

Isaiah Lesson 10

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Introduction: *In chapter 9, we studied about the prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ to a virgin and ended with the impending judgment coming to Israel.*

This chapter of Isaiah begins with further warnings to Judah. Afterwards, the prophet describes the coming judgment against Assyria. The focus then shifts to the Day of Lord and of the Jewish remnant in the land during the Tribulation. Finally, an itinerary of the invasion of Judah by the Assyrians is presented though some think it is eschatological.

I. Woe to Those Making Unrighteous Decrees

Isa 10:1 Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

Isa 10:2 To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

The chapter begins with a woe against the sin of Judah. The local leadership of the nation's regions were denounced for issuing decrees and edicts which were burdensome, unjust and uncalled for. The judicial process was corrupted, especially against those of low estate.

Specifically, they sought to withhold fair judgement from the poor rendering them powerless and making them easy prey. In short, those in authority went about to defraud the poor. The widows, and the orphans were targeted because of their vulnerability.

Isa 10:3 And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

Isa 10:4 Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

After articulating the sins that the leadership committed against their people, God asks, 'And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which

shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?' That judgment would come from afar. Both the immediate text and history show that God used the Assyrians to chasten Judah for their sin.

Without Gods protection, Judah would be brought lower than even prisoners. The dead of the coming battles would fall on top of them. As noted earlier, the prophet again warns, 'for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.' God's wrath was still impending against Judah.

II. Judgment on Arrogant Assyria

Isa 10:5 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

Isa 10:6 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

God made it very clear that he was about to use the Assyrian army to be a rod of chastening against his sinful people, Judah. As the Assyrians invaded Judah, the weapons in their hands would be that of God's indignation against them. Lest there be any question, God made it very clear that he would send the Assyrian king against "an hypocritical nation." That nation was Judah. Judah was the target of God's wrath.

Accordingly, the Assyrians would invade, conquer, pillage the land, and trample Judah like mud in the streets. The chastening of God's wrath was impending. Though king Hezekiah was godly, the nation under him was not.

Isa 10:7 Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.

Isa 10:8 For he saith, Are not my princes altogether kings?

Isa 10:9 Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus?

Isa 10:10 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

Isa 10:11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?

The Assyrians were ignorant of Gods involvement and did not understand they were being used of God. The motive of the Assyrians was to conquer as many nations as they could. Their motive was conquest. The arrogance of the

Assyrian king is apparent. The prophet records the boasts of the king of Assyria (likely Sennacherib).

The Assyrians had overrun the city and region of Carchemish with ease. They did the same to Calno, a city in Babylonia. They had no trouble conquering Arpad and Hamath, both cities of Syria. As their empire expanded to the south, they conquered Damascus and then Samaria in 722 B.C. Sennacherib was not shy about boasting of his conquests. Implicit is that Judah and Jerusalem were next.

Sennacherib boasted how he had overrun kingdoms given to idolatry. Moreover, the quality and quantity of idols of those nations far exceeded the idolatry of Jerusalem and Samaria. Little did Sennacherib understand the indictment he was making against the Hebrew states. He mocked the character of their idolatry.

The pagan nations of the region were aware of the idolatrous worship which had developed in both Samaria (the northern kingdom) and Judah (the southern kingdom). They also knew that the inhabitants of these kingdoms belonged to Jehovah God, idolatrous or not. Approximately, nine years earlier, the Assyrians had captured the northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria). Now, Jerusalem would be next. The arrogance of the Assyrians was clear and known by God. Nevertheless, God would use them to chasten His people. The knowledge of their idolatry by the Assyrians was an indictment in itself.

Isa 10:12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

God was very clear that after He had used the Assyrians to chastise Judah, that he would punish the insolence and arrogance of Sennacherib and the wickedness of his people.

Isa 10:13 For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man:

Isa 10:14 And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

The prophet makes record of the growing arrogance of Assyria. The Assyrian king was full to the brim with pride and arrogance. He boasted how by his own strength and wisdom, he had overrun other nations including Samaria. This king undoubtedly had been made aware that Jehovah God had allowed him to

conquer Samaria to judge them. Yet, he gave no glory or credit to God for his exploits.

III. Word Comes as a Burning Fire

Isa 10:15 Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.

In a series of rhetorical questions (those in which the answer is apparent), the prophet likened various tools boasting themselves against their owner. It is not the axe but rather the skill of the woodsman which makes it effective. The same is true for a saw or a weapon. With that same folly, the king of Assyria was boasting himself against God. God was using him as rod to chastise His people.

The Assyrian king continued to arrogantly boast of his own power. He had placed himself in a very dangerous position in so doing. God would deal with him before long.

Isa 10:16 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

Isa 10:17 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

Isa 10:18 And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

Isa 10:19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.

God's judgment would soon fall upon Assyria. Their acquired wealth would soon become lean and the presumed glory of Sennacherib would turn into a destructive fire within. Whereas the king of Assyria reveled in his own presumed glory, the Glory of Israel would become a fire which would consume him. The mention of his "thorns and his briers" refers to the Assyrian army. They were indeed destroyed in one night by the angel of the Lord as recorded in II Kings 19:35.

