

Isaiah Chapter 10

Verses 10:1-4: A prophetic Woe is pronounced against those administrators who pervert justice. These government officials have abused their power and are now called to God's bar of justice.

Isaiah 10:1 "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness [which] they have prescribed;"

In these first two verses, the prophet returned to assigned reasons for God's wrath again;

- (1) Iniquities in administering the laws; and
- (2) Harsh treatment of those in need.

This is speaking of those who are listened to by others. It is bad to sin yourself, but to lead someone else into sin through statements you make is much worse. This woe is spoken to those who lead others astray, with the things they say.

Writing plans for others to live by is very dangerous, as well, when they are things the writer has decided, and not God. The leader, who writes or speaks, better speak as an oracle of God. Their writing and speaking must be from God and not from themselves.

Isaiah 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!"

This is speaking of those who favor the wealthy over the poor in judging them. This is also, speaking of people who take advantage of a widow or orphan. God teaches that we are to take care of the widow and orphan, not cheat them out of the little they have.

Isaiah 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?"

"Day of visitation": The Assyrians were the first to invade, then Babylon and other foreign powers followed.

There is a day of reckoning when Jesus will stand and Judge the whole world. His judgment will be righteous. Who can help you when that day comes? The answer is no one, because you cannot deceive the Lord.

Just because you have had some place of authority on this earth will not speak in your favor before the Lord. In fact, if you have been a cruel leader, or one who taught them falsely, you will be judged the more severely. To whom much is given, much is required.

Isaiah 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."

This seems to be a little different rendering of the stretching of His hand. In this case, it is the wrath of God. Since they have turned from God, they will go into captivity. The wrath of God is not immediately removed, even after they are captured. They endure many hardships in prison.

Verses 10:5-19: Like an offended father dealing with the disobedient son, God used the Assyrian as a rod of anger to discipline Israel. "Howbeit he meaneth not so" indicates that the Assyrians did not intend to cooperate with God, but in the providence of God they cooperated unwittingly. The cities listed (in verse 9), are on a direct line from Nineveh (capital of Assyria), to Jerusalem (capital of Judah).

Note that Samaria is already listed as fallen. The prophet's intention is to make it clear that Assyria will not conquer Israel by her own power but by God's permission.

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

"Rod of mine anger": God used Assyria as His instrument of judgment against Israel and Judah. He did the same with Babylon against Judah later on. (Habakkuk 1:6).

The Assyrians are the instrument God uses to carry out His will. They are the rod of His anger. This tells us that even worldly people are sometimes used to carry out the will of God.

All are subject to the wishes of God. The Assyrians are not on the side of God. He is just using them to carry out His wrath on His people.

Isaiah 10:6 "I will send him against a 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."

This verse is speaking of Israel and Judah.

This is just another way of saying, "judgment begins at the house of God". These hypocrites are thought of as God's people. They actually say they are God's people, but they are not living like God's people. The wrath of God is against them to get them to repent and live right.

This is very much like those Jesus spoke to that thought they were Christians. He told them to get away from Him, because He never knew them. They said they were Christians, but they were not acting Christ like. They were not feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, etc.

Are you truly a Christian? Are you a hypocrite, saying you believe, but acting as if you do not believe?

Isaiah 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."

Assyria did not realize that she was the Lord's instrument, but thought her conquest were the result of her own power.

This is speaking of the heart of the Assyrian. In his heart, he wants to war and take by force anything he can. He is worldly. This is why God chose him for this job. Assyria is not aware God is using her for His purpose.

Isaiah 10:8 "For he saith, [Are] not my princes altogether kings?"

This is speaking of there being secondary kings under the king in their country. Instead of calling them princes, the king had made them kings. It would be no problem for the king to set one of his secondary kings over a country he had conquered.

Isaiah 10:9 "[Is] not Calno as Carchemish? [is] not Hamath as Arpad? [is] not Samaria as Damascus?"

"Calno ... Damascus": the cities and territories all capitulated to the Assyrian invaders.

The cities mentioned in the verse above, except for Samaria as Damascus, were all cities that had been overrun by the Assyrians.

Verses 10:10-11: Proud Assyria warned Jerusalem that she would overcome that city just as she had been the instrument used by God against other nations.

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

These conquered countries were called, in the verse above, kingdoms of idols. Notice, this is in the eyes of the Assyrians. All gods, besides their false gods, were thought to be idols.

