

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

ISAIAH 7:1-10:4

Tonight's chapters, Isaiah 7-10, have as their backdrop the most underrated story in the OT. Christians can recite stories like *David and Goliath*, *Jonah and the whale*, *Daniel in the lion's den*, *Moses at the burning bush*, but few have even heard of **Isaiah and the Angel**.

Yet here's a story so important to God's interests, He chose to record it three times in Scripture – **2 Kings 19**, **2 Chronicles 32**, and **Isaiah 37**.

The event is also referred to in the prophets and the psalms.

In 701 BC the Assyrian army surrounded Jerusalem. After successful sieges – against the Syrian capitol of Damascus, and the Israeli capitol of Samaria – Assyria set her sights on the Judean capitol of Jerusalem.

At least 185,000 troops camped outside Zion's walls poised to strike. A 200,000 troop army is about the population of the city of Columbus, GA.

The Assyrian king hoped the mere threat of such a vast army would intimidate the Jews into surrender. He would conquer without firing a shot.

But that's not what happened. Isaiah the prophet and King Hezekiah hit their knees, and prayed for a miracle. The people of Jerusalem went to bed on the brink annihilation, but the next morning they awoke to a pleasant

surprise. That night an angel of the Lord fought for God's people.

One battle-hardened angel – a one-angel wrecking crew - slaughtered 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. 2 Kings 19:35 provides the play-by-play, "On a certain night that the angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses - all dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home (he tucked tail), and remained at Nineveh."

George Byron describes the Angel's victory with the poet's pen...

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold, and his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold. And the sheen of their spears were like stars on the sea, when the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green, that host with their banners at sunset were seen. Like the leaves of the forest when autumn has blown, that host on tomorrow lay withered and strawn.

For the Angel of Death spread His wings on the blast, and breathed in the face of the foe as he passed. And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill - and their hearts, but once heaved, and forever grew still!"

And there lay the soldiers distorted and pale, with the dew on their brow, and the rust on their mail. And their tents were all silent, their banners alone, the lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the Assyrian widows are loud in their wail, and the idols are broke in the temple of Baal. And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword, has melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!" It was a mighty triumph!

But that's just the beginning of the story. Isaiah 7-10 fills in some details and provides us some background. It sets the stage. Verse 1, "It came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to make war against it, but could not prevail."

Isaiah takes us back in time – 30 years prior to Assyria's invasion.

Verse 1 recalls a couple of earlier bullies. Hezekiah's granddad, Ahaz, was frightened when the king of Syria and king of Israel came against him.

Understand, Syria and Assyria was two different people groups. Assyria lived on the Euphrates River in the heart of Mesopotamia. Nineveh was its capitol. Syria lived just north of Israel with its capitol in Damascus.

At the time, Ahaz was afraid of his nearer neighbors, Israel and Syria. In fact, he was courting Assyria - hoping he could secure their protection.

"And it was told to the house of David (the kings of Judah), saying, "Syria's forces are deployed in Ephraim." So his heart and the heart of his people were moved as the

trees of the woods are moved with the wind.”

Ephraim was the tribe just north of Judah. This was the northern Jerusalem suburbs. Ahaz was scared to death. Ever heard the expression, “shaking like a leaf...”? Here’s where it originates. It describes King Ahaz.

“Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub your son...” Isaiah had two sons and there’s a price to be paid when you’re father is a prophet – you often end up with a weird name.

The names of Isaiah’s sons were both prophetic. The Hebrew phrase, “*Shear-Jashub*” means “a remnant shall return.” This promise of a remnant of Jews was an assurance that Judah would never be utterly destroyed.

And God tells the Father-Son team where to meet King Ahaz, “At the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller’s Field...” If you’ve been to Jerusalem “the upper pool” was probably the Pools of Bethesda, north of the Temple Mount. The location of the Fuller’s Field is uncertain so we’re not sure which way the highway ran.

