

## Isaiah 10:1-34

### "The Destruction And Deliverance Of The Lord"

In Ch 10 we jump into the throes of judgment. God has been warning the southern kingdom of Judah through the destruction determined upon the northern kingdom of Israel... I would remind you that beginning in Ch 9, each phase of judgment was "concluded" w/the words, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

God said (in essence) that He would punish those who refused to recognize His hand of correction, who refused to turn at His direction. He would hold the prophets & the politicians accountable who prophesied & proclaimed lies to the people leading to their destruction. He said that their wickedness was as fuel for the fire & the people would be devoured... & again at the end of Vs 21 of Ch 9 we read... (read).

### Vs 1-4

Ladies and Gentlemen: I'm going to trust that you've been just as blessed by our studies in Isaiah as have I. God's word proves over & over again that though times may change & cultures may vary, the human heart remains the same.

The word of warning goes out to those who legislate law in the land... Allow me to recall to your mind that back in Ch 9 Isaiah prophesied of the kind of government that the Messiah would establish & uphold when He is ruling/reigning upon the earth. He said that Christ would, "...order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever." (& Notice, it won't happen through the ingenuity, the creativity of man. [Buying the world a coke... peace/harmony] & all that.) *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*<sup>1</sup> Unrelenting peace under the rule/reign of the Prince of peace.

But here we find deep contrast w/what's coming prophetically, Vs what's going on presently. – People (politicians/leaders) who decree (or declare) unrighteous legislation. Who put ungodly precepts in place & force them upon the people for personal gain. To enrich themselves, to obtain power & influence. They take advantage of those who have no means to defend themselves. They rob the poor/needy, widows are their prey & they rob the fatherless.

We need to understand that God expects *man's* justice & those who hand down decisions, to reflect *His* justice & the decisions *He* would hand down. But the leaders of Israel were preying on the weak, perverting justice.

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<sup>1</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Is 9:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

& This is where we can all be like, “Yeah, get em’ God!” & It’s true, the rightness of what’s being said here resonates in us. But though the *interpretation* belongs to judges, legislators, people who make decisions over others, there is *application* for us all...

I want you to focus in on Vs 3, perhaps underline that 1<sup>st</sup> phrase. He says, “What will you do in the day of punishment...” He says, “To whom will you flee for help?” – I like the way it reads in the KJV. “What will you do in the day of visitation?” The idea is this. Your wicked ways may be serving your gain (presently), but what are you going to do, to whom are you going to turn (ultimately) on the day God visits you, on the day that *you* stand in judgment? Who’s going to help you when you stand helpless before the Judge?

It's something I find myself circling back to from time to time & that is this. Take heed to maintain & guard carefully the eternal perspective. Listen, the Bible is clear. A day of reckoning, a day of judgment will find us all. The Bible declares, **“it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,”**<sup>2</sup> & Notice there’s no round 2, no reincarnation, you don’t get to give it another go, we’re appointed to die once, but after this the judgment. & Let me just tell you that God is a great accountant. There’s nothing He loses sight of. & Your bill (& mine) will be reconciled. It can happen 1 of 2 ways. Either you pay for it, or someone else can...

& This is where the gospel comes in. Jesus came to pay a debt He didn’t owe, because we owed a debt we couldn’t pay. Christ didn’t come to call the righteous, but the sinner to repentance. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. The Bible says, **“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”**<sup>3</sup> Jesus paid our sin debt through the shedding of His blood. He was delivered up for our transgression & raised up for our justification... Believe on the Lord J.C. & you will be saved. It’s not about what you need to do, it’s about what He’s already done for you & you simply receiving it by faith.

But back to our text, people will enter into all kinds of scams or horrific legislation laws in order to advance their agenda, to lay hold of power/wealth/popularity & influence. Things that will prop them up for the time being, bring comfort & pleasure into their lives, they’re not concerned w/who it hurts or how it impacts anyone else. But the question they neglect to consider is, “What will you do in the end? To whom will you turn in the day of visitation?”

<sup>2</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Heb 9:27]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 3:17]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Pastors/preachers will often do the same thing in a spiritual context. They'll scratch the people's itching ears. Tell them, "I'm ok, you're ok, God understands your situation." & People will heap up for themselves teachers who tell them that everything is going to be ok. – Someone was talking w/me last week about a conversation they were having w/another individual about how our society has gone about "normalizing" sin. & It's true. People are offended by about everything *but* sin.

