

## “God Protects” - Isaiah 31:1-9

Ask - “In what ways do people try to protect themselves?”

Background - During Isaiah’s lifetime the mighty Assyrian kingdom was advancing and expanding. Many of his prophecies warned various nations of coming judgment that was ultimately carried out by the Assyrians. They even conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, and the vulnerable southern kingdom of Judah was desperate for help and protection (see 2 Kings 18-19 for context).

“A Futile Request for Help” - Isaiah 31:1-3

(v1) Who did the leaders of Judah look to for help against the Assyrians? What did they have that might be of assistance? Whose help did they overlook?

(v2) How does Isaiah describe the Judah counselors who’d rather seek help from the Egyptians than trust in Him? What will happen to both Judah and Egypt?

(v3) How are the Egyptians and their horses (armies) limited? Read Deuteronomy 17:16. Why is trusting in God for protection so important?

IN THE FACE OF THE ASSYRIAN THREAT, JUDAH TURNED TO EGYPT FOR HELP RATHER THAN TRUSTING IN ALMIGHTY GOD. HOWEVER, NEITHER NATION WOULD ULTIMATELY ESCAPE GOD’S JUDGMENT.

“The LORD’s Protection” - Isaiah 31:4-5

(v4) Explain the analogy in this verse (*a lion protects its prey from shepherds who seek to take it*). Who will God protect?

(v5) Explain the analogy in this verse (*Birds fly over their prey to prevent it from being taken*). Again, who is God watching over to protect?

THOUGH HIS JUDGMENT WOULD EVENTUALLY COME (THROUGH THE BABYLONIANS), GOD PROMISED TO PROTECT JUDAH AND JERUSALEM FROM THE ASSYRIANS.

“Assyria Will Fall” - Isaiah 31:6-9

(v6) Who did the people of Judah need to return to? How had they offended and forsaken Him?

(v7) Did Isaiah predict that Judah would return to the LORD? How and when (*on the day of Assyria’s failed invasion - see 2 Kings 19:32-36*)?

(v8) Who would ultimately be responsible for the fall of Assyria? What would become of the Assyrians?

(v9) Why would the Assyrians panic and become terrified? What do God's fire and furnace represent (compare with Genesis 15:17)?

DESPITE THEIR MANY OTHER SUCCESSES, THE ASSYRIANS NEVER DEFEATED JERUSALEM. IN TIME, GOD BROUGHT DIVINE JUDGMENT ON THEM AND THEIR MIGHTY KINGDOM WAS CRUSHED.

Application - God protected Judah in accordance with His own divine will. The judgment He had reserved for them was not to come by the hands of the Assyrians. Though Judah had forsaken Him and turned elsewhere for protection, namely Egypt, God was patient and longsuffering. The Assyrians would fail and eventually fall, but for the time being Judah would be spared. How strongly do you trust in God to protect you and your family? Discuss.