



Isaiah 9-10

Tape #7246
Isaiah 9-10
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn in our Bibles now to the ninth chapter of Isaiah? Isaiah has directed his prophecy of chapter eight, toward the northern kingdom of Israel, and he is told of the coming Assyrian invasion. In fact the Assyrians had already taken some of the northern most parts of the country. The tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali had settled in the northern part of the land, in what is known today as the upper Galilee region, the tribe of Naphtali. The tribe of Zebulun had settled in the area that is around the Galilee, and slightly south of the Galilee. The valley of Megiddo, the plains of Esdraelon, over to Nazareth and all. So already the Assyrians had moved in and taken that area.

So he, in the last part of chapter eight, talks about the people who were led away captive, and would be led away captive. "They will be hungry", verse twenty one, "they will fret themselves, and they will curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look unto the earth; and behold there's nothing but trouble and darkness, there's dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness."

And so these are terribly dark days, having been conquered by the Assyrian forces, who were extremely cruel. The Assyrians were known for their cruelty. The cruel and inhumane way by which they treated their captives. History tells us that quite often they physically mutilated them. Cutting off their ears, cutting out their tongues, cutting off their noses, physically mutilating the bodies of their prisoners. Thus, being taken captive by the Assyrians was sometimes worse than death. For this reason, many times in history, when a city was surrounded by the Assyrians, the entire populous of the city would commit suicide, rather than becoming a captive, because of the fear of the torture, and the mutilation of the captives. So he is predicting the fall, and at this time Assyria is already moving in its conquest of the northern kingdom. There is nothing but darkness. He speaks of the dimness in the last verse there, of anguish.

So the first verse of chapter nine, ties directly with the last verse of chapter eight. Remember, originally there were no chapter distinctions. The scrolls of Isaiah just go right on. They don't have chapters and verses, they just continue on. The chapter and verse distinguishing the separation is good, in that it helps you in referencing a passage of scripture, but it is bad many times, in that you read the chapter, and you think, "Well that's the end of the chapter", and so you quit. Then, when you start the new chapter, you don't always see the relationship to the previous chapter. We have a tendency to think that, "Well that's the end of the chapter, that's the end of the thought.", when many times it is a continuing thought that is carried right on through. Such is the case here. Chapter nine is tied with chapter eight. He speaks of the dimness of anguish.

Nevertheless the dimness [So tied just right to it, "the dimness",] shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in the Galilee of the nations (9:1).

Now God sort of gave them a warning. They went through some difficult times. Times of real hardship and difficulty, but they failed to repent, they failed to turn to God. Thus, God then dealt with them in a more severe way. God is merciful even in judgment. God always gives to us the opportunity to repent. "God does not afflict willingly", the scripture tells us. In a, in a sense, you might say that God is a poor disciplinarian. He's soft. He doesn't afflict us according to what we deserve, the psalmist recognized that. That we deserved what, much worse than what God gives to us. But God is gracious even in judgment, and sometimes He allows things to happen which are bad, which are only a foretaste of the worse things that will happen, if we do not repent, and turn. They're, they're sort of just warnings of God to turn from your wickedness.

Now I have often said that there are important lessons that we need to learn, and God intends that we learn these lessons, because they are important to our own welfare. We have to know these things. Just like there are certain things that your children need to know. Important lessons they need to learn. They need to learn not to just, to run out into the street. They need to learn to stop, and look both ways, before they go out

into the street. If they're playing ball, and the ball rolls out into the street, they're not just to run out into the street to retrieve the ball. They should stop on the curb, and they should look both ways.

Now that is an important lesson. Because your child's life may depend upon learning that lesson! If he doesn't learn that lesson, it could mean horrible maiming or even death. So as a parent, in seeking then to train your child, and to teach them that lesson, you first of all may just speak to them and tell them. But then you see them running out into the street without looking, and so you may say, "Alright you can't have TV for a week, because...", and, and so, it's, it's you know, it's tough when kids are used to watching cartoons, not to be able to watch a cartoon for a whole week. To them it seems like a lifetime. But it's an important lesson!

