

## **THE FOLLY OF WORTHLESS ALLIANCE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN ISAIAH 30:1-17 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTIANS TODAY**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper employs the Grammatical-Historical approach to examine the folly of forming futile alliances of the people of God (Israel), as described in the prophetic book of Isaiah 30:1-17. This approach considers the rules of grammar, particularly in the Hebrew language, through which the passage was conveyed, and also takes into account the historical circumstances that gave rise to the message of the text. The study explores the passage within its immediate and broader context, considering its genre and the use of poetry as a literary style by the prophet to address the audience. Furthermore, it includes a verse-by-verse analysis resulting in a well-structured outline for relevant applications in contemporary times. Despite the passage being distant from our era, the research emphasizes its significance in addressing modern issues of worthless alliances of God's people. The study underscores the relevance of trusting solely in God and avoiding any futile endeavors that may jeopardize the mission of spreading the gospel to the world. Throughout the examination, the presupposition remains that the text of Isaiah is the work of a single author (Isaiah), is inspired and is applicable today. The findings illustrate that God, who called Israel into fellowship and entrusted them with a divine mission, expressed dissatisfaction with their reliance on human strength instead of trusting in Him—the Holy One of Israel. The evident consequences of their actions serve as a reminder for present-day believers to place their complete trust in God and refrain from engaging in any futile pursuits.*

**Keywords:** Folly, Worthless Alliance, People of God, Isaiah.

### **Introduction**

A careful reading of Genesis 12: 1-3 reveals clearly that God chose Israel to be a blessing to all nations on earth. Her status as the chosen people was an act of grace (Deuteronomy 9:5-6), which means that they were to remain faithful to God and rely entirely on Him to fulfill the mission for which they were chosen. However, from the beginning, the journey towards fulfilling this mission was fraught with struggle and temptations, even as they had to move from place to place and have had to be careful as they interact with other nations of the earth. For the journey to be smooth, the Ten Commandments outlined what God expected of Israel,

starting with a reintroduction of Himself and a reminder of what He had done for them (Exodus 20: 1-2). For example, the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3), requires complete faith and trust in the Lord. This means that the Israelites were to be mindful of activities that would jeopardize their God-given mission. For example, they were frequently reminded not to imitate the practices of other nations or be like them (Deuteronomy 23:24; Leviticus 18:3; 2 Chronicles 36:14).

During Isaiah's time, the people of God failed to maintain their integrity and repeatedly transgressed the laws of the Lord their God (2 Kings 18: 12). They worshiped other gods and pledged allegiance to other nations and seeking help from their gods (2 Kings 17:7). This rebellious behavior prompted chapters 28-31, which served as warnings to the people of God in Isaiah's day. Despite Isaiah's earlier warnings, Judah allied with Egypt and believed they were safe from Assyria's invasion. However, God was the one they refused to trust, even though He was the one who ultimately saved them (Chapters 27-33; 31:5-9; 37:36) (David and Pat Alexander, 1973, p. 387).

Today, many Christians still find themselves in a similar situation. Like Israel, Christians are called to evangelize the world by being a shining example and positive influence, but they have often failed to maintain their integrity by forming unworthy and unacceptable alliances. The aim of this paper therefore, is to provide an exegesis of Isaiah 30:1-17, considering both its immediate and broader context. The approach taken in this paper will be to analyze the biblical text within its canonical context, ultimately revealing the foolishness of forming alliances that are not in tandem with the will of God.

### **An Overview of Gramatico-Historical Method**

Being a method adopted and used in this paper, Silva & Kaiser (2007), characterizes the Grammatico-Historical method as "a technique for comprehending the significance of scripture through an intricate analysis that meticulously considers the language of the original text and the cultural context from which the text emerged." (p. 19). This approach according to Yilpet (2023) holds great importance in exegesis due to its emphasis on the wording of the text, specifically how the verbs in their various forms function, and how the nouns, adjectives, prepositions, and other parts of speech are interconnected within the syntax. This method also takes into account the historical backdrop of the text, delving into cultural elements, customs, and philosophies (Yilpet, 2023). Through this method, we are able to delve deeply into grammatical and historical aspects, thus enabling us to grasp the intended meaning of the author, a matter of deep concern for Christians (Tyler, ny, para. 2). This aspect underscores the authority by which the message remains relevant for transforming individuals and encouraging reliance on God rather than human folly, as demonstrated in our passage under study.

Stressing the significance of grammar, Stuart (2009) points out that "a precise comprehension of grammar is indispensable for an accurate interpretation of the passage." (p. 9). Lending their voice on the role of grammar, Hayes & Holladay (1987) opine that:

Grammatical criticism is concerned with analyzing a text through its language. To be sure, language consists of words, but ideas and concepts rather than being conveyed through words standing alone are transmitted through words arranged in various combinations with each other. Grammatical criticism is concerned not only with how individual words function as carriers of meaning but how those words are arranged in phrases and sentences to form meaningful sense units. This type of criticism may be thought of as the set of skills and discipline through which we seek to re-create and enter the original thought world of the author (or text) through the language of the text (p. 59).

While engaging this method, the invaluable role of exegetical tools such as Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, which address significant biblical ideas and concepts, Biblical wordbooks and lexicons that provide language-focused information, and the Biblical concordance, which lists verses containing specific words remain important (Hayes & Holladay, 1987, p. 60-61). This method has been employed in our analysis of Isaiah 30: 1-17, where key terms have been identified, scrutinized, and the historical context of the passage has been ascertained.

### **Text and Translation of Isaiah 30: 1-17**

The Hebrew text for this study is gotten from *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Elliger & Rudolph, 1983, pp. 718-720).

