
Isaiah 30

Kaiser opines: “When the great emperor Sennacherib began to close upon Jerusalem—if not before—Hezekiah sent a embassy to Pharaoh Shabako with a request for military assistance... But the Egyptian army that actually set out was defeated at Eltekeh. This seems to have sealed the fate of the allies [including other nations such as Philistia, Ammon, Moab, and others]... On the one hand the actual decision to send the embassy had been taken without consulting the prophet of Yahweh... The revolt of the Philistine cities, which seems to have lasted from 713–711, and in which Ashdod tried at least to involve Hezekiah, failed quite miserably; not only did Shabako refuse to send the reinforcing army but actually handed over... the ruler of Ashdod.” It is not certain, however, whether Hezekiah ever sought the aid of Egypt—as the kings of Judah who had preceded him had done. Alexander well says: “Egypt is mentioned in the first part of the chapter as the chosen ally of the people, and Assyria in the last part as the dreaded enemy. There is no need, however, of restricting what is said to that period exclusively.” ¶ Govett points these scriptures to former days, but also likens them to the challenging times before the coming of the Son of Man and to the dangers of leaning upon the Antichrist or upon Satan. The Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith asked: “Should we expect the Lord to come to judge the world without first giving it warning and preparing the means of escape for all who will repent?” And citing ISAIAH 30:1–17 answers: “In each instance [of warning] the call came through the opening of the heavens. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets were sent to warn Israel and Judah before the scattering and captivity came upon them.” Isaiah warns against those who lean on the strength of man, or Egypt (a symbol for that strength), and also cautions against those who despise His words and His prophets. Regarding the arm of flesh, Jenour well quotes Jeremiah as a summary of this chapter: “Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD... Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is” (Jeremiah 17:5, 7). In the millennial day the moon and the sun shall shine with incomparable strength. Great blessings are promised to those who heed the warning and return to the Lord. Christ lovingly invites us to heed the Spirit and partake of His blessings.

vv 1–7. Elder Marion D. Hanks loved ISAIAH 30. “Let me refer to a glorious expression in the book of Isaiah, written a long time before Christ, about seven centuries, which talks about listening. All of us need to cultivate the capacity to listen. And Isaiah, speaking in the name of the Lord, spoke to a people at a time when listening to the word of the Lord, to the whisperings of the Spirit, was rare—at a premium. He castigated the people and clearly identified their sins. I read from ISAIAH 30: ‘Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, [They were listening, but to the wrong voices.] but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth;¹ to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.’” After also quoting ISAIAH 30:9–10, 15 and 18 Elder Hanks continues: “The people of Israel were listening all right, but to the voices of pagan, materialistic Egypt. They had forsaken God for the siren sound of the great secular strength which Egypt could offer. They thought to defend themselves with the strength of Pharaoh. They trusted in chariots

because there were many, and in horsemen because they were strong. They would not listen to the law of the Lord nor look to the Holy One of Israel. They admonished the seers to see not and the prophets to prophesy not unto them ‘right things,’ but to speak that which would tickle their ears and satisfy their unrighteous hearts. Their confidence was in temporal power, and in their idols of gold and silver.”²

1 ¶ WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “but not of [in] my Word (Meimra, לֹא בְּיַמְיָי)” rather than “but not of me.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “‘Ah rebellious children! saith the Lord, you have formed a design, but not by me.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *apostate* instead of *rebellious*. This was one of the great pre-exilic sins of Israel, that of taking counsel, but not

¹ See discussion on Jeremiah 42, below (ISAIAH 30:2).

² Marion D. Hanks. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, May 28, 1964, pp. 4–5.

of the Lord. For instance, Ahab, King of Israel, “gathered the [false] prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king” (1 Kings 22:6). When King Jehoshaphat of Judah questions why King Ahab does not inquire of a true prophet of the Lord, the Kind of Israel answers: “There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil” (1 Kings 22:8b). ¶ Faussett has: “God had prohibited such alliances with heathen nations, and it was a leading part of Jewish polity that they should be a separate people (Exodus 23:32; Deuteronomy 7:2).” With Cowles, we note that the Lord ceases to call the people “my children” or “my people,” as a sign of their rebelliousness. Regarding **rebellious**, סוֹרְרִים, Rashi relates it to סוֹרָה³ *to turn away*” (in Rosenberg). Luther translates סוֹרְרִים as “disobedient and self-willed”; Calvin as “*obstinate and rebellious*.” ¶ *And that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin*: The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Who consult a consultation, but do not ask my prophets, that they may add sin to the sin of their soul.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And thou hast made covenants, but not by my spirit, that you may add sins to sins.” Instead of *cover with a covering* the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *who offer wine offerings* (Lamsa) / *who offer libations* (BPE),⁴ or *and they poured out drink offerings* (Bauscher⁵). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And would begin a web,” instead of “And that cover with a covering.” ¶ *And that cover with a covering*, וְלִבְנֵי מִסְכָּה. Lowth explains: “Hebrew means, [*who ratify covenants*]: [*And*] ‘*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,⁶ 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, ἐποιήσατε συνθηκας.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) also supports this translation. The term

covering מִסְכָּה, can either mean *libations* or *covering*. ¶ Several modern translations focus on the idea of unholy alliances or unholy counsel: “Who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit (HCSB); “And who make alliances—but not by my Spirit” (ISV); “To make counsel, but not from Me” (LITV); “And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit” (NASB). Birks says, “This scheme of an Egyptian alliance was another idol, one of the heart, which they formed and moulded with equal care, poured into it, as a mould, costly sacrifices and efforts, and thereby ‘added sin to sin.’” ¶ Faussett has: “*cover ... covering*—that is, wrap themselves in reliances disloyal towards Jehovah. ‘Cover’ thus answers to ‘seek to hide deeply their counsel from the Lord’ (ISAIAH 29:15). But the Hebrew is literally, ‘who pour out libations’; as it was by these that leagues were made (Exodus 24:8; Zechariah 9:11), translate, ‘who make a league.’” We may note that *cover with a covering* may also make an interesting contrast with the idols made of wood that on the surface were covered with precious metals (see ISAIAH 30:22). ¶ Regarding the second acceptance, Wordsworth makes some interesting contrasts: “The veil (Heb. *masac*⁷) of the Tabernacle; and the covering (*masac*) of the Cloud which I provided for Israel in the wilderness, were ‘coverings of My Spirit,’ which is outraged, and is deserted for the help of idolatrous Egypt, from which I delivered them, and led them through the wilderness; and yet they now go back to trust in its shadow instead of in Mine!” Wade has, “Literally, *weave a web* (ISAIAH 25:7 Heb.), i.e. either, procure means of protection (cf. ISAIAH 22:8; 28:20), or, engage in political scheming.” ¶ *But not of my spirit*. Ibn Ezra explains, “*But not of my spirit*, that is, of my prophecy.” Gill explains this clause back to the counsel that did not come from the Lord: “They sought for a cover, a shelter, a protection from the enemy, but not from the Spirit of the Lord, in his word and prophets, who would have directed them to a more suitable and sufficient one.” The Lord through Micah complained, “If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people” (Micah 2:11). That is, the people are apt to call someone a prophet because he teaches them to listen to a false spirit rather than to God (in the case of *wine and strong drink*, of coming plenty). This reprimand continues in the next chapter: “Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him” (Micah 3:5). And we further read, “The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for

³ Gesenius has for סוֹרָה, “*to depart from God*, i.e. to turn away from his worship.”

⁴ In Hebrew, *libation* is translated as קָרְבָּן, or Corban, “a gift,” or any type of sacrifice in a more generic way.

⁵ *The Aramaic-English Interlinear Peshitta Old Testament*, by Glenn David Bauscher, 2013. Bauscher translates נִבְרָהוּ as *their oblations* and נִבְרָהוּ as *drink offering*.

⁶ LEH has, “*agreement, pact, covenant* (based on an accord between two parties, in opp. to διαθήκη where one party usually imposes its will upon the other).”

⁷ מִסְכָּה.

money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us” (Micah 3:11). As a result, these false prophets will be ashamed and confounded: “Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God” (Micah 3:7). ¶ Adding *sin to sin* (תַּטָּאת עַל־תַּטָּאת) is similar to the concept—and a play on words—of what we saw ISAIAH 29:1 (שָׁנָה עַל־שָׁנָה), adding *year to year*. That is, to continue leaning on a wrong tradition (ISAIAH 29:1) or behavior (sin). Barnes says, “They add to the sin of rebellion against God that of forming an alliance. Sins do not usually stand alone. When one is committed, it is often necessary to commit others in order to carry out and complete the plan which that contemplated.” ¶ In summary, we are to trust the Lord and His prophets; not the philosophies of men.

2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Who go to descend into Egypt, but ask not the words of my prophets.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “They are setting out to go down to Egypt, without having consulted me.” Instead of *walk to go down*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *start to go down*. In the Hebrew text we have הַהֲלִיכִים, from הֵלֵךְ, which means to *walk, go, journey or move about* [Gesenius, HAL], so we are essentially talking of the same thing. The children of Israel, in pre-exilic days, often wanted to lean on Egypt. *Descend or go down*, לָרֶדְתָּ, from a stream that does down (HAL). Some exegetes have suggested because they are going *south*, toward Egypt, or because they descend from the hills of Judea, or from a spiritual height to a lower one. Instead of going up to the Holy Temple, as it were, they are descending from it. Barnes says, “The journey to Egypt from Palestine is always represented as going down (Genesis 12:10; 42:3; 43:15; Numbers 20:15; Deuteronomy 10:22).” ¶ *And have not asked at my mouth*, וּפִי לֹא שָׁאַלּוּ, *and my mouth not consult they*, that is, they do not ask or inquire at my mouth. Alexander says, “To *ask the mouth*, or *at the mouth*, of the Lord is a phrase used elsewhere in the sense of seeking a divine decision or response.” The Targum (Ⓣ), of course, removes the anthropomorphic expression by making it sound as if it is the mouth of the prophets. Young says, “At one time Israel had been under the shadow of Egypt and Egypt

had been her oppressor. From this dreadful oppression and bondage the Lord had delivered Israel and had warned her against returning to Egypt. ‘Ye shall henceforth return no more that way’ (Deuteronomy 17:16c).”⁸ ¶ These verses, about the people setting their hearts on Egypt, remind us of Jeremiah 42–43, where the captains of the forces of Judah—and *all the people from the least even unto the greatest* (Jeremiah 42:1b)—came to the Prophet Jeremiah to ask for the Lord’s blessing in escaping to Egypt. They asked God—in the most hypocritical way—to confirm their decision. “That the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do” (Jeremiah 42:3). They even reassured the Prophet Jeremiah: “The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not [אִם־לֹא]⁹ even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us. *Whether* it be good, or *whether* it be evil¹⁰ [אִם־טוֹב וְאִם־רָע], we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God” (Jeremiah 42:5b–6). So, how many times did they reassure the Prophet Jeremiah that they would be obedient? Nevertheless, they had already made up their minds as to what they wanted God’s answer to be. So it was that when the Prophet Jeremiah gave them an answer they did not like, they insulted him thus: “Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to

⁸ Actually, the whole verse is instructive here, especially as we shall also speak about leaning upon horses: “But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.”

⁹ Recall that these words, *if not*, stand for an oath (ISAIAH 5:9). Remember that אִם stands for *if*, while לֹא for *no*, or *negation*. For more on oath formulas, see ISAIAH 22:14; and especially ISAIAH 62:8.