FYI, “a fuller” was a professional launderer. He cleansed and thickened cloth - made it “fuller.” He would used soap and pounding to beat out the stains and recondition the fibers. The process necessitated running water so the Fuller’s Field was always located near a stream or spring.

King Ahaz expects a prolonged siege of Jerusalem, so he inspects the aqueduct - the city’s water supply. It was either

east or north of the city.

Isaiah is to intercept him on his inspection, and God tells Isaiah what to say to the king **“And say to him: 'Take heed, and be quiet; do not fear or be fainthearted for these two stubs of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and the son of Remaliah.’”** The king of Syria was **“Rezin.”** King of Israel was the son of Remaliah – a man named **“Pekah.”**

God calls them **“two stubs of smoking firebrands”** – literally a couple of cigarette butts. Here’s His point, these kings and their armies will blow a lot of smoke, but won’t flame. Don’t be afraid or intimidated by them.

Remember, at the time Ahaz is seeking the protection of the Assyrians. He’s about to strike an ungodly alliance, because he doesn’t trust God. In fact, he’ll go so far as to buy their security with gold from the Temple. Ahaz will even bow to the idols of Assyria. God is grieved. Ahaz’s compromise is unnecessary. He should’ve had faith, the Lord promised to deliver him.

Verse 5 **“Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, 'Let us go up against Judah and trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over them, the son of Tabel' - 'Tabel' was a Hebrew code name for Remaliah.**

“Thus says the Lord GOD: 'It shall not stand, nor shall it come to pass.

For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of

Damascus is Rezin. within 65 years Ephraim will be broken, so that it will not be a people. The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established."

Ahaz isn't to worry about Syria and Ephraim (a nickname for Israel).

In 65 years they'll be no more. The year was 733 BC. Israel's capitol fell to Assyria in 722 BC, but in the years that followed the Assyrians resettled Ephraim with foreigners from other conquered lands. By 668 BC, 65 years later, the northern kingdom of Israel had lost its Hebrew identity.

One truth you learn by studying the Bible is that nothing God does is incidental. In fact, the location of Isaiah's prophecy was no accident.

Remember, Ahaz had invited the Assyrians to protect him. Yet they'll pose a greater threat than either Syria or Israel. In just three decades, in the reign of Ahaz' son, King Hezekiah, 185,000 Assyrian troops will surround Jerusalem and their King, Sennacherib, will send out an ambassador to rail insults and threats, and pose terms of surrender.

And guess where he speaks?

2 Kings 18:17 tell us *"On the highway to the fuller's field."* At the exact same spot where Isaiah promised Hezekiah's father God's protection.

It was a double reminder... If King Ahaz had trusted God instead of the Assyrians, this murderous army might not be outside the wall. Yet now that they are, God's promises still stand. In the exact spot where the enemy hurls its threats, God has already promised His people deliverance.

Verse 10 **"Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 'Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above.'"** Here's an incredible command: ask for sign, God is going to assure Ahaz of His deliverance with a sign of the king's choosing.

Ask for the most outlandish sign you can imagine... and God will do it!

"But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!'" We learn from his future actions that this was a false humility. He didn't want to trust God.

Ahaz had made up his mind. He had more confidence in his political maneuvers – he was planning to strike an alliance with the Assyrians.

"Then he (Isaiah) said, 'Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign...'" Since Ahaz refuses to name a sign, God will provide a sign Himself. And notice Isaiah takes this matter of a sign beyond the current, local situation. Obviously, the immediate politics of the day provoked this prophecy, but it's as God knew it would be wasted on King Ahaz, so He

broadened its implications to the whole house of David.

The sign Isaiah is about to reveal will speak not only to King Ahaz, but it'll be a sign to all the kings of the Davidic dynasty, and the tribe of Judah.

And what God chooses as a sign is more bizarre than anything Ahaz could've dreamed up on his own. Isaiah says in verse 14, **"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."**

The word **"Immanuel"** means **"God with us!"** What a sign indeed!

