

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 17

April 7, 2019



The Prophet Isaiah from the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo cir. 1508–1512

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah

Message Seventeen

THE OVERTHROW OF DAMASCUS & SAMARIA

April 7, 2019

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Isaiah 8:1–10

¹And Jehovah said unto me, Take thee a great tablet, and write upon it with the pen of a man, For Maher-shalal-hash-baz; ²and I will take unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. ³And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said Jehovah unto me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. ⁴For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and, My mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be carried away before the king of Assyria.

⁵And Jehovah spake unto me yet again, saying, ⁶Forasmuch as this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; ⁷now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory: and it shall come up over all its channels, and go over all its banks; ⁸and it shall sweep onward into Judah; it shall overflow and pass through; it shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel ⁹Make an uproar, O ye peoples, and be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces. ¹⁰Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us. (ASV, 1901).

THE ORDER TO WRITE THE WARNING

Isaiah 8:1–2

¹And Jehovah said unto me, Take thee a great tablet, and write upon it with the pen of a man, For Maher-shalal-hash-baz; ²and I will take unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah (ASV, 1901).

In the last chapter Isaiah had warned Ahaz the king of Judah that Syria (Hebrew Aram) and Samaria would be laid waste by the Assyrians. He included the warning to Ahaz that the Assyrians were not his friends or allies as he desired. They would attack Judah and bring them to the brink of destruction sparing only Jerusalem as God would not allow that to happen. Knowing that this message would not be hearkened to by the population God is now giving additional instructions on a new method of broadcasting the message to the larger population.

God gives Isaiah an explicit instruction regarding the manner, material and message he is to communicate to the people.

He was instructed to write upon a large tablet with an engraving instrument. Those *tablets* were made of wood, metal, or stone, for the purpose of writing upon; (Isaiah 30:8; Habakkuk.2:2). On these tablets, or smooth plates, writing was accomplished by cutting the letters with an iron *stylus*, or small chisel (Hebrew *cheret*). Although Isaiah got this message in a prophetic vision the instruction was to use common physical means to relate it to the people. The order to use this implement and designate it *with the pen of a man* was to affirm the broadcast of the message in a physical manner not simply speaking what God had given Isaiah. This was to be written so as to clearly communicate without any misunderstanding the message from God. Spoken words reduced to writing are permanent and can be viewed repeatedly to understand. He wanted the most common man (Hebrew *nosh*) to be able to read it and quickly understand it. The writing process was very slow with deliberate slow deep cutting strokes, making the writing permanent. What he was to write was the name of a yet to be conceived son of Isaiah whose name will be *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*.

All Hebrew names have meaning and this one means; *the spoil speeds and the booty hastens*. It is referring to the Assyrians who will hasten to the spoil and they will speed to the prey. The prey being Syria and Samaria, the Northern Kingdom of Judah. As with Isaiah's first son Shear-Jashub (the remnant will return) they intended audience would know what the prophetic assuring message meant. In keeping with the Mosaic law's instruction for affirming the accuracy and validity of a message witnesses were required to attest to the reliability of the document.

God chose Uriah the priest (II Kings 16:10–16) and one named Zechariah probably Ahaz's father-in-law (Isaiah 18:2). It is likely that affixed with the names of those two men, the document was posted in some public place near or in the temple. This would be so that it might be seen by the greatest number of people, while calming their fears that this was genuine, and not a false prophecy. They are called faithful because of their character.

Deuteronomy 17:6-7

At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So, thou shalt put the evil away from among you (KJV).

GOD PROVIDES THE TIMING OF THE INVASION

Isaiah 8:3–4

³And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said Jehovah unto me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. ⁴For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and, My mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be carried away before the king of Assyria (ASV, 1901).

Isaiah now begins to speak and describe the near future conception and birth of his son *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*. Although Isaiah calls his wife *the prophetess*, he is not referring to her in the sense of what she does. He is simply saying that to refer to her as the wife of the prophet. Sometime

before the child would be able to speak his earliest words of *abba* and *eemma*, father and mother, the Assyrians would invade the Northern Kingdom. It can be presumed that in less than three years of the timing of this prophecy the invasion would begin. Damascus was taken in 732 B.C. and Rezin was killed. The Northern Kingdom lost its northern provinces to the Assyrians (Isaiah 15:29). In about two years or so (nine months for the pregnancy and one to two years of the child's life before he was able to speak), Assyria would plunder both Damascus (Aram's capital city) and Samaria (Israel's capital). This happened in 732 B.C., which confirms the date of 734 for Isaiah's prophecy. Plundering started long before the Assyrians finished conquering. The capital city of Samaria fell completely ten years later ending the war with the total Assyrian capture of Israel (722 B.C.).

BECAUSE OF THE SIN OF UNBELIEF

Isaiah 8:5–7

⁵And Jehovah spake unto me yet again, saying, ⁶Forasmuch as this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; ⁷now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory: and it shall come up over all its channels, and go over all its banks (ASV, 1901).

