Session 11 The Forerunner Message in Isaiah 32-33

1. Introduction
   1. Isaiah 32-33 was an especially important prophetic message to the leaders of Jerusalem. Given within two years of Assyria laying siege to Jerusalem in 701 BC (32:10), the historical events mentioned here occurred around 704-701 BC.

*Isaiah 32-33 are especially important prophetic messages to the leaders of Jerusalem. What is going on is that it is only about two years before a great crisis is going to come and decimate the land of Judah. Remember the Assyrians who were the major superpower in the Middle East in that couple-hundred-year period? There was no one close to the Assyrian empire as rivals for several hundred years. The Assyrian army was two years away from invading Judah, killing a lot of people, and taking 200,000 captives from Judah, then putting a siege around the city of Jerusalem, surrounding Jerusalem, threatening to destroy the city.*

*Then Hezekiah and Isaiah together cried out to the Lord. The Lord supernaturally saved the city of Jerusalem, though He allowed the great crisis to happen in the larger area of Judah with 200,000 captives taken out of the land.*

* 1. Outline for Isaiah 32-33

**32:1-20 The coming King will rule in righteousness**

32:1-8 The coming King will rule in righteousness

32:9-14 An urgent exhortation to the complacent women

32:15-20 The transforming power of the Spirit

**33:1-24 The certain victory of God’s King and kingdom**

33:1 The certain destruction of Assyria

33:2-4 Isaiah’s prayer for help in the crisis with Assyria

33:5-6 Strengthened by the knowledge of God’s victorious plan

33:7-9 The crisis of Assyria’s betrayal of Jerusalem

33:10-12 God’s judgment of Assyria

33:13-16 Isaiah called all the nations to pay attention to His judgments

33:17-24 The beauty of King Jesus

*I am going to highlight just a couple points. This outline is more for you in your personal study when you take time and really spend a longer time on these chapters. Isaiah 32 is one of the great chapters about the Messiah. He is coming in righteousness.*

*There was a lot of confusion in the land of Judah. Remember, Judah is the southern kingdom; Israel is the northern kingdom. There was a civil war, the south versus the north. South is Judah where the city of Jerusalem is the capital. That is where David had been. He was part of the south.*

*There was a lot of confusion going on in the land, a lot of compromise. So, Isaiah, I got good news for you: there is coming a really good King. It ends up He is fully God and fully Man. He will reign forever. Everything that God promised to the city of Jerusalem is going to come to pass.*

*Then here in Isaiah 32:9-14, very important, we are going to look at this. I want you to highlight it. There is a prophetic exhortation to the complacent women of that day. Now I would not limit it to the women, but the idea was a prophetic exhortation to people who thought, “Well, you know what? Things are going to go on, business as usual. Nothing is really going to change.” Isaiah challenges them, and that is a really important passage for today.*

*Then, Isaiah 33, he says, “I have got good news for you. The King is going to win. There is going to be great victory, and the enemy is going to be destroyed.” In verse 2-4, Isaiah prays, and this is a model prayer that we can pray today in the midst of crisis. It is a key prophetic prayer.*

*Then, verse 5-6, Isaiah urges them to understand, and he emphasizes to them the value of knowing what is going on. He is saying that there is power in knowledge. If you know what is happening and what the Lord is doing, it will give you stability in the time when things are in an upheaval, darkness is rising, and things are seemingly out of control. If you have understanding, he says, you will have strength, and you will have stability. So he presses them to take getting understanding seriously.*

*Of course, that is what we are doing for these three years, by the grace of God. Through all 150 chapters in which the primary subject is the end times, we are wanting to get the large storyline. We are wanting to get some of the detailed nuances as well, although those are not as important as the major storyline.*

*Then he goes on in Isaiah 33:13-16 to reveal the godly response, how the godly are to respond to the judgments that are increasing in the land. Of course, that is a model for the end times as well. Then it crescendos with a revelation of the beauty of the King, that King Jesus in His beauty will be one of the primary focuses of the Holy Spirit in the generation the Lord returns. He says, “In that day, your eyes will see the beauty of the King.” Because, it is the beauty of Jesus that unfolds, particularly in these two chapters, but really in the whole end-time storyline. It is really the focus here in Isaiah 32-33. It is the beauty of the Jesus, seeing that beauty in a way others cannot see. Others will see the events unfold, and all they will see is random chaos. When trouble happens, and it seems random, and it does not seem like there is a purpose. particularly not a redemptive purpose that matters forever, then people get very offended at the chaos because random chaos leaves people confused, hurt, and offended. If there is a beautiful orchestrator of history, and we can see through the lens of the Word of God by the Holy Spirit, we can see beauty unfolding in the midst even of the devil raging and men rising up in sin against the purpose of God.*

* 1. What happens *in fullness* when Jesus returns occurs *in part* now and in an increasing way.
  2. Shakespeare said “history is a prologue.” God’s activity and leadership manifested in history is like an ancient mirror of what He will do in the end times in Israel and the nations.

1. The coming King will rule in righteousness (Isa. 32:1-8)
   1. In the millennial kingdom, Jesus will establish righteous leaders over society (32:1-4).

1Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice. 2A man [godly leaders] will be as a hiding place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. 3The eyes of those who see will not be dim, and the ears of those who hear will listen. 4Also the heart of the rash will understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers will be ready to speak plainly. (Isa. 32:1-4)

*Let’s jump right in here. He starts off, and again the context is in Isaiah’s day where the leadership—the spiritual and the political leadership—is filled with compromise, all kinds of confusion and deception and incompetence everywhere. I mean, it is similar today. There is a need for godly leadership in the political arena, the economic arena, and in the spiritual arena as well. So Isaiah trumpet-blasts this prophetic decree.*

* + 1. ***King***: Isaiah saw the King when he was commissioned (Isa. 6). He is the beautiful king of 33:17 (cf. 6:1, 5; 24:23; 33:22) who rules in righteousness (1:26; 9:7; 11:4-5; 32:1-2, etc.).   
       In Isaiah’s day, the spiritual and political leadership of Jerusalem was characterized by compromise, confusion, deception, and incompetence. Isaiah’s prophetic decree was that,   
       “A King is coming who will rule in righteousness!”

*There is a King who is coming. Righteousness will win. The chaos will be behind us forever.*

* + 1. ***Princes***: Jesus will impart His values (justice, etc.) and power through His godly leaders. These godly princes will provide “understanding” that helps the people under them to overcome fear, offense, and deception in the times of trouble (32:2). Such “understanding” will strengthen, stabilize, and protect the people—as a shelter protects from a storm and as water and shade strengthen in a desert (32:2). The Lord promised to raise up shepherds “after His own heart” like David—they will feed people on understanding of God’s heart and ways.

15“Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.” (Jer. 3:15)

*He says this Man is not only going to have this ability, but He is going to multiply it. He is going to raise up princes. He is going to raise up leaders. They will have His values. They will value justice and righteousness. So not only there is a Man who is coming, there is a Man who is coming who is going to multiply His values and His power through people that are like Him. Now this is obviously related to the second coming, but the principle is also for today because if that is happening in fullness when He appears, we know it is happening in part right now. It is increasing. The closer we get to the return of the Lord, the more that the promises and the blessings increase in intensity.*

* + 1. ***Cover***: These godly princes will be a source of provision and blessing to the people of God. Godly leaders use their understanding and resources to strengthen others—to provide shelter from the storm and to be like water and shade in a desert (32:2). We gain insight and inspiration from this millennial promise that strengthens our work in the Forerunner Research Group. God is raising up leaders who will be part of the answer instead adding to the problem of people being overwhelmed with fear, offense, deception, and compromise.

*He goes on in verse 2 and talks about a Man who will be for us “a hiding place.” What he is actually talking about are these leaders under Him, these princes, these leaders of society, these spiritual, economic, and political leaders. I love this description that Isaiah gives. He said that these leaders will provide a covering. They will be like a hiding place when there is a big storm breaking out. These godly leaders will be like a covering in a tempest. A tempest is a violent storm. They will be like water in a dry, desert land. They will be like the shadow of a great rock with the heat bearing down upon them.*

* + 1. ***Eyes will not be dim***: Scripture speaks of spiritual blindness being on the children of Israel since Isaiah’s generation. Yet he prophesied of a future time when it will be lifted entirely. Under the influence of godly leadership, they will gain insight—physically and spiritually (32:3-4; cf. 29:10-11,18; 35:5; 42:18).

*He says in verse 3 that the fruit of these godly leaders is that the spirit of blindness will be lifted off the people. Verse 3 says, “…the eyes of those who see will not be dim.” In verse 4, “The heart of the rash will understand knowledge.” They will actually speak it plainly.*

*Now at a quick read, you might wonder what is going on. In the larger storyline of the book of Isaiah, there is a spiritual blindness on the people of God, on the nation of Israel. What Isaiah is saying is that there is a day coming where the spiritual blindness that is operating in part right now upon Israel is going to be lifted entirely. There is a spirit of lethargy and blindness upon them, even on the saints in the Body of Christ. Not all of them, but there is a tremendous lack of grasping what God is doing and what is unfolding in the earth today.*

*The point He is making in verse 3 is that when God sets godly leaders in place that spirit of blindness is lifted. The people under them get living understanding. Verse 4 speaks of “the heart that speaks rashly.” I think of many in the Body of Christ that are distorting the truth about Jesus and the grace of God. The Lord has a plan to heal blindness that so they will speak clearly instead of with distortion. Now this is going to happen in fullness when He returns. I see this as a promise I am believing God for even right now.*

*So there is a glorious plan of victory. That great plan is based on a Man, and that Man is going to impart His values to other leaders, both men and women, young and old. Those leaders are going to be a resource in the storm to other people. You know even now I look at that prayer. I say, “Lord I want to touch that even now. I want to be amidst a company of people whose passion is to connect with God in such a way that, as trouble increases, we are a part of the answer, not part of the problem.”*

*The reason I say “not part of the problem” is that believers who are overwhelmed in fear or offense, they are mad at God. Like, “I thought that You were going to do it this way. It is happening that way, I do not even know if I believe You anymore.” Jesus warned that offense would emerge in the generation that He returns. There are more and more believers being captured by fear or offense or even deception or compromise. They are actually contributing to the confusion.*

*I have mercy on them but I am saying, “Lord I want to be a man among a people that actually is part of the solution, not part of the problem.” I want to see leaders raised up who, in the wind, in the tempest, and the darkness and the storm, can actually be a resource for other people.*

*So, verse 2, just put your name on that verse and say, “Lord, that is me by the grace of God. I am going to be a leader who is going to have answers and is going to be a stability when things shake. That is who I am going to be, by the grace of God.”*

* + 1. ***Make their heart dull***: The Lord gave Isaiah a challenging prophetic assignment—to speak the truth so *consistently, clearly, and boldly* though it would result in making their heart more and more dull since they would not faithfully respond to the it (Isa. 6:9-10).