¹⁰ The word *evil* [רָע] is used in its archaic signification, i.e., to bring misfortune or challenge or difficulty or any sort of unwanted event. So these “pious” men were explaining to Jeremiah that they would be obedient to the word of the Lord that would come through the Prophet regardless of the consequences. Elder Dennis E. Simmons spoke of a truly righteous and faithful group of young men, Daniel and his companions: “Centuries ago, Daniel and his young associates were suddenly thrust from security into the world—a world foreign and intimidating. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to bow down and worship a golden image set up by the king, a furious Nebuchadnezzar told them that if they would not worship as commanded, they would immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. ‘And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?’ The three young men quickly and confidently responded, ‘If it be so [if you cast us into the furnace], our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand.’ That sounds like my eighth-grade kind of faith. But then they demonstrated that they fully understood what faith is. They continued, ‘But if not [not the oath formula, but simply a statement that if this would not happen, לֹא יִהְיֶה]—GB], ... we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.’ That is a statement of true faith” (“But if not ...,” April 2004 General Conference).

say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there” (Jeremiah 43:2b). No, indeed what they wanted was to hear *smooth things* and the prophecy of *deceits* (see also Jeremiah 5:31). On that occasion the Lord had promised the people great things if they would be obedient, very much as we find in this chapter of Isaiah—glorious blessings to the obedient. ¶ *To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!* The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “To be assisted by Pharaoh and protected by the Egyptians.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, for the first clause, “Hoping for help in the strength of Pharaoh.” ¶ The Assyrians would soon mock Israel for leaning on Egypt, “Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him” (ISAIAH 36:6). Faussett explains that shadow is an “image [taken] from shelter against heat: *protection* (Psalm 121:5–6).” So also Cowles: “‘Trusting in the shadow of Egypt’ is more precisely seeking shelter *under* her shadow, in the shade of her protection.” ISAIAH 4:6; 25:4; 32:2; 49:2; and 51:16 also use the term *shadow* as affording *protection*.

3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt [your] confusion.

Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “For the protection of Pharaoh will be your shame.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *confusion* instead of *shame*. Egypt, in many scriptures, was synonymous with Babylon. So here Judah was being accused of putting her trust in the strength of Pharaoh and Egypt rather than in the Lord her God.

¶ *Therefore...be.* The Hebrew וְהָיָה may properly be translated in a number of ways including *therefore...be*. Birks says, “The connective is rendered variously; ‘therefore’ A. V. ‘but’ (Rosenmüller, Henderson), ‘and’ (Alexander, Drechsler, Delitzsch). The first makes the causal relation too prominent, which has its proper Hebrew word, 29:14, 22; 30:7, 12, 13, 18. The main thought is that disappointment would be the natural and speedy result of their sin, and the causal relation is only implied. The word ‘so’ is thus the best rendering.” There is nothing wrong with the AV rendition, but Birks makes a vital point here, that the moment one translates from Hebrew to another language, the translator is forced to interpret, and indeed may not give a perfect translation. There are differences in nuance between such words as *and*, *so*, and *therefore*, and no single word in the English language can stand for all of these. ¶ *And the trust in the shadow of Egypt [your] confusion.* The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And a disgrace to them

who have trusted in Egypt.” Instead of *trust* in the shadow, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *shelter* of the shadow. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And the confidence of the shadow of Egypt to your shame.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) we have *in the shadow of Egypt to your yearning*, בְּצֵל מִצְרַיִם לְכַמָּה, while the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *in the shadow of Egypt to your confusion*, בְּצֵל-מִצְרַיִם לְכַלְמָה. ¶ Gill says, “They should be confounded, when they should find themselves unsupported by the Egyptians, in whom they put their confidence; so all such that trust in the creature, or in an arm of flesh, sooner or later are ashamed and confounded; but those that trust in the Lord never are, neither in this world, nor in that to come.” Govett points us to Ezekiel: “And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand” (Ezekiel 29:6–7). Ezekiel describes Egypt as a *staff of reed* (in other words, something that would bend or break if we tried to lean upon it).

4 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “For their princes were in Tanes, and their messengers have reached Taphnes. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Because generals are unwelcome messengers at Tanis.” Instead of *came to Hanes*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *shall act deceitfully* (Lamsa) / *shall be fatigued* (BPE). The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) translation is ambiguous and suggests that the ambassadors belong to Pharaoh rather than Judah. The Spanish Peshitta translation is not very clear either: “Porque él se encuentra en Zoán, pero sus príncipes y sus mensajeros perversos se fatigarán” (Peshitta BPE {Ⓢ}), i.e., “Because he can be found in Zoan, but his princes and perverse messengers shall be fatigued.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For thy princes were in Tanis, and thy messengers came even to Hanes.” ¶ Gill suggests that the ambassadors sent to Egypt were taken from the princes of Judah, and says, and that Zoan and Hanes, because the King of Egypt would be likely to be in one of these two places: “The Jews (T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 1. & Sota, fol. 34. 2.) say there is not a more excellent place in all Egypt than Zoan, because kings were brought up in it.”

5 They were all ashamed of a people [that] could not profit them, nor be an help

nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

They were all ashamed of a people [that] could not profit them. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “All of them go unto a people to be confounded.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “They shall labour in vain with a people who will be of no service for assistance.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has them *going* to a people who cannot profit them. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *confounded* instead of *ashamed*. ¶ Rawlinson says: “The reference is not to the ambassadors, who felt no shame in their embassy, and probably returned elated by the promises made them; but to the subsequent feelings of the Jewish nation, when it was discovered by sad experience that no reliance was to be placed on ‘the strength of Pharaoh ... Mr. Cheyne compares, very pertinently, an inscription of Sargon’s, where he says of the people of Philistia, Judah, Edom, and Moab, that ‘they and their evil chiefs, to fight against me, unto Pharaoh, King of Egypt, a monarch who could not save them, their presents carried, and besought his alliance’ (G. Smith, ‘Eponym Canon,’ p. 130, II 35–39). Egypt was, in fact, quite unable to cope with Assyria, and knew it.” ¶ *Nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.* The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “But for a shame and disgrace.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “They were no help, nor to any profit, but to confusion and to reproach.” ¶ Rawlinson writes: “A shame, and also a reproach. A matter of which they would themselves be ‘ashamed,’ and with which the Assyrians would ‘reproach’ them (as they did, 2 Kings 18:21, 24).”

6 The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence [come] the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people [that] shall not profit [them].

The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish. The Hebrew word here rendered as *south* [יָבֵשׁ] can also mean *desert*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “They carry upon their beast of burden on the way southward, into a land of oppression and distress.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “This is the vision of the four footed beasts in the desert.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has essentially the same translation as the KJV, *Prophetic burden of the beasts of the south*; the Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *The prophecy concerning the oppressors of the south*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “The burden of the beasts of the south. In a land of trouble and distress.” ¶ Most of

the exegetes and translators believe this verse is an *oracle, prophecy* or *burden of the beasts of the south*. Delitzsch, for instance, writes: “Isaiah breaks off his address to communicate an oracle relating to the Egyptian treaty, which Jehovah has specially commanded him to hand down to posterity...” ¶ The Targum (Ⓣ), however, represents a literal burden that is carried upon beasts of burden, rather than a *masha* (מָשָׂא) or oracle. So does Jenour: “This verse in the English Bible is very obscure, and seems to be the beginning of another prophecy, which it certainly is not; there being an evident connexion between it and the preceding. The translation I have given [i.e., “They shall carry the burden of the beasts of the south, to a land of trouble and anguish &c.”], makes, I trust, the meaning plain. Egypt is called a land of trouble and anguish, because the Israelites had there endured a cruel bondage. Also it abounded with lions of the largest description, and, more than any other country, with serpents and venomous reptiles; hence it is further characterized *as the land from whence come the great lion, etc.*” We may well have a play on words: as the camels carry a *burden* (מָשָׂא) on their backs and the prophet pronounces a *burden* (מָשָׂא) on the failure of this effort. ¶ *From whence [come] the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “A place of the lion, and the whelps of the lionesses, and serpents, and the flying basilisks.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “A lion and a lion’s whelp were in distress and difficulty; and from them went the asps and the brood of flying serpents.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “From whence come the lioness, and the lion, the viper and the flying basilisk.” So also Alexander, and many others including HALOT, explains that “לְבִיאַ וְלִישׁ” rather means *lioness and lion*. Birks well suggests that “The description of the desert alludes to Deuteronomy 8:15. They were reversing the steps of their great national deliverance. They were trusting in the shadow of that oppressor, from whose cruel yoke God had rescued their fathers. On this vain errand they were journeying south through that terrible wilderness, where their forefathers had been sustained by water from the rock, and manna from heaven. There was danger in the journey itself, and would be nothing at its close but shame and sorrow.” ¶ Skinner suggests that *and fiery flying serpent* [וְיִשְׂרָף] is a *winged seraph*. Rashi (in Rosenberg) has, “The flying serpent, too, is a species of snake, not that it has wings with which to fly, but it jumps and springs long distances and throws a flame from its mouth.” *The Book of Mormon Reference Companion* has, “Associated with the Egyptian Sinai (ISAIAH 30:6), these serpents were considered extremely poisonous and came to represent agents of divine chastisement (2 Nephi 24:29). In recounting the proofs

of God’s power manifested in the Exodus (1 Nephi 17:23–42), Nephi observed that because of the ‘iniquity’ of the Israelites God had ‘sent fiery flying serpents among them.’ But in his mercy God had also ‘prepared a way that they might be healed’ (1 Nephi 17:41). The means of healing consisted of a brass representation of a serpent twisted on a pole upon which the Israelites could gaze (Numbers 21:4–9). This brass serpent was interpreted by later Book of Mormon prophets to typify the Savior (Helaman 8:14–15; cf. John 3:14–15).¹¹ ¶ *They will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches¹² of camels, to a people [that] shall not profit [them].* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “They carry upon the shoulders of their young cattle their treasures, and they bring upon the bunches of camels whatever is in their treasuries unto a people, that shall not profit them.” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “Who carried their wealth on asses and camels to a nation which could not profit them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has *beasts* instead of *young asses*. Regarding the *bunches* of the camels [עַל־דְּבָשֶׁת], and upon the bunches] Henderson writes: “That the hunch, or hump, of that animal is meant, there can be no doubt. It is of the shape of a pyramid, and sometimes of such a size as to occupy at its base nearly the entire back of the animal.” Rashi and Kara (in Rosenberg) explain that the דְּבָשֶׁת,¹³ or camel’s hump, is frequently sore from burdens laid upon it and is often anointed with *honey* (דְּבַשׁ), “as we say in Baba Mezia 38b: *Honey that lost its sweetness is fit for the sores of the camels.*” Most exegetes explain that the camels would be packed with the treasures and gifts to be taken by the ambassadors to be given to the Egyptians. What good, then, would come from all of these gifts? None, as they would be given to a people [the Egyptians] who would not profit them [Judah] at all.

7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength [is] to sit still.

✓ or, to her

For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “In vain and to no purpose will the Egyptians help you.” Jenour beautifully says: “[The

¹¹ *Book of Mormon Reference Companion.*

¹² Humps, e.g., “and their treasures upon the humps of camels” (ASV).

¹³ LXX (Ⓢ), Δαβασθῆ (*Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*).

prophet proclaimed to the Jews, that the way to be safe was, to wait quietly for that deliverance he had promised them. He taught them, that they would be strongest when they relied most implicitly upon the protection of Jehovah. And so it is with the Christian, “*When he is weak, then he is strong*” (2 Corinthians 12:10). When he most *feels* his helplessness, and relies most exclusively upon the grace of his Saviour, then he is most able to contend against his spiritual enemies. Yet it is a shocking abuse of this passage to infer from it, as some appear to have done, that the Christian is required to make no exertions on his part for the attainment of holiness, but to consider himself as entirely passive in the hands of his Lord. When truly we most feel our weakness we are strong; but not when we exert ourselves least. What says the apostle? *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, on this very ground, that it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do* (Philippians 2:12).” ¶ *Therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength [is] to sit still.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Therefore I shall meet many of the slain: I will bring armed men upon them.” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “Announce to them, That this application of yours is vain.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) instead has the Lord warning them that their trust has been vainly misplaced. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, for the last clause, “It is pride only, sit still.” Regarding קְרָאתִי, *have I cried*, Wildberger calls it the *prophetic perfect*,¹⁴ “What Yahweh announces is already a reality, even when the punishment remains to be unveiled...” The word *strength* in this clause is rather רַהַב,¹⁵ *Rahab* (also see ISAIAH 51:9, and Psalm 87:4; 89:10). Cheyne here writes, “The riddle of ‘Ariel’ [see ISAIAH 29] receives its counterpart in that of **Rahab!**” Many of the modern translation so translate it: “For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still” (ASV, also see AMP, ESV, GLB, GW, HCSB, ISV, LBLA, NASB, NBLH, RV). In addition, we have the Spanish 2009 LDS Edition, which offers a rendering that is very close to the ASV [except it translates וְיִמְצֵרָיִם as *and Egypt* rather than *for Egypt*]: “Y Egipto en vano e inútilmente dará ayuda; por tanto, yo lo he llamado **Rahab**, la inmóvil” (Edición SUD 2009). Gesenius has for רַהַב: “a poetical name of Egypt (probably of Egyptian origin, but accommodated to the Hebrew language; however, no one has yet shewn a probable etymology in the Coptic language; see Jablonskii Opuscc. ed. te Water, i. 228) ... allusion is

¹⁴ We shall repeatedly see the *prophetic perfect*, or the speaking of a future even with so much surety, as if it had already come to pass.