Now again you see them running out into the street without looking. So because they didn't learn because they were deprived of TV, now you take some other measure. You be, and you continue to become more stringent in the punishment to correct them, as they continue to persist in this dangerous practice. Because you know they've got to learn this lesson! Their life depends on it.

Now there are many important things that we need to learn because our lives depend on it. God is determined that we're going to learn. As He is training us, maybe in the beginning it's just sort of a light reprimand, in hopes that we will use good judgment and we'll see the danger and the folly of it.

But, if we persist, as did the nation of Israel, then God becomes stronger, and stronger in the methods that He uses to teach those important lessons. So their affliction was rather light at the first, but it was a foreshadowing of that which was to come, if they did not change. God has important lessons that you need to know, that you must learn, and if you don't learn the easy way, you'll learn the hard way. For there is always a easy way, and a hard way to learn things. If we are stubborn, then we'll learn the hard way. A lot of times people say, "Oh why did God ever allow this to happen to me?", you know. Well, you just didn't learn, friend! You know, you needed to know, but you wouldn't listen.

So it gets, I think of Jonah, he learned the hard way, that you can't run from God, that you can't hide from the call of God. He learned that lesson. It was important that he learn that lesson, but he learned it the hard way. So you can make up your mind, to learn the easy way, or you can learn the hard way. It's up to you. They're going to experience this dimness. Not as bad when God first began to vex them. That was just slight. It's gonna get worse, until it will be complete darkness. The dimness will turn to darkness. But then, out of that darkness, those people sitting in darkness, having been taken captive by the Assyrians.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined (9:2).

God, it seems just never gives up! He continues to pursue, even when we've turned our backs upon Him, even when we've gone into captivity, God continues to pursue. They now, sitting in this darkness, God brought to them a glorious light. "The people who were walking in darkness, hath seen a great light." We know that, that light is this child that was to be born. The sign of the virgin that would conceive, and bear a child, is the great light that is promised. "They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death", this land had now been forsaken, it was empty. The villages were destroyed, and the land was desolate. The land of Zebulun, and Naphtali. The Lord declares...

You have multiplied the nation, and increased the joy: [The word "not" is, is a, should be omitted from the translation.] the joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil (9:3).

The day is coming. Those that are sitting in darkness, are gonna see the great light. It will be a day of tremendous joy. "God will multiply the nation, He will increase their joy." It will be the same joy that they have at harvest time. As men rejoice when they won a victory, and are dividing the spoils of war.

Because you have broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the days of Midian (9:4).

The Midianites who were defeated by Gideon. Actually, defeated by the Lord, Gideon was the human instrument. So will Assyria be broken, as Midian was broken.

For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and the garments are rolled in blood; but this shall be with a burning and a fuel of fire. [And this will all take place when,] Unto us a child is born, unto us

a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder (9:5-6):

So here we have now a further prophecy of the Messiah. In seven, fourteen, “Behold, the Lord himself will give you a sign, for a virgin will conceive, and bear a son, shall call His name Immanuel”, which, being interpreted is, “God with us”. Now we are given a little more information concerning this child. “Unto us a child is born”, He is the one that will bring light, bring light to the people. John said, “In the beginning was the word. The word was with God, the word was God, the same was in the beginning with God, and all things were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made that was made, and in Him was life, and the life was the light of men. This is the true light that shineth unto every man. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. He that abideth in me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” So those sitting in darkness, have seen the great light. The nation of Israel, in it’s darkness. To them the light did shine. The glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news, the Messiah has come!

“Unto us a child is born”, there on that special night in Bethlehem. We read in Luke’s gospel that, “She brought forth her first born son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room in the inn.” “A child is born”, but He’s a special child. He is born of a virgin, but more than that, this child that was born in Bethlehem, of the virgin Mary, is the Son of God. As the angel said to Mary when he announced to her that she was highly favored of the Lord, because she was to be the earthly instrument, through which God would bring His Son into the world. He said to her, “He shall be great, and shall sit upon the throne of His father, David.” And spoke of the glorious government, the peace. So this child that is born is a son that is given. And the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, “God so loved the world, He gave His Only Begotten Son.” Throughout the gospel of John, over and over, Jesus affirms that, “I did not come to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.” He spoke of God as His Father, until finally they took up stones to kill Him. He said, “I’ve done a lot of good works. For which of the good works are you stoning me?”, and they said, “We’re not stoning you because of the good works. We’re stoning you because you being a man, are constantly insisting that you are the Son of God.” As you go through the gospel of John, you find that their charge is correct. He was constantly affirming that He was the Son of God. “Unto us a son is given”, God gave His Son.