Our culture has been desensitized and subjected to a mindset of relativism. "It may not be ok for you, but it's ok for them, so it's fine." "Speak *your* truth..." If the majority deems it as acceptable, it's no longer wrong...

It leaves my proverbial mouth gaping wide open. Even believers beginning to bend to the mindset of, "If everyone says it's fine, then we can consider it fine..." Listen, sin is not fine! Heaven & earth will pass away, people and their perspectives will come & go, but the word of God abides forever! God won't bend the standard of His "outdated", "antiquated" "no longer relevant" word to justify sin in our lives!

The prophet Jeremiah wrote, "*The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule by their own power; And My people love to have it so.*" (Don't miss this) *But what will you do in the end?*<sup>4</sup> When you stand before God? In the day of visitation, of punishment, of reckoning, settling accounts? People, I'm just telling you, let's not play games w/God. Let's not test the resolve of His righteousness.

In Deut 32, Moses is warning the nation of Israel, it may as well have been written to us today! Listen to this, "*...they are a nation void of counsel, Nor is there any understanding in them. Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would consider their latter end!*"<sup>5</sup> Again this mindset of, "if everyone approves" or "if it's legal" it must be ok, will destroy your life! Legal, doesn't mean scriptural & it sure doesn't mean God is ok w/every decree or majority decision of man!

But you know what *is* scriptural? This "deceiving & being deceived" wave that's washing over the masses & even over many believers. It's indicative of the last days in which we live. But again, I implore you, don't test the resolve of the righteous judgment of God. Write it down so you can read it later, 2 Peter 2.

Vs 4, "W/out Me they shall bow down among the prisoners & fall among the slain..."

<sup>4</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Je 5:31) Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>5</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Dt 32:28-29). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

They could either bow down before the Lord in adoration, or before their enemies in suffering & humiliation. – “For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still.” Why? Because He still hasn’t found repentance in the hearts of the people. – *There’s something in the heart of a rebellious & sinful people that causes them to stand up against the chastening hand of God... Rather than repent they resolve to rebel. We see it over & over again throughout Scripture. The Pharaoh acted similarly in the Exodus. Of course, we see it throughout Israel’s history. In the book of Rev as God is pouring out His wrath, we find people refusing to repent... Wise is the one who will turn from their sin, humble themselves in the sight of the Lord that they might be saved, spared His judgment, healed & made whole. –*

Beginning in Vs 5, God addresses the nation of Assyria. We’re entering a new section that indicates (Vs 10-11) the Northern Kingdom has already been destroyed by Assyria. That being the case we’re in roughly 720 B.C. (give or take a few yrs).

### Vs 5-7

*This is a bit of a mind-blowing concept for some. That God would use pagan, unbelieving, ungodly people/nations to bring about His plans/purposes or even punishment to others, even & including His own people who are serving Him hypocritically rather than sincerely & in truth...*

Habakkuk struggled w/this. God told *him*, *“Look among the nations and watch— Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you.”*<sup>6</sup> Habakkuk said, “I’d believe it.” God said, “You won’t believe it.” Habakkuk said, “I’ll believe it!” God told him. He said, “I don’t believe it!” ☺ That God would bring the Babylonians, an ungodly nation to chasten Judah...

*But here, God says that He’s having the Assyrians run some errands for Him. & This kind of thing is not uncommon. When Saul was trying to kill David, Saul was acting wickedly, but God was using it to prepare David. When Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery, they meant it for evil, God used it for good... Judas sinned against Jesus, but God used it to bring about our redemption... Ps 76:10 says, “Surely the wrath of man shall praise You;”*<sup>7</sup> God can take what man means for evil & turn it for good... Do we always have the luxury of being able to deduct or discern the good that God will bring out of an evil against His own? No.

<sup>6</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Hab 1:5). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.  
<sup>7</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ps 76:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But scripture shows us again & again that He can, & ultimately/eternally, He does. Now, in Vs 5-6 we have Assyria's mission (to come against an ungodly nation, & against the people of God's wrath) & in Vs 7-11, Assyria's motive.