<p><b>הוּי בְּנֵי סוֹרְרִים נְאֻם־יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲצָה וְלֹא מִנִּי וְלִנְסֹךְ מִסִּכָּה וְלֹא רוּחִי לְמַעַן סְפוֹת חַטָּאת עַל־חַטָּאת:</b></p>	<p>Ah, stubborn children," declares the Lord, "who carry out a plan, but not mine, and who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin;</p>
<p><b>הֵהָלְכִים לְרֵדָת מִצְרַיִם וְפִי לֹא שָׁאֲלוּ לְעֹז בְּמַעֲוֹז פְּרַעֲהַ וְלַחֲסוֹת בְּצַל מִצְרַיִם:</b></p>	<p>who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my direction, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!</p>
<p><b>וְהָיָה לָכֶם מַעֲוֹז פְּרַעֲהַ לְבִשְׁתׁ וְהָחֲסוֹת בְּצַל־מִצְרַיִם לְכִלְמָה: וְהָיָה לָכֶם מַעֲוֹז פְּרַעֲהַ לְבִשְׁתׁ וְהָחֲסוֹת בְּצַל־מִצְרַיִם לְכִלְמָה:</b></p>	<p>Therefore, shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation.</p>

<sup>4</sup> כִּי־הָיוּ בָּצֵעַן שָׂרְיוֹ וּמַלְאָכָיו חָנַס נִגְיָעוֹ:

For though his officials are at Zoan  
and his envoys reach Hanes,  
everyone comes to shame  
through a people that cannot profit them,  
that brings neither help nor profit,  
but shame and disgrace."

<sup>5</sup> כָּל הַבָּיִשׁ עַל־עַם לֹא־יִוָּעִילוּ לָמוּ לֹא לַעֲזָר וְלֹא לְהוֹעִיל כִּי  
לְבַשְׁתׁ וְגַם־לְחַרְפָּה: ס

An oracle on the beasts of the Negeb.  
Through a land of trouble and anguish,  
from where come the lioness and the lion,  
the adder and the flying fiery serpent,  
they carry their riches on the backs of donkeys,  
and their treasures on the humps of camels,  
to a people that cannot profit them.

<sup>6</sup> מִשָּׂא בְהֵמוֹת נֶגֶב בְּאֶרֶץ צָרָה וְצוּקָה לְבִיא וְלִישׁ מֵהֶם אֶפְעָה  
וְשָׂרָף מְעוֹפֵף יִשְׂאוּ עַל־כַּתְּף עֲנָרִים חִילָהֶם וְעַל־דְּבַשְׁתׁ גְּמָלִים  
אוֹצְרוֹתָם עַל־עַם לֹא יוֹעִילוּ:

Egypt's help is worthless and empty;  
therefore, I have called her  
"Rahab who sits still."

<sup>7</sup> וּמִצְרַיִם הִבֵּל נְרִיק נִעְזְרוּ לָכֵן קָרָאתִי לְזֹאת רַהַב הֵם שְׂבֵת:

And now, go, write it before them on a tablet  
and inscribe it in a book,  
that it may be for the time to come  
as a witness forever.

<sup>8</sup> עֲתָה בּוֹא כְּתֹבָה עַל־לוּחַ אֶתֶם וְעַל־סֵפֶר חֻקָּה וּתְהִי לַיּוֹם אֶתְרוּן  
לְעַד עַד־עוֹלָם:

For they are a rebellious people,  
lying children,  
children unwilling to hear  
the instruction of the Lord;

<sup>9</sup> כִּי עַם מְרִי הוּא בְּנִים כְּחֹשִׁים בְּנִים לֹא־אָבוּ שְׂמוּעַ תּוֹרַת יְהוָה:

who say to the seers, "Do not see,"  
and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is  
right;  
speak to us smooth things,

<sup>10</sup> אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ לְרֹאִים לֹא תִרְאוּ וְלַחֲזִים לֹא תִחְזוּ־לָנוּ נִכְחוֹת  
דְּבָרוֹ־לָנוּ חִלְקוֹת חֲזוּ מִהַתְּלוֹת:

11 סורו מני־דרך־הטו מני־ארת השביתו מפנינו את־קדוש  
ישראל:

12 לכן־פה אִמַר קדוש ישראל יֵעַן מֵאַסְסֶכֶם בְּדַבָּר הַזֶּה וַתִּבְטְחוּ  
בַעֲשָׂק וּנְלוּז וַתִּשְׁעֲנוּ עָלֵינוּ:

13 לכן־יהיה לְכֶם הַעֲוֹן הַזֶּה כַּפְרִיץ נֹפֵל גִּבְעָה בַחֹמָה נִשְׁגָּבָה  
אֲשֶׁר־פְּתָאֵם לְפָתַע יָבֹוא שְׁבָרָה:

14 וּשְׁבָרָה כְּשֶׁבֶר נֶבֶל יוֹצְרִים כְּתוֹת לֹא יִחַמַּל וְלֹא־יִמָּצֵא בַמִּכְתָּחוֹ  
חֶרֶשׁ לַחֲתוֹת אֵשׁ מִיְקוּד וְלַחֲשֹׁף מִיָּם מִגָּבָא: פ

15 כִּי כֹה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשׁוֹבָה וְנַחַת תִּנְשָׁעוּן  
בַּהֲשָׁקֵט וּבִבְטָחָה תִּהְיֶה גְבוּרַתְכֶם וְלֹא אֲבִיתֶם:

16 וַתֹּאמְרוּ לֹא־כִי עַל־סוּס נָנוּס עַל־כֶּן תִּנּוּסוּן וְעַל־יָקָל נִרְכָּב עַל־  
כֶּן יִקְלוּ רַדְפֵיכֶם:

17 אֵלֶּה אֶחָד מִפְּנֵי גַעְרַת אֶחָד מִפְּנֵי גַעְרַת חֲמִישָׁה תִּגְסוּ עַד אִם־  
נִוְתַרְתֶּם בְּתֵרֶן עַל־רֹאשׁ הַקָּהָר וְנָגַס עַל־הַגְּבֻעָה:

prophecy illusions,

leave the way, turn aside from the path,

let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."

Therefore, thus says the Holy One of Israel,

"Because you despise this word

and trust in oppression and perverseness

and rely on them,

Therefore, this iniquity shall be to you

like a breach in a high wall, bulging out, and about to collapse,

whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant;

and its breaking is like that of a potter's vessel

that is smashed so ruthlessly

that among its fragments not a shard is found

with which to take fire from the hearth,

or to dip up water out of the cistern."

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel,

"In returning and rest you shall be saved;

in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

But you were unwilling,

and you said,

"No! We will flee upon horses";

Therefore, you shall flee away;

and, "We will ride upon swift steeds";

therefore, your pursuers shall be swift.

