

# Isaiah 29:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

## Analysis

**It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty** (וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר יִחְלֹם הָרָעֵב וְהָיָה אוֹכֵל וְהָיָה נֶפֶשׁוֹ רֵיקָה, vehayah ka'asher yachalom hara'ev vehineh okhel veheyqits vereyqah nafsho). Isaiah intensifies the dream metaphor with visceral hunger imagery. The ravenous man dreams of feasting but wakes to **his soul is empty** (רֵיקָה נֶפֶשׁוֹ, reyqah nafsho)—his נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh, soul/appetite) remains void. **Or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite** (וְהָיָה עַיֵף וְנֶפֶשׁוֹ שׂוֹקֶקָה, vehineh ayef venafso shoqeqah)—he's עַיֵף (ayef, exhausted) and his soul שׂוֹקֶק (shoqeq, craves/longs).

**So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion—**the armies came to plunder, to satisfy their imperial appetite for conquest and treasure. Instead, they wake to devastating loss, their hunger for Jerusalem's wealth utterly unsatisfied. Their confident expectations of victory prove as illusory as a starving man's dream-feast.

## Historical Context

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Sennacherib's campaign aimed to enrich Assyria through tribute and plunder. His annals boast of taking 'thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver' from Hezekiah. Yet he failed to capture Jerusalem itself or depose Hezekiah—his primary goals unfulfilled. The dreamed feast of total conquest turned to the empty awakening of military catastrophe.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How do God's enemies' confident expectations prove as empty as dream-food?
2. What does this teach about the futility of opposing God's purposes?
3. When have your own plans, made without God's direction, proven as unsatisfying as a dream-meal?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהִנֵּה הַ	וְכַאֲשֶׁר רַ	יִחַל מַ	הִכְעֵב בַּ	וְהִנֵּה הַ	
H1961	or as when	dreameth	It shall even be as when an hungry	H2009	
	H834	H2492	H7457		
אֹכֵל לַ	וְהִקְיָץ	וְרִיקָה הַ	וְנַפְשׁוֹ	וְכַאֲשֶׁר רַ	יִחַל מַ
and behold he eateth	but he awaketh	is empty	and his soul	or as when	dreameth
H398	H6974	H7386	H5315	H834	H2492
הַצֵּמָא	וְהִנֵּה הַ	שֶׁתּ הַ	וְהִקְיָץ	וְהִנֵּה הַ	
a thirsty man	H2009	and behold he drinketh	but he awaketh	H2009	
H6771		H8354	H6974		
עֵיִף	וְנַפְשׁוֹ	שׁוֹקֵקָה הַ	יְהִי הַ	כִּי	
and behold he is faint	and his soul	hath appetite	H3651	H1961	
H5889	H5315	H8264			
הַמֶּוֹן	כָּל	הַגּוֹיִם	הַצֹּבָא יִמַּ	עַל	הַר
so shall the multitude	H3605	of all the nations	be that fight	H5921	against mount
H1995		H1471	H6633		H2022
צִיּוֹן:					
Zion					
H6726					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 44:12** (Parallel theme): The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

**Psalms 73:20** (Parallel theme): As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.