9And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand…’ 10Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart…” (Isa. 6:9-10)

*Again, one of the great benefits of this godly leadership when the Lord returns—but again we are believing for it now. I am asking for a lot of these things now, knowing they will come in fullness when the Lord returns. I already mentioned it, but I will mention it again—Isaiah said the people whose the eyes are dim are confused. They are deceived. They are distorted. They are filled with fear. They are blind. They do not know what is going on. It looks like history is a train off the tracks going nowhere, with random violence and disruptions. Where this thing going? Those are people that their eyes are dim. The Lord says, “I am going to give clarity to them. I am going to release a spirit of boldness and clarity.”*

*Now, Isaiah 6 is when Isaiah was commissioned as a prophet. We did not cover Isaiah 6 in this course, but it was his ordination, his commissioning service so to speak, where the Lord visited him. His eyes saw the King and His glory. The Lord gave him this most—I do not want to say terrible, but this most—challenging commission. He said, “I want you to speak the truth so boldly, so persistently, so clearly that it actually ends up hardening the nation of Israel.”*

*You think, “What on earth are You talking about?”*

*You read Isaiah 6:9-10. The first time I read that, I was like, “Wait, if you anoint a prophet, it is so that the eyes of everyone who hears him will be clear.”*

* + 1. ***Truth is not neutral***: When we hear truth, we either become more tender and responsive or we do not respond and a small measure of spiritual dullness or hardness sets in. Hearing the truth either tenderizes or hardens. We become a little more responsive or a little more dulled.

*The Lord told Isaiah, “No, that is not how it works.” You see, there is a very, very important truth here: truth is not neutral. If you hear the truth and you do not respond to it, incrementally you take a step backwards. There is just a little bit of hardness that sets in. If you respond to it, you have a small incremental step forward, and there is a just a little bit of tenderness. Though there is not much change each time, every time something happens. Tonight, everyone in this room is going to be a little bit more responsive or a little bit more dull after hearing the Word tonight. Not because it is an end-time teaching, but because that is true of every single setting everywhere we go, because truth is not neutral. It hardens or it tenderizes and makes us responsive. If we do not say yes to it, we do not leave the same. We leave a little bit ever so slightly jaded. The next time we hear it, it moves us a little bit less.*

*So He told Isaiah that part of his commission was that he was going to speak the truth so clearly, so consistently, boldly, under the power of the Spirit, that the result of it would be that some would say yes, while others would grow hard in their heart because the truth, the anointed truth, not responded to, hardens.*

* + 1. The spiritual blindness related to Isaiah’s calling was still operating on the nation of Israel over 700 years later—in the time of Jesus and Paul. Paul made reference to God’s promise that the spiritual blindness on Israel will be healed when Jesus returns (Rom. 11:25-26).

25I do not desire…that you should be ignorant…that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26And so all Israel will be saved…  
“The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”  
(Rom. 11:25-26)

*That is what happened in Jesus’ day. He actually quoted this very reality. He quoted Isaiah to the Pharisees. He said, “You see My miracles; you have heard My truth. It has made you so much harder in the three-and-a-half years. Now you are ready to kill Me. Whereas before you were not quite at that point, now you are.”*

*The great news here is that He says the blindness is going to be totally lifted one day. Between now and when the Lord returns, it is going in two directions. We are asking the Lord, “Lord, give us living understanding in a way that it opens the eyes of the understanding.”*

*In Romans 11, Paul talks about this truth a little bit, this truth right here in Isaiah 32:3, about the eyes opening. He refers to this “blindness” that started or that was emphasized. Isaiah’s calling was still operating 700 years after Isaiah in Paul the apostle’s day.*

* + 1. ***Speak plainly***: These godly princes will help people to understand and thus to plainly communicate God’s truth instead of speaking in a way that distorts it (32:4). The Lord will raise His messengers up so that they speak the truth with clarity without distorting it.
  1. Isaiah described the current foolish leadership in Jerusalem—they were easy to recognize (32:5-8). Such leaders will be openly seen as fools and will lose credibility “when God arises” in judgment.
  2. Isaiah called the women to rise up and see the reality of the crisis that was coming soon to their nation (32:9-11; cf. 3:16-26). Great trouble was coming to their nation *within two years* (32:10). These women assumed that the ease which they currently enjoyed would continue uninterrupted. Isaiah challenged the ladies to listen, tremble, and be troubled because a crisis was coming soon.

9Rise up, you women who are at ease, hear my voice; you complacent daughters, give ear to my speech. 10In a year and some days you will be troubled, you complacent women; for the vintage will fail, the gathering will not come. 11Tremble, you women who are at ease; be troubled,   
you complacent ones; strip yourselves…and gird sackcloth on your waists. (Isa. 32:9-11)

*Okay, now he gives a call to the women in Jerusalem. These are women, who, quote-unquote, “grew up hearing the Bible in the synagogue,” hearing the Word of God. These are people who are well familiar with the Scriptures. He gives them this very urgent cry to shake off their lethargy, because he was saying that within two years, trouble was coming and things were going to change dramatically. The leaders in the land were saying, “Isaiah, he is way out there.”*

* + 1. ***Complacent***: The leaders in Jerusalem had made a political covenant with Assyria and assured the public and its leading women that the “Assyrian crisis” was over, and thus they did not need to listen to Isaiah’s warnings. Their complacency was in thinking that a crisis was not coming to their cities and that Isaiah was wrong to alarm the people about it. They were complacent because they trusted the optimistic words of the political leaders which assured them that their covenant with Assyria would hold up (33:8). These women assumed that the ease which they currently enjoyed would continue uninterrupted as it always had.
    2. These women were familiar with the Scripture. They accepted the narrative of the culture which mocked Isaiah’s prophetic messages and thought things would go on business as usual.

*In verse 9, he gives seven exhortations. I am not going to point them all out. I got a little bit on the notes there. This is a passage that is really worthy of tearing apart in a practical way. I do not want to do it on these Friday nights as I want to stay more on the broad strokes of these chapters. This is a “note to self” passage. You want to really open up verses 9-11 because it gives seven action items, seven exhortations of how to respond.*

*He says, verse 9, “Rise up, you women who are at ease. He says, “Hear my voice”—that is the second thing—“you complacent daughters.”*

*The reason they were complacent was because they trusted the word of the political leaders. The word on the street, the word that was popular, was that they had made a covenant with Assyria, this superpower. They went to him, and King Hezekiah sent a tremendous amount of money, like fifty million dollars of today’s money, and gave it to the superpower to buy them off, saying, “Hey, we will give you a lot of money. Just be nice to us. You are really powerful. We are really weak.” They made a covenant, and they said, “The crisis is over. The leaders have solved it. They met Sennacherib”—that is the king of Assyria—“they have settled a deal, they signed the contract, they gave them the fifty million dollars, and things are good.”*

*What Isaiah says is, “You are complacent. You are totally being lied to. You think it is going to be business as usual, but in a short amount of time, even within a two-year period, we are going to see in a moment that things are going to change radically. You are completely unprepared for it. If you would cry out to the Lord, the Lord would do more in your midst. You think it is business as usual.”*

*Boy, again you see that all around the earth today, even in the Body of Christ. Now the good news is there are millions in the Body of Christ who are waking up, but there are hundreds of millions who are not. That is the Lord’s issue, but we want to contend continually for more and more folks to wake up and pay attention to what the Spirit is saying in this hour.*

*He says to them in verse 9, “Hear my voice, you complacent daughters. Give ear to what I am telling you.”*

* + 1. Many of the leaders in Jerusalem mocked Isaiah. It is commonly accepted that Isaiah was killed by them. Various ancient texts report that King Manasseh commanded Isaiah to be sawn in two; they include the Babylonian Talmud and the Jerusalem Talmud (both written after AD 200). Many assume that Hebrews 11:37 is a reference to Isaiah’ martyrdom.

37They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword.   
(Heb. 11:37)

*I have mentioned that there are several times in the book of Isaiah where Isaiah had to contend with his spiritual leaders in his own nation writing him off, wagging their head at him, saying he had gone overboard. These ladies have bought into the narrative of the culture, so they are not responding at all to his words.*

* + 1. ***Vintage will fail***: The crops will fail because an invading army would destroy them.