A thousand shall flee at the threat of one;

at the threat of five you shall flee,

till you are left  
 like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,  
 like a signal on a hill.

### **The Setting of Isaiah 30: 1-17**

The passage Isaiah 30:1-17 is located specifically within the oracles of woe (chs. 28-33), which consist of prophetic warnings regarding reliance on either Egypt or the Lord in the face of Assyrian threats (Robinson & Harrison, 1979). The book of Isaiah is structured into various thematic sections, with the initial part (chs. 1-12) containing prophecies of restoration for Judah and Jerusalem. Subsequent sections include oracles of judgment and salvation concerning foreign nations (chs. 13-23), discussions of world-judgment and Israel's redemption (chs. 24-27), warnings against alliances with Egypt (chs. 28-35), and a mixture of history, prophecy, and song (chs. 36-39). The later section (chs. 40-66) offers comfort, salvation, and the promise of future glory for Israel (Robinson & Harrison, 1979).

Chapter 30 is part of the oracles of woe, which are united by the theme of "woe" and revolve around the consequences of depending on Egypt instead of the Lord (Mosley & Bond, 2003, p. 838). In this fourth "woe," God rebukes the nation's rebellion for turning to Egypt for aid against the Assyrian threat, despite past divine interventions (Robinson & Harrison, 1979). Wiersbe (2004) points out that Isaiah begins and ends his prophecy with accusations of rebellion against God. Unlike previous leaders like Moses, Joshua, David, and Jehoshaphat who sought God's will in critical decisions, the rulers of Jerusalem did not seek divine guidance and turned to feeble Egypt for help, which proved to be inadequate against the powerful Assyrian army (np).

The subsequent "woes" (chs. 31-32 and ch. 33) continue to denounce those who trust in Egypt's military might rather than in the Holy One of Israel. The sixth and final woe (ch. 33) is directed against the treacherous spoiler who has already devastated Judah's cities and is now besieging Jerusalem in 701 B.C. (Robinson & Harrison, 1979).

Isaiah 30 is linked to preceding chapters in its condemnation of the people's unfaithfulness and their reliance on human strategies rather than turning to God. It also connects to subsequent chapters where Isaiah delivers messages of hope and restoration, indicating that God's judgment is not final, and there is still an opportunity for repentance and redemption (Wiersbe, 2004).

During the era of Prophet Isaiah in the kingdom of Judah, leaders deliberated over forming an alliance with Egypt to protect against the Assyrian Empire's threat (*Isaiah 30 – Trust in The Lord, not in Egypt*, ny, introduction section, para 1 & 2). The crucial decision was whether to trust in Egypt or rely on the Lord's intervention in the face of the Assyrian menace (Yilpet, 2018, p. 2). Hezekiah chose to reject paying tribute to Assyria, instead opting to seek

encouragement from Egypt, ultimately leading to Sennacherib's invasion in 701 B.C. (Mariottini, 1987). Despite their attempts to seek assistance from Assyria, Judah faced setbacks, including the destruction of Gaza and the loss of several regions between 734 and 732 B.C. (as indicated in 2 Kings 16:7, 2 Kings 15:29, 16:7-9, 2 Chron 28:19, and Isa 7:1) (Robinson & Harrison, 1979). The attempt to forge a partnership with Egypt against Assyria proved unsuccessful, resulting in Judah confronting Sennacherib without external support. Even the advice provided to Israel against paying tribute to Assyria had negative consequences, further worsening Judah's precarious position (Robinson & Harrison, 1979).

Despite these circumstances, Judah did not consider turning to the Lord as a viable option, and chapters 30 and 31 were the Lord's response to the detrimental alliance formed by Judah. Isaiah's message was primarily directed at the leaders of Jerusalem who were the main focus during the crisis that preceded Sennacherib's invasion (Yilpet, 2018, p. 2).

### **Literary Unit of Isaiah 30: 1-17 within Its Immediate Context**

Isaiah 30:1-17 is considered to be a self-contained section, with the term "woe" marking the beginning of a new segment. This is a typical style in prophetic books where the Lord delivers pronouncements. This passage maintains a coherent narrative, addressing the issue of reliance on Egypt. Watts (2002) describes Isaiah 30 as a scene depicting the struggle between God and the Judean leaders who are determined to follow their own plans. The chapter can be divided into three main units: verses 1-17, known as the "Oracle of the Rebellious Children," which warns the people of Judah against seeking alliances with foreign nations instead of relying on God, offering hope of restoration if they turn back to Him. The second unit, verses 18-26, is the "Promise of the Holy One of Israel," assuring Judah that God will be gracious and restore them if they repent and trust in Him. This promise includes physical, material, and spiritual blessings. Another unit, verses 27-33, focuses on the judgment of Assyria and the defeat of its army (Watts, 2002). The literary units in Isaiah 30, including verses 1-17, can be further divided into two major sections: verses 1-7 and verses 8-17 (*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 2006). These units are interconnected and reflect common themes of judgment, warning, and hope throughout the book of Isaiah (Isaiah 1:2-9; 5:1-7; 24:1-23; 30:1-18).

### **Allusions on the Text of Isaiah 30: 1-17**

The term "Rebellious Children" in verses 1-3 alludes to the unfaithfulness and disobedience of the Israelites, who turned away from God's guidance and rejected His path. This behavior is reflected in other biblical passages, such as Exodus 32:9, Deuteronomy 9:7, Jeremiah 3:6-10, Ezekiel 2:3-5, Isaiah 1:2, 4, 23, 30:9, 65:2, Hosea 11:1-2, and Acts 7:51. The narrative of proceeding to Egypt and Egypt's inability to provide help, leading to shame (verse 2a, 5), is referenced in other contexts like Jeremiah 43:7; 2:36, Isaiah 30:7; 31:3. The notion of carrying

out plans without seeking consultation (verse 1b) is alluded to in Isaiah 29:15.