If you're a student of the NT you remember that after the angel appears to Joseph to tell him that his betrothed wife, Mary, has conceived a son through the Holy Spirit, Matthew says this occurred to fulfill that which was spoken by the prophet... then he quotes our text, **Isaiah 7:14.**

Jesus was born of a virgin. There are two other OT prophecies that predict the virgin birth - Genesis 3:15 and Jeremiah 31:22.

Be aware in Isaiah 7:14 the Hebrew word translated **"virgin"** is **"almah."** And skeptics will tell you that **"almah"** doesn't necessarily mean **"virgin."** It can mean **"a young girl of marriageable age"** - which is true.

But it often does mean **"virgin."** **"Almah"** appears 7 times in the OT, and in each case the context refers to a girl who's never had sexual relations.

In 270 BC the OT was translated into Greek – and the Septuagint renders the word **"almah"** with the Greek word

“**parthenos**” - which is an unequivocal reference to a virgin. This is the word Matthew uses in the NT.

And understand the virgin birth of Jesus is not a peripheral doctrine. It's crucial to Christianity. The genetics of salvation require a virgin birth.

Sin is passed down from Adam – through the father's bloodline. If a human father had sired Jesus he would've been born in sin, and His death could never be substitutionary. For Jesus to die for you and me it was necessary for Him to be born sinless. The virgin birth enabled Jesus to be as human as his mother Mary, yet as sinless and divine as God in heaven.

Here's the point of Isaiah's prophecy – Isaiah introduces “**Immanuel.**”

The sign to Ahaz was “**Immanuel.**” He'll be born of a virgin, but that's 700 years future. Isaiah 7:14 lists a detail that identifies His birth, but Jesus was pre-existent. He was alive in Isaiah's day. In fact, more relevant to King Ahaz than *His virgin birth* - was *His presence* and *His mission*.

Jesus didn't commence being Immanuel when He was born of a virgin.

He was Immanuel from the beginning. And here Isaiah introduces Immanuel to the nation Judah. He'll be born of a virgin 700 years in the future, but He's about to play a huge role in Judah's current situation!

Isaiah talks about “*Immanuel*” in verse 15, “Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse evil and choose the good. For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.” Curds and honey were baby food. Thus Isaiah is saying before this miraculous, virgin-born child reaches adulthood the Syrians and Israel will no longer be a serious threat.

It was 730 years before the child of the prophecy was even born. Yet if Jesus had been born that very day the timeframe would’ve still been valid.

A Jewish boy celebrates his [bar-mitzvah](#), or his passage from childhood into adulthood, at age 12. In a little less than a dozen years the Assyrians had wiped out both Syria and Israel. Both enemies were toppled.

Assyria will conquer Syria and Israel, but they’ll keep coming South...

“The LORD will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house - days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah.” He references the Civil War that split the nation after Solomon. Times will be worse than they’ve been in two centuries...

“And it shall come to pass in that day that the LORD will whistle for the fly that is in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. They will come, and all of them will rest in the desolate valleys and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all thorns and in all pastures.” The enemy armies will swarm into the land like

flies and bees.

“In the same day the Lord will shave with a hired razor, with those from beyond the River, with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the legs, and will also remove the beard.” Like the American Indians of the Wild West often an invading army scalped its conquered foes. Hair is a symbol of a person’s honor, thus to shave him was a way to humiliate him.

Verse 21 “It shall be in that day that a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep; so it shall be, from the abundance of milk they give, that he will eat curds; for curds and honey everyone will eat who is left in the land.” There’ll be no steak. Judah will have to survive, so they’ll keep their few head of cattle alive as an ongoing source of milk and cheese.

“It shall happen in that day, that wherever there could be a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels of silver, it will be for briers and thorns.

With arrows and bows men will come there, because all the land will become briers and thorns. And to any hill which could be dug with the hoe, you will not go there for fear of briers and thorns; but it will become a range for oxen and a place for sheep to roam.” Once populated areas will be turned to pasture - animals will graze where communities once lived.

Chapter 8, “Moreover the LORD said to me, “Take a large scroll, and write on it with a man's pen concerning Maher-

Shalal-Hash-Baz.”

