to bottom." This shouts clearly how obvious and expressive the image is. The psalmist has in the same manner made use of it, to express sudden and utter destruction: - "Ye shall be slain all of you;

Ye shall be like an inclining wall, like a shattered fence." Psa 62:4.

ISAIAH 30: 14 He will break it as a potter's vessel is broken, breaking it in pieces without sparing, so that there won't be found among the broken piece a piece good enough to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern."

Verse 14

He shall not spare "And spareth it not" - Five MSS. add the conjunction I vau to the negative; וְלוֹ velo.

ISAIAH 30: 15 For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, "You will be saved in returning and rest. Your strength will be in quietness and in confidence." You refused,

ISAIAH 30: 16 but you said, "No, for we will flee on horses"; therefore you will flee; and, "We will ride on the swift"; therefore those who pursue you will be swift.

ISAIAH 30: 17 One thousand will flee at the threat of one. At the threat of five, you will flee until you are left like a beacon on the top of a mountain, and like a banner on a hill.

Verse 17

At the rebuke of five shall ye flee "At the rebuke of five, ten thousand of you shall flee" - In the second line of this verse a word is manifestly omitted, which should answer to one thousand in the first: the Septuagint supply πολλοι, רבים rabbim. But the true word is רבבה rebabah, as I am persuaded any one will be convinced, who will compare the following passages with this place: - "How should one chase a thousand;

And two put ten thousand (רבבה) to flight?" Deu 32:30. "And five of you shall chase a hundred;

And a hundred of you shall chase (רבבה) ten thousand." Lev 26:8.

ISAIAH 30: 18 Therefore the LORD will wait, that he may be gracious to you; and therefore he will be exalted, that he may have mercy on you, for the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all those who wait for him.

Verse 18

And therefore will he be exalted "Even for this shall he expect in silence" - For ירום yarum, he shall be exalted, which belongs not to this place, Houbigant reads ידום yadum, he shall be silent: and so it seems to be in a MS. Another MS. instead of it reads ישוב yashub, he shall return. The mistakes occasioned by the similitude of the letters ד dalet and ר resh are very frequent, as the reader may have already observed.

ISAIAH 30: 19 For the people will dwell in Zion at Jerusalem. You will weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the voice of your cry. When he hears you, he will answer you.

Verse 19

For the people shall dwell in Zion "When a holy people shall dwell in Sion" - λαος ἅγιος, Septuagint; עם קדוש am kadosh. The word קדוש dro kadosh, lost out of the text, but happily supplied by the Septuagint, clears up the sense, otherwise extremely obscure. When the rest of the cities of the land were taken by the king of Assyria, Zion was preserved, and all that were in it.

Thou shalt weep no more "Thou shalt implore him with weeping" - The negative particle לא lo is not acknowledged by the Septuagint. It may perhaps have been written by mistake for לו lo, to him, of which there are many examples.

ISAIAH 30: 20 Though the Lord may give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers won't be hidden any more, but your eyes will see your teachers;

Verse 20

Though the Lord "Though Jehovah" - For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, sixteen MSS. and three editions have יהוה Yehovah, many of De Rossi's have the same reading; all my own have יהוה Yehovah.

ISAIAH 30: 21 and when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way. Walk in it."

Verse 21

When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left "Turn not aside, to the right or to the left" - The Syriac Chaldee, and Vulgate, translate as if, instead of כִּי־וְכִי ki-vechi, they read לֹא־וְלֹא lo-velo.

ISAIAH 30: 22 You shall defile the overlaying of your engraved images of silver, and the plating of your molten images of gold. You shall cast them away as an unclean thing. You shall tell it, "Go away!"

Verse 22

Ye shall defile "Ye shall treat as defiled" - The very prohibition of Moses, Deu 7:25, only thrown out of the prose into the poetical form: "The graven images of their gods ye shall burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or the gold that is on them; nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to Jehovah thy God."

ISAIAH 30: 23 He will give the rain for your seed, with which you will sow the ground; and bread of the increase of the ground will be rich and plentiful. In that day, your livestock will feed in large pastures.

ISAIAH 30: 24 The oxen likewise and the young donkeys that till the ground will eat savoury provender, which has been winnowed with the shovel and with the fork.

ISAIAH 30: 25 There shall be brooks and streams of water on every lofty mountain and on every high hill in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

Verse 25

When the towers fall "When the mighty fall" - מגדלים migdalim, μεγαλους, Sym.; μεγαλυνομενους, Aquila; רברבין rabrebin, Chard.; all signifying mighty sizes.

ISAIAH 30: 26 Moreover the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD binds up the fracture of his people, and heals the wound they were struck with.

Verse 26

Shall be sevenfold - The text adds כאור שבעת הימים keor shibath haiyamayim, "as the light of seven days," a manifest gloss, taken in from the margin; it is not in most of the copies of the Septuagint. It interrupts the rhythmical construction, and obscures the sense by a false, or at least an unnecessary, interpretation.

By moon, sun, light, are to be understood the abundance of spiritual and temporal felicity with which God should bless them in the days of the Messiah, which should be sevenfold, i.e. vastly exceed all that they had ever before possessed.

ISAIAH 30: 27 Behold, the LORD's name comes from far away, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke. His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is as a devouring fire.

Verse 27

And the burden thereof is heavy "And the flame raged violently" - משאה massaah; this word seems to be rightly rendered in our translation, the flame, Jdg 20:38, Jdg 20:40, etc.; a sign of fire, Jer 6:1; called properly משאת masseeth, an elevation, from its tending upwards.