¹⁵ רַהַב, also means *pride, arrogance* (HALOT, Gesenius, BDB). So it is that Wordsworth says, “‘Rahab and Babylon,’ the cities of Pride and Confusion.”

made to the Hebrew etymology in these words [i.e., quoted from ISAIAH 30:7], רָהַבְתֶּם שְׂבֵת, ‘insolence, (i.e. the insolent) **they sit still**,’ i.e. boasting and grandiloquent, they are altogether inactive; no doubt a proverbial expression.” The BDB and HAL also include the synonym *arrogant* for that of *insolent*. As a result, we also see translations that use these words: “For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I called her arrogancy that sitteth still” (JPS), and “For Egypt shall help in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I named her, Arrogance, that doeth nothing.”

Rashi (in Rosenberg) explains that שְׂבֵת means that their pride and haughtiness is fit to be curtailed... [and that] their pride is fit to be curtailed.” This clause about Egypt’s false strength may stand in juxtaposition to what God can offer Judah: “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10); “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD” (Exodus 14:13); and “Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you” (2 Chronicles 20:17).

vv. 8–17. Isaiah is commanded to write these words in a book. The children of Israel refuse instruction and reject the prophets and the gospel. Poor use of moral agency brings negative consequences. Leaning upon the strength of horses or the mighty nations would be of no avail to Israel who, in punishment for disobedience, would now flee from the enemies.

8 ¶ Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: ✓

✓ the latter-day

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Now go, write it amongst them upon a tablet, and mark it upon lines of a book, that it may be for a witness before me in the day of judgment for ever.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Now therefore sit down and write these things in a tablet and make a book that they may be for the appointed time even for the time to come.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *book of the covenant* rather than just *book*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “Now therefore go in and write for them upon box, and note it diligently in a book, and it shall be in the latter days for a testimony for ever.” What is the prophet to write in a book? The exegetes are divided on this matter. For instance, Delitzsch suggests that it refers to the words *already spoken* (ISAIAH 30:6–7) while Barnes to *what follows* (ISAIAH 30:9). Rawlinson says: “Isaiah received a Divine intimation that the prophecy was to

be put on record, doubly, upon a tablet and in a book. At the same time, the ‘rebelliousness’ of the people was further pointed out, and fresh threats (vv. 13, 14, and 17) were uttered against them.” Delitzsch opines that upon tablet (עַל-לוּחַ)... and upon book (וְעַל-סֵפֶר) are a repetition of one thought, while others (e.g., Rawlinson and Gill) believe that the tablet is to be made visible to the people at the time and the book was to be kept for posterity. Delitzsch explains: “סֵפֶר could be used interchangeably with לוּחַ, because a single leaf, the contents of which were concluded, was called סֵפֶר (Exodus 17:14). Isaiah was to write the oracle upon a table, a separate leaf of durable material; and that “with them,” i.e., so that his countrymen might have it before their eyes (compare ISAIAH 8:1; Habakkuk 2:2). It was to be a memorial for posterity.” Here we have two very beautiful expressions: לְיוֹם אַחֲרָיוֹן, for [the] latter-day; and לְעַד עַד-עוֹלָם, for perpetuity perpetuity forever.

9 That this [is] a rebellious people, lying children, children [that] will not hear the law of the LORD:

The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Because this is a rebellious people—lying children, who would not hear the law of God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “For it is a people that provoketh to wrath, and lying children, children that will not hear the law of God.” This is an allusion to ISAIAH 1:2b–3, “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” In Zechariah 7:11 we read: “But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.” Daily we each make countless choices to either *turn to God* or *turn our backs on Him*. When we refuse to hear the word of God, whether it is from the Holy Scriptures or from the Holy Ghost, from the Brethren or from our Bishop or Branch President, we are turning aside from the path that we ought to follow. With Rawlinson and Delitzsch and many of the translators (e.g., Bishops, NASB, JPS, ISV, ESV, ASV, AMP), I prefer to translate כִּי as **for**, כִּי עַם מָרִי הוּא, **For this [is] a rebellious people** &c. Regarding lying children, Rawlinson has, “They professed devotion to God; but their acts contradicted their words.” See also, ISAIAH 59:3, 13; Jeremiah 9:3; Ezekiel 13:7, 9. Wildberger writes, “When [ISAIAH] uses עַם מָרִי (*obstinate people*), one sees a deep disappointment that he, or Yahweh himself, has experienced from Israel. One encounters similar

vocabulary being used along with ¹⁶מַרְדּוּ (rebelliousness) in Nehemiah 9:17.” Cowles comments: “Their sin involving not falsehood only but filial ingratitude...” In D&C we read: “And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments” (D&C 59:21).

10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Who say to the prophets, Prophecy ye not: and as for doctrines, teach us not the doctrine of the law.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Who say to the prophets, ‘Preach not to us,’ and to them who see visions, ‘Speak not to us.’” Instead of *right things* the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *reproof*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓝ) has, “Who say to the seers: See not: and to them that behold: Behold not for us those things that are right.” ¶ *To seers see not*, לְרֹאִים לֹא תִרְאוּ.

Elder James E. Faust taught, after quoting this verse: “Nephi explained, ‘The guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center’ (1 Nephi 16:2).”¹⁷ Barnes says, “They were offended at their plainness and their reproofs of their vices; and they preferred the false prophets, who fell in with their prejudices, and who did not denounce the judgment of God for their crimes.” ¶ *Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Speak ye with us with signs, relate unto us various things.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Nay, speak to us and tell us another error.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓝ) has, “Speak unto us pleasant things, see errors for us.” King Ahab of Israel (see ISAIAH 30:1 notes) was an example of someone who sought to hear smooth things, even if they were false. Also see Hananiah, who falsely prophesied that the Babylonian yoke would be broken (Jeremiah 28). ¶ Delitzsch explains regarding ISAIAH 30:10b: “Their desire was to be entertained and lauded, not repelled and instructed.”

11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

¹⁶ *In their rebellion*, בְּמַרְדָּם.

¹⁷ Elder James E. Faust, *Unwanted Messages, Ensign* (CR), November 1986, p.8.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Turn us from the right path, make us to cease from tradition; put at a distance from us the Word of the Holy One of Israel.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And turn us from this way, and take from us this path, and take from us the oracle of Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓝ) has, “Take away from me the way, turn away the path from me, let the Holy One of Israel cease from before us.” ¶ Ibn Ezra explains: “*Get you out of the way, etc.* These words are addressed by the people to the prophets. *Cause the Holy One, etc.* Cause the mention or the name of the Holy One of Israel to cease.” The people did not want to hear the word of the Lord. While I was a counselor in a Modesto, California Ward, one man would cover his ears when letters were read from the Brethren defending the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman. To cover our ears at the words of the Brethren is covering our ears at the words of the Lord.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression[✓] and perverseness, and stay thereon:

✓ or, fraud

Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word. The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Therefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, because you have disbelieved these words.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓝ) has *rejected* instead of *despise*. ¶ Prophecy in general—as well as this particular oracle about the absurdity of leaning upon Egypt. So also Ibn Ezra, who says, “*Ye despise this word, the prophecy.*” Alexander suggests: “The *word* here mentioned is no doubt the *law* of ISAIAH 30:9, both being common epithets of revelation generally, and of particular divine communications.”

¶ *In this word*, בְּדִבְרֵי. This may also be an allusion to the Word, or Christ (see ISAIAH 40:8) who was indeed rejected for the strength of Pharaoh. ¶ *And trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:* The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And placed your hopes on a lie: and because thou hast murmured, and been confident in this matter.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *murmured* (BPE) / *complained* (Lamsa) and (BPE) / *yet* (Lamsa) trusted in it. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓝ) has, “And have trusted in oppression and tumult, and have leaned upon it.” In ISAIAH 31:1 we read, “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!” To *stay* תִּשְׁעֶנּוּ, means to lean upon, rely, have confidence in. The people are being denounced here for *staying* on Egypt or the arm of flesh, rather than upon their God.

13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Therefore this sin shall be unto you as a city laid waste, and made a ruinous heap, as a bending wall, whose breaking cometh very suddenly.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Therefore this sin shall be to you like the tottering wall of a fortified city, which hath been taken by surprise; the fall of which is instantaneous.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Therefore shall this iniquity be to you as a breach that falleth, and is found wanting in a high wall, for the destruction thereof shall come on a sudden, when it is not looked for.” ¶ Henderson suggests that the materials may well be soft such as adobe,¹⁸ “As the Orientals most frequently constructed their walls of clay, or soft brick, dried in the sun, they are extremely liable to rend, and be washed down by rain (compare Psalm 62:3¹⁹).” Once a wall is breached or broken, a city quickly falls into the hands of the enemy (see our notes in ISAIAH 29:3). Kay well notes: “The expression *lofty wall* (as of a fortress, cp. ISAIAH 25:12) occurs in Proverbs 18:11: ‘A rich man’s wealth *is* his strong city, and as a *lofty wall* in his own conceit.’ It is added (v. 12), ‘Before destruction (or, a breach, *s. w.*) the heart of man is haughty.’” So we understand what a breach in a wall means, but what is the significance of this verse? Who will experience this breach? Israel wanted to lean upon the strength of Egypt (or the world) yet the might and the proud nations would all fall like mighty towers (ISAIAH 30:25). Destruction tends to come quickly and often unexpectedly. We can be safe if we put our trust in the Lord.

14 And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters’ vessel[✓] that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water [withal] out of the pit.

✓ the bottle of potters

And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters’ vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: The

¹⁸ Our farmhouse in San Javier was made of adobe and the 2010 earthquake (8.8 on the Moment Magnitude Scale) brought portions to the ground and basically made it uninhabitable. It was constructed in the early twentieth century.

¹⁹ “As a bowing wall shall ye be” (AV).

Targum (Ⓣ) specifies that the potters’ vessel shall be of clay broken without compassion. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And its fall shall be like the breaking of an earthen vessel, the fragments of which are so small.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And it shall be broken small, as the potter’s vessel is broken all to pieces with mighty breaking.” Jerusalem would be likewise broken. Henderson has, “The meaning is, that, in punishment of their apostasy from God, the Jews should, as it respected their public affairs, experience a complete overthrow.” ¶ *So that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water [withal] out of the pit.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And among its fragments there shall not be found a potsherd to take fire from the hearth, or to draw (the Royal Polyglot and the Biblia Magna, reads correctly לְמִזְלָה, ‘to draw’) water from the cistern.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “That there cannot be found among them a sherd on which thou canst carry fire or with which thou canst scoop up a little water.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) also makes it clear that the fragments would be so broken up that they could not be used to scoop up fire or water. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And there shall not a sherd be found of the pieces thereof, wherein a little fire may be carried from the hearth, or a, little water be drawn out of the pit.” ¶ Alexander explains: “*Sherd* is an old English word, now seldom used, meaning a broken piece of pottery or earthenware, and found more frequently in the compound form of *potsherd*. A potter’s vessel, literally, *vessel of the potters*.” Rawlinson says, “From comparing Judah’s fall and ruin to the shattering of a lofty wall, he suddenly turns to a comparison of it with the breaking to pieces of an earthen pitcher. Judah shall be so broken as when the pitcher is crushed into minute fragments, so that there is no piece large enough to convey a coal from one fire for the lighting of another, or to be of even the least use for drawing water from a well.” Delitzsch goes beyond the destruction of Jerusalem: “It is the captivity which is here figuratively threatened by the prophet; for the smashing had regard to Israel as a state.”