The reference to "Pharaoh, the king of Egypt" (verse 4) likely symbolizes oppressive earthly rulers or powers that Israel might trust instead of God. Similar themes are found in 2 Chronicles 16:7-9, where King Asa of Judah sought help from the king of Syria instead of relying on God and faced the consequences of his lack of faith. This theme also recurs in prophetic books like Isaiah 31:1-3 and Jeremiah 2:18. The mention of "Rahab" in verse 7 alludes to ancient symbol of chaos and evil defeated by the gods in Canaanite creation mythology representing opposing forces to God's order and goodness (Watts, 2002). In verse 6, the phrases "the adder" and "fiery serpent" may allude to the Israelites' experiences in the wilderness during the Exodus, including the incident of the bronze serpent in Numbers 21:4-9.

The concept of trusting in military might rather than in God, as depicted in the entire passage, is mentioned in various other verses, such as Psalm 20:7, Psalm 33:16-17, and Psalm 147:10-11. The repetition of the phrase "Holy One of Israel" in verses 12 and 15 emphasizes God's holiness and uniqueness as the God of Israel. Similar expressions can be found in Isaiah 1:4, Isaiah 10:20, and Jeremiah 50:29. While there is no direct reference to a specific New Testament verse, themes from Isaiah 30:1-17 can be related to New Testament teachings. It highlights the recurring theme of relying on God's guidance over worldly solutions, present in both Isaiah and the New Testament (e.g., Matthew 6:33, Philippians 4:19). Additionally, the need for repentance and turning back to God, emphasized in Isaiah, is reiterated throughout the New Testament, with Jesus frequently preaching about repentance and salvation (e.g., Mark 1:15, Luke 24:47) (*The Reformation Study Bible ESV.*, 2015, pp. 1175-1176).

### **Textual, Grammatical and Exegetical Notes on the Text of Isaiah 30: 1-17**

**Verse 1:** The first verse of the passage introduces a proclamation attributed to the Lord, expressed as נְאֻם־יְהוָה which is translated as "saith the Lord" or "declares the Lord." The term נְאֻם (ncmsc) originates from a foundational root denoting a soft utterance, signifying an oracle-like pronouncement (*OT: 5001 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance*, 2006). Within this context, it is the Lord who is communicating a declaration concerning Judah, characterizing them as בְּנֵי סוֹרְרִים which translates to "stubborn children." (*OT: 1121 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006). According to Watts (2002), the mention of "rebellious children" builds on a theme introduced in 1:2 (np). The verb סוֹרְרִים (Qal act Ptc mp סרר – be stubborn) indicates their persistent obstinacy, portraying an unbroken state of stubbornness. The participle also describes "action in progress." It depicts the action as dynamically unfolding in the very course of the narrative (Wheeler, 2006). The particle הוֹי (Hebrew Interjection) translated "oh" or "woe" "alas" indicates that the declaration was carried out by the Lord in a lamentable or pitiable situation (Wheeler, 2006).

The phrase *לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲצָה* meaning, "Who carry out a plan," employs the verb *לַעֲשׂוֹת* (prep. Qal inf. cstr - to do, make) to highlight the intention behind the actions of these rebellious children. This draws attention to the fact that they are pursuing their own agendas. The expression *לֹא יְהוָה*, translating to "but not of me," suggests that they deviated from God's guidance to follow their own path, implying that their plans do not originate from the divine source. According to Watts (2002), this portion of the verse defines the nature of their rebellion. The term *עֲצָה* (ncfsa) meaning "a plan" underscores that YHWH has a strategic plan for Israel. However, the political leaders also have their own plans, which, unlike YHWH's plan, lead nowhere (Watts, 2002).

The verb *וַיִּלְבְּטוּ* (Conj. Prep. Qal Inf. Const – to weave) potentially signifies the nature of their plan, one that is not aligned with God's spirit (*וְלֹא רִיחָי*). The interpretation of this verb is a subject of debate (Watts, 2002, p. 464). According to Brown, Driver, & Briggs (1907), the phrase *וַיִּלְבְּטוּ מַטְכָּה* holds four possible related meanings: (1) "pour out a libation" (as seen in 48:5); (2) "cast a molten image" (30:22; 42:17); (3) "weave a web" (25:7); or (4) "negotiate an alliance." The final interpretation aligns well with the parallel concept of "doing a plan." Nonetheless, the notion of "weaving a web" could also symbolize the intricacy of the plan, fitting the context of the discourse. By their plan, they were adding sin upon sin. The verb *וַיִּסְפּוּ* (Qal Inf. – add, increase) conveys the idea of "adding" or "accumulating," rather than indicating a specific instance of the action. This leads them farther away from God. Widyapranawa (1990) characterizes it as a single action resulting in destruction, the reason behind Judah's forthcoming "shame and disgrace" (30:5) (p. 184). This verse employs synonymous parallelism, where the phrases "to those who carry out plans that are not mine" and "heaping sin upon sin" convey a similar concept, underscoring the consequences of their deeds.

**Verse 2** continued what Judah had conditioned her mind to do; going down to Egypt for help. This of course perfectly explains their being referred to as stubborn children. The participle verb *וַיִּהְיוּ* (Qal act Ptc mp - to go, walk) emphasizes the ongoing and continuous nature of the action. It describes a recurring behavior or characteristic of the people who seek help from Egypt rather than turning to God for assistance (Wheeler, 2006). The verb *וַיֵּרְדוּ* (Qal Inf. – come down) emphasizes the action of descending or going down to Egypt. For not consulting the Lord, they were treating him as one unable to protect and help them. The verb *וְלֹא שָׁאַלּוּ* (neg. Qal Pf 3cp lav – ask, borrow) translated "they have not asked" implies that God was not involve. The expression *וְפִי* translated "and my mouth" ultimately translates to "for my direction" ESV ultimately referring to God's direction; they were on their own, taking refuge in the protection of Pharaoh. The verbs *וַיִּלְבְּטוּ* (Qal Inf. – take refuge), *וַיִּלְבְּטוּ* (conj. Prep. Qal Inf. – make refuge, (put) trust) (*OT:2620 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) expresses the purpose, intention, or result of an action, in this context, "going down to Egypt"; i.e., finding security by relying on Egypt instead of trusting in God's guidance and protection, they have forgotten quickly what the Lord had done from the time of their forefathers, how he carried them on eagle's wing have now turned away to look for help outside the Lord. Their trust was on Egypt; seeking protection from Pharaoh and shelter in the shadow

of Egypt. Hebrew parallelism is evident in this context, where finding refuge under Pharaoh's protection is akin to seeking shelter in his shadow. Both expressions essentially refer to seeking help from Egypt. According to Widyapranawa (1990), contrasting the traditional faith which considered Yahweh as the Rock of refuge and a safe stronghold (e.g., Ps. 90:1; 27:1; 18:1–2), Judah now sets out “to go down to Egypt” to seek refuge and shelter (p. 184). Watts (2002, p. 465) noted in line with the aforesaid that Jerusalem’s leaders were determined to play the game of power politics, pitting one superpower against the one they thought would be its successor.

