

Come Follow Me  
Elo Viz production  
Week 38  
Isaiah 13-38

This week we will read a lot about the wrath of God and how He can sometimes stretch forth His all powerful hand and smite those that don't listen to Him. Let me set the scene so we can comprehend what is going on. As you recall the children of Israel were split into two kingdoms. The ten tribes to the north retained the name of Israel and the southern two tribes were now called Judah. Israel, the northern kingdom, was in a world of hurt. They made a treaty with a foreign country. Meaning they went to a large superpower and said: If you will protect us then we will give you of our money and goods. Well the Assyrians came and they were not protected. They were captured and scattered, due to their unrighteousness. The southern kingdom of Judah was about to do the same thing. They were seeking protection from an outside superpower called Egypt. But, God through Isaiah warns them not to do it. Isaiah 28: 18-19 says:

“18 ¶ And **your covenant with death** shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only *to* understand the report.”

What God is saying is: Stop putting your trust in other countries to protect you. Trust Me! I will protect you, I will keep you safe. Why do you keep looking to outside sources for help when I have been here the whole time ready and willing to help and protect you.

There are 3 chapters that we are going to look at to really uncover this principle. Chapter 33 shows us how we can trust God, 34 teaches us what happens when we don't trust God, and 35 what blessings come when we do trust God.

Starting in Chapter 33 here are some highlights:

“5 The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

6 And wisdom and **knowledge** shall be the stability of thy times, *and* strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord *is* his **treasure**.”

“15 He that **walketh** righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth **the gain of oppressions**, that shaketh his hands from holding of **bribes**, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of **blood**, and shutteth his eyes **from seeing evil**;

16 He shall dwell on high: his place of defence *shall be* the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters *shall be* sure.

17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his **beauty**: they shall behold the land that is very far off.”

“22 For the Lord *is* our **judge**, the Lord *is* our **lawgiver**, the Lord *is* our king; he will save us.”

Wow, Isn't that powerful? It seems to me that God is pleading for His children to look to Him, and to trust Him. Listen to some of these very plain and bold words of God recorded by Isaiah in Chapter 35:

“3 ¶ Strengthen ye the **weak** hands, and confirm the **feeble** knees.

4 Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* **vengeance**, *even* God *with* a recompence; he will come and save you.

5 Then the **eyes** of the **blind** shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6 Then shall the lame *man* leap as an **hart**, and the tongue of the dumb **sing**: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”

These are the blessings awaiting those that trust in God. And there is no one better to put your trust in. In Doctrine and Covenants the opening Section teaches us to “trust not in the arm of flesh” (D&C 1:19) And yet. Sometimes we still do. Why is that? Why do we choose to put our trust in the arm of flesh instead of God? Well, for one, it is easier to trust in something we can see with our natural eyes. This is the obvious one. The second not so obvious is that when we put our trust in someone we become vulnerable. We expose ourselves to being hurt or taken advantage of. We have all had experiences like this before when we trust someone and that trust was broken. The more this happens the less we tend to pass out our trust willingly. I feel like that. There are very few people in this world that I can truly trust completely. With everyone else I have to guard myself and limit my exposure so I don't get hurt. But, God says: I am not like other men. Proverbs puts it this way: Proverbs 3:5-6

5 ¶ **Trust** in the Lord with all thine **heart**; and lean not unto thine **own understanding**.

6 In all thy ways **acknowledge** him, and he shall **direct** thy **paths**.

God will never hurt you or take advantage of you. God is the only one that you can trust in completely. And, I know... I can hear you. Your saying but, God hasn't answered all my prayers, I still have struggles and problems, trials and sorrows. How can I trust God when He doesn't deliver me from all my pain? In Oct 2019 Todd Budge answered this question, he said:

“In a paradoxical way, afflictions and sorrow prepare us to experience joy if we will trust in the Lord and His plan for us. This truth is beautifully expressed by a 13th-century poet: “Sorrow prepares you for joy. It violently sweeps everything out of your house, so that new joy can find space to enter. It shakes the yellow leaves from the bough of your heart, so that fresh, green leaves can grow in their place. It pulls up the rotten roots, so that new roots hidden beneath have room to grow. Whatever sorrow shakes from your heart, far better things will take their place.”

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2019/10/27budge?lang=eng>

See, God is not just someone we can trust to give us what we want, He is someone we can trust to Give us what is best for us; joy and sorrow, pain and salvation. So, when something undesirable happens we can look to God and pray: Father, I don't understand the purpose of this trial you asked me to go through, But I trust that you will show me your wisdom in this. That I may come out the other side with stronger faith and trust in you, able to experience more joy than I have ever had before. I testify that God will never let you down. He will never walk away and forget you are in the refiners fire. He is there, attentive, watching so carefully for the perfection of your character.

Elder Holland shared a story in General conference that illustrates this point.

“Without safety ropes, harnesses, or climbing gear of any kind, two brothers—Jimmy, age 14, and John, age 19 (though those aren't their real names)—attempted to scale a sheer canyon wall in Snow Canyon State Park in my native southern Utah. Near the top of their laborious climb, they discovered that a protruding ledge denied them their final few feet of ascent. They could not get over it, but neither could they now retreat from it. They were stranded. After careful maneuvering, John found enough footing to boost his younger brother to safety on top of the ledge. But there was no way to lift himself. The more he strained to find finger or foot leverage, the more his muscles began to cramp. Panic started to sweep over him, and he began to fear for his life. Unable to hold on much longer, John decided his only option was to try to jump vertically in an effort to grab the top of the overhanging ledge. If successful, he might, by his considerable arm strength, pull himself to safety.

In his own words, he said:

“Prior to my jump I told Jimmy to go search for a tree branch strong enough to extend down to me, although I knew there was nothing of the kind on this rocky summit. It was only a desperate ruse. If my jump failed, the least I could do was make certain my little brother did not see me falling to my death.

“Giving him enough time to be out of sight, I said my last prayer—that I wanted my family to know I loved them and that Jimmy could make it home safely on his own—then I leapt. There was enough adrenaline in my spring that the jump extended my arms above the ledge almost to my elbows. But as I slapped my hands down on the surface, I felt nothing but loose sand on flat stone. I can still remember the gritty sensation of hanging there with nothing to hold on to—no lip, no ridge, nothing to

grab or grasp. I felt my fingers begin to recede slowly over the sandy surface. I knew my life was over.

“But then suddenly, like a lightning strike in a summer storm, two hands shot out from somewhere above the edge of the cliff, grabbing my wrists with a strength and determination that belied their size. My faithful little brother had not gone looking for any fictitious tree branch. Guessing exactly what I was planning to do, he had never moved an inch. He had simply waited—silently, almost breathlessly—knowing full well I would be foolish enough to try to make that jump. When I did, he grabbed me, held me, and refused to let me fall. Those strong brotherly arms saved my life that day as I dangled helplessly above what would surely have been certain death.”

“[it was Jesus’s] brotherly hands and determined arms that reached into the abyss of death to save us from our fallings and our failings, from our sorrows and our sins.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2015/04/where-justice-love-and-mercy-meet?lang=eng>

He is one that we can truly put our trust in and we can have a sure knowledge that He will never fail us or forsake us. I testify that we can take that leap, we can commit completely and He will catch us, He will save us.

In His holy name even the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.