Now Isaiah here, talks of the future glory of His Son. Now the Bible tells us that the prophets in the old testament, wrote of things they did not fully understand. They desired really to know more completely the plan of God, and they were confused many times by the things they wrote. Because at times it seemed that they were writing things that were contradictory. Isaiah here, in speaking about this son that will be given, speaks about the glorious reign, the eternal reign of this Son. How the government will be upon His shoulder.

Of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be no end, sitting upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, ordering it, in justice [Or righteousness] and judgment from henceforth even for ever (9:7).

But later on in chapter fifty three, Isaiah tells us concerning this son that, “He will be despised and rejected by man. He will be a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. He will be put to death and in His death, He will be put to death between thieves, transgressors.” He goes on to tell us though that His death is for us. That, “God laid on Him the iniquities of us all. He was bruised for our transgressions, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities.” God cries out, “For my people He is afflicted!”

So, it seems to be totally contradictory. Put to death, despised and rejected, and yet reigning for ever a king. We find that in the first coming the prophesies in the latter part of chapter fifty two, and fifty three were fulfilled. Jesus was crucified. He was despised and rejected. He was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. He was put to death, numbered with the transgressors in His death. The only way by which He can possibly fulfill the other prophesies is by coming again, in power and glory. That’s exactly what He told His disciples He would do. As He was getting ready to be put to death, to fulfill those first parts of the prophesies, as He was ready to be despised and rejected, and hanged on a cross, the night before, gathered with His disciples, He said, “Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, now believe also in me. For in my Father’s house, there are many abiding places, and if it were not so I would’ve told you. I’m going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, then I am going to come again, and receive

you unto myself. That where I am, there ye may be also.” And He spoke words of comfort, promising to come again. He told His disciples earlier, as they were saying, “Lord what will be the sign of your coming, and the end of this age?”, and He said unto them, when giving them the signs, “the great tribulation”, but immediately after the tribulation of those days, “shall they see the sign of the Son of Man, coming in the clouds with great glory.”

So this particular portion of the prophecy, as Isaiah, at this point speaking about God giving His Son, jumps over the first coming, and goes to the second coming, the coming of Christ in power and glory. You can only understand the prophesies concerning Christ, when you see it in the aspect of His first coming, and in His second coming. He came first to be an offering for sin. To provide for God, a way by which He might forgive you your sins, by His taking your guilt, and your sin, and dying in your place, providing for God, a righteous basis for the forgiveness of your sins. But He’s coming again! Not as a child, but as a reigning King, to establish God’s kingdom upon the earth. Reigning over the earth. Thus the other prophesies of which the old testament is also filled, will come to pass when Jesus reigns as King over the earth.

So here, “the child is born, a son is given”, jumping though the aspects of His first coming, “His name will be called, Wonderful, Counsellor”. The word “wonderful” could also be translated, and is translated in some of the translations, “marvelous counselor”. That is, as a leader, He will exercise tremendous wisdom. His ways are right, as a reigning monarch, He will be a wonderful Counsellor, for He is the mighty God. Now, “The mighty God” is used again in the next chapter, and it can refer there only to Jesus, verse twenty, I mean, only to God. “The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.” So here that same title is given to Jesus, for Jesus is God. “In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, the word was God.” Jesus is God. So His name will be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father.

Now another translation of this, and more literal is, “the Father Eternal”, and it speaks of the nature of Jesus, as a Father. It does not really refer to God the Father, but Jesus, in the characteristics of the Father Eternal, and finally, the Prince of Peace.

