

Title: Wait til the King Comes Back!  
Text: Isaiah 30-35  
Theme: Wait for the King  
Series: Isaiah #28  
Prop Stmtnt: Live now, in view of the King's return  
Aim: I aim to call my people to really believe the promises of the King

Preaching Schedule:

April 8 – Resurrection Day  
April 15 – Chad Holmgren  
April 22 – Patrick  
April 29 – Isaiah resumes

Read Text: 30.1-5, 8-11, 15-18; 31.1-3; 32.1-5; 33.2-6; 34.1-4; 35.1-10

Let's say that you are twelve years old and your dad tells you to cut the grass. He has some errands to run and will be back in about an hour or so. Well, you've heard that before and you know that an hour or so could mean two or three or even longer, so you figure that you have plenty of time. So, instead of shutting off the video game, you play a little longer and a little longer and a little longer, until you hear the sound of the garage door going up and you realize that your dad has returned and you haven't done a thing. Now, how happy and how relieved are you that your dad has come back and that he even showed up early? Son, you are in deep weeds!

Now, let's say that you are eight years old and your older brother is a terrorist. I don't mean that he is a terrorist like an Al Qaeda terrorist, but he terrorizes you when your parents aren't around and threatens to really torment you if you would ever dare to tell on him. Well, on this day, dad says that he has some errands to run, and he leaves your brother in charge who dutifully and hypocritically feigns submission, while you know that you have run for your life. Your fears are justified. Your brother duct tapes you to the chair, steals your game-boy, puts it in the microwave, and just as he hits the popcorn setting, unexpectedly your dad walks in. Now, how happy and how relieved are you that your dad has come back and that he even showed up early? The promise to return by dad, is a blessing and a judgment, all at the same time. It is a judgment to the older brother and to the lazy kid, but it is an enormous blessing and relief to the eight year old.

The message of Isaiah is: Our God Saves! That is the good news. The other edge to that sword is this: There is NO hope in anyone other than God. There is no salvation, no rescue, and no security in anything or anyone else. God is your rest. God is your refuge. Believe him! Now, Isaiah was preaching to people, including himself who were living in the gap between the promise of God and the fulfillment of that promise. How you live in the gap demonstrates whether-or-not you really believe the promise of God.

Chapters 30-35 conclude the teaching part of first half of Isaiah. 30-33 are marked by judgment (30.1-17), blessing (30.18-33), judgment (31.1-3), blessing (31.4-9; 32.1-8),

judgment (32.9-14), blessing (32.15-20). And like the examples, the judgments and blessings often come at the same time. When the King shows up, his enemies are judged and his kids are sheltered. Isaiah, like Daniel, like John is overwhelmed with these visions of the future. Chapter 33 is a prayer of Isaiah. It is like the dam has burst and Isaiah just pours out his heart before God. Here is this man, this lonely man, burdened with the sins of his people, now carrying the weight of this message, and finally just breaks out in prayer. It is a cry for grace, a lament for the coming judgment, and hope in the coming blessing. 34 - Summary of Judgments - on the nations; 35 - Ultimate Promise of Rest for the Faithful

Promise (judgment) (blessing)	Immediate Fulfillment (Assyrians) (Judah) (King coming)	Ultimate Fulfillment (world - 34) (believers - 35) (King returning)
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They lived between the promise and the coming of the King. We live between the promise and the return of the King. Keep this in mind since we have even more evidence why the promises of God are worthy of our trust.

Here is the setting: Assyria, while the dominant world power, went through a short time of weakness. There were some internal issues that created some unrest. By this time, Damascus and the Syrians have fallen. Samaria and the Northern Kingdom have fallen, and Judah (Southern Kingdom) is still paying tribute (heavy taxation) to Assyria due to Ahaz's agreement. By the time of chapter 30, Hezekiah has replaced Ahaz and has decided to rebel against Assyria by not paying tribute. But, while he is considering this, he is sending envoy's to Egypt to find out what they are doing and if they would stand with Judah if and when Assyria responds. Now, international diplomacy is not wrong. But, what is wrong is when Judah attributes to Egypt and to Egypt's gods a status that is for God and God alone. This setting sets us up for the conclusion of this section (33-35) and then for the absolutely incredible event that is described in chapters 36-39 which brings the first half of Isaiah to a close.

So, here is more of the same, isn't it? Why, why, why do you insist on looking to trust in everything and everyone instead of God? This text, this section and this book is all about the contrast between trusting God or trusting anything else. So, the outline reflects that.