**Verse 3:** It is vain to depend on Egypt for help because that would not only be a waste of time, but would set them on the path of shame and humiliation. The verb וְהָיָה (Conj. Qal Pf. 3 ms - be, become) translated “but it shall come to pass” “therefore” (*OT: 1961 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) introduces the consequence that will occur: Egypt's help will be worthless to the people addressed in the passage. It emphasizes that the situation described is a certainty and will inevitably happen. It was foolishness to depend on the protection of Pharaoh who ordinarily needed to help himself. The phrase מְעוֹז פְּרָעוּה translated “the strength of Pharaoh” refers to the military might and power that the rulers of Egypt, represented by Pharaoh, possessed during that period. This is again speaking of human inability to provide the kind of protection Judah required. Driver (2006) refer to it as a foolish mission, adding that it was fruitless and folly of those who expect from it any substantial result. Here, we find the presence of parallelism as a poetic element. It is evident in the protection sought from Pharaoh (מְעוֹז פְּרָעוּה) and trust placed in the shelter of Egypt (וְהָיָה כִּי-מִצְרַיִם), which ultimately results in לְבֹשֶׁת (translated as "shame") and לְכִלְמוֹתָ (translated as "humiliation") (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc.*, 2006). These poetic features serve to emphasize a significant point.

**Verse 4:** The expression כִּי-יְהִי translated as "because they were" or "for they were" serves as a connector, providing a reason for the situation described in the previous verse (verse 3); the strength of Pharaoh (Egypt) being a cause of shame and confusion for the people of Judah. It appears the Lord is telling Judah the strength of Pharaoh’s administration that though שְׂרָרָיו (ncmpcx3ms) translated “his princesses” or “his officials” “his head persons” (*Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006). וּמִלְאָצְכָיו (conj. nmp 3ms - sf) translated “his ambassadors” “his envoys” are at Zoan and his envoys reach as far as Hanes (Widyapranawa, 1990, p. 184) may probably be describing the length and breathe of what might have enticed Judah and felt she could be protected and secured. In v. 4.a. of LXX, the pronouns in the word under consideration are missing, while the Vulgate includes them. On the other hand, the MT retains the pronouns as indicated. This observation is significant as it enhances our understanding that Pharaoh's officials were positioned both far and near (Watts, 2002, 462). The verb יָגִיעוּ (Hiphil Impft 3mp – reach, arrive) translated “they reach” figuratively, to arrive, acquire) (*OT: 5060 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) describes the officials being at Zoan, and their envoys arriving at Hanes, indicating their presence in different locations for diplomatic or political purposes.

**Verse 5** continued to build on what Judah was probably thinking she could do. The Lord is still reminding them that they would be put to shame. In this verse 5.a. The *Kethib* (K) reading for

the Hebrew word is **הבאיש**, which is understood as a Hiphil perfect, third person singular form of the root **באש**, meaning "be odious, stink." On the other hand, the Qere (Q) reading, influenced by Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, suggests **הביש**, a Hiphil perfect, third person singular form of the root **בוש**, which means "come to shame." This emendation, represented by Q, is the first among several suggested changes. In the Masoretic Text (MT), this Qere reading aligns better with the context, as noted in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS), following Procksch's view (as cited in Watts, 2002, 462). The verb **הביש** (Hiphil Pft 3ms vwb – to be ashamed) has a causative meaning, indicating the act of making someone else feel ashamed or bringing shame upon them. In this verse, it is applied to the previously mentioned people who cannot offer help or benefit to others. Egypt, described as **על־עם לא־יועילו לְמוֹ**, is translated as "a people that cannot profit them," meaning they provide neither help nor benefit. Consequently, Judah was engaging in a business venture that would inevitably lead to loss, not profit—a futile transaction resulting in shame and disgrace. Watts calls it a willful folly (Watts, 2002, 462). Egypt, in this scenario, becomes a burden for Judah, offering no protection or assistance. Calvin (1998) remarked that the ultimate outcome is not only the absence of the expected support but also severe punishment due to their arrogance and lack of faith.

**Verse 6:** The oracle now directs its attention to the creatures of the Negev. **מִשָּׂא** translated as "burden", specifically refers to tribute or portage, and figuratively conveys an utterance, primarily a doom (*OT: 4853 from OT: 5375 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006). This imagery portrays the destitute burden-bearing animals, namely camels or donkeys, which compose Egypt's caravans in the southern regions of Palestine. These creatures are compelled to traverse through the terrifying presence of wild animals in this "land of trouble and anguish" (Watts, 2002, 465). The Negev, characterized by wilderness and desert, presents a harsh and rugged terrain, from which emerges **וְלִישׁ אֶפְסָה וְשָׂרָף** translated as "the Lion, the adder, and the flying fiery serpent" (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc.*, 2006). This description emphasizes that the region is indeed a "land of trouble and anguish," highlighting the adversity these animals must endure during their journey. Despite the challenging landscape, Judah still chooses to transport their riches and treasures on the backs of donkeys and the humps of camels to Egypt. However, the Lord describes Egypt as **על־עם לא־יועילו** translated as "a people that cannot profit them" (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc.*, 2006). The verb **יועילו** (Hiphil Imft 3mp luy - profit, benefit) (*OT: 3276 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) implies that their efforts were and will continue to be in vain. By doing so, Judah is investing in the wrong place, where losses will be recorded rather than any gains. Their act of carrying such valuables signifies loyalty to a nation that ultimately cannot provide any real help or benefit to them.