15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved. The Targum (Ⓣ) makes the returning to the law explicit, with a promise of rest and redemption. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, Lord. The Holy One of Israel, when thou shalt return sighing, then thou shalt be saved.” The Peshitta

(S) has *repent for in returning*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the second clause, “If you return and be quiet, you shall be saved.” ¶ In returning, or **בְּשׁוּבָה**, or *in turning* again to the Lord, man can find peace and safety, and in no other way. We see this also in: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (ISAIAH 26:3). This is an invitation to find joy in walking with God—and the spiritual, emotional and temporal safety that this provides. ¶ Young well says regarding *rest* **נִחָתָה**, “Isaiah had commanded Ahaz to be still (ISAIAH 7:14), but Ahaz would not do so.” King Ahaz did not have the faith to be still in the Lord. ¶ *In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not*. The Targum (T) has, “Ye shall be quiet, and ye shall dwell in safety, and be mighty; but ye would not.” The LXX (G) reads, “And thou shalt know in what a situation thou wast, when thou didst trust in these vanities.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “in silence and in hope shall your strength be. And you would not.” We likewise see this earlier in Isaiah: “Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me” (ISAIAH 27:5). ¶ *And in confidence, וּבְבִטְחָה... your strength, וּבְגִבּוֹרַתְךָ...* Wildberger²⁰ points out: “Isaiah wants to be so exact about the way he differentiates trust [confidence] in Yahweh over against trust [confidence] in one’s own plans that he never, in any formal sense, uses the same verb to describe both true and false trust. As can be seen most clearly in 32:9 ff., Isaiah uses **בָּטַח** from the outset to describe reprehensible behavior, from which one has to protect oneself. By contrast, he does speak about **בִּטְחָה** (trust) [i.e., confidence] in a positive sense in ISAIAH 30:15.” The Lord, also, through Jeremiah, teaches the *strong* not to rely in *strength*: **וְאַל-יִתְהַלֵּל הַגִּבּוֹר בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ** (and not let the mighty man glory in his might), save it be the *strength* of the Father and of the Holy One of Israel. If we do this, “then shall [our] *confidence* (**בִּטְחָה**) wax strong in the presence of God” (D&C 121:45b). The whole idea of *in quietness* (**בְּהַשְׁקֵט**) reminds us of the still small voice of the comforter, “The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion” (D&C 121:46a). Also, “Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly” (ISAIAH 8:6a). ¶ *And ye would not*. In His mortal ministry, the Savior seemed to be expanding on these very words in Isaiah: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children

²⁰ See also, Wildberger note on ISAIAH 10:20.

together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!” (Luke 13:34).

16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

The LXX (G) reads, “Your strength was vain, yet you would not hearken, but said, ‘We will flee on horses.’ Therefore flee you shall. And, ‘We will mount swift coursers,’ therefore swift shall be your pursuers.” The BPE (S) has, “But ye said, ‘It shall not be so, we shall ride upon horses and will hurry to flee’; so they will flee, but those who pursue will also hurry.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “But have said: No, but we will flee to horses: therefore shall you flee. And we will mount upon swift ones: therefore shall they be swifter that shall pursue after you.” In essence, then, the people are saying **לא**, or *no*, to this invitation to lean upon the Holy One of Israel. Ibn Ezra has: “You fled²¹ without a cause, you will therefore be compelled to flee by your pursuers.” ¶ Redak (in Rosenberg) explains: “If the enemy attacks us, we will have horses upon which to flee.” As Rawlinson mentions, “‘The *swift*’ (**קָלִי**) seems to be a mere variant for ‘horse,’ the parallelism being, as so frequently, ‘synonymous.’” Regarding *swift* **יִקְלֵנוּ**, see my notes on ISAIAH 18:2. Gill explains that the time did come when they had to escape—whether in horses or camels—from the enemy: “This was fulfilled long after, when the city was taken by the Chaldeans (see 2 Kings 25:4)... [who] are represented as very swift (Jeremiah 4:13²²).” Keith points us to Amos 2:14–16: “Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself: Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow; and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself: neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself. And he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith the LORD.” ¶ In the Hebrew Scriptures horses, horsemen, and chariots are often given as a symbol of leaning on the strength of beasts rather than the strength of God. For instance, we read: “And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother” (Haggai 2:22); and “Woe to them that go

²¹ See my notes on Leviticus 26:8 in the next verse.

²² **קָלִי מִנְּשָׂרִים סוּסֵי**, “Swifter than eagles are his horses,” (Leeser).

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). Cheyne and Skinner²³ well point out that *horse* and *flee* rhyme in Hebrew, *flee upon horse*, על־סוס נָנוּס סוּסִים, the word *horse* in the singular in the Hebrew. Both *horse* and *flee* end with the same sound: *sus*, *nanus*. Nägelsbach explains that Drechsler thinks that while the Israelites had intentions to flee on horses and ride on the swift, “then it must be said in opposition: therefore shall ye flee **on foot**.” Nägelsbach goes on to say that “horses will serve you only for *flight*.” Either way, by foot or on horseback, the people of Jerusalem would be fleeing from the enemy.

17 One thousand [shall flee] at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

✓ or, a tree bereft of branches, or, boughs: or, a mast

One thousand [shall flee] at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “A thousand shall flee at the voice of one; and at the voice of five, many thousands shall flee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *fear* instead of *rebuke* in both instances. This curse for *disobedience* is a direct allusion to the blessing for obedience found in *Rain in due Season*: “And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword” (Leviticus 26:8, *also see* Deuteronomy 32:30, Joshua 23:10). We also read in *Rain in due Season*: “And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf

²³ Skinner further adds, “In ISAIAH 36:8 the Rabshakeh seems to taunt the Judeans with their *childish fondness* for horsemanship” (*emphasis added*). I have, from my youth, had a great passion for horsemanship. I find Skinner’s comments particularly interesting because it has taken me so long to push away this passion and more fully replace it with my love for the Holy Scriptures. While at times I feel some nostalgia for horses, when this happens I think, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (1 Corinthians 11:13). In a recent conversation with my father during a visit to Santiago (15 December 2012), he reminded me that it is better that I dedicated my life to something useful at the University of California—rather than to teaching horsemanship to the rich. As a youth I asked my parents whether as an adult I might have half an hour a day to ride horses. I realize, of course, that all these things are a question of balance. After I retire I may well have a little time for horsemanship as I have a God-given talent in that field. Indeed, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1).— 11 January 2013.

shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth” (Leviticus 26:36). The picture I have had in my mind for decades is that of the sound made by a falling leaf that is torn off a tree during the fall season. The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (Ⓢ), likewise, renders it:

קל טרפא נתיר מן אילן, “[and the] sound [of a] leaf falling from [the] tree... shall put them to flight.”²⁴

After writing my comment on the falling leaf from a tree I read in Gill: “either *the sound of a leaf that falls from the tree*, as the Targum of Jonathan, or which the wind beats one against another, as Jarchi [i.e., Rashi], which makes some little noise; even this should terrify them, taking it to be the noise of some enemy near at hand, just ready to fall on them; such poor faint hearted creatures should they be” (*emphasis added*). Many render נָדָה shaken as *driven away* [see HAL], especially by the wind: HCSB renders *shaken leaf* as “wind-driven leaf.” Several translations render it “driven leaf” (ASV, RV, AMP, JPS, Darby, ESV, LITV, MKJV, NASB). YLT renders it “the sound of a leaf driven away.” This, then, may represent a leaf that is already fallen but carried away from one place to another by the wind. Either way, the amount of sound made by such a shaken leaf (עֲלָה) is for all practical purposes *absolutely imperceptible*. ¶ *Till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has *signal fire* for the first beacon. Chilton’s Ⓢ translation uses *bonfire*, while Stenning’s Ⓢ translation uses the same term as in the KJV, *beacon*. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Until you be left like a beacon on a mountain, and like a flag staff upon a hill.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Till you be left as the mast of a ship on the top of a mountain, and as an ensign upon a hill.” In other words, until you be left desolate, alone.

vv. 18–26. We seem to transition in these verses from God’s mercy despite our weakness, to the blessings that will be poured out in the latter-day and in the millennial day. Ironside well says, of these verses, “Surely no one can think that these words have ever been fulfilled in the past [but rather point to “Israel’s glorious portion in the day” when they return to the Lord].”

18 ¶ And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD [is] a

²⁴ Etheridge, John Wesley, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Targum Onkelos, Newsletter for Targumic and Cognate Studies. URL accessed 25 October 2012: <http://targum.info/targumic-texts/pentateuchal-targumim/>.

God of judgment: blessed [are] all they that wait for him.

And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And therefore the Lord will shew you pity, and he that is mighty will compassionate you.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “But again the Lord will wait to be gracious to you.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) has “The Lord will begin to show *them* (BPE) / *you* (Lamsa) mercy.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, for the second clause, “That he may have mercy on you.” Some exegetes translate *and therefore* לְכִן, as *yet therefore* (Faussett—leaning on Gesenius), *yet or nevertheless* (Gill), *however* (HAL), giving better sense to the transition. So also Geneva, “Yet therefore”; GNB, “And yet”; and ISV, “Nevertheless.” It means that despite the disappointments that God has experienced with His people, He will be slow to punish or that He will remember His people in the latter times (or both). Alexander thinks this verse refers back to an earlier one and does not follow directly to what has been said: “On the whole, the simplest and most probable conclusion seems to be that לְכִן has its usual meaning, but refers, as in many other cases, to a remoter antecedent than the words immediately before it. As if the Prophet paused at this point and reviewing his denunciations said, Since this is so, since you must perish if now dealt with strictly, God will allow you space for repentance, he will wait to be gracious, he will exalt himself by shewing mercy.” Rashi (in Rosenberg) suggests that the Lord will wait to bring the good upon His children that He might have brought to them sooner had they been obedient. Kay says, “*the Lord will wait*, in resolute self-withdrawal, looking for the time when your penitence will permit Him to be again *gracious unto you*.” ¶ Speaking of this verse, Elder Marion D. Hanks exhorted that we *liken this verse unto ourselves* when we are in a position of power or authority: “But we must take people—boys and girls, men and women—where they are, as they are, in the imperfect conditions that so widely exist, in the personal imperfections which are universal. We cannot escape responsibility for our families and others whom we might touch, nor ever cease pulling for them and praying for them and trying to help them. If they make wrong decisions, follow the false programs that many of their peers pursue, still we will love them and suffer with them and work with them and wait for them, even as the father in the Lord’s parable waited for the prodigal who finally came to his senses and headed home: ‘When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him’ (Luke 15:20). We will watch and pray, even as the Lord himself waits with godly mercy, as He declared through His prophet

2,700 years ago: ‘And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you’ (ISAIAH 30:18).²⁵ It is not that punishment will be removed altogether. Sometimes we must receive chastisement: “And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction” (ISAIAH 30:20a). ¶ Wordsworth, in fact, correctly believes that true repentance must come first: “The Prophet beholds the People turning to God with penitential cries and tears, and he announces to them the blessed consequence of their repentance. This was exemplified in a remarkable manner in the person of Hezekiah, the King of Judah (and doubtless in the persons of many of his nobles and people), who at first had shown a great lack of trust in God (see 2 Kings 18:14, 16), and resorted to Egypt and Ethiopia for help (see above, on chapters 18—20; and 2 Kings 18: 21), but afterwards turned to God, in his double distress, with *prayers*, and *cries*, and *tears* (2 Kings 19:15–19 ; 20:3–5; and above, 25:8; and below, 38:14–17). The words (which are here spoken by the Prophet) were fully verified in Hezekiah: ‘Thou shalt *weep no more*: the Lord will be very gracious unto thee; at the *voice of thy cry*, when He shall hear it. He will answer thee.’ The speed of the answer to Hezekiah’s prayers is noticed in 2 Kings 20:4.” ¶ *And therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD [is] a God of judgment*: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For the Lord is the God who doeth judgment.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And will therefore be exalted for compassionating you. Because the Lord your God is judge.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has the Lord *sparing* instead of its synonym, showing *mercy*. Alexander writes: “That the clause does not relate to righteousness or justice in the strict sense, appears plain from the added benediction upon those who trust Jehovah. One point is universally admitted, namely, that somewhere in this verse is the transition from the tone of threatening to that of promise. The question where it shall be fixed, though interesting, does not affect the general connection or the import of the passage as a whole.” Henderson says: “The last words of this verse shew that it is not a continuation of the threatening, but contains a promise of mercy. מְשַׁפֵּט²⁶ is, therefore, to be taken in the strict sense of *rectitude*, and not in that of *punishment*.” Calvin explains that *judgment* “denotes not only punishment, but also the moderation which is exercised in chastening. In like manner Jeremiah says, ‘Chasten me, O Lord, but *in judgment* [מְשַׁפֵּט], not in thy wrath, lest thou crush me’ (Jeremiah 10:24). And again, I will not consume thee, but will chastise thee in

²⁵ Elder Marion D. Hanks, Seeing the Five A’s, *Ensign* (CR), November 1977, p.36.