*Here in verse 10 is the two-year thing. He says, “in a year and some days,” so I am calling it two years or less because we do not know how many days, “trouble is going to come.” Now this is a really specific time. It is time-sensitive. It is a timing indicator that within a two-year period, a year and some days, this nation is going to be troubled. They are saying, “No, it is not. No, we have made deals our leaders have told us. They have assured us business as usual is going on.”*

*He says, “You complacent women, the vintage will fail.” Meaning, the crops are going to fail. Meaning, a foreign army is going to invade us and that is why the crops are going to fail. When it talks here about the gathering will not come in, the harvest, that means because there would be a foreign invasion, a military invasion. They are eating our crops and destroying them so they can take us captive. That is what he is talking about here.*

* + 1. ***Be troubled***: There is a paradox in the grace of God. Believers living in a time of judgment were to be troubled yet also have confidence in who they are as citizens of the kingdom. We can be troubled by what is happening in society yet confident in our relationship to our beauty King. Isaiah motivated them by God’s *kindness* (32:1-4) and *judgement* (32:12-14).

22Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God… (Rom. 11:22)

*He says verse 11, “Tremble; shake off the spirit of ease; be troubled.” Now the grace of God is a paradox, because we are troubled and we tremble, but we have joy and confidence, for we have confidence in who we are before Him and that we are a part of a kingdom that is growing, that is victorious. We are troubled because around us darkness will increase as well.*

*So, there will be an increase of darkness and trouble, but an increase of power and victory happening at the same time. So, we are troubled, but we are confident with joy because we are connected to the King. There is a goodness and the severity of God happening at the same time. He said verse 11, “Tremble; be troubled.” He said, “As a matter of fact, strip yourself of things that are not necessary in your life right now. Begin to seek the Lord. Gird yourself with sackcloth.” That is the Joel “Cry out and call a fast.” Begin to get more serious with God.*

*They were saying, “No, no, things are fine.”*

*It is that tension of Romans 11:22. Paul said, “Consider the goodness and the severity.” You see, Judah was going to experience severity, but Judah was going to experience goodness because God was going to discipline them. He was going to wake up a remnant. Then He was going to save the remnant in a miraculous way. Then He was going to anchor His eternal kingdom into the storyline even of that generation. There was an unfolding storyline that would lead right to the Messiah, and then 2,000 years plus years later to His return. So, there is this paradox of goodness and severity going on at the same time.*

*Now our temptation is to only do goodness, to only stare at goodness. Some people, I do not know very many, I know a few, they are really into severity. They are kind of almost happy about severity. I say, “No, I do not want to go there either. I just want the truth.”*

*I heard one preacher say, “You know, there is the wide-eyed optimist and the muddy-eyed pessimist.” He said, “Let’s be wide-eyed realist.” That is where we need to go.*

* + 1. ***Seven exhortations***: Isaiah gave 7 action-oriented exhortations of how to respond (33:9-11). Isaiah called the complacent women them to “rise up” in action to seek the Lord (30:18-17), to “hear his voice” by giving special attention to gain understanding of the coming crisis (32:12-14), to “give ear” by applying the truth to their life, to “tremble” in light of the crisis coming within two years (32:10), to “be troubled” by implications of military invasion (32:12-14), to “strip themselves” of anything that hindered their spiritual preparation, and to “gird themselves” with sackcloth in fasting (Joel 2:12-13).
  1. The land of Judah was soon to suffer a great crisis. An Assyrian military invasion resulted in the harvest being devastated (mourn for the pleasant fields), the land being deserted (thorns coming up), and the homes of even the wealthy (palaces) being forsaken, as 200,000 people were taken captive by Assyria. The agricultural and economic crisis resulted in significant food shortages.

12People shall mourn upon their breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. 13On the land of my people [Judah] will come up thorns and briers, yes, on all the happy homes in the joyous city; 14because the palaces will be forsaken, the bustling city [Jerusalem] will be deserted…   
(Isa. 32:12-14)

*Now he goes on to tell it to them really straight. He said that a great crisis is coming in a year and some days. You know in verse 10 he said, a year in some days. In verse 12 he said, as it were, “Let me tell you more specifically. The people are going to mourn for the pleasant fields,” meaning the crops are going to fail. That is poetry. Well, I mean he literally means the pleasant fields are going to be destroyed. It is not poetry. He is talking in kind of poetic language, but he means it literally because the agriculture was destroyed by the invading military invasion of the superpower of that day, the Assyrian empire.*

* + 1. ***Thorns and briars***: These will grow in the land, implying that the cities would be destroyed.

*He said, verse 13, “On the land will come up thorns and briers.” Now why are thorns and briers going to come up in cities that are developed? Because the cities are going to be destroyed. That is the point he is making. He said, “Yes,” complacent ladies, “in the happy homes in the joyful city, and the palaces,” the big wealthy people’s houses. He did not mean just the king’s palaces, but even the really nice neighborhoods were going to be disrupted by the trouble.*

* + 1. ***Forsaken***: Various cities were deserted as Assyria marched through the land of Judah.   
       The cities were deserted because many were taken captive, killed, or fled out of fear.

*“The bustling city will be deserted.” By “the bustling city,” he means Jerusalem, but there were other cities, too. When the superpower Assyria came to Judah, there were a number of cities they attacked in the bottom part of the nation of Israel, which, again, after the civil war was called Judah. The reason the cities were deserted was because so many were taken away captive and others killed. Many fled because of fear, and the cities were deserted.*

*Now these ladies looked at this and said, “Isaiah, you are out of your mind! You are the only guy saying this. You and a few of your little prophet disciples.” In Isaiah 8, he had a little team with him. Most of the leadership of the nation was mocking him and laughing at him, just like they did to Jeremiah.*

* + 1. Destruction begun by Assyria (701 BC) was completed 115 years later by Babylon (586 BC).
  1. Trouble in Israel was to continue “until” a time when the Spirit would be poured out in fullness at the coming of the King (32:1) who would rule in righteousness, heal the land, and bring world peace. When Jesus returns, even the wilderness will become fruit fields (33:15; cf. 30:23-26).

15Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field… 16Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness…in the fruitful field. 17The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. (Isa. 32:15-17)

*Now this is a big statement. He says, “As a matter of fact, the trouble is going to continue in Israel.” Isaiah is around 700 BC, a little more than that, 700 to about 740. Just call it 700 BC to get an easy number to work with. So 2,700 years ago, Isaiah said that there will be times in Israel’s history of intense trouble, then times when things are not so intense. What he is saying here is that the trouble is going to continue from this day clear to the second coming. He said, “There is going to be trouble in the land,” verse 15, “until the Spirit is poured out on us.” He meant the city of Jerusalem.*

* + 1. Justice and righteousness will be established throughout all of society, even in the wilderness. The source of the transformation will be a King, anointed with the Spirit (32:1, 15; 11:1-3).
    2. Quietness and assurance are the opposite of fear and anxiety (32:17; cf. 30:15).

15In returning and rest…in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. (Isa. 30:15)

* 1. Joel prophesied of an end-time outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh—meaning on all nations.

28“…I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy… 29Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. 30I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth: blood, fire, and columns of smoke.” 31The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 32…whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered…in Jerusalem there will be those who escape…even among the survivors whom the Lord calls. (Joel 2:28-32)

*Now there was a down payment of the Spirit poured out on Jerusalem in Acts 2, but it was on only 120 people who then touched 3,000, and then touched 5,000. The majority of the city wanted nothing to do with it. So the first outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was a down payment described in the book of Joel.*

*In Joel 2, the promise is really the end-of-the-age outpouring. What happened on the day of Pentecost was a down payment. It was 120 people; it was not the Spirit on* ***all flesh****. It was not the whole earth being touched by the Spirit. It was a down payment. Joel and Isaiah were saying that there is going to be trouble, literally, until the Messiah comes and the Spirit is poured out in fullness on the city of Jerusalem, so gird yourself. Yes, there will be some victories. There will be some miracles. There will be some great moments, but gird yourself because Israel is not responding to the Messiah, and the same is true in the nations. The nations are not responding so well to the great King either. You see, He is not just the King of Israel, He is the King of the nations. Isaiah describes that here in verses 15-17. Let’s move on.*

* + 1. ***All mankind***: Acts 2 was only a “down payment” of Joel’s prophetic promise of a global outpouring of the Holy Spirit. What happened on the day of Pentecost did not fulfill the promise of the Spirit being poured out on “all mankind” or “all flesh.” In Acts 2, the Spirit only rested on 120 Jewish believers in Jerusalem, and then again on 3,000. The fullness of Joel’s prophecy requires a global dimension where the Spirit empowers believers from all over the world so that they prophesy and see visions.
    2. ***Sun and moon***: The outpouring of the Spirit that Joel prophesied was not *completely* fulfilled in Peter’s generation. This is evidenced by significant differences between Joel 2 and Acts 2. Only a portion of it was fulfilled in Peter’s day. Joel said the Spirit would touch all mankind and that the sun and the moon would grow dark and signs as blood and smoke would be seen. Blood is associated with three trumpet and two bowl judgments (Rev. 8:7-10; 16:3-4).
    3. ***Before the day of the Lord***: The end-time outpouring of the Spirit will happen ***before*** the day of the Lord (Joel 2:31). The outpouring of the spirit of prophecy is in context of the end-time drama, thus enabling the saints to discern the deception of the Antichrist.
    4. ***Delivered***: Whoever calls on the Lord in Jerusalem will be delivered or protected—escaping to survive the Great Tribulation (Joel 2:32). Jerusalem will be one of the most violent cities on earth at that time. Yet, those who call on His name will receive His protection.
  1. In the Millennium, the children of Israel will in peace without fear of military threats (32:18-20). Even though hail comes down and Jerusalem is brought low (32:12-14), God’s promises will surely come to all the land of the Israel in the Lord’s appointed time.