Notice that God refers to Assyria as the "rod of My anger" & "the staff in whose hand is My indignation." The rod & the staff were the shepherd's tools of direction & correction of the sheep. God was saying that Assyria was like an instrument in His hand used to bring correction to Syria, to Israel & to Judah.

But what we discover is that, even though God was using them it didn't excuse them. He says, "Woe to Assyria..." In other words, God can use the wicked acts of others, but He's not Himself responsible for their wickedness, they're making their own decisions, He's using it for His ends.

So, could God be trying to get your attention through an ungodly employer or supervisor at work? Absolutely... David took comfort in God's rod & staff. So long as the instrument of chastening is in God's hands, we should take comfort. Why? Because God is for us, not against us, has thoughts of peace, not of evil toward us, to give us a future & a hope.

& We note (Vs 7) that Assyria (or perhaps your ungodly boss) didn't even realize or recognize that God was using them, allowing them the power to plunder & granting them their success over others. It's because God gave them permission that they were able to seize the spoil, to take the prey & to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

They think they're out there just conquering the world! The truth is God is using them as an instrument of judgment against wickedness & hypocrisy. But as to where they were meant to be an instrument of discipline, they became an instrument of destruction. They exploited the purpose for which God allowed them to be raised up... notice.

#### Vs 8-14

In Vs 8-11 & 13,14 we see the *fruit* of the king of Assyria's sin, in Vs 12 God puts His finger on the *root* of his sin. Did you see it there? It's an arrogant heart.

The king thought that he'd come to chew gum & destroy nations, the only problem was that chewing gum didn't exist! ☺ So he was just destroying nations! He didn't see any *indication* or have the slightest *inclination* that God's was allowing him to have his success. That he was being used as an errand boy, handing out God's judgment upon ungodly, hypocritical nations. As far as he was concerned, he was all that, the bag of chips & the Capri-Sun along w/it! ... The last thing he was thinking about was the glory of God, or God's will. Only destruction was in his heart.

& Because he was accomplishing all that was in his heart, it fed into his arrogant pride, placing his princes on the level of kings (he himself being the king of those kings).

In the ancient world, there was a common thought that a nation was only as strong as was their “gods”. That’s why he says in Vs 10-11 that as he’s done to the other kingdoms & their idols, he’s done to Samaria & her idols & he’ll do to Jerusalem & her idols... He thinks that the Lord God of Judah is no different than the idols of the other nations... Their gods couldn’t help them & Judah’s God won’t be able to help them either. He’s in for a rude awakening...

But it’s a fairly common mistake that people make. They’re somewhat familiar w/various religions, w/religious rituals & they just presume that you are just a religious individual not too unlike any other religious person. But God isn’t some plastic figure you place on your dashboard. **Or some benevolent deity you visit on holidays or as it’s convenient. He’s the omnipotent, omnipresent wholly righteous Creator, the One true Living God w/whom we have to do & there is no other!** Isaiah 44, *“I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.”*<sup>8</sup> Quick question, if God is all knowing & He knows of no other God... what does that tell you? There is no other.

& We’ll see it more in coming chapters, but suffice it to say for now that God hates pride & arrogance. Throughout Vs 13-14, over & over again we read, “my hand, I have done it, my wisdom, I am prudent, I have, I have, my hand, I have... & no one opened his mouth even a peep.” God says, “I’m going to punish the fruit of your arrogant heart & the glory of your haughty looks.” Prov 21:4, *“A haughty look, a proud heart, And the plowing of the wicked are sin.”*<sup>9</sup> Ps 101:5, *“The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.”*<sup>10</sup> God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. The king of Assyria considered his wisdom irresistible, his might invincible. God will bring him low.

### Vs 15-19

“Shall the ax boast itself against him who chops w/it? Can a rod wield itself against those who lift it up?”

<sup>8</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Is 44:6-8]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>9</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Pr 21:4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>10</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ps 101:5]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



Listen, the thing about an instrument is that it can't do anyone any good unless it's in the hands of a skilled artisan. Imagine a life saving surgery taking place & the people gathering around the scalpel & giving it praise & adoration! Or the scalpel standing up & saying, "Did you guys see that! What precision, what perfection I displayed!"