²⁶ Normally translated as *judgment*.

judgment (Jeremiah 30:11).” ¶ *Blessed [are] all they that wait for him.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Blessed are the righteous who wait for his salvation.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Happy are they who wait for him.” This idea of waiting upon the Lord is further developed in ISAIAH 40. ¶ Birks writes: “However severe God’s discipline, its design was gracious. His dealings are full of wisdom, like our Lord’s absence during the sickness of Lazarus, to make the blessing afterward more glorious and Divine. There is, on His part, no slackness or indifference, but the calm waiting of an ever-patient love.” Elder Robert D. Hales taught: “In the scriptures, the word *wait* means to hope, to anticipate, and to trust. To hope and trust in the Lord requires faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end.”²⁷

19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, in the first clause, “For the people of Zion shall dwell in Jerusalem.” (Chilton’s Ⓣ translation is similar.) Stenning’s Ⓣ translation renders it, “For, O people in Zion, inhabitant of Jerusalem.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Because a holy people will dwell in Sion, and Jerusalem with weeping cried, ‘Have mercy upon me.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For the people of Sion shall dwell in Jerusalem: weeping thou shalt not weep.” ¶ Cheyne writes, “...to prevent any misunderstanding, or, with affectionate emphasis, the prophet adds, ‘in Jerusalem.’” Kay says, “...*In Zion* (and not only in Zion mystical, but literally) *in Jerusalem*.” LDS do make a distinction between Zion in the American West and Zion in Jerusalem, even though the names may sometimes be used interchangeably. In its full sense, this prophecy will be fulfilled during the millennium and thereafter, at a time when “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces” (ISAIAH 25:8). We also read “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation 7:17); and “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away”

²⁷ Hales, Robert D. 2011 October General Conference, Sunday morning session.

(Revelation 21:4). ¶ *He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “He will assuredly shew thee compassion: the voice (the Royal Polyglot puts in after קל the word קנול, ‘thy crying’) of thy prayer He will hear, and He will answer (Chaldee, ‘he will do’) thy supplication.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Therefore he will have mercy upon thee. When he heard the sound of thy cry, he hearkened to thee.” Compare with “Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am” (ISAIAH 58:9a); and “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear” (ISAIAH 65:24).

20 And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

✓ or, oppression

And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the Lord shall give unto you the treasures of the enemy, and the spoil of the oppressor.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “When the Lord shall have given you bread of affliction and stinted water.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And the Lord will give you spare bread, and short water.” ¶ Alexander suggests: “The true connection seems to be, that God would afflict them outwardly, but would not deprive them of their spiritual privileges; or, as Cocceius says, there should be a famine of bread, but not of the word of the Lord (Amos 8:11).” ¶ *Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And He will no more take away His **Shekinah** from the house of the sanctuary, and thine eyes shall behold my Shekinah in the house of the sanctuary.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “They who lead thee astray shall no more come near thee.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “Nor shall their eyes see those who turned their way (or, made them lose their way).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And will not cause thy teacher to flee away from thee any more, and thy eyes shall see thy teacher.” A number of translators of the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) have followed after the Targum (Ⓣ) שכינתיה, **Shekinah**, or “the presence of the Lord.” ¶ *Thy teachers,* מורייך. A number of translators have suggested that rather than *thy teachers*, the Hebrew ought to be rendered *thy Teacher*, meaning the Holy One of Israel, or Christ, who will be plainly manifest and no longer put away or hidden. For instance: “yet shall not thy Teacher hide Himself any more, but thine

eyes shall see thy Teacher” (JPS, also see this line of thought from NBLH, NASB, LBLA, HCSB, ESV, ERV, CEV, AMP). Our LDS footnote on ISAIAH 30:20b also suggests that מוֹדֵר יָד stands as an allusion for “the LORD.” ¶ Keith applies ISAIAH 30:20 to the restoration: “As evil leaders and false teachers are often represented as among the greatest of the nation’s curses; so, when finally restored, and when their judgments shall be past, among their greatest blessings will be that of faithful teachers.” ¶ To be removed into a corner (כַּנֵּי), or to be hidden. This comes from the Hebrew כָּנָה, to remove to the four corners of the earth, to cover or hide (HAL). In the millennial day the Lord will be present and visible to all. But meanwhile, in applying these scriptures unto us, when we turn our back on the Lord, we may say that we have removed Him into a corner or hidden Him from us. This is also true when we turn our backs on the prophets that He has given us as guides. ¶ Elder Marion G. Hanks loved ISAIAH 30 and particularly ISAIAH 30:20: “I interpret [wisdom] to be the capacity to recognize which things in life really matter most and to identify oneself with them, to choose them. In the thirtieth chapter of the book of Isaiah is a marvelous statement which I have loved since first I read it. The Lord seriously rebukes rebellious Israel. He recognizes their failings, their unfaith, their unwillingness to rely upon Him, their insistence upon self-reliance to the exclusion of humility before Him, but then comforts them and blesses them with this marvelous promise: ‘And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left’ (ISAIAH 30:20–21). I believe it is possible for anyone ... to discover for himself what things really matter in this world. I think he may learn it through teachers and through the voice which speaks behind us.”²⁸ The voice that speaks behind us is the Holy Ghost.

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

The LXX (6) reads, “Because thine eyes will see them who are leading thee astray and thine ears will hear the words of the deceivers behind thee who say, This is the

way let us walk in it, whether to the right or left.” After the words *walk ye in it*, the Peshitta (5) admonishes men to stay on the path and not deviate from it to the right nor to the left. The Douay-Rheims (2) has, “And thy ears shall hear the word of one admonishing thee behind thy back: This is the way, walk ye in it: and go not aside neither to the right hand, nor to the left.” Monte S. Nyman says, “Elder Thomas S. Monson cited this verse as a reference to the ‘still, small voice which testifies of truth’ (CR, April 1975, p. 23).” So also Faussett, who rightfully points us to a scripture about the Holy Ghost: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come” (John 16:13). When we hear or read the Word—scriptures as well as addresses from the prophets who seek to guide us in the proper path—the Holy Ghost bears witness that what they have said is true. To turn to the right or to the left means to deviate from the straight and narrow path. Of King Josiah we read: “And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left” (2 Kings 22:2; see also 2 Chronicles 34:2). In Proverbs we read this beautiful admonition: “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil” (Proverbs 4:25–27). Wordsworth beautifully taught: “Its larger fulfilment [of these verses] was in the coming of Christ. Then the Lord had waited for many generations to be gracious; and blessed were all they who waited for Him (v. 18). Blessed were they, who, like Simeon, and Anna, and many others, ‘waited for the consolation of Israel’ (Luke 2:25, 38). Then the people saw their Teacher, and He established a Visible Church, wherein His Word is preached, and His Sacraments are administered in the whole world. Then the Word went forth, saying, ‘This is the way: walk ye in it.’ The Gospel is specially called ‘the WAY’ in Holy Scripture... It extends to the times of the Messiah, and even to His Second Advent.” So also Skinner, who says that this verse represents “Jehovah, walking like a Father behind His children.” Skinner continues, “when ye turn] Whenever your steps leave the straight path off righteousness, the warning voice will check you.” ¶ Elder Marion D. Hanks quoted this verse of Isaiah and taught: “That was their promise. We have the same promise, that if we will listen to the law of the Lord, if we will see through the eyes of the seer, if we will hear the words of the prophets when they testify to us right things, if we will listen to the oracles—past and present—to wise teachers, humble parents, honest friends; if we will listen to the voice of the Spirit, to the still, small voice, then we will learn the right way and to

²⁸ Marion D. Hanks. *Spiritual Constraints In Our Changing Times*. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, January 4, 1961, pp. 3–8.

walk in it.”²⁹ President Thomas S. Monson invited: “Like the peal of a remembered bell will be the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the soul of him who earnestly seeks. Many of you have traveled long in a personal quest for that which rings true. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sends forth to you an earnest appeal. Open your doors to the missionaries. Open your minds to the word of God. Open your hearts—even your very souls—to the sound of that still, small voice which testifies of truth. As the prophet Isaiah promised, ‘Thine ears shall hear a word . . . , saying, This is the way, walk ye in it’ (ISAIAH 30:21).”³⁰ In *Rain in Due Season* there is a special promise given for walking in the way: “And I [the Lord] will walk among you, and **will be your God**, and **ye shall be my people**” (Leviticus 26:12, emphasis added).

22 Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

- ✓ the graven images of thy silver
- ✓ ✓ scatter

Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Therefore thou wilt defile thine idols plated with silver, and cut to pieces those overlaid with gold.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And thou shalt defile the plates of thy graven things of silver, and the garment of thy molten things of gold.” Henderson explains: “The Jews, convinced of the abominable evil of idolatry, would cast away their idols with feelings of utter disgust.” Faussett has: “Hezekiah, and afterwards Josiah, defiled [the graven images] (2 Kings 23:8, 10, 14, 16; 2 Chronicles 31:1; compare ISAIAH 2:20; Deuteronomy 7:25).” The expression *and defile* טָמַא, from the root טָמֵא, also has an acceptation that means “to declare unclean” as in Leviticus 13:3–59; 20:25 (HAL, Gesenius). Wordsworth talks of our hidden idols: “Ye will defile the covering or veil by which your idolatrous images were shrouded from the eye in their secret shrines,” and then goes on to quote Deuteronomy: “Cursed be the man that maketh any

graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place” (Deuteronomy 27:15a). This, then, is a command to declare all graven images unclean and thus to throw them away from our lives. Each one of us has to throw away those things that turn us to the right or to the left of the straight and narrow path. We are to do this with vigor. ¶ *Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Ye shall abominate *it*, as they abominate the impurity of a monstrous woman, thus ye shall abominate it.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And scatter them like polluted water and cast them out as dirt.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) explains that they shall be cast out as the waters of a menstruous woman, and thrown away as waste. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, for the first clause, “And shalt cast them away as the uncleanness of a menstruous woman.” The idea of this passage is that we should truly put away our sins. Lowth writes: “The very prohibition of Moses, Deuteronomy 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.’” Cowles teaches: “The ‘covering of their graven images’ is specified because this was often exceedingly rich, of gold and silver, very attractive therefore, and the last thing to be given up. Considered as a special prophecy, this had a very striking fulfillment when the Jews returned from Babylon. But in the spirit of it, it is fulfilled in the case of every real penitent. He loathes his former sins and thrusts them away with all his heart.³¹ So he ought to do; and more than this, so he actually *does* if his penitence is sincere.” ¶ *Menstruous cloth* (see ISAIAH 64:6, *filthy rags*). According to the law of Moses, a woman was considered unclean during menstruation (Leviticus 15:19). A menstrual cloth was used to contain the blood discharge over this period, before the advent of many of today’s disposable sanitary products. Leviticus 19 ff. and 20:18 also explain that in the Mosaic Law, those who would come in contact with the menstrual blood would be unclean. (With our two older children we used cloth diapers. Only part way through our third child did we switch to disposable diapers.) ¶ *Get thee hence.* The Geneva Bible notes have: “Showing that there can be no true repentance, unless both in heart and deed we show ourselves enemies to idolatry.” This is a commandment of great force, a discarding of that which is unrighteous. When Christ was tempted by Satan he quoted Isaiah: “Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only

²⁹ Marion D. Hanks. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, May 28, 1964, pp. 4–5.