**Verse 7:** Concludes this sub-unit again with the Lord reiterating that Egypt's help is utterly useless. Even though the BHS suggests omitting **מצרים**, "Egypt," (Watts, 2002, p. 465), this is however not necessary. The retaining of Egypt in the MT only adds meaning and clarity to what God wanted Israel to know; "Egypt's help is worthless". In The verb **יעזור** (Qal Impft. 3mp rzu – help, aid) as used in the imperfect form expresses an action that has not yet been completed

or one that is anticipated to happen in the future. It is not something to be desired or admired; it is not required. The result of what Egypt might have claimed she could do was shame and disgrace. The Lord called her “Rahab the Do-nothing”. The verb קראתי (Qal pft. 1cs arq – call, proclaim) translated “I called/proclaimed” indicates that it is God who is performing the action of calling or proclaiming. This means that she (Egypt) had to capacity to render a long-lasting help if at all she had any. She is empty; she is declared incapacitated to render any help. Luther et’al (1990) adds that Rahab: Egypt sits still will completely ignore Judah and will not protect her (p. 255).

**Verse 8** introduces the second subsection within the passage we are examining. The initial word, "עתה" (an adverb commonly translated as "now"), signifies that the prophecy should be documented immediately, underscoring its pertinence and significance in the present moment (*Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006). This word modifies the verbs בוא (Qal Impv ms awb – come in, go) כתבה (Qal Impv ms btk x3sm – write) חקקה (Qal Impv ms qqj x 3fs – cut in, inscribe); implying a divine directive for the prophet Isaiah to indispensably record the conveyed prophecy or message for the people of Israel. The imagery of writing on a tablet (לית) and inscribed on a scroll (ספר) emphasizes the significance and permanence of the message that it might be יהיה (Qal Jus. 3fs hyh – be, become) as a testimony or witness to the people, meant to be preserved and passed down to future generations so that they are not left uninformed as to whether their forefathers obeyed the word of the Lord or not. For the fact that these things were to be written before them, “before their eyes” (אתם), Luther et’al. (1990), wrote is “so that their descendants might inherit the warning of their parents, who were cut off because of their unbelief, and this might serve them as a perpetual witness to frighten all descendants. By means of this alarm he wants to deter the ungodly from their malice” (p. 255).

**Verse 9:** Again, the Lord reiterates that the Israelites are rebellious people (עם מרי). The noun מרי translated “rebellious” from hr\*m\*; a primitive root; to be (causatively, make) bitter (or unpleasant); (figuratively) to rebel (or resist; causatively, to provoke) implies that the deeds of the people; disobedience provoke and made God bitter. The Lord also described them as בנים כוזבים translated “lying children”. The word כוזבים (ncmpa) from vj^K\*; a primitive root; to be untrue, in word (to lie, feign, disown) or deed (to disappoint, fail, cringe) (*OT: 3584 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) implies that they were in word and deed not faithful to the terms of the covenant. All these are introduced by the כי; a major subordinating conjunction indicating causal relations (Wheeler, 1990) which provides the reason or justification for why the people are described as "rebellious" or "stubborn. לא־אָבִי (neg. Qal. Pf. 3cp -be willing) שָׁמְעוּ (Qal Infv umv - hear) (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc.*, 2006) combine which translate “children unwilling to hear” conveys the idea of the people's unwillingness or refusal to listen to the instruction of the Lord, highlighting their rebellious nature.

**Verse 10** continues to depict the prevailing attitude among the people. The verb "אָמְרוּ" (Qal Pft 3cp rma – to say), translated as "they said," pertains to the people. At this point, their situation

had reached a stage where they derided the seers and prophets. They directly address the seer, saying "לא תראו" (neg. Qal. Impf. 2mp - see), meaning "do not see," and they speak to the prophets, stating "לא תתוודו לנו נבחות" (translated as 'do not prophesy to us what is right'). The verb "לא תתוודו לנו" (neg. Qal Impf 2mp – prep. - 1cp – prophesy, see) and "דברו לנו" (Piel impv. 2 m.s – prep. – 1 c.p. sf. - speak), translated as "prophesy" and "Speak to us smooth things" (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc., 2006*) respectively, indicate their refusal to accept prophecies that challenge their conduct and beliefs. Instead, they prefer to hear only what aligns with their desires, even if it means disregarding the truth. Essentially, the people reject prophetic messages that confront their wrongdoings and call for repentance. They desire prophets who will speak comforting words that support their sinful ways, regardless of whether these words are truthful or in accordance with God's will. This aligns with what Paul wrote to Timothy about people seeking teachers who will cater to their preferences and desires in 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

**Verse 11** shows that their call upon the seers and the prophets was to abandon the way of the Lord which the people might have felt was a means of disturbance. The use of the verbs סורו (Qal Impv mp rws – turn aside), הטה (Hiphil Impv mp hfn – turn, incline) (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc., 2006*) all in the imperative sense implies a command. It shows clearly that the people were rejecting the prophetic messages and visions, preferring not to hear about what the future holds. They are essentially asking the prophets not to reveal anything to them. They were completely out of the way by their not interested in hearing about אֱת־קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל translated “the Holy One of Israel”; they had forgotten quickly what he had done for them and the promises he had made to their forefathers. They wanted freedom; depending on human power (Egypt) and not the Lord. They saw the prophets as narrow instead of broad minded. The Hiphil verb הִשְׁבִּיתוּ (Hiphil impv. 2mp tkv – destroy, remove) (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc., 2006*) implies a call to remove the presence or influence of the Holy One of Israel from their midst. The people being addressed are being asked to cease their behavior or actions that are contrary to the ways of the Holy One of Israel.

