

Review

In our last study, we saw that Judah was being attacked by an alliance of King **Rets-EEN** of Aram and King **PEH-kakh** of Israel. Instead of trusting the Lord, as Isaiah exhorted him, he turned to Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria for help.

In that study, we also saw how prophecy is often fulfilled twice - through a near fulfillment and a far fulfillment. Through Isaiah, God had told King Ahaz,

Is. 7:14 "...Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

We saw how this sign was for the house of David, and was ultimately fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ.

But in the near fulfillment, we were told that before the boy knew to refuse evil and choose good, the kings of Israel and Aram would be forsaken (Isa. 7:16).

Tonight, as we begin our study of chapter eight, we see the boy who was the near fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy...

8:1-4 Maher-shalal-bash-baz

Isaiah fathered a child, and gave him the name which God had commanded: "**Mah-HARE shaw-LAWL khawsh baz.**" Translated from Hebrew, this means "**the plunder hastens, the spoiling comes quickly,**" or "**quick to plunder, swift to the spoils.**" Why was the boy given such a strange name? Because the king of Assyria was going to attack and be victorious over Israel and Aram.

Unfortunately for Judah, Tiglath-pileser was not going to stop there...

8:5-8 Rejecting The Waters Of Shiloah

When King Ahaz heard that Tiglath-pileser had defeated Israel and Aram, he must have been quite happy. After all, it had been his idea to reject Isaiah's exhortations and to enlist the help of the Assyrians:

2Kings 16:7-9 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son;

come up and deliver me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are rising up against me." Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria listened to him; and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and captured it, and carried the people of it away into exile to Kir, and put Rezin to death.

When Ahaz heard of this great deliverance,

2Kings 16:10 Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria...

He must have been thinking, "What a great plan this was!" But Tiglath-pileser wasn't motivated to stop with Aram and Israel. Unbeknownst to Ahaz, he also had his eye on Judah.

2Chr. 28:20 ...Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him.

This is exactly what Isaiah was prophesying would happen. In stylistic speech, the Assyrian army is described as the Euphrates river, which will flood not only Aram and Israel, but will sweep up on Judah, reaching even to the neck. This is very literal, for a river up to the neck leaves only the head above water. Judah's head was Jerusalem.

Ahaz did not live to see the fulfillment of this prophecy, for God had spoken,

Is. 7:9 "...If you will not believe, you surely shall not last."

But Ahaz's son Hezekiah did see the river flood up to the neck:

2Kings 18:13 Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.

The flood had covered Judah... except for the head. The Assyrian army besieged Jerusalem. But the Lord would not permit them to victorious.

2Kings 19:35-36 Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp

of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home, and lived at Nineveh.

8:9-10 Devise A Plan

As the king of Assyria discovered, you can "devise a plan, but it will be thwarted." No matter how certain the outcome seems, God can intervene. James warns us against the presumption of planning:

James 4:13-15 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

There's nothing wrong with making good plans, as long as we remember the proverb which says,

Prov. 16:9 The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.

Sennacherib's plans weren't made with the Lord, or approved by the Lord. And so they were ultimately disrupted by the angel of the Lord.

8:11-13 Don't Walk In The Way Of The People

Most of the people of Judah were behind Ahaz seeking Assyria's protection. The Lord strongly exhorted Isaiah not to give in to the popular opinion.

Scholars are divided on the proper translation of "**KEH-sheer**", which is here rendered "conspiracy." Since it can refer to treason, or an alliance, the interpretations are all over the place. However, the point is still clear. God is saying, "Don't say this just because most of the people are saying it."

Peter quotes this passage to us, reminding us not to be afraid of people as well:

1Pet. 3:14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED

We should fear God alone. Even a powerhouse preacher like Isaiah needed to be reminded that...

Prov. 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

8:14-15 He Shall Be A Stone

When you fear God instead of man, He becomes your sanctuary.

Unfortunately for the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, they had put their trust in man, because of their fear of man. And so instead of God being their sanctuary, He became a stone to stumble over. This too is used by Peter to illustrate how the Jews in his day stumbled over God, Jesus Christ.

1Pet. 2:4-9 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

After quoting from Isaiah 28 and Psalm 118, Peter uses verse 14 from here in Isaiah 8.

8:16 Isaiah's Disciples

Some people were actually listening to and obeying Isaiah. He called them his disciples, a word which means "**learner**." They had not forsaken the word of God - it was treasured in their hearts.

8:17 I Will Wait And Look

Because of a nation's sin, God can become angry and hide His face from them (Deut. 31:17-18; Isa. 54:8; 57:17). But just because God hides His face from a nation doesn't mean that we can't look eagerly for Him ourselves. In fact, the Lord wants to be sought after. David wrote,

Psa. 22:23-24 You who fear the LORD, praise Him; All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel. For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from him; But when he cried to Him for help, He heard.

The righteous will seek God and find Him. Isaiah knew this, and so he waited on the Lord.

8:18 Sons For Signs

Isaiah points out that he and his children were for signs and wonders in Israel. What does he mean? Remember that we saw at the beginning of the chapter the son who was born in near-fulfillment of prophecy. His name, **Mah-HARE shaw-LAWL khawsh baz**, was also prophetic. As a matter of fact, Isaiah's own name was prophetic as well, for it meant, "**Yahweh is salvation**."

8:19 Consulting The Dead

This message of Isaiah's is as important to hear today as it was then. Because even now, Christians who should know better often consult psychics for direction, look for answers through channelers, and try to contact the spirits of their deceased loved ones.

Saints, hear this loud and clear: these types of practices are forbidden by God and will result in your doom.

Lev. 19:31 "Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek

them out to be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God."
Lev. 20:6 "As for the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists, to play the harlot after them, I will also set My face against that person and will cut him off from among his people."

Deut. 18:10-14 "There shall not be found among you anyone who ... uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so.

The warnings are plentiful in the Bible. These things are demonic, with evil spirits pretending to be dead people communicating from beyond the grave. But Isaiah makes an interesting point: even if they were the real thing, why would you ask them instead of God?

Is. 8:19 "...should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?"

When the rich man was burning in the torment of Hades, he shouted across the chasm to Abraham.

Luke 16:27-31 "And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house - for I have five brothers - in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' But Abraham *said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

The truth comes from the Word of God, not from the spirits of the

dead.

8:20-22 Dawn Or Darkness

Isaiah continues to point us to the Word of God. If someone speaks contrary to the Word of God, they are in darkness.

Jesus said,

John 12:46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."

Those who refuse to come to the light will continue to stumble around in the dark. They will become more embittered against both man and God, and will not find any good thing.