Here’s Isaiah’s second son, *"Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz."* I think I’d rather be *"the boy named Sue."* Imagine the first day of school with this name.

This too is a prophetic name, *"speed to the plunder, swift to the spoils."*

The name of first son spoke of *God’s deliverance*. His second son’s name spoke of *God’s destruction*. Jerusalem’s enemies will be plundered.

Verse 2 *"And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah."* Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, *"Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz; for before the child shall have knowledge to cry 'My father' and 'My mother,' the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria."*

God will judge Syria and Israel by the hand of the king of Assyria.

"The LORD also spoke to me again, saying: "Inasmuch as these people refused the waters of Shiloah that flow softly, and rejoice in Rezin and in Remaliah's son..." God is upset with the northern tribes for turning their back on Jerusalem. The *"waters of Shiloah"* was the *pool of Siloam*. It was the water supply fed by the Gihon Spring inside the walls of Jerusalem.

They turned from Jerusalem to establish a rival kingdom

in Samaria.

“Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them the waters of the River, strong and mighty - the king of Assyria and all his glory; he will go up over all his channels and go over all his banks.” Jerusalem was gentle spring, whereas the armies of Assyria will overwhelm them like a flood.

Notice verse 8, “He (the king of Assyria) will pass through Judah, he will overflow and pass over, he will reach up to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.”

Here is where the plot thickens... Remember Isaiah 7:14. Who is “Immanuel”? He won’t be born for 700 years, but the Son of God exists from eternity past to eternity future. Jesus is “Immanuel.” Jesus is “God with us” – and the land belongs to Him. Israel was His possession.

This is why the foreigners should beware. Assyrian troops poured into Judah like a flood, but the invading army was about to meet its match.

"Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces! Give ear, all you from far countries. Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak the word, but it will not stand, for God is with us."

What stops flood? What shatters and breaks in pieces Assyria’s invincible army? What was the sign God gave to Ahaz – the guarantee of Judah’s deliverance? It was none other than “God with us” or “Immanuel.”

Here's why *"Isaiah and the Angel"* is one of the most provocative stories in the Bible. Jesus was the Angel who killed 185,000 Assyrians. Immanuel went on the warpath. The first blood Jesus spilt was not His own.

The Hebrew word *"angel"* simply means *"messenger"* whether human or angelic. There are OT examples where the Angel of the Lord was a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus. I believe that's what happened here.

Here's the part of the Christmas story that's seldom told. Mary's baby was not a newcomer. He was here before. The babe had been to battle.

The Christmas Child was **Immanuel** - the warrior of Isaiah's day that proved the Hebrew God true and dispensed with the evil Assyrians. The babe Mary *laid in the manger hay* had already *made hay* in battle.

Seven centuries earlier the Babe of Bethlehem came brandishing a sword. *With fire in His eyes and justice in His heart* – Jesus flashed His medal, and by the time He returned it to its scabbard it dripped with rebel blood... *When Mary's baby cried it could've been a battle cry...*

Imagine Joseph when he heard the Angel say, *"Immanuel."* He knew Isaiah. What did he think when he learned that Mary's baby was the Ancient Warrior? It made the humility of God – the fact, God would become a man - that much more amazing.

Verse 11 **"For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way**

of this people, saying: "Do not say, 'A conspiracy, 'Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread."

At the time Ahaz was afraid of two nations conspiring against him. God says don't be afraid of a "*conspiracy*." One plus God still equals a majority.

Oliver Cromwell was a courageous man. One day he was asked how he could be so brave. He responded, "*I have learned that when you fear God, you have nothing else to fear.*" God will be Jerusalem's defense!

"He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel..." 1 Peter 2 takes this very verse and applies it to Jesus. Embrace Him as your cornerstone, and He'll make us into a Temple of praise. Reject Jesus and you'll stumble, you'll be broken.

The Jews stumbled over Jesus. He didn't meet up to their expectations.

They wanted a political ruler. Jesus came to establish a spiritual kingdom. They were offended by His claims and His intentions. Better to embrace Jesus as Lord, than to be offended by your own prejudice.