**Verse 12:** The Holy One of Israel is again mentioned here and making a declaration as indicated by the verb אָמַר (Qal Pft 3ms rma – to say) that because מְאַסְּכֶם (Qal Infrc sam+ 2mp- reject, refuse, despise) translated “they despise” the word of the Lord as illustrated by verses 9–10b, (Motyer, 1993) MT reads בְּדָבָר הַזֶּה translated “this word” and וַתִּבְטְחוּ (consec. Qal impf. 2mp – trust) translated “and trust” (Motyer, 1993) in oppression and וְנִלְוִו (Niphil act. Ptc. ms zwl – be crooked, perverse) translated “perverseness” and וַתִּשְׁעֲנוּ (consec. Niphil impft. 2mp /uv - lean, support) translated “and lean/rely) implies that the Holy One of Israel had every reason to sanction them. Their rejection of the truth (this word) and trusting in oppression, perverseness and relying on them and not God, constituted the evidences for their sanction. In essence, Isaiah is Once more reading to them the implications of their choices. They chose to have a new morality (10e–11b) and every humanly devised morality is sooner or later a bondage and a cruel master (Motyer, 1993).

**Verses 13-14:** לְכֵן (Hebrew adverb) translated “therefore” in verse 13 which is omitted by the NIV, resumes the corresponding word in verse 12, giving a typically Isaianic formation, (Motyer, 1993) as a result of the above (their iniquity), the calamity that would come יִהְיֶה (Qal Impf 3ms hyh -be, become) upon them is sudden and is compared to a bulging wall that bursts and falls which in an instance will collapse and crash down. Their destruction was near. The emphasis on "iniquity" in v.13 is evident by the use of the Hebrew word "sin" עֲוֹן ('āwôn; cf. 1:4; 6:7) (*OT: 5771 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006). It reflects the accusation of an unwillingness to listen as indicated in v. 9. According to Motyer (1993), two illustrations are provided to illustrate this point. The first illustration portrays a wall נִפַּל (Qal Ptc ms נִפַּל -fall) falling/collapsing under its own weight. Indeed, the wall was about to collapse as indicated by the verb נִבְעָה (Niphal Ptc hub ms -searched, swell) while the second depicts a pot that is smashed by an external force. Both examples demonstrate that iniquity leads to self-destruction and invites judgment (Motyer, 1993). This wall which will eventually break, as indicated by וַיִּשְׁבְּרָהּ (Qal Ptc 3ms rbv x3fs-break, burst) (*OT: 7665 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) translated “And he will break it” can be interpreted as a passive construction, but it is more likely referring to the Lord as the agent of the action. In summary, vv 13-14 with many other verbs יוֹצְרִים (Qal Ptc mp form, create) כָּתוּת (Qal Pass. ptc ms ttK – beat, crush) מִיִּקוּד (prep. Qal pass. ptc dqy – be kindled) לְהִתְחַזֵּק (Qal Infic htj – snatch up) conveys the consequences of iniquity and the certainty of its eventual downfall and judgment.

**Verse 15:** Further still, יְהוָה קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל, “the Holy One of Israel” will not relent. כֹּה־אָמַר (conj adv. Qal Pf 3ms rma – to say) translated “for thus said” (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc., 2006*) indicates that the words that follow are the divine proclamation of the Lord God, specifically conveyed through the prophet Isaiah. That despite all they have done; provoking him to anger and considering him as not the help they need and the consequences of their actions awaiting them, he said there is still hope but only in returning to him will they be saved. The phrase בְּשׁוּבָה וְנַחַת translated “in returning and rest) emphasizes that true security and strength lie in turning back to God and finding rest in His presence. The verb תִּנְשָׂעוּן (Niphal Impf 2mp uvy) means "to save" or "to deliver" (*OT: 3467 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006). The prefix תִּנְ (ti-vva-) indicates the second person plural, so the word refers specifically to a group of people who are refusing to follow the path of salvation and deliverance that God is offering them.

**Verse 16** continues to show that despite such wonderful offer, the people were unwilling to do the needful. The verb וַתֹּאמְרוּ (Consec Qal Impft 2mp rma - say) (*OT: 559 Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers*, 2006) translated "and you said" introduces the words and intentions of the people. Now what they said shows that they were completely detached from the Lord. They prefer to flee upon horses whose guarantee of saving them was zero percent. Their being proud of fleeing on horses and riding upon swift steeds is clear from the verbs נָבוֹס (Qal Impft 1cp -flee, escape) “we will flee” נִרְכָּב (Qal Impf 1cp bkr – mount, ride) “we will

ride” express their collective decision in rejecting the Lord’s help. The phrase על־כֶּן תִּנוּסוּן translated “therefore you shall flee away” and על־כֶּן יִקְלוּ רֹדְפֵיכֶם translated “therefore your pursuers shall be swift” (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc., 2006*) all suggests that their attempts to escape their enemies through military alliances and expeditions would be futile. Instead of finding security, they would become the ones fleeing, facing the swift pursuit of their enemies.

**Verse 17** explains that for their folly, they shall surely be put to shame and defeated because Egypt whom they relied on is unable to help them. Their enemies in their fewer number shall pursue them. The phrases "גַּעְרַת אֶחָד" translated as "the threat of one" or "the rebuke of one" and מִפְּנֵי גַעְרַת חֲמִשָּׁה תִּנוּסוּ translated as “the threat of five you shall flee” (*Interlinear Transliterated Bible, Biblesoft, Inc., 2006*). The verb תִּנוּסוּ (Qal Impf 2mp שׁוּחַ – flee, escape) is describing a situation where a thousand people will flee or be scattered when confronted or threatened by just one individual. The imagery used here illustrate a condition of fear and weakness, where a large group becomes powerless and scattered in the face of minimal opposition. The verb אָמְנוּתְרָתָם (Conj. Niphal Pf 2mp רָחַץ - be left, remain) indicates how they were left על־הַגְּבֻעָה כְּתֵרֶן עַל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר וְכִגְס עַל־הַגְּבֻעָה “like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill.” Lending his voice, Watts (2002) says, “they became a hollow and lonely symbol without meaning or following” (p. 466).

### **Summary of the Message of Isaiah 30: 1-17**

In verse 1-2, the prophet Isaiah starts with a stern warning to the rebellious children of Judah, who are seeking alliances with foreign nations, particularly Egypt, without seeking God's guidance. They are heading down a path of disobedience and trust in their own wisdom rather than relying on God. In verse 3, Isaiah did not hesitate to point out that their reliance on Egypt will only lead to further disappointment and shame, as Egypt's help will prove to be futile and untrustworthy. Despite Isaiah's warnings in verse 4-5, the people of Judah insist on pursuing this alliance with Egypt, refusing to listen to the guidance of the prophets sent by God. In Verse 6-7, Isaiah compares the stubbornness of the people to the uncooperative animals in the Negeb, a desert region known for its difficulty in taming animals. The people's refusal to heed God's warnings will lead to their own destruction.