³⁰ President Thomas S. Monson, Dedication Day, *Ensign* (CR), November 2000, p.64 (also see, *The Way Home, Ensign* (CR), May 1975, p.15).

³¹ So in Alma 22:18 Lamoni’s father says, “I will give away all my sins to know thee.”

shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland addresses this issue squarely in a powerful General Conference address, of which I only quote one paragraph: “Above all, start by separating yourself from people, materials, and circumstances that will harm you. As those battling something like alcoholism know, the pull of proximity can be fatal. So too in moral matters. Like Joseph in the presence of Potiphar’s wife, just run—run as far away as you can get from whatever or whoever it is that beguiles you. And please, when fleeing the scene of temptation, do *not* leave a forwarding address.”³²

23 Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Then shall there be rain for the seed of thy land.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And rain shall be given to thy seed, wheresoever thou shalt sow in the land.” This is a direct allusion to the *Rain in Due Season* chapters as well as to Leviticus 26:4, more specifically. Obedience brings blessings as well as peace and joy. Gill says, “... the earth, being watered with rain, should give its increase of corn, of which bread should be made; so that there would be seed to the sower, and bread to the eater,³³ as in ISAIAH 55:10.” Regarding *bread* and *fat*, Wesley says: “Which shall be the fruit of thy own land and labour: and excellent for quality, which is called, fat, Deuteronomy 32:14, and abundant for quantity.” ¶ *And bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And corn and fruit shall increase in the land, and there shall be sustenance and goodness.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And the bread of the increase of thy land shall be both abundant and nutritive.” Instead of *bread*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *grain*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And the bread of the corn of the land shall be most plentiful, and fat.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) we have *it shall be fat*, while in the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) we have, *and it shall come to pass [that it shall be] fat*, פֶּתִיחַ הָאָרֶץ. It is interestingly to us as LDS that most translations leave the *and* yet drop the

³² Elder Holland, Jeffrey R. Place no more for the enemy of my soul. General Conference, April 2010.

³³ *Bread to the eater* means food in general, but can also mean flower—whether made from wheat or corn or other agronomic crops—and *seed to the sower* means that crops also provide the seeds for planting next year. For people during famine, it was a great temptation to eat their seeds now and be left without anything to plant in the future.

פֶּתִיחַ (it came to pass / it shall come to pass) that appears in the literal text. ¶ *In that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And at that time, the just shall be nourished from their cattle, with the marrow of the tender and the fat ones.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And thy cattle shall feed in rich and large pastures.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *fertile pastures* (BPE) / *rich pastures* (Lamsa), The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “The lamb in that day shall feed at large in thy possession.” Note the use of the expression, פֶּתִיחַ הָאָרֶץ, *in that day*, which points to the latter day. Barnes explains: “This is a description of security when their cattle should be permitted to roam at large, and have abundant pasturage—an image of prosperity that would be very gratifying to a people whose main conception of wealth consisted in abundance of flocks and herds.”

24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean[✓] provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

✓ or, savoury, HEB., leavened

The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the oxen and the asses, with which they plough the ground, shall eat fattening meslin.³⁴” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Your bulls and your cattle which till the ground shall eat provender.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) also has oxen and young bull tilling the ground. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And thy oxen, and the ass colts that till the ground, shall eat mingled provender.” ¶ That *ear the ground*, עֲבָרֵי הָאָרֶץ. This is an expression for the oxen or cattle that *work* (עָבַד, Gesenius) *the ground*, i.e., plow, rake, or otherwise *till the ground* (HALOT). Bullinger explains, “*Ear*. Old English = to plough: from Anglo-Saxon *erian*: and this from the Latin *arare*: the Aryan root AR entering into many words with a cognate reference. ARt (ploughing being the oldest art); oAR (with which the water is ploughed); ARtos (Greek for bread); eARth; ARatrum (Latin, a plough); ARare (to plough). The verb ‘ear’ is found only here, Deuteronomy 21:4; and 1 Samuel 8:12. The noun ‘earring’ occurs in Genesis 45:6, and Exodus 34:21” (CBNotes). Likewise, in Spanish we use *arar* for plowing, and *arado* for the plow. ¶ *Savoury provender.*

³⁴ Stenning calls it *savory provender*, while Chilton renders it as *mixed provender*, which from an agronomical perspective would be mixed grasses. Faussett spells it *maslin* when speaking about מַסְלִין and say, “Or else, *well-fermented maslin*, that is, provender formed of a mixture of various substances: grain, beans, vetches, hay, and salt.”

The margin ||, savory or fermented (leavened) feed, makes the most amount of sense in this verse and is preferred by numerous translators, “The oxen likewise and the young asses that till the ground shall eat savory provender (ASV, also JPS, AMP; *finest grain*, CEV; with many others having *salted* or *seasoned*). YLT talks about *fermented* feed, “Fermented provender do eat.” This verse seems to be speaking of the fermentation process that takes place when silage is prepared.³⁵ Faussett writes, “The Arab proverb is, ‘Sweet provender is as bread to camels – salted provender as confectionery.’³⁶ The very cattle shall share the coming felicity. Or else, *well-fermented maslin*, that is, provender formed of a mixture of various substances: grain, beans, vetches, hay, and salt.” Wordsworth, brilliantly continues with his likening of this chapter to spiritual matters: “The clean provender, or the *salted fodder well winnowed*, represents the sound, wholesome, and pure doctrine, ‘seasoned with salt’ (Colossians 4:6; Cp. Mark 9:50), purged from all adulterations of God’s Word, on which they feed, that they may have strength to labour in His husbandry.” ¶ *Which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan*. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Mixed with winnowed barley.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “As it was winnowed in the floor.” In order to make silage, the hay is first harvested. So the cows do not have to even go out to find the food, as it is provided for them. Man does the winnowing with the shovel (or the combine, today) and with the fan (to separate the grains from the chaff). Winnowing is the process of separating the grain from the chaff, or the hay. The shovel or fork was used to through the matter up and with the help of the wind or air, separate the grain from the chaff.

25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers [and] streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

³⁵ “During the ensiling process, some bacteria are able to break down cellulose and hemicellulose to various simple sugars. Other bacteria break down simple sugars to smaller end products (acetic, lactic and butyric acids). The most desirable end products are acetic and lactic acid. As the bacteria degrade starches and sugars to acidic and lactic acids, dry matter is lost. Attention to details such as speed of harvesting, moisture content, length of chop, silage distribution and compaction can greatly influence the fermentation process and storage losses. Efficient fermentation ensures a more palatable and digestible feed, which encourages optimal dry matter intake that translates into improved animal performance. Making consistent, high-quality silage requires sound management decisions and attention to details.” Schroeder, J.W., North Dakota State University Extension Dairy Specialist. “Silage Fermentation and Preservation.” AS-1254, June 2004, <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ansci/dairy/as1254w.htm> (URL accessed 5 November 2012).

³⁶ Or as quoted by Henderson, “Sweet provender is the food of the camels; salted provender their dessert.”

✓ lifted up

And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers [and] streams of waters. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And there shall be on every lofty mountain, and on every high hill streams of water in that day.” Israel’s blessing is also described in Joel: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim” (Joel 3:18). Slotki/Rosenberg writes: “Even on the Judean mountains and hills, which might be expected to be dry and barren, there will flow streams and watercourses that will fructify them as well as the plains and valleys.” Alexander writes: “J. D. Michaelis connects this with what goes before, and understands it as a description of the height to which agriculture would be carried, by means of artificial irrigation... The simple meaning seems to be that water shall flow where it never flowed before, a common figure in the Prophets for a great change, and especially a change for the better. The same sense is no doubt to be attached to the previous descriptions of abundance and fertility.” ¶ *In the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall*. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “In the day of the great slaughter, at the falling of the princess/armies.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “When many shall be perishing / And when towers may be falling.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “In the day of the slaughter of many.” Now we hear more about an idea planted in ISAIAH 30:13 and developed further in ISAIAH 30:27–28, 30–33. The breach can stand no longer and the building—the big and spacious building and all it represents—collapses and the arrogant nations fall. For מִגְדָּלִים [i.e., *towers*] ... Lowth³⁷ has, instead of towers: “When the mighty fall] מִגְדָּלִים migdalim, μεγαλους, Sym.; μεγαλυνομενους, Aquila; רַבְרַבִּין [רַבְרַבִּין] rabrebin, Chaldee; all signifying mighty sizes.” McFadyen suggests the towers stand for the “proud heathen.” Delitzsch says, regarding the falling towers, that these represent: “All the bulwarks of self-confidence, self-help, and pride (ISAIAH 2:15; Micah 5:9–10).” Wesley has, regarding the towers: “The mighty potentates, who fought against God’s people.” Rawlinson writes: “In this allegorical intention the waters stand for the streams of God’s grace. **In the day of the great slaughter**. Equivalent to ‘the day of vengeance’ (ISAIAH 34:8) the day when God shall tread down his enemies. The prophet passes from the immediate effect of Judah’s repentance to a broader view of what shall happen when God’s kingdom is

³⁷ See Lowth’s *new translation*, not his exegetical comments.

established upon the earth. **When the towers fall;** *i.e.* when there shall be a general ‘pulling down of strong holds,’ and a ‘casting down’ of every high thing that exalts itself against (2 Corinthians 10:4–5).” The words from ISAIAH 18:5, about the pruning out of that which is not good, also come to mind. Wordsworth has: “By the preaching of the Gospel, *the towers fall*, the strongholds of Satan are cast down, and ‘every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God’ (see 2 Corinthians 10:4–5); as the walls of Jericho fell at the sound of the trumpets, blown by the Priests, marching before the Ark of God.” Certainly, in this sense of the word, the walls that prevented the preaching of the gospel in parts of the world have begun to come down, one by one.

26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days. (See ISAIAH 24:23.) The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall in future shine three hundred and forty-three times more brightly, as the light of seven days.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun; and the light of the sun shall on that day be seven fold.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Pesachim 68a, see also Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 91b) has: “It is written, Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed;³⁸ whereas it is written, Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days? There is no difficulty: the former refers to the world to come; the latter to the days of the Messiah” (Talmud, Soncino). A footnote in the same, attributed to Rashi (Sanhedrin 91b), explains that the time will come when the light will emanate from the presence of the Lord. Wade explains: “The light of the full moon was thought to be normally one-seventh of that of the sun (Enoch 73:3). ¶ *Light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, אור־הַלְבָנָה כְּאֹרֶתְהָמָה, Or rather, literally, “the light of the full moon shall be as the light of the sun’s glow.”* Whitehouse writes, “Poetical names are given to the moon³⁹ and the sun, viz. ‘the pale one’ and

‘the glowing one.’” LITV renders it as: “And the moonlight shall be like the light of the sun &c.” Faussett, like many others, supposes the light to be a manifestation of spirituality and joy and take this passage to be an “Image from the heavenly bodies to express the increase of spiritual light and felicity. ‘Sevenfold’ implies the *perfection* of that felicity, seven being the sacred number. It shall also be literally fulfilled hereafter in the heavenly city (ISAIAH 60:19–20; Revelation 21:23–24; 22:5).” Barnes writes, “That this refers to the times of the Messiah there can be little or no room to doubt. It is language such as Isaiah commonly employs to describe those times; and there is a fullness and splendor about it which can suit no other period.” Birks well says, “As it denotes a change inconceivable by man, it may represent blessings inconceivable by him here, in that state in which things that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive are prepared.” ¶ *In the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “In the day that the Lord shall turn the captivity of His people, and heal the sickness caused by His blow.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “When the Lord will heal the bruises of his people, and when he will cure thy painful wound.” Instead of *stroke*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *pain*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has *wound* instead of *breach*. This will be a glorious day of restoration. Ibn Ezra explains: “When the Lord heals the wounds of Israel.” Henderson says, “The **שִׁבְרָה**, *breach*, is that described in ISAIAH 30:14.” Indeed, the Hebrew appears in ISAIAH 30:13 as “whose breaking” [שִׁבְרָה] and ISAIAH 30:14, “as the breaking of” [כְּשִׁבְרָה] and here in this verse, *breach* [אֶת־שִׁבְרָה]. The Hebrew has many meanings including *shattered, broken* (HAL). The expression translated as “as a breach” in ISAIAH 30:13, however, is כְּפִתְחֵי, and comes from a hole or crack as in a breached wall (HAL). These are but two of many words in Hebrew translated as *breach*. Birks writes: “The same thought appears in Hosea 6:1. ‘He hath torn, and he will heal us, hath broken and will bind us up.’” *The stroke of her wound* may represent a spiritual healing on the one hand (by returning to the Lord) and on the other a healing from that last awful future siege of Jerusalem.

vv. 27–33. There is a strong allusion in some of these verses to the Assyrian attack upon Israel and Jerusalem. The language seems to also point to the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior.