You know, the world is so hungry for peace today, that we’re willing, for the sake of peace, to even set aside good judgment. When Gorbachev began to wave the peace flag, we’re all excited. We’re ready to cut the defense budget, we’re ready to disarm. Because we’re so hungry for peace, and rightfully so! There’s nothing wrong with desiring peace. God knows that war is a horrible thing. The prospect of war with nuclear weapons is unthinkable! Thus, peace is a attractive, desirable thing, and we desire it so deeply that we’re willing to lay aside our good judgment, in just the hope of peace! I would feel much better about the whole issue of peace, if Russia were not spending twenty billion dollars this year to build nine of these Typhoon Class submarines, each one capable of nuking two hundred cities. That’s eighteen hundred cities that they’ll have the capacity, eighteen hundred more. They already have three hundred and some of these submarines that they have been making during these last five years, when they began this whole peace initiative. Why did they keep building them? They’re not a defensive weapon, they’re strictly a first strike surprise weapon. Equipped now with new caterpillar type engines that are silent, and we can’t trace them. Yet they have satellites now by which they can trace all of our Tridents. Why?

You know, there are a lot of peace movements around the world today, and I sympathize with the desire for peace, however, I have just enough knowledge of man, and of the word of God, that I know that there will be no real peace until the Prince of Peace comes and reigns over the earth. As long as we have human governments, as long as we have man in government, there will be no peace. It is not until the prince of peace comes, that the earth can really have a real, true, peace on earth. At that time, this Prince of Peace, during His reign, every man will sit beneath His vine, and His fig tree, and live in peace and unafraid. “And they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and they will study war no more.”

The thought of the coming of Jesus Christ is surely not doom and gloom. It is a hope for a new day, a new age, a true new age, the age of righteousness, and peace. So...

The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel. And all of the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and the stoutness of their hearts, The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores have been cut down, but we will change them

into cedars (9:8-10).

Now you see, God had begun the judgment. The Assyrians had moved in, and the Assyrians had destroyed the brick walls of their cities. The Assyrians cut down their trees. That was another cruel kind of a method of destroying a land, was by destroying the trees, the forest. So the people, rather than turning to God, rather than learning their lesson, they in the stoutness of their hearts said, "Well, we'll just build new cities. But we'll not use bricks, we'll use hewn stones, they'll be even stronger! The sycamores have been cut down, we'll go ahead and plant cedar trees!" They were resolved in their wickedness, rather than to turn from it and turn to the Lord. "We'll just go ahead and we'll make do. We'll, we'll improve even, our position!"

Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and will join his enemies together; The Syrians before them, and the Philistines behind them; and they will devour Israel with an open mouth (9:11-12).

So because they did not turn to the Lord, those that they had trusted in as an ally, Syria, king Rezin, he will turn against them. From the south, the Philistines will attack them. God declares...

For all of this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still (9:12).

In all of this they didn't learn, they didn't turn. They, they didn't learn the lesson they needed to know, and so God's hand is stretched out still. He has to become even more severe in His judgment against them. But God in His love is gonna persist, until they learn. God in His love, will persist in pursuing you! If you haven't learned, you've been going through some real hardships, then He'll say, "Well, put a few more coals on the fire, make it a little hotter you know."

For the people did not turn to him that was smiting them, [The purpose of God bringing this was that they might turn to God, but they wouldn't.] neither do they seek the Lord of hosts. Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel the head and the tail, the branch and the rush, in one day. [Gonna smite the nation.] Now the ancient and the honourable men, are the head; and those lying prophets are the tail. For the leaders of this people are the ones who are causing them to err; and they that are led of them are being destroyed (9:13-16).

When I read of the legislation that is coming out of Washington, out of Sacramento, I realize that the leaders of this nation are bringing us into shame, and disproof, refute, causing the people to err.

Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither will he have mercy on their fatherless or their widows: for every one is a hypocrite and an evildoer (9:17),

God usually takes up the cause of the widow, the fatherless, the orphans. God has special mercy upon them, but no longer. Because...

they're hypocrites, they're evil doers, every mouth is speaking folly. And for all of this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still (9:17).

This is a oft repeated refrain now, in the next chapter or so. Because He is giving them opportunities to repent, giving them opportunities to change their ways, but they are abdurant in their wickedness, and thus the continued stretched out hand of judgment.

For wickedness burns as the fire: the fire among the briers and thorns, [These prairie type fires, the underbrush, the dry underbrush.] the kindling in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of the smoke. And through the wrath of the Lord of hosts the land is darkened, the people will be like fuel for the fire: and no man will spare his brother (9:18-19).