Jesus became "*as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble; they shall fall and be broken, be snared and taken.*" In Matthew 21:44 Jesus referred to Himself as a stone.

He says "Whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." It's wonderful to come broken and humble before the Lord. But the haughty and self-reliant will be crushed.

Verse 16 "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait on the LORD, Who hides His face from the house of Jacob; and I will hope in Him. Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion." Isaiah was a righteous man in a sea of idolaters. His life, and other faithful followers were a sign against the faithless in Judah.

Ahaz had sold his soul for political favors. He'd bowed to Assyrian idols.

"And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?" In Jerusalem's darkest hour some of her brightest minds turned to the occult, rather than to God. It grieved Isaiah. *Why reach out to the dead when we serve a living God!*

Verse 20 "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." This should be our strategy when we face tough and impossible circumstances.

Let's turn to the law, the testimony, the Word of God.

And if a counselor steers you in any other direction than

God's Word then rest assured, *"there is no light in them."* They're not speaking for God.

"They will pass through it hard pressed and hungry; and it shall happen, when they are hungry, that they will be enraged and curse their king and their God, and look upward. Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness." Those who refuse to trust in God turn on everyone else. They *"curse their king."* They look to blame someone rather than rely on God.

Chapter 9:1 *"Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali..."* Zebulun and Naphtali were always lesser tribes.

It was even worse in Isaiah's day. *"And afterward more heavily oppressed her, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles."* Isaiah speaks of *"the way of the sea"* or *Via Maris* – a trade route than ran along the Mediterranean up the coast through the Galilee.

Notice its *"Galilee of the Gentiles."* A larger Gentile population lived around the Sea of Galilee. By the first century the Galilee was the home of Greek culture. Ten Roman cities called *"The Decapolis"* dotted the Galilee.

This explains Nathaniel's reaction to Phillip when he was invited to come and meet Jesus of Nazareth. Nathaniel scoffed, *"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"* Nazareth was at the heart of the Galilee.

All the invading armies entered Israel from the north. Before Ephraim and Judah, Zebulun and Naphtali were the first tribes to get trampled.

Yet these two tribes will be compensated. Isaiah tells us in verse 2, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.”

The Galilee, Jerusalem’s doormat, was given a special blessing. They were privileged to see “a great light.” Jesus made Galilee the home base of His earthly ministry. He did many of His miracles among the Galileans.

Capernaum and the Gospel Triangle were part of the tribe of Naphtali.

Verse 3 “You have multiplied the nation and increased its joy; they rejoice before You according to the joy of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.” The “You” here is probably “*Immanuel*.”

“For You have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.” Immanuel broke Assyria’s chokehold on the city of Jerusalem and harvested joy! “For every warrior’s sandal from the noisy battle, and garments rolled in blood, will be used for burning and fuel of fire...” Spoils of Immanuel’s victory...

Again we find *Immanuel*. Virgin born babe of chapter 7 – the conqueror of chapter 8 - now in chapter 9 we have the fullest description yet...

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; Jesus was fully human - a newborn child, and He was also fully divine, God’s only Son.

Imagine, God coming to earth as a frail, vulnerable, helpless child. It’s been said, **“The incarnation adds courage to the virtues of the Creator.”**

When God join the ranks of humanity He entered through the lowest door. He wants to *understand our predicament* and have *pity on our plight*.

“And the government will be upon His shoulder.” Before Jesus *slept in an earthly manger* He *sat on a heavenly throne*. He’s use to being in charge. Jesus is King of heaven. Governor of all the earth is not too much for Him to shoulder. He’s not afraid of the hard choices and constant crisis.

There are those who teach the Church will usher in God’s Kingdom. They envision the Church as a body with political muscle. The goal is to take over human governments. The mission is political, but this is not what Isaiah tells us. The government will be on Jesus’ shoulders – not ours.