ISAIAH 30: 28 His breath is as an overflowing stream that reaches even to the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction; and a bridle that leads to ruin will be in the jaws of the peoples.

Verse 28

To sift the nations with a sieve of vanity "To toss the nations with the van of perdition" - The word להנפה lahanaphah is in its form very irregular. Kimchi says it is for להניף lehaniph. Houbigant supposes it to be a mistake, and shows the cause of it; the joining it to the ה he, which should begin the following word. The true reading is להניף הגוים lehaniph haggoyim, "to sift the nations."

The Vulgate seems to be the only one of the ancient interpreters who has explained rightly the sense; but he has dropped the image: ad perdendas gentes in nihilum, "to reduce the nations to nothing." Kimchi's explanation is to the following effect: "נפה naphah is a van with which they winnow corn; and its use is to cleanse the corn from the chaff and straw: but the van with which God will winnow the nations will be the van of emptiness or perdition; for nothing useful shall remain

behind, but all shall come to nothing, and perish. In like manner, a bridle is designed to guide the horse in the right way; but the bridle which God will put in the jaws of the people shall not direct them aright, but shall make them err, and lead them into destruction." This latter image the prophet has applied to the same subject afterwards, Isa 37:29 : - "I will put my bridle in thy jaws, And turn thee back by the way in which thou camest."

And as for the former it is to be observed, that the van of the ancients was a large instrument, somewhat like a shovel, with a long handle, with which they tossed the corn mixed with the chaff and chopped straw into the air, that the wind might separate them. See Hammond on Mat 3:12.

There shall be a bridle in the jaws - A metaphor taken from a headstrong, unruly horse: the bridle checks, restrains, and directs him.

What the true God does in restraining sinners has been also attributed to the false gods of the heathen. Thus Aeschylus, prom. Vinct. 691: - ἀλλ' ἐπιναγκαζέ νιν Δίος χαλινός προς βίαν πρασσειν ταδε. "But the bridle of Jupiter violently constrained him to do these things."

ISAIAH 30: 29 You will have a song, as in the night when a holy feast is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goes with a flute to come to the LORD's mountain, to Israel's Rock.

ISAIAH 30: 30 The LORD will cause his glorious voice to be heard, and will show the descent of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and the flame of a devouring fire, with a blast, storm, and hailstones.

Verse 30

The Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard - Kimchi understands this of the great destruction of the Assyrian host by the angel of the Lord. Instead of **אֶת־בְּזָאֵף** *bezaaph ats*, "with swift anger," five of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. and one of my own, read **אֶת־בְּזָאָם** *bezaam aph*, "with detestation indignant." For **אֶת־** *ats*, "swift," which is the common reading, forty-two of Kennicott's, forty-three of De Rossi's, and two of my own, have **אֶת־** *ats*, "wrath or fury." The former reading, **אֶת־** *ats*, is not found in any Bible previously to that of Van der Hooght, in 1705; and there it seems to be a typographical mistake.

ISAIAH 30: 31 For through the voice of the LORD the Assyrian will be dismayed. He will strike him with his rod.

Verse 31

Which smote with a rod "He that was ready to smite with his staff" - "Post **אֶשְׁשׁוּר** *ashshur*, forte excidit **אֶשֶׁר** *asher*." - Secker. After **אֶשְׁשׁוּר** *ashshur*, probably **אֶשֶׁר** *asher*, "which," has been omitted.

ISAIAH 30: 32 Every stroke of the rod of punishment, which the LORD will lay on him, will be with the sound of tambourines and harps. He will fight with them in battles, brandishing weapons.

 Verse 32

The grounded staff "The rod of his correction" - For מוסדה musadah, the grounded staff, of which no one yet has been able to make any tolerable sense, Le Clerc conjectured מוסרה musarah, of correction; (see Pro 22:15); and so it is in two MSS., (one of them ancient), and seems to be so in the Bodleian MS. The Syriac has דשוע בדה deshuebedah, Virgo domans, vet subjectionis, "the taming rod, or rod of subjection."

With tabrets and harps - With every demonstration of joy and thanksgiving for the destruction of the enemy in so wonderful a manner: with hymns of praise, accompanied with musical instruments. See Isa 30:29.

With it "Against them" - For בה bah. against her, fifty-two MSS. and five editions read במ bam, against them.

ISAIAH 30: 33 For his burning place has long been ready. Yes, for the king it is prepared. He has made its pyre deep and large with fire and much wood. The LORD's breath, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it.

 Verse 33

For Tophet is ordained - Tophet is a valley very near to Jerusalem, to the southeast, called also the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna; where the Canaanites, and afterwards the Israelites, sacrificed their children, by making them pass through the fire, that is, by burning them in the fire, to Molech, as some suppose. It is therefore used for a place of punishment by fire; and by our blessed Savior in the Gospel for hell-fire, as the Jews themselves had applied it. See Chald. on Isa 33:14, where מוקדי עולם mokedey olam is rendered "the Gehenna of everlasting fire." Here the place where the Assyrian army was destroyed is called Tophet by a metonymy; for the Assyrian army was destroyed probably at a greater distance from Jerusalem, and quite on the opposite side of it: for Nob is mentioned as the last station, from which the king of Assyria should threaten Jerusalem, Isa 10:32, where the prophet seems to have given a very exact chorographical description of his march in order to attack the city; which however he never reached. - L.