Actually there will come civil internal strife, and civil war, and this as you read the history, is what happened. They began to destroy each other. People were hungry, and they began to kill each other for food. They'd turn against themselves. It's a horrible, horrible thing when a city is besieged, and supplies are cut off and people get so hungry, that they begin to fight each other for what food supplies are there.

There are many people today who are teaching, and I believe falsely, that the church is gonna have to go through the great tribulation. We know that during the great tribulation, probably as a result of nuclear fallout, there's going to be tremendous shortages of food. There will be such a shortage of grain, that a quart of wheat will be selling for about sixty dollars. So it'll be a tremendous shortage of food. So these people who are declaring that the church is gonna go through the great tribulation, are recommending that the

Christians lay up food. That you get some remote area, preferably in Oregon, where you can survive, and they are survivalists. And, they'll give you, in fact they'll even sell you the food that you will need. The grain, and the canned vegetables, and the water and all, that you'll need to survive for seven years. So you buy a unit for each number of people in your family. Then they also will sell you automatic weapons, because they said, "If you have the food when the rest of the world is hungry, you're gonna have to use the weapons to drive them off, lest they, you know what a tremendous witness you're gonna be during the great tribulation. Ha, ha, ha! With your automatic weapons, destroying the hungry people that are coming around. "Hear the word of the Lord!" You know! I can't quite agree with that!

But if you will read Josephus, the wars of the Jews, and you read of the besiege of Jerusalem by Titus, there came such fighting within Jerusalem, the Jews against the Jews, that more Jews were probably killed by their own brothers, than were killed by the Romans. As there, there came these gangs, and the mob rule, and, and the, and it was a horrible, horrible strife within the city of Jerusalem, under the siege. He gives you graphic details. You need a strong stomach in order to keep reading. But here, he, he speaks that this is what will happen. "No man will spare his brother."

But he will snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and shall eat the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm: [Cannibalism.] Manasseh, Ephraim; Ephraim, Manasseh: [Brothers actually, twin, not twin brothers, but brothers of these, they were the sons of Joseph.] but they together shall be against Judah. For all of this [All of the turmoil, and all that they go through.] still his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still (9:20-21).

Chapter 10

Woe to them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed (10:1);

Woe! There's one thing that I should have brought out in the previous chapter. Going back to verse one, the prophecy of Zebulun and Naphtali. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." Actually Jesus began His ministry in Zebulun and in Naphtali. He was in Nazareth, and He went to Capernaum, and the majority of the ministry of Christ was in and around Galilee, the area of Naphtali, and Zebulun. In Matthew's gospel, chapter four, verse fifteen and sixteen, Matthew refers to this prophecy of Isaiah, speaking there he said that it might be, "He left Nazareth, and He came and dwelt in Capernaum." "He had left Nazareth and Zebulun, came to the area of Naphtali, which Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, and the borders of Zebulun, and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying, The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, the Galilee of the Gentiles. The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region of the shadow of death, this light is sprung up." So that is the fulfillment of that prophecy there.

So now, "Woe to those that are decreeing these unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed." These laws that are being enacted. Woe to them that are enacting these unrighteous laws. Boy! I'll tell you, these men who sit in judgment and pervert judgment, woe to them when they come before the Judge of the earth. These men who are writing these laws, when they stand before the great lawgiver, what they'll have to answer for!

For in the laws they turn aside the needy from judgment, they take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows might be their prey, that they may rob the fatherless! What will you do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which will come from far? to whom will you flee for help (10:2-3)?

You've been guilty of taking advantage of the weak and the poor! So what will you do when God begins to visit in His judgment, in His wrath? Where are you gonna flee for help?"

For without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall among the slain. [They'll try to hide, they'll try to hide with the prisoners, they'll try to hide under the bodies of those that have been slain.] But for all of this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. [They still haven't learned!] O Assyrian, [Now God addresses the Assyrian nation, and here God calls them,] the rod of my anger (10:4-5),

In other words, Assyria is to be used as God's rod of punishment. God is going to use this wicked nation

of Assyria, to be His instrument of judgment against His people that have turned from Him. “You are the rod of my anger.”

you’re the staff in their hand of my indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation (10:5-6),

Remember that the Lord said that they were hypocritical and all? And so He said, “I’m going to bring them against this hypocritical nation.” Talk about hypocritical nation, we put on our coins, “In God We Trust”, and then we use them for every ungodly thing!