1. **Man makes Promises and God makes Promises.** (30.1-5; 31.1-3)

The envoys of Judah are described in this chapter as going to Egypt seeking the protection and shelter of the Pharaoh. The words that are used to describe Pharaoh (v.2) are the same words that are used in the Psalms to describe God. Seriously, have you forgotten your history?! What good was the Pharaoh before God in Exodus? What good will he be now? The prophet makes it clear. This plan is a colossal waste of time. (7) Egypt is the "do-nothing" country. "Rahab" was a nickname for Egypt. The point was, Egypt may look impressive, but in reality she just sits there and does nothing. Egypt cannot and will not save you. There is no hope in Egypt. Look to God!

All of these plans are simply man's attempt at creating solutions to problems that only God can solve. It all reminds me of the diplomatic efforts to address the North Korean missile issue, the Iran nuclear issue, the Palestinian nation status issue, the Taliban Afghan issue, the economic summits, the trade summits, the global warming summits and on and on it goes. We have summits, conferences, agreements, treaties, handshakes and promises. All of these are man's attempts at making promises. It never ends. It has been this way for thousands of years. Neville Chamberlain famously returned from a meeting with Adolph Hitler in Munich in 1938 and proudly proclaims that war in Europe has been averted, only to watch in disbelief as Germany invaded Poland a short while later. How many lies are told? How many appeasements offered? Man makes promises that he either will not keep, or cannot keep. Why would you put your security in that?

Imagine if our government announced that North Korea agreed to suspend her missile program, opened her borders to commerce, that Iran has agreed to recognizing Israel's right to exist, ending the embargo on her oil exports, that the new Libyan government was able to get their oil back up to speed, that the currency and debt issues in Europe were addressed in a way that gave strength back to the dollar, that oil fell to \$60 a barrel, that gas fell to \$2.25 per gallon, that SUV's, trucks, and cars started selling even faster, that the population in this area began to recover, that home prices started to increase and companies started hiring more people and raising wages. Should we celebrate? Should we think that now all of our troubles are behind us? No. Our hope is not in the promises, the plans, or the strategies to fix everything. Our fundamental problem is NOT the economy, nor is it that we have international and diplomatic issues. We are a nation that lives in rebellion to God. We need God! That is the problem with Judah. God told Judah that Assyria is my rod to discipline you. I am bringing pressure on you SO THAT you will turn to me. Don't run to Egypt, run to God! Run to the promises of God.

1. **Man's promises are doomed while God's Promises endure.** (30.8-11; 30.19-22; 34.16-17)

When you compare the track record of the promises of man to the promises of God, the promises of man cannot even begin to measure up. So, why do we keep on believing them? We believe them because there are people who will tell us what we want to hear. People will tell us what we want to hear to stay in power. People will lie to us, hoping that the unveiling of their lies and the consequences will come down the road after they have been able to get out of town. That is what this text is speaking of.

In this text, both politicians and prophets are guilty. What was going on then, is absolutely no different than what is going on now. It seems to me that most politicians will tell you what you want to hear in order to get elected. Elect me and I will give you free health care, increase your social security payments, increase college funding, give you better schools, better roads, make the Lions win the Super Bowl, and make Detroit sunny 300 days a year. When people promise what they cannot deliver, it puts a people/nation on a trajectory toward collapse. Look at what has happened to Detroit. Yesterday's leaders wrote checks on today's accounts and did not fund them. The city is

in danger of default and complete collapse. We are doing the same thing nationally. Our national debt is a staggering 15+ trillion dollars! Each citizen owes close to \$50,000 and the government continues to spend like a drunken sailor. If you want to get elected you learn to promise people everything they want without any consequences. We are losing our freedoms because we are giving them away. Man promises what people want to hear, but man cannot deliver.

What is worse, is that pastors and teachers pretend that sin is no longer sin, that Christ is not the only way to God, that marriage and sexuality is open for redefinition, that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are myth and legend, that living together is now ok, that everyone is entitled to their own opinion interpretation of the Bible, that all views of God are equally valid and that we should not speak in terms of right and wrong or we might be guilty of being judgmental and harsh. I can take you through religious history and show you time after time after time, how the people who claimed to be followers of God, set aside the promises of God because the promises of man appeared to be easier, more charitable, and more enlightened. In every case, the result has been catastrophic.

I recently concluded a funeral at the cemetery when the funeral director gave a little feel good talk and poem in which he completely denied the gospel. He told every person there that we were all going to meet in heaven one day because “our religions teach us that.” Hold the phone! What gives you the right to say that? What gives you the right to tell every single person that God is going to welcome them into heaven? He has no right to say that, but, the reasoning goes, it makes people feel good. It gives them closure. But, you are lying to people.