How ludicrous is that? The strength, skill & sufficiency is in the hands of the surgeon, not the scalpel! If the surgeon doesn't pick up the scalpel & use it, it's not going to do a single profitable thing!

& It's truly wonderful to be an instrument in the hands of God, there's nothing that compares to God using your life. It's an honor that will ring throughout eternity. But let's not get it twisted. It's not the instrument who deserves the praise, it's the One who wields it! What can we do of any eternal value apart from the Lord? Jesus said it like this, "...without Me you can do nothing."<sup>11</sup> & Again, "...when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"<sup>12</sup> (Often times much less) It's not the instrument that warrants the accolades, God is the One who does the work. We're honored, humbled & blessed if He chooses to use us to accomplish the task.

We might say that Assyria was sitting, "fat & sassy", but God would send leanness among them. His judgment would be like a consuming fire that would leave Assyria as a but a shadow of its former self. A child could count them when He's done w/them.

### Vs 20-27

You may've picked up on this phrase used a couple different times in this passage, "And it shall come to pass in that day". It's phrase that has a definite eschatological nuance attached to it. Which is to say that what's to happen w/Assyria is a foreshadow of what will be fulfilled pertaining to the tribulation, the destruction of the A.C. & the return of Israel to the Lord in truth.

We love this phrase (Vs 20), "Those who have escaped of the house of Jacob, we never again depend on him who defeated them, but will depend on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel (notice) *in truth*." Where do you place your trust, in truth? We place on our currency, "In God we trust". Like it's a national creed or something. Is that true? Not even close. But those who worship God *must* worship Him in spirit & in *truth*. Honestly, from the heart.

<sup>11</sup> *The New King James Version*, (1982). [Jn 15:5]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>12</sup> *The New King James Version*, (1982). [Lk 17:10]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

He says that the remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God... What incredible grace & longsuffering on God's behalf. He would be completely justified in saying, "You want to trust in the Assyrians, have at it, you're on your own." **But even in the midst of their judgment He offers them hope & brings them comfort.** Listen, God understands that sometimes it takes *tough times* to turn a people, or a person back around. It wasn't until the prodigal (Luke 15) was in the pig pen, completely undone that he returned to his father.

Btw we should note here in passing (Vs 22) when God determines destruction, it's always done in righteousness. It "overflows" w/righteousness.

**Therefore, "Do not be afraid" (Vs 24) "of the Assyrian". Just FYI the title "The Assyrian" is another title of the A.C. & God is telling them (remember present foreshadow, prophetic fulfillment) that though the Assyrian shall wage war w/them, seek to the destroy them, they're not to be afraid of him.** Because God will stir up a scourge for him like the slaughter of Midian (that whole Gideon episode we discussed last time). Like when God parted the sea & His people were delivered but the entire Egyptian army was swallowed up & destroyed... God is saying that He will completely/utterly annihilate him. "Because of the anointing oil". The Person, the power & the presence of the Holy Spirit will be w/them. The take home here is that if God be for you, who can be against you?

**If you want to read about it, write down 2 Kings 19. In one night the Angel of the Lord swept through the Assyrian camp & killed 185,000 soldiers. The few remaining packed up & headed home where the king was killed by his son... What does the Bible say? Ps 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them."<sup>13</sup>**

**Vs 28-32 Close**

This would be the route from the north to the south of the Assyrian invasion. It would be outside of Jerusalem where God would kill 185,000 of them.

**Vs 33-34**

Again, the idea here is that God will bring low the proud. The haughty will be humbled by the Mighty One. Better to humble yourself *before* God & receive His deliverance than to be humbled *by* God in the throes of His destruction. Amen? Amen.

<sup>13</sup> *The New King James Version*, (1982). [Ps 34:7]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



**Prayer Points:**

God, we thank You for Your word. Strengthen our resolve to be a people who love & want to know Your word that we might lead lives that are pleasing to You & find favor in Your sight. May we humble our hearts before You & may our lives bring glory *to* You.

Listen, the yoke was to be destroyed because of the anointing oil. It's by the power of the Holy Spirit that the yoke of bondage, the bondage of sin & death is broken in our lives. If you need Christ to come into your life, forgive you of your sin & make you new, then don't hesitate, surrender today.