18My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places, 19though hail comes down on the forest, and the city is brought low in humiliation. 20Blessed are you who sow beside all waters, who send out freely the feet of the ox and the donkey.   
(Isa. 32:18-20)

* + 1. ***Peaceful habitation***: The inhabitants of the land will be blessed after the Lord returns and will enjoy a peaceful life with abundant waters and crops described in pastoral language.
    2. ***Hail***: Hail represents the attack on Judah by Assyria in Isaiah’s generation (32:12-14) and it can apply to the difficulties that will occur in Israel and many other places in the end times. God’s judgments are often compared to hail (Ex. 9:18-34; Josh. 10:11; Ps. 78:47-48; Isa. 18:2, 17; 28:2, 17; 30:30; Ezek. 13:11, 13; 38:22; Hag. 2:17; Rev. 8:7; 11:19: 16:21).

2Behold, the Lord has a mighty and strong one [the Assyrian army], like a tempest of hail and a destroying storm…who will bring them down to the earth with His hand. (Isa. 28:2)

30The Lord will…show the descent of His arm [judgment], with the indignation of His anger…with scattering, tempest, and hailstones. (Isa. 30:30)

21And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail…[it] was exceedingly great.   
(Rev. 16:21)

* + 1. ***Blessed are you***: It will be common for the people to plant their crops by one of the many sources of water resulting in abundant crops. This parallels God’s promise in 30:23-25, where cattle range free in large pastures and rivers will be found on “every” high mountain and hill.

23...in that day your cattle will feed in large pastures…25There will be on every high mountain and on every high hill rivers and streams of waters… (Isa. 30:23-25)

* + 1. ***Send out freely***: The crops will be so abundant that they will even let their livestock roam freely eating to eat. The oxen and donkeys pulled the plow over the land.

1. The certain victory of God’s King and kingdom (Isa. 33:1-24)
   1. The certain destruction of Assyria (33:1): Isaiah 33 continues the theme from Isaiah 32. Isaiah shifted from prophesying trouble coming to Judah to speaking of God’s judgment on Assyria. God has no partiality. He was troubled by the lack of response to Him of those in Judah *and* in Assyria.

1Woe to you who plunder…and you who deal treacherously [Assyria]…! When you cease plundering, you will be plundered…they will deal treacherously with you. (Isa. 33:1)

*Now he begins to shift from talking about trouble in Judah and Jerusalem. He shifts and begins to say that it is not only going to be trouble on you, it is also going to be trouble on the superpower that is troubling you, because God has no partiality. There is no partiality in God whatsoever. God looks at Israel, and He is troubled by their lack of response to Him. He looks at the Assyrians that He is using to wake Israel up. They are not responding to Him either. God has no partiality. He says, as it were, “I am going to use the Assyrians to wake up My people, and then I am going to judge the Assyrians because they are going to be responsible for their cruelty and for their deception. Though I am going to use their cruelty and deception to wake up My people, then I will hold them responsible because it will be their choice that they chose this pathway as well, though I used them.”*

* + 1. ***Deal treacherously***: The Assyrian empire is referred to as the “treacherous one who plunders” (33:1). They were treacherous in breaking the covenant with the leaders in Jerusalem (33:8). The Assyrians were identified as a nation speaking with a stammering tongue (33:19; 28:11).

*Isaiah 32-33 is all one big conversation actually, so you want to study these two chapters together. He suddenly shifted in verse 1 and said, “Woe to you, plunderer.” Now he is talking to the superpower.*

*So, the people in Jerusalem are going like, “Praise God, we have changed the subject! The Lord is troubled by the people troubling us. The Lord is not only troubled with us, He is troubled by the superpower troubling us.”*

*He said, “Woe to you, Assyria.” Well, he calls the empire the plunderer. It is quite clear and almost every commentator— there are a few who disagree—but the vast majority understand this to be Assyria. There are a bunch of reasons why, but I will not go into it right now.*

*He said, “Assyria, you who deal treacherously.” He went on, “I have got news for you: you will be plundered too. You have been plundering all the nations around the Middle East. The day is coming, Assyria, when you are going to be plundered. You are going to be finished.”*

* + 1. The Assyrians’ treachery and betrayal of Israel in Isaiah’s generation is a foreshadowing of the end-time betrayal of Israel by the Antichrist. The Antichrist will betray a covenant he made with Israel seven years before Jesus returns (Isa. 28:14-18; Dan. 9:27; cf. Dan. 11:45; 14; 39:26; Zech. 11:16; Lk. 19:11-28; Jn. 5:43; 1 Thes. 5:3). He will probably monetize the covenant.

*Now the point that he highlights here in verse 1 is the treachery of Assyria. The reason this is important is because this same treachery is going to happen with the Antichrist and the nation of Israel in the generation the Lord returns. The treachery is going to be repeated again.*

* 1. King Hezekiah made a political covenant with the Assyrian King Sennacherib that required Judah to pay much gold and silver as tribute to Assyria (2 Kgs. 18:14-17).

14Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay.” And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15So Hezekiah gave him all the silver… in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king’s house…17Then the king of Assyria sent…a great army against Jerusalem… (2 Kgs. 18:14-17)

*Here is the treachery that I mentioned when I first opened up the passage. King Hezekiah is the king of Judah based in Jerusalem. He made a covenant with the superpower, King Sennacherib. I want everyone to say, “Sennacherib.” Say it again, “King Sennacherib.” Say, “I can learn the name Sennacherib.” I am not going to name my son Sennacherib or your dog; do not name anybody that. Well, the reason I mention this king is because he shows up a number of times, so this is one of those few names that if you learn it, then you can recognize it. You think, “Oh, okay. I got this one down. He is the bad guy with Hezekiah. Got it.”*

*What happened is in 2 Kings 18. I am not going to read it to you; you can read it on your own, 2 Kings 18. King Hezekiah went to Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, the superpower, and said, “Okay, you are about to destroy us. What do you want?”*

* + 1. ***300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold***: Today, this is worth almost ***$50 million***.   
       A talent in that day was approximately 75 pounds. In today’s market, 300 talents of silver are worth just over $5 million and 30 talents of gold are worth just over $40 million. Imagine a small nation the size of New Jersey paying this amount of money for protection!

*He said, “What do you think I want? I want slaves, and I want money, tribute.” It ends up that the king of Assyria here in the end of verse 14 wanted 300 talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. In today’s market, that is about fifty million dollars. He said, “I want fifty million dollars, and I want you to obey me in whatever I say I want you to do. That is the deal.”*

*Hezekiah thought, “My goodness, that is intense!” When you are the superpower, that is what you do. So, Hezekiah gave the fifty million. It says here that he had to strip all the silver and gold out of his treasuries and even out of the temple. I mean King Sennacherib made him milk the nation of everything for the fifty million.*

*Then King Sennacherib, look what he did in verse 17. He said, “We are going to attack you anyway, now that I have got your money. I lied to you. I made a promise to you, but I am not going to keep it. I got your money. Now I am going to destroy you because I want to create fear in all the other nations so that when I go down to Egypt, they salute because they see how badly I treated you. In fear, they will give me whatever I want, and all the other nations will.” That is why the superpowers are so cruel. They wanted to incite the next nation to give up quickly.*

*Well, again, the reason we care about this treachery in the storyline is because, remember from Isaiah 28:15-18—I do not want to go through it again—there is going to be a covenant of death that the leaders of Israel make with foreign powers that ends up bringing destruction to their nation. That is going to happen at the end of the age. Other nations are going to make that same covenant of death with the Antichrist. I do not want to go through that again.*

*That is a key part of the storyline that we see in Isaiah, that we see a highlight of it, a short kind of snapshot of it in Isaiah’s life. It is going to be played out on a global level at the end. We get to read the whole storyline ahead of time, get familiar with how God feels, how God responds, what He wants, what the good response is, what the bad response is. We get to read the whole story with some details before it happens in the generation the Lord returns. That is the value of the book of Isaiah and these chapters because there are all kinds of details in here.*

*Again, I do not want people to feel like they have to understand every one of the couple hundred nuanced details. I am just kind of urging people to get the twenty-five kind of main points of the storyline—and that is a made-up number, by the way, because the list is about that long. I have not actually counted it—there are only a handful of key parts of the end-time storyline.*

* 1. Isaiah’s prayer for help in the crisis with Assyria is a model prayer for the end times (33:2-4).   
     This is a prayer that Israel may use when being attacked by the Antichrist.

2O Lord, be gracious to us; we have waited for You. Be…our salvation also in the time of trouble. 3At the noise of the tumult the people [Assyrians] shall flee; when You lift Yourself up, the nations shall be scattered; 4And Your plunder shall be gathered… (Isa. 33:2-4)

*Okay, so Isaiah kicked into gear here. He said, “God, are You going to destroy the superpower?” Verse 2 is a model prayer, verses 2-4. This is a prayer that we could spend a half hour breaking down the key points. I want you again to “note to self,” and just highlight this as a model prayer in a time of crisis, a model prophetic prayer.*

* + 1. ***Waited for You***: He assured them that God was waiting to hear their cry (30:18-19).

18…the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious…blessed are all those who wait for Him… 19He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. (Isa. 30:18-19)

*He prayed, “Lord, be gracious.” He said, “We have waited on You.” Now the “we” is not a very big group. Isaiah had only a small number of people in his company, but it worked. The “we” were enough. Remember last week in Isaiah 30. We look at Isaiah 30 a week ago, just a chapter or two back, and Isaiah said, “The Lord will wait. The Lord wants to be gracious. He will be gracious when He hears the sound of your cry. He wants you to wait on Him. The Lord is waiting on you to wait on Him.” So, since he prophesied that in Isaiah 30, and here it is a little bit later in time, he said, “Lord, I am going to do it. I am going to do what I taught them. I am going to cry out to You, and I am going to wait before You because I know that when You hear the sound of my cry You will be gracious.” I love that Isaiah is walking out what he taught the nation just a little bit earlier, back in Isaiah 30!*

*He prayed, “O Lord, be gracious, for we have waited on you.” Again, that “we” is a pretty small, little company. I tell you, as for me and my house, I am going to be a part of a company of people that are waiting on the Lord. It is not passive. The waiting is not biding time. That is not what waiting means. “Waiting” is Old Testament language for engaging actively with God. Being attentive to His heart, to His will, waiting on Him. It is like the waiter that is waiting on the one they are serving. They are just, “Anything You say, Lord. I am waiting attentively to go at Your beck and call. I want to move with Your heart.” That is what waiting on God means, so do not think of it as passive or just biding time. It is an active interaction of attentiveness with God.*

* + 1. ***At the noise of the tumult***: The loud noise made by a violent thunderstorm or by a multitude of people fleeing in fear from danger. This refers to the loud noise made in the Assyrian camp, when the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 soldiers and the rest fled in fear.