In verses 8-11, God instructs Isaiah to write down His message as a witness against the people, condemning their rebellious ways and false reliance on Egypt and other nations instead of seeking Him. They have rejected the divine instruction and prefer deceptive and comforting words that do not address their sin. In verse 12-14, the people demand that the prophets stop speaking about their sins and God's judgment and instead speak pleasant and soothing words. They wanted to hear only what makes them feel good, rather than facing the truth of their wrongdoing; a similar situation Paul wrote Timothy about (2 Tim. 4: 5-6). In verse 15, however, God, through Isaiah, calls for repentance and a return to Him, promising that salvation lies in

turning away from their sinful ways and trusting in His guidance. God reveals further in verse 16-17 that true salvation and strength lie in returning to Him and relying on His mercy and compassion. If the people of Judah repent and seek God, He will help them overcome their enemies and deliver them from their troubles. But if they insist on relying on foreign nations, even a microscopic few will defeat and disgrace them.

### **Outline/Structure of Isaiah 30: 1-17**

Upon examining the passage verse by verse, and subsequently summarizing it for our study, the following outline/structure emerged for effective application for today:

- 1. Trusting in Egypt's Help vv. 1-7:**
  - a. Israel's Rejection of God's Guidance vv. 1-2
  - b. The Futility of Trusting in Egypt vv. 3-5
  - c. Even in the face of disaster (the Negev desert), the people refuse to turn to God vv. 6-7
- 2. The Rebellious People vv. 8-11:**
  - a. Isaiah as the messenger of God's word to a disobedient people vv. 8-9
  - b. The people's rejection of God's message and preference for deception and lies vv. 10-11
- 3. Disregard for God's Word vv. 12-14:**
  - a. The people's disdain for the word of the Lord, seeking comfort in falsehoods vv. 12
  - b. Israel's rejection of God's word and their refusal to turn to Him in repentance will result in their complete destruction, v. 13-14
- 4. Repentance and Rest Verses 15-17:**
  - a. Returning to God in quietness and trust v. 15a.
  - b. The consequences of rejecting God's counsel, leading to vulnerability and adverse circumstances vv. 15b-17

### **Implications of the Message of Isaiah 30: 1-17 for Today**

The timeless relevance of Isaiah 30:1-17, conveyed by the prophet Isaiah to the ancient Israelites, remains pertinent to our lives today. This passage holds a crucial message of caution, reproach, and direction (2 Timothy 3:16). The application of this message can be observed in four distinct levels, as delineated by the passage's structure.

In verses 1-7, Israel sought an unworthy alliance, schemed and carried out their own plan. Today, people of God who are called to serve him and evangelize the world as part of keying into the mission given to Israel (Genesis 12: 1-3) are faced with many challenges resulting from issues arising from politics, insecurity, economy among others. They may as a result be tempted to seek help and solutions from the world rather than relying on God. James 4: 4 admonishes the people of God to know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God and. It is essential to remember that our ultimate trust should be in God, and seeking worldly solutions without seeking God's guidance can lead to detrimental consequences as experienced by Israel.

In 1 John 5:21, people of God are admonished to keep themselves from idols," emphasizing the need to remain focused on the true God.

In verses 8-11, the people of Israel rejected God's word and were unwilling to listen to the message of the Lord given through the prophets. They wanted to hear only pleasant and reassuring words, rejecting any correction or warnings of impending judgment. Similarly, in today's world, there might be a tendency to ignore or downplay certain aspects of God's Word that challenge our lifestyles or beliefs. As people of God, we should be open to receiving His full counsel, even if it means confronting our own shortcomings and making necessary changes in our lives. We must remember that God's inspired word cannot be changed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3: 16). People of God should desist from manipulating or calling Pastors and teachers of the word to tell them what their itchy ears want to hear. This was the situation Paul reminded Timothy that would happen (2 Timothy 4: 5-6).

In verses 12-14, the Israelites by rejecting the word (truth of God) put their confidence in oppression and deceit, thinking that these tactics would protect them. However, these strategies would only lead to further destruction as reflected in vs. 15b - 17. In the present age, some might be tempted to gain power or control through unethical means, thinking it will secure their position or protect them. The message from Isaiah reminds us particularly in Nigeria where oppression of the masses and deceit is the order of the day. People of God must know that such methods (putting confidence in oppression and deceit) are ultimately futile and contrary to God's will. As God's people, we should seek justice, truth, and righteousness in all our endeavors. This was the Prophet Amos' admonition in 5: 24.

Amidst the warnings and rebukes, Isaiah in vv. 15a offers a message of hope, encouraging the people to return to God with repentance, acknowledging their need for His guidance and grace. This timeless message is still relevant today and reminds us of Joel 2: 12 to return to the Lord in repentance. No matter how far we might have strayed from God, His invitation to return with a repentant heart remains open. When we humbly seek His forgiveness and guidance, God is always ready to receive us with love and grace. However, if we refuse to obey God, we will be vulnerable to adverse circumstances as reflected in verses 15b-17.

## **Conclusion**

By utilizing the rules of Hebrew grammar relevant to the passage and considering its historical context, the prophetic text found in Isaiah 30:1-17 elucidates the imprudence of forming futile alliances among the people of God. Instead of relying on God's guidance and protection, Judah is censured for seeking associations with foreign powers. Regrettably, this alliance merely offered them a false sense of security, ultimately serving as nothing more than a temporary delay of their impending doom. The passage serves as an illustration of the folly of entering

into meaningless alliances, the repercussions of which are severe. It underscores the danger of depending solely on human strength and worldly wisdom, while disregarding God's guidance and protection, as exemplified by the historical actions of Israel. As a result, this passage remains an enduring reminder that genuine safety and wisdom emanate from placing our trust in God and faithfully following His guidance.

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