God again speaks to Isaiah referring to the people's refusal of His guidance and help. He speaks of the *waters of Shiloah* as an illustration to compare what He offers to them. The Lord likens Himself to "the waters of Shiloah," referring to what is now called the Siloam Channel. God's people were trusting in Assyria (represented by the destructive waters of the Euphrates), rather than in the Lord (represented by the gentle, steadfast waters of the Gihon Spring that flowed through the Siloam Channel). *The waters of Shiloah that go softly* that flow gently. The name Siloah, or Siloam, is found only three times in the Scriptures as applied to waters. It appears once here in Isaiah chapter 8:5, where it is spoken of a smooth or soft running water; once as a pool in Nehemiah and again as a pool, in the account of the miracle of healing the man who was born blind (John 9:7, 11). Siloam is on the east side of the city of Jerusalem, to the south-east of the site of the temple, and its waters flow into the valley of Jehoshaphat. The name means *sent*, or *sending*, from *shlack* (Hebrew *to send*), and was probably given to it because the waters were *sent* or made to pass through a subterranean passage or aqueduct.

Now though because the people refused to heed the Lord's commandments He will bring a different water to them. This one will be strong and destructive, not gentle, smooth and calm.

The waters of the Euphrates river are violent, rapid, and overflowing, which here represent the government of Assyria. The wrong one the people Judah despised (the Lord); the other they sought and admired (the Assyrians). The Southern kingdom was feeble and decaying. The Assyrians were vigorous, mighty, and vast. The people of Judah despised the one, and sought the alliance of the other. Therefore, the disobedient people of Israel and Judah would be overwhelmed by the strong and abundant waters of the Euphrates symbolizing the power and prideful pomp of the king of Assyria. As the Lord emphasizes His description of the people's mocking or rejoicing in the

Assyrian overthrowing of Syria and the Northern Kingdom, He says this will happen to them too. The also proverb says this.

Proverbs 24:17–18

¹⁷Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, And let not thy heart be glad when he is overthrown; ¹⁸Lest Jehovah see it, and it displease him, And he turn away his wrath from him (ASV, 1901).

Those who do this are truly ignorant of the sovereignty of God and the degree of control He exerts over world events. Because if one mocks the misfortunate God will turn away His wrath from the intended target and direct it at the mocker. Interestingly God says that only to Him does any vengeance belong, He alone repays. He will bring doom upon all who deserve it in due time.

Deuteronomy 32:35

³⁵Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly (ESV).

We are exhorted in many verses to not seek our own vengeance but seek peace *if possible*.

Romans 12:18–21

¹⁸If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. ¹⁹Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. ²⁰But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. ²¹Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good (ASV, 1901).

THE FLOOD WILL INUNDATE JUDAH

Isaiah 8:8

⁸and it shall sweep onward into Judah; it shall overflow and pass through; it shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel (ASV, 1901).

Here is the king of Assyria, is being compared to the mighty waters of the Euphrates river. Now God says that he will not only run over and possess the land of Israel, or the ten tribes, but will continue south and enter into Judea as a chastisement for not trusting in the Lord. This is because they trusted in Assyria for help instead of relying on the Lord. The Assyrians definitely distressed them in the times of Ahaz, even Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria (2 Chronicles 28:20), 21. *He shall overflow, and go over;* the whole land of Judea, as Sennacherib king of Assyria did in Hezekiah's time: *he shall reach even to the neck;* that is, to Jerusalem but without conquering it. This verse says that the whole land is compared to a body, and Jerusalem was the head. So, since the Assyrian army, comparable to the waters of a great river, overflowed the whole land, took all the ten walled

cities of Judah, and came up to Jerusalem. The entire country was in danger of being drowned and destroyed, like a drowning man is, when the waters are come up to his neck. (2 Kings 18:13, 17).

Using additional imagery of a airborne bird of prey (*its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land,*) the wings of the Assyrian army, *shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.* The Assyrian army will virtually cover the land of Judea as a cloud causing a massive shadow blocking the sun, called Immanuel's land. This also prefigures the Antichrist who will bring on the *Wing of Abomination* (Daniel 9:27). He calls it Immanuel's Land because Jesus as Immanuel will be born there, and conversely die there. Again, as in chapter seven this is mentioned, to show that, though this land would be overrun by the Assyrians, it would not be destroyed, because Immanuel, the son of the virgin, would be born here.

COMFORT TO THE REMNANT

Isaiah 8:9–10

⁹Make an uproar, O ye peoples, and be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces. ¹⁰Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us. (ASV, 1901).

These closing verses are meant as a word of comfort and assurance about the ultimate victory of the kingdom of God (Isaiah 7:7). Enemies coming upon Judah to destroy it are nearby. They think that they are acting in their own strength and power. But they are deceived, for they are mere instruments of the Lord which He is using to punish His own people of Israel and Judah. In His own time, these evil nations will be broken. He in Judah who trusts in the Lord need not fear, for God is with us. Which is why He says "Immanuel." That is, for those who accept the sign of Immanuel (7:14) there is still hope for deliverance. The LORD will remember his people, and He will spread out his wings over them to provide them with safety and protection. Consequently, basing his message upon this Immanuel prophecy, Isaiah declares that all the efforts and counsels of the peoples (i.e., of Assyria and its subjected peoples) "will come to nought" (Isaiah 8:10). Human promises "will not stand."

So, here assurance is given regarding the ultimate victory, no matter how incredible and unrealistic the faith God requires may sound to the unbelievers. But the truth of the fact is, that Scripture is revealed truth and the reality of that victory will be proven by the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. We must not pay any attention to the unbelievers when they tell us that these things cannot be. God has proven His Word repeatedly over time again and again.



From Logos Software

Next message: THE ORDER TO NOT FOLLOW THE PEOPLE

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