God, on the other hand will not lie. He will tell you the truth ahead of time. (30.19-22) God warns us about the tough times. He warns us about the consequences. He tells us up front about the laws. That is what he did with Adam and Eve. Satan, on the other hand did not tell them what was going to happen. He promised something that he could not deliver. But, when God makes a promise, he goes on record. He writes it down. He calls us to challenge him. Look at history. Look at what he said was going to happen. It did!

1. **Man’s plans makes things worse while the King is the only One who can save.**  
(30.15-17; 32.1-8; 35.1-10)

Throughout this book we see this contrast: Trust God and relax or trust (man) yourself and be in a frenzy. Now, think with me. What causes you to be tense or uptight? It comes from knowing that something needs to be done, and it is not done and you now feel responsible. You have just been told that fifty junior high students are coming over after church. Oh no! Or, more serious, you just found out last night that your spouse has not been paying the bills and you might lose your home.

Now, when you carry a load that God has put upon you, God will give you the grace to walk. However, when you fail to trust God, then you will try to pick up a load that you cannot handle and that load will stress you out and will crush you. In this text, the Assyrians are coming. God says, trust me. Turn to me and be saved. I will take care of

you. (30.15) But what happens? (16-17) They refuse to trust God and instead in their frenzy and fear they run off to Egypt and try to find a way to fix the problem, which only makes things worse.

Some of you have problems in your marriage. Man's way of dealing with it is through fear, intimidation, manipulation, fighting, threats, slander, blame-shifting, yelling and even violence. At the end of the day, you are worn out, isolated, bitter and desperate because man's way does not work. God's way of addressing problems starts with humility, confession, and repentance. So, who are you going to believe? What does this world say about money? The more you have, the happier you are. What does God say about it? Money is simply a means to advance the gospel. Who do you believe? Seriously, do you handle your money that way? Does your giving reflect that? What does this world say about your appearance? What does God say about it? Who do you believe? What does this world say about sexual purity? It mocks it. It scorns it. But, what does God say? Who do you believe? What does this world say about retirement and leisure? What does God say? Who do you believe? What does this world say about success, popularity, and being accepted? What does God say? Who do you believe? What does the world say about power and leadership? What does God say? What do you really believe? How do you look at those in leadership? How do you function as a leader? Part of the reason why many of you are losing this battle is because you are in a fight without the sword. We live in a world of media. Media is the means of communicating messages to you. Yes, there is an agenda that drives media. There is a message, a value system, a worldview, that is being pushed upon you. How effective is one 45-minute sermon going to be against the 5-6 hours of TV, or internet that some of you are exposed to? How much do you give of yourself to listening to this world? How much do you give of yourself to listening to God? While it is true that the man's promises are doomed and God's promises endure, if you are not reading them, and thinking on them, you will not be affected by them.

God promised a king. He came. He promised to return. He will. Why was he rejected the first time? The people did not believe his message. They had no heart, no appetite, no desire for his truth. There was no place in their lives for what he stood for. That is what I fear for some of you. I really do. In theory you like aspects of the message of Christ, but in practice there is very little evidence in your affections that would indicate that you really believe Christ. In other words, I truly wonder if many of you have ever really come to faith in Christ. I fear that being the people of God is cultural, but not genuinely personal. You fear giving up control. You fear, really following the King on his terms. This Palm Sunday is no different than the first.

Israel then believed that the Messiah would come. You believe that Christ will come. But, the Messiah that came was not the Messiah they wanted. He demanded too much of them. He was the King who graciously, yet unapologetically called them to trust him, worship him, surrender to him, give up the right to self-rule and follow him. Most of them did not. Today you can go to Israel and watch as many devout Jews pray at the Wailing Wall for the Messiah to come. How are we any different? Really? The Christ that some of you want is a Christ who will forgive you, give you a get out of hell free

card, appease your conscience, but not demand that you be humble, not demand that you repent of your materialism, not demand that you forgive others, not demand that you reconcile relationships, not demand that you repent of your racism, not demand that you stop getting drunk, or high, or being sexually involved with your boyfriend, not demand that you honor your parents, not demand that you value the people of God.

I am convinced that if Christ came to the earth now, in a similar way he did then, he would get crucified all over again. But don't think that the liberals would do it. Don't think that the "world" would do it. "Christians" would do it, because Jesus would ask too much and he would blow our cover.

There is a choice that is before you. Who are you going to trust? Frenzy or Rest. It all depends on who you trust. Man cannot keep all his promises while God keeps every promise He makes. Who are you going to trust?