A teacher this past week, was ordered by the court, not to read his Bible in his classroom to himself during the twenty minutes that he had which was his break time. Because, that sort of constituted a message to the children that he believed in the Bible, and thus it was sort of a state kind of a, you know, I mean they’re using such stupid things! Now had he been reading a book on Satanism, witchcraft, Zen Buddhism, the Koran, no problem. You can read all that junk you want. In fact, you can even teach the kids!

The schools that are the ones that are promoting Halloween more than any other religious holiday in the year. They’re having parties, and everything else, Halloween parties, and kids you know, making the jack-o-lanterns, and everything else. Halloween is a pagan, it’s a religious holiday. A religious holiday, but a pagan religious holiday. Being strongly supported by the schools. Help us Lord! “His hand is stretched out still.” “I will send them against a hypocritical nation”...

against the people my wrath and I will give him charge, to take the spoil, to take the prey, to tread them down like the mire of the streets (10:6).

God is ordering the Assyrians to come and just to wipe them out.

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

He doesn’t realize that God is using him, and that it is God who has, who has given this nation to them. They don’t realize that. It’s just they have a heart to destroy.

For he said, Are not my princes kings? [They take great boasting in their power.] Is not Calno as Carchemish? [Now they had already conquered Carchemish, there at the Euphrates, Calno was a city in the northern part of Syria, and said, “Hey we’ve conquered the bigger city of Carchemish, and Calno’s no different we’ll conquer it!”] is not Hamath [Another city of Syria] like Arpad? [Which was already conquered by Assyria.] Is not Samaria as Damascus (10:8-9)?

They’d already conquered Damascus, and soaked the capital of Israel, Samaria. So they were bragging about what they’d already conquered, and these other cities were not really as great, or as strong, or equal to the cities, already had fallen to Assyria.

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

In other words, in those days, they felt that to win in a battle, was a sign that your god was greater than the gods of the cities that you had conquered. Most of these cities had their own local deities. Their own idols, and images. So the gods that were worshiped by these other cities, that were already conquered, they’re really greater than the gods of Samaria, or Jerusalem. They excel them. So you know, “if these gods of these other nations could not deliver them, surely then the God of Israel can’t deliver Israel.”

As you read in II Kings, the messages that were sent by the king of Assyria, to Hezekiah, demanding Hezekiah to surrender, and telling Hezekiah, Sennacherib sent these messages and telling him the folly of trying to resist. Then when this Rabshakeh came to Jerusalem with the messages to Hezekiah, and came with his armed men, because he was not getting a response from Hezekiah, he called to the people who were there on the walls looking down on them, and he said to them, “Don’t let your king deceive you into believing that your God can deliver from the Assyrians! For look at the nations that we’ve already conquered, and their gods were unable to help them, and neither is your God able to help you. So don’t let the king deceive you by saying, ‘Trust in God, God will deliver us.’” They openly defied God, and Hezekiah just took the letter into the temple, and he just stretched it out before the Lord, and he said, “Look Lord what they’re saying about you!”

Now we know the history, how that God wiped out the Assyrian army when they were gathered in sight of Jerusalem, probably on Mount Scopus. The people looked out and saw this huge army encamped. They

had cut off the supplies from Jerusalem, things were getting worse. This guy was coming down and making all of these threats. Hezekiah told the people, “Just don’t answer them”, and all. All of this blasphemy against God, until the angel of the Lord one night, went to the camp of the Assyrians, and he killed 185,000 of the front line troops. The Assyrians who were left alive, along with the king, fled back to Assyria, where the king was assassinated.

Some people say that they had a bubonic plague. I don’t know how God did it. God did it. You know, I don’t have to have some kind of a rationale! I mean, if God does it, He can do it in many different ways! But here they are bragging. “As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, graven images that excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria.”

Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols? [So he’s, he’s bragging about what he’s already conquered, and, “Jerusalem’s gonna fall.”] Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord has 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 (10:11-12).

