

## ISAIAH 33: THE LORD WILL RULE IN ZION

### OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 1-35

- I. Judah's sin requires exile, but a remnant will return (1:1-12:6)
- II. The nations will be judged, and therefore they should not be trusted (13:1-23:18)
- III. The Lord will rule over the earth and redeem his people (24:1-27:13)
- IV. **The Holy One of Israel will replace faithless rulers with a righteous king (28:1-35:10)**
  - A. The Lord condemns the leaders of Israel and Judah (28:1-29:24)
  - B. The Lord condemns those who trust in Egypt (30:1-31:9)
  - C. **The Lord will rule in righteousness (32:1-33:24)**
  - D. The Lord will destroy the nations and restore Zion (34:1-35:10)

### SUMMARY OF ISAIAH 33

The wicked are oppressing us but they will be destroyed. God, come and save us, for you are able and you have promised. Lord, the land is devastated because of our covenantal unfaithfulness. But you will come and destroy the sinners. You will protect the righteous one and bring him into your kingdom. The kingdom will be characterized by a beautiful king, an expansive land, freedom from oppressors, a secure Jerusalem where God will live and rule. The kingdom will be filled with plunder taken from the defeated enemies. In Jerusalem all sickness will be healed and all sins will be forgiven.

v15 "What kind of change must a human being undergo to live with God? It is not a change of essence but a change of character. That is, what finally separates us from God is not our essence (finite to infinite, etc.) but our character (unholy to holy). This is the truth which the Hebrews discovered at Sinai (Lev. 19:2, etc.) and which Isaiah also recognized in his personal Sinai (ch. 6). If we are to dwell with God as his guests, we must share his character" (Oswalt 600).

v15 "Those who trust God do not need to manipulate circumstances to their advantage through evil talk or bribery, but the ungodly who do not trust God arrogantly put themselves in God's place and attempt to control events to their advantage by works of unrighteousness" (Smith 2007: 559).

v17 "Furthermore, the absence of a definite article on "king" suggests that an ideal is being spoken of, as in Ps. 45 where the Messiah is in view. This view is reinforced by the description of the royal realm as a *land of distances*. This is hardly Hezekiah's constricted domain, even spoken of hyperbolically. Rather, the prophet is using the coming deliverance from Sennacherib to speak of a day when true and final deliverance will have come" (Oswalt 1986: 602-3).

v24 "Ultimately, says Isaiah, our problem is a broken relation with God because of sin. That being so, mere defeat of enemies and restoration to the land will not do. The final goal is a forgiven people living a life in keeping with God's character" (Oswalt 605-6).

v24 "As in ch. 53, forgiveness of sin and healing from disease are related. This is not to say that all disease can be related to specific sins committed by the ill person. But neither can we say no relation exists between the two. Disease is in the world because of sin" (Oswalt 1986: 605n14).

### SOURCES CITED

John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39*, NICOT, 1986.  
Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1-39*, New American Commentary, 2007.

## OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 33

- I. Warning of judgment (33:1)
- II. Plea for deliverance (33:2)
- III. Declaration of God's position and character (33:3-6)
- IV. God will destroy the land and people because of unfaithfulness (33:7-14a)
- V. God will establish his kingdom of righteousness (33:14b-24)
  - A. God will preserve the righteous (33:14b-16)
  - B. God will establish his kingdom (33:17)
  - C. God will defeat the oppressing nations (33:18-19)
  - D. God will rule in Jerusalem (33:20-24)

### MAJOR IDEAS

1. Sinners will be destroyed and will not enter the kingdom (33:1, 11-14).
2. Judgment will precede deliverance (33:7-15).
3. The enemies of the righteous remnant will be defeated and their plunder taken (33:3-4, 18-21, 23).
4. Those who will be saved are those who long for God, fear the Lord, and walk righteously (33:2, 6, 14-16).
5. The exile will end (33:17-19)
6. God will rule in a secure Jerusalem (33:5-6, 20-22)
7. The people will be transformed (33:5-6, 24)
8. The kingdom will be characterized by the Lord's presence, justice, righteousness, a beautiful king, a large territory, freedom from oppression, peace, security, divine rule, and the reversal of the curse.

## NOTES

v3 "The point is clear: why trust the nations in place of God, when it will take only a simple manifestation of his power to scatter them like chaff" (Oswalt 1986: 593).

v9 "The four regions mentioned are those which were the most fruitful. Now they are barren. The interplay between fruitfulness and barrenness and the question of whence they come is a great favorite of Isaiah's. For him the answer is plain: barrenness is a result of self-reliance; fruitfulness is the result of reliance on God" (Oswalt 1986: 597).

v10 "Interestingly, the final two verbs, *exalted* and *lifted up*, are the same ones which appear in 6:1 and 52:13. Clearly, for Isaiah the manifestation of God was inseparably linked to the conquest of God's enemies and the deliverance of his people" (Oswalt 598).

v12 "despite the hazardous nature of thorns when they are alive, once they are cut and dried, fire can consume them almost completely in a very short time. So it would be with Assyria and later with Babylon. For all their pomp and glory, each one's collapse came with great suddenness" (Oswalt 1986: 598).

v14 "The idea of God as a "consuming fire" (*'ēš ôkēlā*) and "everlasting burning" (*môqēdî 'ôlām*) derive from the revelation of God's presence in a flaming torch (Gen 15:17) and a burning bush (Exod 3:1-6), and in the thunder, lightning, fire, and clouds on Mount Sinai (Exod 19:12; 24:17; Deut 5:23,25). As a consuming fire, God had destroyed Israel's enemies (Deut 9:3), as well as sinners in Israel (Num 16:35; Isa 30:27)" (Smith 2007: 558).

v15 "There is no direct call for the audience to confess their sins and humble themselves before the almighty power of God. Instead the prophet points to behavioral changes that demonstrate the results of a work of grace in the hearts of transformed people" (Smith 2007: 559).