

Isaiah 6-39 God will rule over a new, perfect and eternal creation	Ch 6-12 God will rule with goodness and power, replacing human kings	Ch 13-27 God will destroy evil and dismantle this creation	Ch 28-35 God will instantly reverse bad and sad situations to become happy and glad	Ch 36-39 Human kings cannot enable long-term happiness
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Isaiah 33 (NIVUK)

33 Woe to you, destroyer,
 you who have not been destroyed!

Woe to you, betrayer,
 you who have not been betrayed!

When you stop destroying,
 you will be destroyed;
when you stop betraying,
 you will be betrayed.

² LORD, be gracious to us;
 we long for you.

Be our strength every morning,
 our salvation in time of distress.

³ At the uproar of your army, the peoples flee;
 when you rise up, the nations scatter.

⁴ Your plunder, O nations, is harvested as by young locusts;
 like a swarm of locusts people pounce on it.

⁵ The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high;
 he will fill Zion with his justice and righteousness.

⁶ He will be the sure foundation for your times,
 a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge;
 the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.^a

⁷ Look, their brave men cry aloud in the streets;
 the envoys of peace weep bitterly.

⁸ The highways are deserted,
 no travellers are on the roads.

The treaty is broken,
 its witnesses^b are despised,
 no one is respected.

⁹ The land dries up and wastes away,
 Lebanon is ashamed and withers;
Sharon is like the Arabah,
 and Bashan and Carmel drop their leaves.

Sunday 14 December 2025

Situation: Judah have been betrayed by Assyria (33:1)

1. Crying for God to act (33:2-9)

a. ‘God, you are strong’
(33:3-6)

b. ‘Look how much we’re suffering!’ (33:7-9)

^a Or is a treasure from him

^b Dead Sea Scrolls; Masoretic Text / the cities

Isaiah 28-35	28:1-6 Ephraim's self-trust ↓ Remnant's God-trust	28:7-13 "God's word is nonsense!" ↓ "I'll give you nonsense!"	28:14-29 "We trust in death!" ↓ "No, you will not!"	29:1-8 Jerusalem besieged ↓ Enemies made to disappear	29:9-24 Blind Judah cannot see God ↓ Judah can see God!	30:1-33 Judah's trust in Egypt leads to disaster ↓ God powerfully rescues Judah and blesses them
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2. God's action, action, action! (33:10-24)

a. Destroying those who threaten his people...

...from without (33:11-13)

...from within (33:14-16)

b. Reigning wonderfully as king!
(33:17-24)

¹⁰ 'Now will I arise,' says the LORD.
 'Now will I be exalted;
 now will I be lifted up.

¹¹ You conceive chaff,
 you give birth to straw;
 your breath is a fire that consumes you.

¹² The peoples will be burned to ashes;
 like cut thorn-bushes they will be set ablaze.'

¹³ You who are far away, hear what I have done;
 you who are near, acknowledge my power!

¹⁴ The sinners in Zion are terrified;
 trembling grips the godless:
 'Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire?
 Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?'

¹⁵ Those who walk righteously
 and speak what is right,
 who reject gain from extortion
 and keep their hands from accepting bribes,
 who stop their ears against plots of murder
 and shut their eyes against contemplating evil –

¹⁶ they are the ones who will dwell on the heights,
 whose refuge will be the mountain fortress.
 Their bread will be supplied,
 and water will not fail them.

¹⁷ Your eyes will see the king in his beauty
 and view a land that stretches afar.

¹⁸ In your thoughts you will ponder the former terror:
 'Where is that chief officer?
 Where is the one who took the revenue?
 Where is the officer in charge of the towers?'

¹⁹ You will see those arrogant people no more,
 people whose speech is obscure,
 whose language is strange and incomprehensible.

²⁰ Look on Zion, the city of our festivals;
 your eyes will see Jerusalem,
 a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved;
 its stakes will never be pulled up,

31:1-9 Judah trust in human Egypt God brings divine power to rescue	32:1-8 Oppressed by injustice Ruled by a righteous King	32:9-20 Judah faces judgement for her complacency God gifts his Holy Spirit	33:1-24 Judah suffers under an unjust destroyer God rescues Judah and becomes her forever-King!	34:1-35:10 2nd Exodus God brutally destroys <i>all</i> enemy nations... (34:1-17) ...and leads his people through a <i>verdant</i> wilderness! (35:1-10)
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nor any of its ropes broken.

²¹ There the LORD will be our Mighty One.

It will be like a place of broad rivers and streams.

No galley with oars will ride them,

no mighty ship will sail them.

²² For the LORD is our judge,

the LORD is our lawgiver,

the LORD is our king;

it is he who will save us.

²³ Your rigging hangs loose:

the mast is not held secure,

the sail is not spread.

Then an abundance of spoils will be divided

and even the lame will carry off plunder.

²⁴ No one living in Zion will say, 'I am ill';

and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven.

For reflection

Diagnostic

1. To what extent do you think about God doing *decisive reversals* on judgement day? Why?

2. What modern 'betrayals' of God's people are there today? Which ones impact you most?

3. Is your version of God 'permitted' to burn people to ash (33:12)?

Devotional

4. Are there parts of Isaiah 33 that struck you? Are there parts you need God's help to hear?

<u>Isaiah 1-5</u> Introduction How can one be spared judgement and live happily ever after?	<u>Isaiah 6-39</u> New Creation God will rule over a new, perfect and eternal creation	<u>Isaiah 40-55</u> New relationship God will restore his people from exile to a permanent relationship	<u>Isaiah 56-66</u> Who God will choose the humble and reject the proud
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The events behind Isaiah 33

Below are two historical instances where Judah sent gold and silver to Assyria:

2 Kings 16:5-9 –Assyria help King Ahaz defeat Israel-Syria

⁵ Then Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem and besieged Ahaz, but they could not overpower him. ⁶ At that time, Rezin king of Aram recovered Elath for Aram by driving out the people of Judah. Edomites then moved into Elath and have lived there to this day.

⁷ Ahaz sent messengers to say to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, ‘I am your servant and vassal. Come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Aram and of the king of Israel, who are attacking me.’

⁸ And Ahaz took the silver and gold found in the temple of the LORD and in the treasuries of the royal palace and sent it as a gift to the king of Assyria. ⁹ The king of Assyria complied by attacking Damascus and capturing it. He deported its inhabitants to Kir and put Rezin to death.

2 Kings 18:13-16 – King Hezekiah attempts to dissuade Assyrian aggression

¹³ In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah’s reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. ¹⁴ So Hezekiah king of Judah sent this message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: ‘I have done wrong. Withdraw from me, and I will pay whatever you demand of me.’ The king of Assyria exacted from Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. ¹⁵ So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the temple of the LORD and in the treasuries of the royal palace.

¹⁶ At this time Hezekiah king of Judah stripped off the gold with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple of the LORD, and gave it to the king of Assyria.