*He said in verse 3, that “at the noise of the tumult…” That is an interesting phrase. The people, the Assyrians, are going to be destroyed. He said, “I know a storm is coming, and it is going to hit the superpower.” He said, “The superpower is hitting us right now, but I know You are going to hit them. I know it! You have told me. They are disciplining us”—I mean it is the Lord’s discipline, but He is using them—“but You are going to take care of them.”*

* + 1. ***The people***: The words “people” and “nations” in the prophets usually indicate the Gentile nations (33:3, 12; 34:1); here it is speaks directly of the Assyrians.
    2. ***You lift Yourself up***: When Isaiah speaks of God “lifting Himself up,” “being exalted,” or “arising,” it often speaks of the times when He intervenes in history in decisive way to save His people and destroy His enemies.

*Now he says this interesting phrase, in verse 3, “When You lift Yourself up, God, the nations will be scattered and Your plunder will be gathered.” This is a very interesting terminology. In the book of Isaiah, it talks about God exalting Himself. There is this phraseology that shows up through the book. You run into it. Isaiah 2 says it a number of times. This terminology that when God is exalted, when God is arises, when God lifts Himself up, which means when God steps into action to intervene into human history in a decisive, open way that everybody can see. That is, when Isaiah says, “When the Lord exalts Himself,” it is code for when God breaks in with His mighty arm, He delivers His people, and He destroys His enemies. Those are His very powerful, unique interventions in history that cause disturbances of nations when His hand is intervening. That goes along with the term in Isaiah, not every time, but almost every time where it says, “God lifts Himself up…He awakens…He arises…He is no longer silent.” That is what that means. It means He is intervening in power. You will see that all through Isaiah. If you know that phrase, then you understand the storyline of what is happening.*

* + 1. Hezekiah’s prayer is also a model prayer in a time of crisis (2 Kg. 19).

1…when King Hezekiah heard it…and went into the house of the Lord. 2Then he sent…the elders…to Isaiah the prophet…3And they said to him, “…This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy…15Hezekiah prayed…19save us…that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God, You alone.” 20Then Isaiah…sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the Lord, ‘…because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.’…31Out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and those who escape from Mount Zion…32concerning the king of Assyria: ‘He shall not come into this city… 34I will defend this city, to save it for My own sake…’” 35And it came to pass…that the angel of the Lord went out and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand… (2 Kgs. 19:1-35)

* + 1. ***Your plunder***: Judah will gather the plunder of the defeated armies of the Antichrist.

14Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together: gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance. (Zech. 14:14)

* 1. The Lord’s commitment to fill Jerusalem with justice instead of Jewish victims of war (33:6):   
     God’s people are strengthened by the knowledge of God’s victorious plan (33:6).

5The Lord is exalted, for He dwells on high, He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness. 6Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation; the   
fear of the Lord is His treasure…17Your eyes will see the King in His beauty… (Isa. 33:5-6, 17)

*Isaiah moves on from his prayer in verses 2-4. Now he is prophesying in verses 5-6. Next is a prophecy after his intercession. His intercession, verses 2-4, now his prophecy, verses 5-6. He said, “The Lord is exalted.” Again, that is code for “You are about to release Your intervening judgments into nations in a way that is big.” I mean, it is not a subtle kind of disturbance; it is a big, historic event.*

*He went on, “…for You dwell on high. You are going to fill Zion with righteousness.” Zion is another word for Jerusalem. Basically it is saying, “Jerusalem is filled with compromise right now, but You are about to step into the affairs of our nation. You are going to wake us up because You want to fill the city with righteousness, not with compromise.” There is going to be some pain involved. The righteousness and the plan of God are going to endure forever. I mean, once it happens, Jerusalem will be righteous for millions and millions of years, never troubled again.*

*In the million-year storyline, this is an amazing story. Because we are eternal, it is an amazing story. Because people think temporally and are disconnected from the Word of God, they see the here-and-now and that is all they think about. The Lord would say, “No, no, you are eternal! My storyline is big. I am filling the earth with love. I know what I am about. It will all make sense when all the information is on the table.”*

* + 1. ***Stability and strength***: Strength comes from knowledge—knowing the biblical narrative of the end times strengthens people with confidence and brings stability. Those who know God’s biblical end-time plans will walk in stability instead of being overwhelmed with fear, offense, or deception in context to the end-time troubles and pressures. By knowledge of God’s end-time plans, His people will have power to have a calm heart in the storm.

*He says here in verse 6 that wisdom and knowledge will be your stability. If you know what God is doing, that is wisdom and knowledge. He is talking about in the crisis, right now. He is not just talking about book-of-Proverbs wisdom, where you know how to invest money or you know how to raise your kids. That is good, too, but that is not what He is talking about here. He is talking about insight into what God is doing as history is unfolding, and the crisis is mounting up, and God’s purpose is intervening. He is talking specifically about knowledge and wisdom in midst of the crisis that is mounting. He said that it will be the stability of your times. It will be your strength.*

*This verse is really dear to me. This was a verse with which the Lord really anchored my life. It was in September 1997. I am not going to tell a big story. I could tell a big story about it, but it was this verse, Isaiah 33:6. It was new to me. It was September 1997, so twenty years ago. I said, “Lord, I do not even know anything about this book.” I was feeling like some of you are feeling right now, saying, “This book is confusing.” You know how Rachel said it was scary and confusing? I thought it was just confusing. I thought, “I do not even know what is going on here.”*

*The Lord began to talk to me real clearly through various ways, “Just learn the storyline. It will be your stability and your strength. You will be able to be a covering and a resource and to bring others into the stability in the storm.*

* + 1. ***Knowledge***: There is power in knowledge. If you know what the Lord is doing, it will give stability in a time of increasing crisis and darkness. Understanding will bring strength and stability. Isaiah urged them to take the necessary steps to gain understating. We care about the knowing the biblical end-time narrative because it is so dear to His heart that Scripture describes the generation of the Lord’s returns more than any other time frame in history.

*Remember, we started off in Isaiah 32:2-3, “The fear of the Lord will be your treasure.” Then a few verses later, “…and your eyes will see the King in His beauty.” So, we see the beauty of God, the knowledge of what He is doing in that generation, the unfolding of it together in the fear of the Lord. From the beauty of God, the fear of the Lord, and the knowledge of His plans as He is unfolding His redemptive purposes, as the crisis is increasing, all of those together create stability and strength, because, again, it is when knowledge is power.*

*When we feel that the crisis is random and it is not producing anything redemptive, that there is pain but no purpose in the pain, we feel there is nothing that God is doing in it. It seems nobody is steering the train, so to speak. That is a really chaotic, hopeless feeling. There may be trouble and even pain, but we see a good God and a beautiful King. He is in control. I can say, “I do not get the pain right now, but I am really captured by the fact that You are leading this thing. It is going somewhere, and it does make sense, and it is not random. The details were laid out thousands of years ago, in advance. Lord, if You have that kind of information, that kind of detail, for the end of the age, that means You have control over the details. If You can know them and set them in motion, that means You have power over them. Yes, there will be some trouble, but I am connected to the beautiful King, so I trust Your leadership.” That is the strength and security that comes.*

* + 1. ***Fear of the Lord***: One gift of God to His people in the time of crisis is the assurance that He sees everything and that even our small choices to obey and trust Him matter deeply to Him.

13…but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account… 16Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace… (Heb. 4:13, 16)

* + 1. ***Filled with justice***: Jerusalem was filled with compromise in Isaiah’s day, but the Lord will intervene with His judgment and grace, resulting in Israel being filled with righteousness.
  1. The crisis of Assyria’s betrayal of Jerusalem (33:7-9): Isaiah described the anguish of the Jewish people after the Assyrian King Sennacherib broke his peace treaty with them (2 Kgs. 18:14-17).

7Surely their valiant ones shall cry outside; the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.   
8The highways lie waste, the traveling man ceases. He [Assyrian king] has broken the covenant, he has despised the cities, he regards no man. 9The earth mourns and languishes, Lebanon is shamed…Sharon is like a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits. (Isa. 33:7-9)

* + 1. ***Weep bitterly***: Even the valiant soldiers of Jerusalem would cry openly, and the ambassadors returning from peace talks with the Assyrians wept bitterly.
    2. ***Covenant***: Things seemed hopeless after Assyria broke the peace agreement with Jerusalem.
    3. ***Earth mourns***: Lebanon, Sharon, Carmel, and Bashan were known for wealth and beauty.