So God says, “I’m, I’m using them as an instrument, but it’ll come to pass that when they come against Jerusalem, I’m through with them, and I will destroy them.” They’ve got this pride, this stout heart, the heart of pride, and so He will destroy them.

For he saith, [That is the Assyrians were saying.] By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am exceedingly wise: I have removed the bounds of the people, I have robbed their treasures, I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: And my hand hath found as the nest the riches of the people: and as one gathers eggs that are left, I have gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, nor opened the mouth, or peeped (10:13-14).

“I’ve shut them all up, I’ve destroyed them all! There’s none that could stand against me. I’ve gathered the eggs, I’ve taken the, the spoils of war!” But then God speaks to them. They have been just an instrument in God’s hands, but they are acting as though they were it. You know, it’s a glorious thing to be used of God, as His instrument, it’s marvelous when God takes your life and uses your life as an instrument, to accomplish His work. But oh how careful you have to be that you don’t get carried away and think it’s because you’re something special. That you have found a new secret of success, that you begin to boast of what you have done, what you’ve accomplished as, as though it was you, and not God who did it.

Paul said, “What have you but what you have received? If there is any value, or good in your life, it’s there because God has done it, and if God has done it, why do you boast as though God didn’t do it, as though it was of yourself?” Now here, Isaiah shows how ludicrous it is for the instrument to boast.

Shall the axe boast itself against him who is hewing with it (10:15)?

Can the axe say, “Look at the tree I cut down!” The axe can’t do anything, just lie there! It’s the strength of the guy that’s wielding the axe, that brings the tree down. The axe is only the instrument.

or shall the saw magnify itself against him that’s using it (10:15),

The saw says, “Look at this giant redwood that I just cut down!”, no the saw was only the instrument. At best, I’m only an instrument in the hand of God, and it is ludicrous to boast in what you have done. You’re nothing, and without God, your just lying there, and can do nothing! It says...

though the rod would shake itself against them that lift it up, [That is turning against the one who is lifting the rod.] or as the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood (10:15).

In other words, the rod or the staff can’t do anything by themselves, but they’re turning against the one who is using them. And that is the absolute degree of folly, is when a man used by God, begins to turn against God.

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. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: [The Holy One, being Jesus.] and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and all of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard-bearer faints. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, as a child may count them (10:16-19).

So few left, a child could, now talking about this tremendous Assyrian army that’s going to invade the

land. They'd been God's tool, God's instrument, but now they are boasting against God. So their day of judgment is coming. When they get to Jerusalem on Mount Scopus, as they are there threatening and telling all they're going to do, and saying, "What God is there that can deliver from our god, and from the Assyrians? Where's the God of Samaria, where is the God of Damascus?", and all. "They weren't able to help them, their gods weren't able, neither is your God able to help you against Assyria!" But God said He's going to destroy them and He did. There were so few left, He said that, "even a child could count the number that remained."

Now the vision of Isaiah goes from the immediate out to the future, out to the day of the great tribulation.

It shall come to pass in that day, [That day of the Lord, the great tribulation, the day of judgment on the earth.] 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 (10:20).

God is not yet through with the nation of Israel. There is coming, one final seven year period in which God is going to deal with the nation of Israel. There were seventy seven determined upon the nation Israel. Sixty nine of them were fulfilled from the time the commandment went forth to, "restore and rebuild Jerusalem", to the coming of the Messiah, the Prince. Sixty nine sevens, but there is one seven year period left in which God is going to deal with Israel as a nation. That time will begin when God destroys the invading Russian army that will soon be moving into the Middle East, and God wipes out that invading Russian army. At that time, God will again deal with Israel as a nation, and you are entering in, at that point, to the final seven year cycle of God's dealing with the nation of Israel, which will culminate in the return of Jesus Christ, in glory.

So here he speaks of this remnant. We read that, "God is going to seal a hundred and forty four thousand of them, and that they will be protected from the judgments of God that will be poured out.", Revelation, chapter six. Then we also read that God will take those Israelites that are able to survive, this remnant, and He will bear them through the wilderness, where He will preserve them for three and a half years, during the final great tribulation period. They will be preserved. So this remnant, God is gonna deal with the remnant of Israel, those that have escaped of the house of Jacob. They will not any longer trust in man. They'll trust in the Lord, the Holy One of Israel in truth.