27 ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning [with] his anger, and the burden [thereof is] heavy: his

³⁸ See ISAIAH 24:23.

³⁹ Instead of the more usual הַרְחֵק and הַרְחֵק (new moon) for the *moon* and שֶׁשֶׁת for the *sun*.

lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

- ✓ or, grievousness of flame
- ✓ ✓ heaviness

Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning [with] his anger, and the burden [thereof is] heavy: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Behold, the Name of the Lord shall be revealed, as the prophets of old have prophesied concerning Him.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Behold the name of the Lord cometh for a time, a burning wrath.” Instead of *burden is heavy*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *exaltation is glorious* (BPE) / *train is glorious* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, for the second half, “His wrath burneth, and is heavy to bear.” ¶ *Behold, the name of the LORD, הַנְּיָה שֵׁם יְהוָה*. This beautiful expression is similar to what the Targum (Ⓣ) often uses to express the idea of the *שְׁכִינָה*, *Shekinah*. We, however, would understand it as *the presence of the Lord*. Alexander writes, “According to Raymund Martini, the expression was applied by the old Jews to the Messiah.” Skinner says, “*the name of the Lord*” appears here to be synonymous with what is elsewhere called the ‘glory of Jehovah’ (cf. the parallelism, ISAIAH 59:19; Psalm 102:15), i.e., the visible manifestation of His presence... Amongst the later Jews the expression ‘the Name’ was commonly used, out of reverence, to avoid the use of the Tetragrammaton (cf. Leviticus 24:11).” Rashi explains that the *name of the LORD* “here is synonymous with God’s power and glory” (in Slotki/Rosenberg). Wordsworth writes about this clause: “See Revelation 19:16, describing the Victory of Christ: ‘He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a NAME written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.’” Govett brilliantly writes: “The 27th verse represents the Saviour as coming from afar, as he said himself, ‘A certain nobleman went into a *far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return*’ (Luke 19:12). His coming is a day of wrath to his enemies, ‘The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?’ ‘By the name of Jehovah,’ says Eusebius, ‘Christ is indicated. And when he cometh and revealeth his second glorious appearance, then shall follow those avenging Powers whom the present passage calls the anger and wrath of God, by whom punishment will be inflicted on the wicked...’” ¶ *His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “His wrath is mighty, and too heavy to bear. His curse shall go forth from before Him upon the wicked, and His word as a consuming fire.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “The oracle of his lips with glory is an oracle full of indignation, and the fury of the wrath devoureth like fire.” Skinner says “... the figure of the storm is

inseparably blended with an anthropomorphic representation of Jehovah.”

28 And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and [there shall be] a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing [them] to err.

And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And His word is an overwhelming river *reaching* unto the neck: He shall slay the mighty.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And his breath is like a sweeping flood in a valley, which will reach up to the neck.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has an overflowing *torrent* instead of *stream*. We here find a strong allusion to the Assyrian invasion of Jerusalem (i.e., see ISAIAH 8:7–8). The Lord permitted Israel to be attacked by Assyria in former days—and only intervened at the very last moment, *when the flood waters had reached to her neck*, on the very eve of the attack on Jerusalem. Similarly, in the latter days, Jerusalem would once again be surrounded—this time by the nations of the world—and once again these waters will be up to her neck before the Lord will intervene in her favor: “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains” (Zechariah 14:1–5a). Alexander thinks “the whole verse as a threatening against Jehovah’s enemies.” On the power of the Lord’s breath, see ISAIAH 11:4b: “And he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.” ¶ *To sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and [there shall be] a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing [them] to err.* See also, regarding such a *bridle*, ISAIAH 37:29. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “He will assuredly agitate the nations with the agitation of vanity: and *there shall be* a bridle of error in the jaws of the people.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And swell to confound nations for their vain errors.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has “to cause terror upon the nations because they have

vainly gone astray” (Lamsa) / “to confuse the nations because of their erring vanity” (BPE). Furthermore, instead of *jaws of the people*, the Peshitta (S) has *jaws of the nations*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “To destroy the nations unto nothing, and the bridle of error that was in the jaws of the people.” While the Lord permits the nations to carry out the work of destruction, it ought to be clear that He will not cause the nations’ hearts to be hardened against latter-day Israel any more than he hardened the heart of Pharaoh against Israel when she dwelt in Egypt (see JST notes throughout Exodus, e.g., 7:13a ff.). The *bridle of vanity* is placed on the nations of the world through Satan’s influence. Rawlinson explains: “One of the Divine purposes, in all violent crashes and revolutions, is ‘to sift nations to separate in each nation the good from the bad, the precious from the vile; and this is done with the sieve of vanity,’ i.e. the sieve which allows the good corn to pass through, separating from it, and keeping back, all that is vile and refuse” (compare to Amos 9:9). Alexander writes: “Most interpreters prefer the more specific sense of leading astray, or in the wrong direction, with particular allusion, as J. D. Michaelis supposes, to the fact that Sennacherib was misled by a false report respecting Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia.” With an allusion to the nations who will gather to fight against Israel in the last days, Govett says: “Here the reason of the delusion [causing them to err] is specified—because the Gentiles will then have rejected nationally the revelation of Christ, therefore will he send them this potent deceiver. Prime movers in the delusion shall be evil spirits ‘working miracles,’ to gather together all nations against Jerusalem, as is here represented by Isaiah. That dreadful day is further described in its terrible artillery of wrath, mighty voices, as the archangel’s trumpet, devouring fire, thunder and hailstones. So St. John, describing the seventh and ‘last trump,’ ... ‘when the nations are angry and his wrath is come,’ adds, ‘And there were lightning and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail’ (Revelation 11:15–19).”

29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night [when] a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.

✓ Rock

Ye shall have a song, as in the night [when] a holy solemnity is kept. The Targum (T) has for the second clause, “When the festival is sanctified.” The LXX (G) reads, “When error shall pursue them and overtake them, before their face ought not you to rejoice continually and continually go to my solemnities like

them who are celebrating a festival?” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “You shall have a song, even a garland which is sanctified in the night when a holy solemnity is kept.” The BPE (S) has, “To you a song shall be a consecrated crown in the feast day.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has *sanctified* instead of *holy*. After the horror; a time of rejoicing. From ISAIAH 54 the words of the Lord majestically echo: “In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer” (ISAIAH 54:8). ¶ *As in the night [when] a holy solemnity is kept.* Ibn Ezra explains this of “the night of the Passover.” So does Rashi (in Rosenberg): “On the night of the Passover shall this joy come to you.— [Rosenberg adds, Rashi from unknown Midrashic source. The only Midrashic work that states that the downfall of Sennacherib’s camp occurred on the night of Passover is *Midrash Panim Acherim*, second version, on *Megillath Esther*, ch. 6, p. 37. In no place, however, is there any indication that this verse connects the downfall of Sennacherib with that date, except in reference to what Rashi cites further. Perhaps Rashi, as well as Ibn Ezra and Redak, was in possession of a Midrash, since lost.]” Most exegetes are divided between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Passover. ¶ *And gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe⁴⁰ to come into the mountain of the LORD*

[בְּהַר יְהוָה], to the mighty One of Israel. The Targum (T) has, “With joy of heart, as when they march with thanksgivings and the pipe, to enter the holy mountain of the Lord, to appear before the mighty One of Israel.” The LXX (G) reads, “Like them who are gladdened you should go with instrumental music to the mount of the Lord, to the God of Israel.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “And gladness of heart, as when one walks rejoicing to come to the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.” The BPE (S) has, “And shall have rejoicing of heart as one who walks in rejoicing until coming upon the mount of Yahweh, the Mighty of Jacob.”

¶ *With a pipe* [or, *with a flute*], בְּחִלְיָל. The rejoicing is accompanied by song and flute. Rawlinson, leaning on Vitranga, explains: “Joyful processions from the country districts to Jerusalem are alluded to. These were commonly headed by a piper or a band of pipers (Vitranga). They took place several times in the year at each of the three great feasts, and irregularly when any district sent up its firstfruits to the temple treasury. (Nehemiah 10:35–37).” This reminds me of a trip to the temple from San Javier to Santiago, during my 2002 Sabbatical leave, with the branch members singing one hymn after another on the bus. Kay writes, “It is said that each band of pilgrims on its way to Jerusalem was headed by a person who played the flute.” ¶ *To the*

⁴⁰ Musical instrument.

mighty One of Israel. Or rather, as in the margin ||, *To the Rock of Israel*, another title for Jehovah, אֱלֹהֵי צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל. Contrast with ISAIAH 1:24, where *mighty* is used, “אֲבִיר יִשְׂרָאֵל.” Alexander writes, “The *Rock of Israel* is not mount Zion or Moriah, but Jehovah himself, to whose presence they resorted, as appears from 2 Samuel 23:3.” So also Cheyne, who says, “‘Rock’ was one of the synonyms for Jehovah; so ISAIAH 17:10; 44:8, comp. Deuteronomy 32 (six times).” For instance, “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deuteronomy 32:4).

30 And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice ✓ to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of [his] anger, and [with] the flame of a devouring fire, [with] scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

✓ the glory of his voice

And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of [his] anger. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the Lord shall proclaim the brightness of the voice of His Word, and He shall reveal the strength of His arm in the fury of His anger (Chaldee, ‘in the strength of His anger’).” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “When the Lord shall cause the glory of his voice to be heard—when, to display the fury of his arm with wrath and indignation.” Instead of *lighting down of his arm* the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has the *blow of his arm*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, beginning with the second clause, “And shall shew the terror of his arm, in the threatening of wrath.” ¶ *Shew the lighting down of his arm*. Other helpful renderings include: “And the Lorde shall cause his glorious voyce to be hearde, and shall declare his stretched out arme with a terrible countenance” (Bishop’s Bible); “The LORD will get furious. His fearsome voice will be heard, his arm will be seen ready to strike” (CEV); “And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard, And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger” (NASB). ¶ The arm of the Lord is often given as an illustration of action. In this case, of vengeance on behalf of His people. ¶ *And [with] the flame of a devouring fire, [with] scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And in flames of fire, destroying the graven images with scattering (בִּירֵר, ‘scattering,’ is omitted in the Royal Polyglot), and storm, and hailstorms.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And consuming fire, he shall utter tremendous thunder, accompanied with a furious tempest of rain and hail.”

Instead of *scattering*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *violent rain* (BPE) / *rainstorm* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And the flame of devouring fire: he shall crush to pieces with whirlwind, and hailstones.” These words remind us of D&C 43:23–25. Alexander helps us notice that *and hailstones* are literally *and stone of hail*, אֲבִן בָּרֶד. By the way, I have noticed that while *stone* in English usually refers to something relatively small, in Hebrew these אֲבִן may be of considerable size.⁴¹

Rather than *scattering*, for נִפְץ, many translate as a *cloudburst* or *thunderclap*, the terrible sound of thunder in a lightning storm. Such lightning and rain storms are often followed by hailstones. Young says, “The image is that of a theophany, in which a storm is an accompanying factor. Many commentators think that there is a specific allusion here to the thunder... [and this] may be, but the heart of the thought is not the storm but the appearance of God.”