“And His name will be called Wonderful (Jesus is the spice of life.), **Counselor** (Got a problem, need wisdom - go it to Jesus.), **Mighty God** (Miracles are His forte’), **Everlasting Father** (He and the Father are one), **Prince of**

Peace" (He brings peace *to the world* and peace *to our hearts*.)

And we're told, **"Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever."**

Jesus will sit on the throne of David – a Jewish throne. He brings in peace and justice. As Eternal King He establishes an everlasting kingdom.

There are those who claim God is through with Israel. The promises He made to the Jews have been inherited by the Church. Not so! Jesus is a Jewish King and His throne will be a Jewish throne. And as hard as Gentiles might fight against such a kingdom, Isaiah closes out verse 7 with a note of triumph, **"The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."**

"The LORD sent a word against Jacob, and it has fallen on Israel.

All the people will know - Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria - who say in pride and arrogance of heart: "The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will replace them with cedars." When Assyria first attacked Israel, he replaced King Pekah with a puppet king, Hoshea. But Israel was too stubborn to admit defeat and rebelled. They tried to rebuild and refortify their city.

They even solicited the help of the Egyptians against Assyria.

“Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and spur his enemies on, the Syrians before and the Philistines behind...” The Assyrians conquered Syria before Israel - the Philistines afterwards.

“And they shall devour Israel with an open mouth. For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still. For the people do not turn to Him who strikes them, nor do they seek the LORD of hosts.”

You can't run from the Lord, the only hope is to run to Him and repent.

A pilot radioed the tower, “Pilot to tower, I'm 300 miles from land, 600 feet high, and running out of fuel, please instruct... over.” The tower radioed back, “Tower to pilot... repeat after me, *“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name...”* when you're running out of options, run to God.

“Therefore the LORD will cut off head and tail from Israel, palm branch and bulrush in one day. The elder and honorable, he is the head; the prophet who teaches lies, he is the tail.” Both the honorable and heretic will die in battle. Notice a false prophet is considered the worse of the worst - a teacher who lies and deceives is despicable in the eyes of God.

“For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and those who are led by them are destroyed.” It's said, “Never follow a leader until you know who the leader is following.” All too often it's the blind leading the blind.

“Therefore the LORD will have no joy in their young men, nor have mercy on their fatherless and widows; for everyone is a hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly. For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still.” Israel’s judgment continues...

For wickedness burns as the fire; it shall devour the briars and thorns, and kindle in the thickets of the forest; they shall mount up like rising smoke. Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts the land is burned up, and the people shall be as fuel for the fire; no man shall spare his brother.

And he shall snatch on the right hand and be hungry; he shall devour on the left hand and not be satisfied; every man shall eat the flesh of his own arm.” When the Assyrians laid siege to Samaria it lasted 3 years. Assyria cut off the supply lines. Nobody in, nobody out – and literally waited for Samaria to starve to death. They resorted to cannibalism. They snatched on a right hand, and devoured a left hand - yet were hungry.

Which reminds me of a few cannibal jokes – I’ve got four...

First, “Did you hear about the cannibal who ate something that disagreed with him?” *His mother-in-law!* Second, “What did the cannibal get when he was late for dinner?” *A cold shoulder.* Third, “Did you hear about the cannibal who ordered the pizza with everybody on it?” Fourth, “Why was the cannibal expelled from school?” *Buttering up his teacher...*

Well cannibalism was no laughing matter during the siege of Samaria.

“Manasseh shall devour Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh; together they shall be against Judah. For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still.” The northern tribes turn on each other.

In chapter 10 God finishes His judgment of Israel.

"Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, who write misfortune, which they have prescribed to rob the needy of justice, and to take what is right from the poor of My people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless." It's been said, "The one commonality between Democrats and Republicans is our money." Isaiah says woe to those who write unrighteous laws that deny justice and rob the needy.

Verse 3 "What will you do in the day of punishment, and in the desolation which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your glory? Without Me they shall bow down among the prisoners, and they shall fall among the slain." For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." God is angry at Israel because she tries to resist the inevitable, and avoid the judgment of God.