And the remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God (10:21).

They'll call upon God. At first the nation of Israel will also be deceived by the Antichrist, for he makes a covenant with them, in which he grants them the privileges of rebuilding their temple, and they will hail him as their savior. But then, he will show his true colors after the temple is built, and they reinaugurate the worship, and the sacrifices. He will come to the temple and stop the daily sacrifices, he will proclaim that he is God, and demand to be worshiped as God, as he stands in the Holy of Holies. He sets up an image of himself in the Holy of Holies, desecrates it completely, and at that point, those Jews that are left, as he turns against the Jews to slaughter them, those that can escape, are taken by God and preserved by God in the wilderness. Actually in the area of the rock city of Petra, in Jordan. We'll get that in a couple more chapters here in Isaiah. But God will preserve this remnant for this three and a half year period. So, "The remnant shall return unto the mighty God."

For though thy people Israel are as the sand of the sea, [Tremendous number of them all over the world.] yet, they're gonna be decimated, and only a remnant of them shall return: for the consumption that is decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all of the land. And therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwell in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrian: he will smite you with a rod, he will lift up his staff against you, as the manner of Egypt. But yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and my anger in their destruction. ["I will destroy them in my anger."] And the Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of the Midianites at the rock of Oreb: and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up as he destroyed Egypt. And it shall come to pass that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing (10:22-27).

The anointing of God. So he speaks then of the coming of the Gentiles, and we have here the, the progress of the Assyrians down towards Jerusalem. Aiath is about ten miles north of Jerusalem, the Assyrians are coming, taking Aiath.

He is come to Aiath, [Ten miles away] and he's passed Migron; [Even closer to Jerusalem] at Michmash he hath laid his carriages: [The chariots and all have, have he stopped, or the luggage actually, he sort of left some of the stuff there at Michmash, as he is approaching Jerusalem.] They are gone over the passage: they've taken up their lodging at Geba; and Ramah [Which is just outside of Jerusalem, Ramah.] is afraid; and Gibeah of Saul is fled. [Just north of Jerusalem, the Assyrians have moved in already.] Lift up your voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard upon Laish, O poor Anathoth. Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee. As yet shall he remain at Nob that day: and shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem (10:28-32).

Or Mount Scopus, they'll come all the way down, and they'll be parked now on Mount Scopus. Today the university of, the Hebrew University is on Mount Scopus, in fact, we often take, when we go to Israel, as we come into Jerusalem, we take the people first to Mount Scopus, because you have such a tremendous view of the city of Jerusalem, from Mount Scopus is actually a continuation of the Mount of Olives. It goes from south to north, and it's a northern part of the continuation of the Mount of Olives. It has a tremendous overview of Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem, anywhere in Jerusalem, you see Mount Scopus there. It's a very prominent, uh, in view of Jerusalem, so that as the Assyrians now are mounting their forces, the people realize, "Assyria's conquered these other places just north of us, and there they are! They're setting up their camps! They're beginning the siege of Jerusalem itself." But the prophet said...

But behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: [God's gonna cut off the branch with terror!] the high ones of stature will be cut down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon will fall by a mighty one (10:33-34).

So God, through Isaiah, predicts the fall and the judgment of God upon this invading Assyrian force.

Now, cutting down the high ones, "hewing down the haughty, lopping off the boughs". Talking about cutting down the tree, cutting off the branches and all, a figurative sense. But that moves right into chapter eleven. The next prophecy of the Messiah. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, a Branch shall grow out of his roots." In this next chapter we get our next beautiful prophecy of Jesus Christ, which we will concentrate on next Sunday morning, in our morning lesson. So we'll move on into chapters eleven, and twelve. But we're dealing with another tremendous prophecy of Jesus, "The Branch out of the root of Jesse", this child that is to be born. This Son that is given us. What clear beautiful insight God gave to Isaiah, what glorious prophecies of Jesus Christ are found in this book! So, as we go through, we will be thrilled to see how God announced in advance, His plan of redemption for man.