31 For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, [which] smote with a rod.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “For through the voice of the Word of the Lord the Assyrian shall be broken, he that smote *by his power*.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “For by the voice of the Lord the Assyrians shall be beaten down by the stroke with which he will smite them.” Similarly, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has Assyria beaten by the rod. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For at the voice of the Lord the Assyrian shall fear being struck with the rod.” While the Assyrian beat her enemies with the *rod* (see also ISAIAH 10:24), now the Lord would, through the power of His mouth—and also the rod as we see in the next verse—defeat her and all that fight against His people. Such reversals of language are very typical of the Prophet Isaiah.

32 And [in] every place where the grounded staff shall pass, ✓ which the LORD shall lay upon him, ✓ [it] shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it. ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ every passing of the rod founded ✓ ✓ cause to rest upon
 ✓ ✓ ✓ or, against them

⁴¹ For instance, the large rocks that compose the Wailing Wall are referred to as *stones*, e.g., see the book, *Touching the Stones of Our Heritage*, which Linda & I purchased while in Israel this year (we got it at *Yad Vashem*, יָד וַשֵּׁן, on 9 September 2012).

And [in] every place where the *grounded* staff shall pass, which the LORD shall lay upon him. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And it shall come to pass, that the Lord shall cause the rest of the vengeance of His might in every pass (or, ‘ford’) of their princes and mighty ones, *even* amongst them.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “This indeed he shall have from all around him—from every place whence they had a hope of that assistance on which he relied.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “And it shall come to pass that because of all his works, the rod of oppression that Yahweh shall inflict upon her.” Lamsa (Ⓢ) has “And in all his works, the staff of affliction which the LORD shall lay upon him.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And the passage of the rod shall be strongly grounded, which the Lord shall make to rest upon him.” YLT renders

מוֹסְרָה as *settled, appointed* or *ordained*; AMP, *punishing*; ASV & HCSB, *appointed*. The idea is that the rod is an appointed punishment. Assyrian here also stands for the world in the latter days. Cowles says, “What our translators understood to refer to the *place* where the staff should pass, is now generally admitted to refer to the *passing or coming down* of the rod itself.” ¶ *The grounded staff*, מוֹסְרָה מוֹסְרָה. Lowth writes, “The Syriac has דְּשׁוּעַ בְּרָה, *virga domans, vel objectionis*.” Clarke, who quotes Lowth, adds: “the taming rod, or rod of subjection.” Duhm suggests that the Hebrew word מוֹסְרָה, ought instead to be read as מוֹסְרָה (with the ד changed to ר). If we follow HAL, מוֹסְרָה is from מוֹסֵר, i.e., *discipline* or *chastisement*. With this change, Whitehouse explains, “Duhm has restored to us the probable reading, and we should accordingly render: ‘and every passing over (= stroke) of the staff shall be his (i.e., Assyria’s) *chastisement*.’” In other words, “And every stroke of the staff shall be her chastisement.” Likewise, Lowth observes: “—*The rod of correction*⁴²] For מוֹסְרָה, the *grounded* staff, of which no one yet has been able to make any tolerable sense, Le Clerc conjectured מוֹסְרָה, *of correction*; (see Proverbs 22:15 {שִׁבְטֵי מוֹסֵר, *rod of correction*}); and so it is in two MSS. (one of them ancient), and seems to be so in the Bodley MS. NASB (also see ISV and some others) thus reads: “And every blow of the rod of punishment &c.” Gill writes: “which **smote with a rod**; other nations, particularly the Jews, whom the Assyrian is expressly said to smite with a rod; and because he was an instrument in God’s hand for the chastising of that people, he is called the rod of his anger, ISAIAH 10:5⁴³ but now he that smote shall be smitten himself; him whom God used as a rod to correct others, he will

smite with his rod, for his own correction: for this may be understood of God, and be rendered thus, ‘with a rod, he,’ that is, God, ‘shall smite’ the Assyrian, as before; so Aben Ezra and Kimhi.” Kay writes, “The ‘mighty staff,’ sent forth from Zion (Psalm 110:2)—mightier by far than that which Moses lifted over the Red Sea (Exodus 14:16)—shall take effect on each enemy in succession, and be welcomed by the Church with jubilant anthems, like those which rose on the eastern shore of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:20), or those which attended the ark on its way to Zion (2 Samuel 6:5).” Barnes has: “Who was accustomed to smite as with a rod; that is, his government was tyrannical and severe. As he had been accustomed to smite in that manner, so he would now meet the proper reward of his oppression of the nations.” ¶ [It] shall be with *tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The house of Israel shall praise with tabrets and harps, because of the mighty war which shall be waged for them against the people.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “They will with timbrels and the kithara fight against him, after his rout.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “Shall be at the sound of tabrets and harps, and He shall fight against her in violent battle.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “With timbrels and harps, and in great battles he shall over throw them.” Alexander explains it: “The sense would seem to be that every passage of Jehovah’s rod (*i.e.* every stroke which passes from it to the object) will be hailed by those whom the Assyrian had oppressed, with joy and exultation... [so that] every stroke would be attended with rejoicing on the part of the spectators, and especially of those who had been subject to oppression.”

33 For Tophet [is] ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made [it] deep [and] large: the pile thereof [is] fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

✓ from yesterday

For Tophet [is] ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made [it] deep [and] large: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “For hell is made ready from eternity on account of their sins; yea, the eternal King hath prepared it deep and wide.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Of thee he will previously demand (and hast thou not provided for his reign) a deep valley and wood laid up in piles.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “For he has prepared his punishment of old; yea, it is prepared to be executed; he has made it deep and large in his dwelling place.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “Because he prepares the provisions before the beginning of days. Yes, he had

⁴² Rather than *grounded*.

⁴³ Also see ISAIAH 10:24.

prepared her to give counsel, and he deepened and widened his abode.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, following the margin ||, “For Topheth is prepared from yesterday, prepared by the king, deep, and wide.” ¶ Keith well says, regarding the end of days, and quotes Joel also: “... is confirmed by what is said in Joel of the scene of the same events, the last and terrible destruction of the enemies of God : ‘Behold in those days and at that time—the great day of the Lord—when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there.’ This valley is united with that of Hinnom, in which Tophet is situated. There, as on a vast funeral pile—as in a grave deep and large—shall the enemies of Judah perish.” Jennings writes: “As to the word ‘Tophet,’ we find it elsewhere in just one [but see others, below] place, Job 17:6⁴⁴; and there it has been completely misunderstood by the translators of the Authorized Version, who render it ‘tabret,’ and thus alter the force of the verse entirely, reading it: ‘And aforetime I was as a tabret.’ The Revised gives the opposite, the correct, meaning: ‘And I became an open abhorring,’ and in the margin ||, ‘One on whose face they spit.’ It thus bears in it the sense of vomiting, or abhorring as the vilest of the vile. Thus the very word ‘Tophet’ speaks that awful truth that what answers to this Tophet will contain only that which is so utterly abhorrent to God that He speaks of it as ‘vomit.’ But that is precisely the repellent figure that our Lord used in His letter to the Church in Laodicea, in which many of us recognize the professing Church of our very day: ‘I will spue thee out of My mouth.’ Could anything speak more strongly of utter abhorrence? It is the perfect parallel to ‘Tophet.’ ... Mark another significant correspondence: this Tophet had been prepared ‘long ago’—a word that is strongly suggestive of what had taken place before the day of man altogether. Before man had come upon the scene, before he fell in disobedience and so came under the penalty of the first death, Tophet had been ‘prepared.’ But that inevitably suggests that there had been a prior fall—a prior sin in a pre-Adamite era; and this, the word of our Lord distinctly confirms: ‘Then shall He say to them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels’ (Matthew 25:41).” Regarding Tophet, ISBE has, “**Topheth**, (תֹּפֶת, etymology uncertain; the most probable is its connection with a root meaning ‘burning’ – the ‘place of burning’; the King James Version, **Tophet**, except in 2 Kings 23:10): The references are to such a place: ‘They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in

the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire’ (Jeremiah 7:31). On account of this abomination Topheth and the Valley of Hinnom should be called ‘The valley of Slaughter: for they shall bury in Topheth, till there be no place to bury,’ the Revised Version margin || ‘because there shall be no place else’ (Jeremiah 7:32); see also Jeremiah 19:6, 12–14. Josiah is said to have ‘defiled Topheth’ as part of his great religious reforms (2 Kings 23:10). The site of this shameful place would seem to have been either at the lower end of the VALLEY OF HINNOM (which see), near where Akeldama is now pointed out, or in the open ground where this valley joins the Kidron.” ¶ *For the king* מְלֶכֶת. Indeed, here we have a word that may be translated as *king*, or as *Moloch*. While most translate as *king*, AMP translates: “For Topheth [*a place of burning and abomination*] has already been laid out and long ago prepared; yes, for the [*Assyrian*] king and [*the god*] Molech it has been made ready, its pyre made deep and large, with fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindles it.” ISBE has, regarding Moloch, “The place where it was practiced from the days of Ahaz and Manasseh was the Valley of Hinnom where Topheth stood, a huge altar-pyre for the burning of the sacrificial victims.” Rawlinson cleverly notes: “Isaiah seems to use [Tophet] generically, as if there were many Tophets. For the king it is prepared; literally, it also is prepared for the king in the Hebrew ‘for the *melech*,’ which is the same word as ‘Moloch,’ who was looked upon by his worshippers as ‘the king’ κατ’ ἐξοχήν. Isaiah means to say, ‘As the Tophet of the Vale of Hinnom is prepared for a king (Moloch), so this new Tophet is prepared for another king (the King of Assyria).’ He hath made it deep and large a vast burning-place for a vast multitude (2 Kings 19:35), with the fire and the wood ready, only awaiting the breath of Jehovah to kindle it. As the bodies of great malefactors were burnt, (Joshua 7:25) and not buried, so the prophet consigns to a great burning the hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian corpses, of which it would soon be necessary to dispose in some way.” Regarding this whole verse Henderson says: “The whole passage furnishes one of the finest specimens of figurative description to be met with in the Bible; and the vengeance taken on the impious king of Assyria and his army, as here set forth, is emblematical both of the destruction of Antichrist, as described in the Apocalypse, and of the wicked generally in the world to come.” ¶ *The pile thereof [is] fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.* The Targum (C) has, “A fiery pyre as of abundance of fuel burns in it: the Word of the Lord, like an overwhelming torrent of brimstone, shall kindle it.” The LXX (G) reads, “The wrath of the Lord will be fire and wood in abundance like a valley burning with

⁴⁴ And Tophet, תֹּפֶת. Also see Barnes on this verse, with similar points made.

brimstone.” The Lamsa Peshitta (**Ⲫ**) has, “The wood and the fire are plentiful; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, does kindle it.” The BPE (**Ⲫ**) has, “Much wood and fire; the breath of Yahweh shall be as a stream of sulfur that burns there.” The Douay-Rheims (**Ⲫ**) renders it, “The nourishment thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindling it.” Barnes explains: “**The pile thereof** – The wood that was collected there to be consumed. **The breath of the Lord** – As if Yahweh should breathe upon it, and enkindle the whole mass, so that it should burn without the possibility of being extinguished. The meaning is, that the destruction of the Assyrian would as really come from Yahweh as if he should, by his own agency, ignite the vast piles that were collected in the valley of Hinnom. **Like a stream**

of brimstone – Brimstone, or sulphur, is used in the Scriptures to denote a fire of great intensity, and one that cannot be extinguished (see Genesis 19:24; Psalm 11:6; Ezekiel 38:22; Revelation 9:17–18).” In terms of the latter days, it seems to speak of the burning fire that will consume the earth, but not the righteous (ISAIAH 33:14). Many exegetes give this verse the meaning of how hell-fire will be for the wicked. From modern revelation, however, we know that this is only representative of the punishment, and is not a literal one. In D&C 19:4–20 we read of the true nature of God’s punishment if we do not repent.

23 October 2011