*Now he says that it is not just the superpower who is going to be troubled. He goes back to Jerusalem and says that he does not think just the superpower is going to be in trouble, though God is actually going to destroy them and remove them. Isaiah would say, “He is still not done with you, Jerusalem.” So, Isaiah comes back to the topic of Jerusalem. Isaiah kind of goes back and forth. Even in one chapter he will talk to the people of God, then he will talk to their enemy, then he will talk about the people of God. Isaiah goes back and forth. That is kind of his way of writing and prophesying. Then he will throw a few prayers in between. So, once you know that about Isaiah, you are not so easily thrown by His style.*

*He said, as it were, “Okay, Jerusalem, you are not off the hook.” He said, “Surely the valiant ones cry outside. The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.” What He is saying is that the leaders of Judah have come back from the peace talks with the superpower Assyria. They have bad news; the king of Assyria is going to betray them. He took their fifty million, but then said that he was going to destroy them anyway, despite having their millions because he wanted the other nations to be afraid of him so that he could get their millions too. These valiant ones, in verse 7, are the mighty soldiers of Israel. The ambassadors are Judah’s ambassadors at the peace talks. They are weeping bitterly openly, verse 8. “The highway is laid waste; the traveling man ceases,” meaning traveling, moving around the whole nation, is going to be disturbed when this military invasion takes place.*

*I mean, just think about what happened in Europe. Just picture some of the documentaries after World War II of some of the cities of Europe and Russia and Asia that were decimated in the war. The travel, the economy, all these things were completely disrupted. That is what Isaiah is describing for Judah. He said, “It is coming to you before it comes to the superpower,” he went on, “for the king has broken the covenant. He despises the cities of Judah. He does not regard any of us. He could not care less about us. The earth is going to mourn,” meaning the land of Israel itself. “We have got trouble ahead of us.”*

* 1. God’s judgment of Assyria (33:10-12): Jerusalem suffered for a season, but in His perfect timing God arose in answer to Isaiah’s prayer for Him to save them from Assyria (33:2-4). We see this as the Assyrians because the word “people” speaks of Gentiles as it does in 33:2

10“Now I will rise,” says the Lord. “Now I will be exalted; now I will lift Myself up. 11You shall conceive chaff, you shall bring forth stubble…12And the people [Assyrians] shall be like the burnings of lime; like thorns cut up they shall be burned in the fire.” (Isa. 33:10-12)

*Isaiah switches, and now he is speaking the Lord’s heart; he is going to switch back to Assyria again. Look at this statement, verse 10. I want you to catch, capture, the word, “now.” It happens three time in one sentence. “****Now*** *I will arise…****now*** *I will be exalted…****now*** *I will lift Myself up.” Remember when God says, “I am going to rise, lift Myself, be exalted,” in the book of Isaiah, almost every time that is code for “I am going to intervene in the affairs of man in a way that is obvious for many to see.” It will not be a subtle intervention you are guessing about. It will be a dramatic intervention.*

*He says, “I am going to destroy the Assyrians. I am going to burn them like dry thorn bushes. They are going to burn quickly and be gone forever when I do it.”*

*He says that, and Israel says, “Well, that is good, but You said we are going to get trouble first before You take care of the ones who trouble us.”*

*Isaiah says, “That is right.”*

* + 1. ***Now***: Isaiah repeated “now” three times—“now I will arise,” “now I will be exalted,” and “now I will lift Myself up.” This spoke of the Lord’s dramatic intervention into the situation in ancient history where He burned the Assyrians like dry thorn bushes.
    2. ***I will arise***: When God “rises up,” “lifts Himself up” (33:3), or “exalts Himself” (33:5), it speaks the times that He manifests His power to save His people and confront His enemies.
    3. ***Burn***: The nations making up the Assyrian army will burn quickly like dry thorn bushes.   
       This burning of Assyria included an angel killing 185,000 soldiers in one night (37:36).
    4. ***The people***: The words “people” and “nations” indicate the Gentile nations (33:3; 34:1).
  1. Isaiah called all the nations to pay attention to His judgments (33:13-16): He called them to acknowledge what God did to His people Judah (33:7-9) and to His enemy Assyria (33:10-12). Isaiah describes how different people will respond God in times when His judgments increase—sinners will be terrified (33:14) and those living godly will dwell in His presence (33:15-16).

13“Hear, you who are afar off, what I have done; and you who are near, acknowledge My might.” 14The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: “Who among us   
shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?”   
15He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly…16He will dwell on high… (Isa. 33:13-16)

*This is really key here. This is another one of the really key passages in Isaiah. This causes the fear of God to come on me when I read this passage in verses 13-16. This is one of God’s redemptive purposes with His judgments. He says here, “Pay attention. Those of you that are afar off,” that means the foreign nations of the earth. Isaiah was saying, “Nations of the earth, watch this story unfold in my lifetime” though it is going to unfold again at the end of the age. It is going to unfold in a bigger scope and with greater intensity.*

*Hear, pay attention worldwide, you who are afar off, nations, foreign nations. You who are near: Judah, the people of God, He said that, whether you are way over there or you are up close, this is a storyline that is going to capture the attention of everyone. He said, “You are going to acknowledge My might.”*

* + 1. ***Hear and acknowledge My might***: Pay attention, you nations who are both far and near! They were called to acknowledge God’s judgments of Judah (33:7-9) and Assyria (33:10-12).
    2. ***Afar off and near***: The Lord wants people who are “far away” in foreign nations and those who are “near” in Judah to see His judgment of both Judah (33:7-9) and Assyria (33:10-12).
    3. ***Sinners in Zion***: Those who grew up in Jerusalem and thus were familiar with the Scripture but who refused to embrace God’s leadership are referred to here as “sinners in Zion.”
    4. ***Afraid***: Sinners and hypocrites in Zion are terrified in seeing God’s zeal in confronting sin. They tremble as they come face to face with their own danger in recognizing God’s zeal in judging both Judah and Assyria. They are terrified because they saw God’s discipline of Judah using the military invasion of the Assyrian army. They reasoned that, “If God zealously intervened with severity when His people cast off His leadership, then where do I stand?”
       1. The nations will learn righteousness from God’s judgments—this includes both believers and unbelievers.

9For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9)

* + - 1. Isaiah’s message is that even this cynical group will be terrified when they see that God is zealous about confronting rebellion against His leadership. In the end times, He will zealously intervene in history to save His people and destroy His enemies.
      2. His end-time judgments will strike terror into the hearts of people—especially those who are familiar with the Scripture and the things of God. Often those who are the slowest to respond to God’s judgments are “the sinners in Zion.”
      3. Many of them are cynical and are not easily moved to repentance, but some of them will learn righteousness in the time of God’s judgments.

*Now he says this very interesting phrase in verse 14. He says that the sinners in Zion will be afraid. The sinners in Zion, what? Fearfulness is going to seize the hypocrites? The question is going to be asked, “Who can dwell with devouring fire?” The devouring fire is the presence of God. “Who can dwell with everlasting burning?” As in they are thinking, “What human can get close to the God who is decimating Assyria and disciplining Israel with such severity? Who can get close to that God? If you get close to Him, you are going to get burned.”*

*Isaiah says, “No,” verse 15, “if you agree with His leadership, if you walk in righteousness”—I am not talking about earning anything, I am talking about coming in agreement with His leadership—He says that if you dwell on high, you will actually be able to dwell in the presence of the God who is a burning fire, and it will be joy and delight, safety and not trouble.*

*Look at this phrase, “sinners in Zion.” The sinners in Zion are the group that grows up with a spiritual heritage. They know the things of God, at least in an elementary way. They continue to live in compromise. They are not just the idol worshippers in a heathen nation who have never heard of the God of Israel. They have grown up with the Bible or are familiar with it enough. They do not want to embrace His leadership, so they are called sinners in Zion. It is a bit of an oxymoron, you know. Sinners in Zion? Like, “rebellious believers.” Like, “Really? That is an odd phrase.”*

*The reason they are going to be terrified is they are going to see God discipline Judah. They are going to see the discipline up close as this military force marches through the land. Then, in a little bit, down the road, they are going to see God destroy that mighty superpower. They are going to say, “Wait, if the God of Israel intervenes with this kind of severity when you cast off His leadership, where do I stand?” He says that the sinners in Zion are going to be terrified. They are going to say, “We know enough about the Bible to be a lot more terrified than the unbelievers are because God does not have double standards.”*

*Though in the religious culture of that day the women, the complacent women, and the foolish men leaders of the nation were telling everybody, “Things are okay. God is happy. Everything is okay,” Isaiah said, “No, it is not. No, it is not.”*

*Today, when I look at the Body of Christ, there are a lot of people with a spiritual heritage. They grew up in a Christian culture, so they know a little bit about the things of God, but they have no concern for obeying His leadership. When God begins to increase His activity—because He has not been doing it much, as mostly through history the Lord’s hands are off in terms of confronting darkness openly and on a global level. The days are coming, well we know, before the Lord returns when it is going to be really intense—He is going to intervene in a very direct way so the people far away in the foreign nations and the people up near in Judah or those near Zion are going to understand the God of Israel is involving Himself in the affairs of men again, and they are going to be terrified.*

*Now the slowest group to respond are the sinners in Zion. The on-fire believer responds. Believe it or not, when things are troubled in the earth, the unbelievers say, “Oh my God! That must be God.” I mean you ought to hear the unbelievers talk about God, with no theology, no background, nothing. They know that “The believer this.. and that…” and the other things are God. Sometimes they are off, but they are far more aware. People who grow up in a Christian setting, they get cynical and jaded. It is really hard to move them. Isaiah said that it is going to be so disturbing even they will be terrified, because they will see that God is zealous about confronting the casting off of His leadership.*

* + 1. ***Dwell with fire***: Who can dwell in the manifest presence of God? —He is a consuming fire. Who can live in the presence of a God who is zealous for love and holiness?

24For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. (Deut. 4:24)

* + 1. ***Who shall dwell with devouring fire***: Isaiah asked “Who can dwell in God’s presence?” Who can live close to a God who will destroys Assyria and disciplines His nation with severity? The message was clear—all who persist in rebelling against the “God who is a consuming fire” will be burned. Those who live in agreement with His leadership will dwell on high with Him (33:16) and will experience joy and safety in His presence.