2Ki 19:35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

The greater thought is how that after God was done judging the Assyrians, they would be utterly defeated. They would be like an army whose leadership had given up hope and would be like a forest with so few trees left that even a small child could count the trees still standing. Though God would use the Assyrians to chasten Judah, the day would soon come when He would judge the Assyrians. Their arrogance and wickedness required it.

IV. The Remnant of Israel Will Return

Isa 10:20 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

Isa 10:21 The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

The focus of the chapter here changes dramatically. God through the prophet now shifts His attention back to Judah. The fulfillment of this prophecy is long term in the Day of the Lord. Both houses of Israel would be deported from the land. The northern kingdom had already been so. The dispersion of Judah was about a century away. Their return in righteousness is here foretold.

The day was coming when “the remnant of Israel” would no longer rely upon their captors. The reference to “that day” refers to the coming Day of the Lord. During the Assyrian captivity for the northern kingdom and the Babylonian captivity for Judah, the Jews were forced to rely upon their captors to survive. The day was coming in which they would again rely upon the Lord “in truth.”

Implicit is that the remnant of Israel would someday not only return to Jehovah in faith but also in truth. To date, that never has been accomplished. Though Jews are in their land today, they are not there in belief or in scriptural truth. Though there was a partial fulfillment of this prophecy recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah, the ultimate fulfillment has not yet come to pass. Since their deportation, Israel has never returned to her God in faith and truth. This will come to pass during the Day of the Lord.

Isa 10:22 For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.

Isa 10:23 For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

The prophet further details Israel's return to God. As God had promised Abraham in Genesis 22:17, His seed would be as the sand of the sea, however, only a remnant of them would return to the land of their heritage. The word translated as consumption (Nwylk, kil-law-yone) has the sense of 'completion' or by extension, 'fulfillment.' The thought is how that the ultimate fulfillment of the return of Israel to their land will be in righteousness. In fact, it would overflow with righteousness. There is no question that has never been altogether accomplished.

Though Jews returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, there were immediate problems of sin and unrighteousness in the people. The return of Jews to the land in the twentieth century certainly was not in righteousness. When this prophecy is ultimately fulfilled in the Day of the Lord, their return will overflow with righteousness. God Himself will fulfill this prophecy in all the land promised to Israel. That, as well, is yet to be altogether fulfilled. Never since the time of David and Solomon has Israel possessed all the land God promised to Abraham. However, when Christ returns, that promised will be fulfilled.

Isa 10:24 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

Isa 10:25 For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

God through the prophet now puts the entire matter into perspective for Judah. God used Isaiah to inform Judah (His people dwelling in Zion) to not be unduly afraid of the Assyrians. Syria would indeed smite them. God would allow Syria to chastise Judah. Though Judah would be chastened by the invading Assyrian forces as they overran the outlying cities of the kingdom, it would not last long.

God would intervene through the intercession of Hezekiah and Isaiah and spare Jerusalem. Moreover, when He was done, the Assyrian army would be destroyed. 185,000 Assyrian soldiers were killed in one night by the angel of the Lord. See II Kings 19:35.

2Ki 19:35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

Isa 10:26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

Isa 10:27 And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck,

and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

Though God would allow the Assyrians to chasten Judah, God Himself would stir up a whip to deal with Sennacherib. The threatening Assyrians would soon be destroyed—their yoke removed from Judah. It would be like when Gideon destroyed the Midianites as recorded in Judges 7:19-25. As Moses lifted up his rod over the Red Sea, giving deliverance from Egypt, God would deliver Judah.

The mention of “the anointing” here is literal in application. Olive oil was the base ointment used for anointing. Some have thought this anointing to refer to the Messiah. This anointing is directly related to the intercessory prayer of Hezekiah for God’s deliverance. See II Kings 19:14-19.

2Ki 19:14 And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

2Ki 19:15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

2Ki 19:16 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

2Ki 19:17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,

2Ki 19:18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

2Ki 19:19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

God clearly anointed Hezekiah’s prayer with an immediate and forceful answer. See II Kings 19:20-34.

V. Lift Up Their Voice

Isa 10:28 He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages:

Isa 10:29 They are gone over the passage: they have taken up their

lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled.

Isa 10:30 Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth.

Isa 10:31 Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

Isa 10:32 As yet shall he remain at Nob that day: he shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

This account is of an invasion of a powerful military force from the north, approaching Jerusalem. Some and more notably C. I. Scofield, have sought to apply this passage to end-time events and, specifically, to the invasion of Israel by the Antichrist during the Tribulation. Though Scofield has sought to apply to this to the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation, there really is nothing in the text to indicate that. The geography described is simply that of invasion from the north toward Jerusalem. The invader even threatens Jerusalem as noted in verse 32.

The cities mentioned are successively from the north of Jerusalem. Sennacherib, in fact, did invade by such a route and proceeded to threaten Jerusalem before God destroyed his armies as noted in II Kings 18-19.. It is conceivable that this might have some application to events that will take place during the tribulation. However, the immediate context of the Assyrian invasion in Hezekiah's day seems more likely.

Isa 10:33 Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled.

Isa 10:34 And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.

The prophet foretold how God would intervene on behalf of His people. Using the analogy of a forest to refer to the Assyrians, the prophet foretold how God would cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one. God would lop off the bough of the Assyrian threat and their arrogance would be quickly become humility.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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