We have discussed before that the word translated "idols", means nothings. The Assyrians regarded no ones gods, but their own.

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

The Assyrians were not aware that Jerusalem was the center for the One True God. True, the people of Jerusalem had strayed from the One True God. That was part of the reason for the Lord allowing this terrible overthrow to happen.

This was a very bold statement to make to the people who belonged to the One True God.

Isaiah 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."

"Punish ... The king of Assyria": The Lord expressed his intention of punishing proud Assyria after He had finished using that nation to punish Jerusalem.

We see that the strength of the Assyrian will last long enough to carry out the wrath of God upon the Hebrews, who God has chosen to punish. The minute this task is finished, God will turn on the Assyrian, and show him where the strength came from. God will bring the Assyrians down Himself. Notice the "fruit".

This means that the descendants of this Assyrian king will be brought low, as well. The punishment was against the Assyrians in general, not just the king and his family.

The prophet proved the Assyrian Kings pride by reiterating his boast (in verses 13 and 14; see versus 8-11).

Isaiah 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]:"

Now we see the reason for the Lord bringing the king and the Assyrians down. They thought they won the battle because of their own personal strength. They did not give credit to God for this at all.

Their arrogance is what really brought them down. The word "I" brings the punishment on the Assyrians.

Isaiah 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 land was left ravaged, because the greed of the king of Assyria. He had robbed them of their wealth. Assyria had devastated these Israelites. The ten tribes of Israel had broken away from Judah, and the main part of the devastation by these Assyrians were on these of Israel.

Isaiah 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."

Here we see the axe, saw, club, and rod which are nothing more than instruments of the Lord (verses 5, 24). Assyria had no power or wisdom of her own.

This is just saying that the Assyrians are just the instrument God used to show His wrath against His people. They are boasting against God, who was the power behind them to do the task the Lord sent them to do. An axe is of no use to anyone, unless there is a hand to use it. God is the hand, and the Assyrians are the axe.

We had read earlier that Assyria was the rod that God would use against Israel. Assyria is like the axe, the rod, or the staff. The instrument has no power in itself. The power and ability to do this came to them, because they were carrying out a task for God.

They were unaware that it was God who was the power, or that they were actually doing this for God. It did not make any difference what they thought, they were doing this in obedience to God's will.

Verses 10:16-19: When God had finished using Assyria as His instrument, the Lord terminated the kingdom's existence (see verse 12).

Isaiah 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."

We know this verse is speaking of the destruction that will come on Assyria. The Assyrians will become weak within their country, and they will, also, fight the Babylonians, and the Medes from without.

Many times, God uses other countries to bring about the punishment on a nation.

Isaiah 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;"

The Light of Israel is the Light of the world (Jesus Christ), as we know Him.

John 1:9: "[That] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Hebrews 12:29: "For our God [is] a consuming fire."

The fire and the Light are of God. God is actually the One who will be fighting against Assyria. They will not be able to stand against the fire of God. The destruction will be so quick and complete, that it will appear to happen in one day. Man (no matter how strong he is), is no match for God.

Isaiah Chapter 10 Questions

1. Who is the first woe spoken to?

2. What is even worse than sinning yourself?
3. The leader, who writes or speaks, had better speak as an _____ of God.
4. What is verse 2 speaking of?
5. What is the day of visitation?
6. To whom much is given, much is _____.
7. What message can we get out of verse 4?
8. Verse 5 tells us the Assyrians are the _____ God uses to carry out His will.
9. What can we learn from this about God and worldly people?
10. Verse 6 is saying, judgment begins where?
11. What is a hypocrite?
12. Which are you, a Christian or a hypocrite?
13. What does the Assyrian want to do in his heart?
14. What does Assyria have instead of princes?
15. What cities had they already destroyed?
16. What kind of kingdoms are mentioned in verse 10?
17. What does "idols" mean?
18. What bold statement did the Assyrians make against Jerusalem?
19. When will God punish Assyria?
20. The "fruit" of the king means the _____.
21. Whose power won the battle for the Assyrians?
22. Why did God bring the Assyrians down?
23. Who received the worst of the damage from the Assyrians?
24. What message is in verse 15?
25. How will Assyria be destroyed?
26. Who is the Light of Israel?

27. Our God is a consuming _____.

28. Why does the destruction appear to happen in one day?