*Now, again, who can dwell with fire? The question is, who can live in the presence of a God who is this zealous? Our God is a consuming fire. Isaiah gives the answer.*

* + 1. ***He who walks righteously***: Isaiah answered the question in 33:14 by giving six responses of a person who chooses righteousness (33:15). The principle is that the pure in heart will see God (Mt. 5:8). David asked a similar question and gave a similar answer (Ps. 15:1-2; 24:3-4).

8Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (Mt. 5:8)

1Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? 2He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart… (Ps. 15:1-2)

3Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?... 4He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. (Ps. 24:3-4)

*He said that the man or woman who says yes to His leadership, by the grace of God, they are enabled to interact with this God of fire and be filled with joy and confidence in the interaction, to have stability and strength and confidence in assurance and to have a quiet heart and not anxiety and condemnation and fear.*

* + 1. ***He will dwell on high***: A person choosing righteousness will find grace to “dwell on high” (33:16) or to live in the presence of God who Himself dwells on high (33:5).

*A matter of fact, that man or woman who says yes to righteousness, they will dwell on high. Meaning God dwells on high, so they will fellowship with God in a meaningful and a real way.*

* 1. The beauty of the King (33:17-24): God’s people gain strength by encountering Jesus’ beauty (33:6). One of the Spirit’s emphases at the end of the age is on revealing the beauty of God.

17Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will see the land that is very far off. 18Your heart will meditate on terror: “Where is the scribe? Where is he who weighs? Where is he who counts the towers?” 19You will not see a fierce people, a people of obscure speech… (Isa. 33:17-19)

*So, Isaiah said that you are going to see sinners tremble in Zion; you are going to see it. Isaiah 26:9 is one of the key verses we have not gone over. I do not have it here. I guess Stuart did it when he was covering those chapters. It says, “When God’s judgments are in the earth, the people learn righteousness.” One of God’s redemptive reasons for letting the judgments to happen is that He wants the earth to learn righteousness. Many will wake up. Many will not. They will get harder and harder, but many will wake up.*

*I do not wait until then to wake up. I do not want to learn righteousness when judgment is in the land. I want to learn righteousness because a beautiful King calls me His beloved. We are the Bride of Christ, we are the children of God, and we are in the grace of God. We are together with Him forever, and He died for us. I want to wake up for those reasons. I do not want to wait until judgment wakes me up. Lord, Your beauty woke me up! That is enough for me. I am with You until the end, no matter what else happens. That is what many of you feel, and that is why you are here.*

*“Your eyes will see the King and His beauty.” This is going to be one of the great emphases of the Holy Spirit in the generation the Lord returns. I believe we are in the early days of that generation. Well, I have told this story a few times, that this is a passage where the Lord really interrupted me on the subject of His beauty. I remember when this happened; it was back in 1996. I will not tell the story. He interrupted me and I thought, “Beauty? Like, beauty, really?” I was not interested in God’s beauty, I was interested in God’s power. The Lord really emphasized it and woke me up. I still have not grown that much in it, but at least I have been alert to it these last twenty years. I am wanting to search it out because it is on the agenda, it is on the menu, of the Holy Spirit for the end-time Church.*

* + 1. ***Your eyes***: Isaiah is addressing those who choose to live in righteousness (33:15-16)—these are the ones who will see the King’s beauty. The beauty of Jesus will be openly displayed in the end-time storyline (33:17). The body of Christ is to look for the beauty displayed in His leadership. Our beautiful King leads His people as His Bride. Thus, we can joyfully trust His leadership. I do not want to wait for God’s judgment to wake me up to the King’s beauty.
       1. Many will not see God’s beauty, but only what seems like “random chaos” when interpreting the escalating pressures that Jesus referred to as the “distress of the nations” (Lk. 21:25).

25And there will be signs in the sun…and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26men’s hearts failing them from fear… (Lk. 21:25-26)

* + - 1. Many who only see random chaos will be deeply perplexed and overcome with fear.
    1. ***Land that is very far off***: lit. “land of far distances.” Jesus’ rule extends to the whole earth. The open manifestation of Jesus’ beautiful leadership will fill the earth in the millennial kingdom! His glory and beauty will eventually fill the whole earth.

*He says that you will “see the land that is very far off.” What He is talking about here: Jesus’ rule will not just touch Jerusalem; His beauty will fill the earth. Isaiah saw it on the day he was commissioned by the Spirit in Isaiah 6, when he said, “My eyes have seen the King, and the whole earth is filled with Your beauty.” The whole earth is going to come under the sway of the beauty of the King. We will see it in the lands far away. His beauty will eventually touch everything in the created order that is on the earth.*

* + 1. ***Your heart will meditate on terror***: The redeemed are to meditate on terror by thinking on the implications of both His past judgments in history and His future judgments against the Antichrist’s empire. There are dimensions of the King’s beauty that are seen in context to His judgments. We are to “meditate on terror” by thinking on God’s judgments that are necessary in accomplishing His glorious plans and in teaching the nations righteousness (26:9).

*Verse 18, this is an odd verse that kind of surprises us. It says, “But let your heart meditate on terror.”*

*“Wait! You just said I am going to see the beauty, but you want me to think on terror?”*

*Well, you discover the beauty even in the terror.*

* + 1. Meditating on judgment in Isaiah’s day included both God’s judgment on Judah (33:7-9) and Assyria (33:10-12). In Isaiah’s day, the people of Judah were to remember the terrifying way in which God’s disciplined them and how He destroyed the 185,000 Assyrian soldiers.

*The terror that they, the redeemed, are to meditate on is that they are to remember the judgments of God. Of course, Isaiah is talking to his own generation. He said, “Remember the judgments when God disciplined us. Then remember the terrifying way He destroyed Assyria. Look at how gracious He is being with us now. Meditate on terror so that you may see the graciousness of His plan for your own life and for the nations of the earth.”*

*Now, when was the last time you heard a message on meditating on terror? I didn’t preach the whole message on it. I just gave one sentence on it. I looked at that, and I thought, “Could you imagine teaching an entire message–Isaiah–meditate on terror.” Somewhere that needs to be in the diet of the end-time Church.*

* + 1. ***The scribe and he who weighs***: The Assyrian officials occupying Judah in Isaiah’s day included bookkeepers, auditors, tax officials, and accountants who kept meticulous records of the activities occurring under that authority. For example, they weighed out the silver and gold that was paid as tribute to Assyria and took a census of the population, etc. They wrote things down, weighed things out (related to taxes), and counted towers (for military reasons).

*Then he goes on, and he asks, “Where is the scribe? Where is he who weighs? Where is he who counts towers? You will not see a fierce people.” What he is really talking about here is that the Assyrian officials were in the land of Israel. They were keeping all these detailed records for the Assyrian government. They were counting the towers. They were weighing out the tribute, you know, X amount of pounds of gold and silver. They were counting the people, everybody! You know, you think of like the Nazi regime when they would occupy a nation with that meticulous accounting. Everywhere, these Nazi officials, and books and books and books! That is what the Assyrians were like.*

*What Isaiah said here: Your eyes will see the beauty of the King. Remember the terror; remember how fierce the Lord interacted with sin. He went on, “Where are those officials now?” They are out! There is victory in the land right now! That is what he was saying here. He was saying that God broke through and there are none of those Nazi officials at the gate weighing all the things that you do, counting all the things that you are about. He said that they are gone and Israel is free. The enemy has been destroyed.*

* + 1. ***Where is the scribe?*** Isaiah asked where the Assyrian officials were. They were gone! The result of God’s judgment is that the enemies of His kingdom were removed from the land.
    2. ***Not see a fierce people:*** The Lord promised that the Assyrians and all other foreign powers will be removed forever from the land of Israel when Jesus sits on His throne in Jerusalem.
    3. Isaiah’s point was that the time is coming when the Assyrian officials would no longer be in the land of Judah. The Lord was going to deliver Judah from the Assyrians.
  1. Isaiah urges the redeemed to look or meditate on the future of Jerusalem or Zion (33:20). Jerusalem will be a city of peace that will never again be defeated.

20Look upon Zion…your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home, a tabernacle that will not be taken down…21But there the majestic Lord will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams,   
in which no galley [small ship] with oars will sail, nor majestic [mighty] ships pass by 22(For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us); 23your [Assyria’s] tackle is loosed, they could not strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail [flag]. Then the prey of great plunder is divided; the lame take the prey. 24And the inhabitant will not say, “I am sick;” the people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity. (Isa. 33:20-24)

* + 1. ***Look at Zion***: Look at the big picture of God’s glorious future for Zion or Jerusalem. In seeing the prophetic destiny of Jerusalem, we gain insight into the glory that will fill the whole earth flowing from Jerusalem (Num. 14:21; Isa. 2:4; 11:9; Hab. 2:14)

*He says in verse 20, “Look upon Zion.” Let your eyes see Jerusalem. You know I love the song that Misty wrote, it was years ago [on her Relentless album.] She wrote, “I know the end of the story.” I have not heard it for a little while, I love that song. I know the end of the story; this is not the end of the story. Anyway, I can’t remember, but anyway, we know the end of the story.*

* + 1. ***Not be taken down***: Jerusalem will be a quiet home compared to a tabernacle that will never be taken down. In other words, Jerusalem will never be defeated again. The Antichrist’s siege against Jerusalem will not succeed because the majestic Lord will be there “for us” or for the people living in Jerusalem (33:21). He will rescue them from all their enemies.
    2. ***Broad rivers***: Since there are no rivers in Jerusalem, the mention of ships challenges interpreters. I see this as a river of living water flowing out of the millennial temple in Jerusalem (Ezek. 47:1-12; Zech. 14:8)*.* Some see this verse as comparing God to a “river of supply” that blesses His people.

8In that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea [Dead Sea] and half of them toward the western sea [Mediterranean Sea] …   
(Zech. 14:8)

1…there was water flowing from…the temple…5the water was too deep…a river that could not be crossed…8This water flows…and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. (Ezek. 47:1-8)

* + - 1. The Psalmist saw a river with streams flowing in Jerusalem (Ps. 46:4).

4There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God [Jerusalem]… (Ps. 46:4)

* + - 1. The Psalmist saw a the “river of God” enriching the earth (Ps. 65:9).

9You visit the earth…You greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water… (Ps. 65:9)

* + 1. ***No galley nor majestic ships***: No military ship will sail on the river on living water in millennial Jerusalem. A galley was a single-decked ship with oars used in ancient times.
    2. ***Judge, Lawgiver, and King***: The reason for Jerusalem’s peace, security, prosperity, and her permanent victory is because Jesus is their ***Judge*** (over all the courts), the ***Lawgiver*** (over all the legal systems), and the ***King*** (the head of the worldwide government). The reason for Jerusalem’s great blessing is that Jesus will live in Jerusalem as their Judge, Lawgiver, and King. In 1620, in the first governing document of the Plymouth Colony called the *Mayflower Compact*, the Pilgrims made a covenant with God using Isaiah 33:22.
    3. ***Your tackle is loosed***: Some see an application of this in ancient history. Isaiah described a   
       disabled and deserted ship of the defeated Assyrian army after an angel killed 185,000 of its solders. The tackle in that day included a system of ropes used on a ship to raise and control the sails and to hold the mast in place. The mast is a pole used on a ship to support its sails. The tackle or the ropes being loosed implied that the ship was disabled and its crew killed.

23…your [Assyria’s] tackle is loosed, they could not strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail [flag]. Then the prey of great plunder is divided; the lame take the prey. (Isa. 33:32)

* + 1. ***Great plunder***: The ropes that held up the sail or literally “the flag” of the Assyrian ship were loose because the soldiers responsible for their maintenance were killed. When the Judahites saw the sail or flag not flying, they approached the ship to take the great plunder left by the dead soldiers.
    2. ***Lame***: The victory would be so great that the lame would take the spoils of the Assyrians.
  1. ***No one is sick, and all are forgiven***: There shall be no sickness in the millennial Jerusalem, and all who are permitted to live there are forgiven and walk strong in the grace of God (33:24).

24And the inhabitant will not say, “I am sick;” the people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity. (Isa. 33:24)

1. Summary: Isaiah’s exhortations to the remnant to gain understanding
   1. Isaiah exhorted the redeemed to meditate on the truths in Isaiah 33 to get anchored in the biblical storyline and to see the King’s beauty to avoid being overwhelmed by fear, offense, and deception.
      1. We need the Holy Spirit’s help to grasp the Bible information on which we meditate.
      2. We care about knowing the biblical end-time narrative because it is so dear to His heart that Scripture describes the generation of His return more than any other time frame in history.
      3. I am struck by the fact that though the greatest loss of life in history thus far occurred in World War II when over 50 million people died in six years (1939-45), yet this period was not mentioned one time in a direct way in Scripture. The 150 chapters focus on the end-time narrative.
   2. ***Knowledge*** (33:6): The redeemed are to take time to gain knowledge the of biblical end-time narrative. They will gain strength and stability by the knowledge of God’s victorious plan.

6Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation…   
(Isa. 33:6)

* + 1. Strength comes from knowledge: Knowing the biblical narrative of the end times strengthens God’s people with confidence and strength even in a time when darkness and trouble increases. Those who know God’s will walk in stability instead of being overwhelmed with fear, offense, or deception in context to the end-time troubles and pressures.
    2. By “knowledge” His people will have power to have a calm heart in the storm. We intentionally engage our mind in this biblical storyline because it will change how we interpret difficult events. In the secular world, those with “big data” or analytics use quantum computing to manipulate data to get an advantage in the time of crisis. The same in kingdom of God, those with “data” of the end-time narrative will be in a place to gain strength. Our paradigm of life and the future is shaped by the biblical narrative of the future.
  1. ***See the King’s beauty*** (33:17): The redeemed will see more of the King’s beauty in context to the biblical end-time narrative. We can see His beauty all around us—in creation, but also in His end-time storyline. We pray, “Show us Your beauty in Your end-time story.”

17Your eyes will see the King in His beauty… (Isa. 33:17)

* 1. ***Mediate on terror*** (33:18): The redeemed are to remember the way the Lord throughout history has destroyed His enemies and disciplined His people out of His love.

18Your heart will meditate on terror… (Isa. 33:17-19)

* + 1. Meditating on terror is sandwiched between the exhortation to see the King’s beauty (33:17) and to look on the glorious prophetic destiny of Jerusalem and, thus, the nations (33:20).
    2. It is important to grasp the negative aspects of the coming pressure and judgments before they occur. It is more difficult to assimilate crisis events while suffering in them.
  1. ***Look at Zion*** (33:20): The redeemed are to look at the prophetic destiny of Jerusalem knowing that God’s glory being manifest in Jerusalem is the precursor to the whole earth being filled with the glory of God (Hab. 2:14). In Steven Covey’s best-selling book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, in habit #2, he emphasized the value of “beginning with the end in mind.”

20Look upon Zion…your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home, a tabernacle that will not be taken down… (Isa. 33:20)

*He says, “Look at Jerusalem.” Look at the storyline. Meditate on terror, but also see where God is going. When you see the King in His beauty, verse 17, you are going to remember the way He intervened with such zeal to confront darkness. You are going to remember the way He destroyed your enemies. You are going to remember the way He judged His people, disciplined His people, because He loves them. You are going to remember the way He removed the enemies. You are going to look at Zion in the future, in the destiny of where things are going.*

*You can read the rest of this. I feel like that we have had enough time here. You can read the rest on your own. Oh, by the way, as I tell you, most weeks I give you this six-page, four-page, six-page handout on Friday. Then typically by Sunday I add quite a bit more to this. Then we edit it and we put it up on the internet. So those of you who want to break down the details of this, you do not have to right now, but if you are interested in that, there will be a far more extensive set of notes on this passage. We are breaking down every one of these phrases. My goal is not to try to give that to you all in one night. but I do want it available to you, and I want you to know it is there.*

*This is a glorious passage, verse 20-24, all kinds of cool nuances in this story here. I feel like we have gone far enough tonight. I just want to mention this, where he says, “Look upon Zion.” Look at the destiny of where God is bringing Jerusalem. Look at the destiny of where the nations are going.*

*So, he tells us these different things. He says in Isaiah 32:10, to the complacent ladies, “Be troubled, tremble. Be troubled; be disturbed.” Then in Isaiah 33:6, he says to know the storyline and you will have strength. Then in Isaiah 33:17, you will see the King. Then Isaiah 33:18, meditate on terror. Isaiah 33:20, look at Jerusalem. See the large storyline of where it is going.*

*With these five or six exhortations, what Isaiah is saying is to fill your mind with these details. Meditate on these things, and your heart will get anchored in a storyline that will make you strong and grateful. You will not be captured by the fear, the offense, and the deception that the enemy wants to sweep the Body of Christ away with.*

*So, I want to do each one of these things. I want to see the King and the beauty, I want to meditate on terror. I want to look at Jerusalem, the destiny of where it is going. I want to mourn and tremble. I want the knowledge that makes me stable. It is really all the same storyline using different language.*

*In the body of Christ, we need to actually engage our mind in an intentional way in this storyline because it anchors us. It shifts us in our perspective. We interpret the news differently when we are looking through the lens of the biblical narrative.*

* 1. ***Shepherds***: The Lord promised to raise up shepherds “after His own heart” like David—they will feed people on understanding of God’s heart and ways (Jer. 3:15).

15“Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.” (Jer. 3:15)

* + 1. These shepherds will strengthen others compared to being a shade to the weary, water to the thirsty, and a shelter in the storm (32:2). These shepherds will be part of the “solution” instead adding to the “problem” in an hour when multitudes will be overwhelmed with fear, offense, deception, and compromise.

2A man [godly leaders] will be as a hiding place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. (Isa. 32:2)

* + 1. I assume the two witnesses will speak the prophetic messages related to the truths in Isaiah.

*Well, amen and amen! Again, these last four verses are really dynamic, but we are just out of time, so in a week or two, when you get that free moment, read the larger set of notes.*

*Let’s stand before the Lord. I love those verses. I always spend too much time on the first verses, and the end verses are the juicy ones. Juicy is a good word. I mean, you know, the ones that really stir our hearts.*

*Father, here we are before You. We love Your leadership. Lord, I do want to meditate on terror. I want to see what has happened in history. I want to see what is going to happen in the Antichrist’s rage and his destruction. I want to see the terror. I want to see the beauty. I want to see the fate of Jerusalem. I want to understand the knowledge that gives me strength. I want to tremble. I want to rejoice. I want to have a quiet spirit, yet I want to have an engaged spirit. All of these things that You said to Isaiah. Lord, here we are before You. Lord, we say that we love Your leadership. We love Your leadership, Lord. Holy Spirit I just ask You even now to stir us, to touch us.*

*You know, no matter how much you hear this information—and hearing it a lot is really helpful, it really, really is because the fog lifts after a while—but still it takes the Holy Spirit to grasp it. It is not just academics. This is more than academic knowledge about the future and the past. It takes the Spirit touching our heart. So when I read this, I am wanting to interact—it is just like Phil said up here—I want to talk to the Man, the King. Lord Jesus, what are You thinking. Show me more. Lord, I say yes to this. I want to talk to the Man because I need His help to grasp this. It is more than just cognitive information, and it will bounce right off if we are not walking in the spirit with it. So, Lord, we are saying yes to the Holy Spirit.*