

The Remnant of Isra'el Yesha'yahu 10:20-34

In my last post, we continued to learn more about **The Woes of Ashur** in **Yesha'yahu 10:12-19**. In this post, we conclude our exploration of **Yesha'yahu 10** by learning about **The Remnant of Isra'el** in verses 20-34.

The Remnant of Isra'el

²⁰ On that day the remnant of Isra'el, those of the house of Ya'akov who escaped, will no longer rely on the man who struck them down, but will truly rely on Adonai, the Holy One of Isra'el. ²¹ A remnant will return, the remnant of Ya'akov, to the mighty God. ²² For, although your people, Isra'el, are like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed, overflowing with justice.

The remnant will turn their trust to God rather than a foreign power. God had promised **Avraham** that his descendants would be as numerous as the sand of the sea (see Gen 22:17; 32:12; 41:49), but because of their punishment, only a remnant would survive, and even that would be an act of God's grace.

²³ Adonai Elohim-Tzva'ot will bring about this decreed destruction throughout all the land.

The divine decree that a city should be destroyed is a familiar motif in the ancient Near East. Though there is not always a reason that could be cited as "righteous," the concept presented here is very familiar.

²⁴ Therefore Adonai Elohim-Tzva'ot says: "My people living in Tziyon, don't be afraid of Ashur, even when he strikes you with a stick and raises his staff against you, the way it was in Egypt.

The present **Assyrian** threat is compared to bondage in **Egypt**. This comparison evokes memories of God's deliverance of His people at the Red Sea (Exodus 14-15).

²⁵ For in but a little while, my fury will end; and my anger will have destroyed them. " ²⁶ Adonai-Tzva'ot will wield a whip against them, as he did when striking Midyan at the Rock of 'Orev; as his staff was over the sea, he will raise it, the way it was in Egypt.

'Orev was a **Midianite** leader who oppressed the **Israelites** during the period of the judges. The forces of Gideon defeated him and executed at a rock that was given his name in Judges 7:24-25). The reference to God's staff in **Egypt** recalls the crossing of the Red Sea. **Moshe** raised his staff, representing God's presence. God caused the sea to divide, allowing the **Israelites** to escape the Egyptian army (Exodus 14:21-31).

²⁷ On that day his burden will fall from your shoulders and his yoke from your neck; the yoke will be destroyed by your prosperity.

The yoke is an image of political domination frequently used by the prophets.

²⁸ He has come to 'Ayat and passed through Migron. He has stored his equipment at Mikhmas. ²⁹ They have crossed the pass, then lodged at Geva. Ramah is shaking, Giv'at-Sha'ul has fled. ³⁰ Cry, shriek, Bat-Gallim! Listen, Layish! Poor 'Anatot! ³¹ Madmenah is in flight, the people of Gevim take cover. ³² This very day he will stop at Nov; and he will shake his fist at the mountain of the daughter of Tziyon, at the hill of Yerushalayim.

The prophecy in these verses describes the march of the **Assyrian** army from the north to the very doorstep of **Yerushalayim**. While some have suggested that this illustrates an actual attack on **Yerushalayim**, it cannot be equated with the **Assyrian** advance that took place in 701 BCE because the army made a different

route. This leads certain scholars to propose a second, later **Assyrian** campaign on **Y'hudah**, but this is doubtful. The journey described in these verses is unlikely to be one taken by an actual army since the terrain would be difficult to cross. The best understanding of these verses is as a visionary image of an attack, not a description of an actual attack. The route described is the most direct route *"as the crow flies,"* indicating that not even natural obstacles could slow down the army's advance. ¹

³³ See how Adonai Elohim-Tzva'ot lops off the branches with terrible violence! The ones standing highest are chopped down, the lofty are laid low. ³⁴ He will hack down the forest underbrush with an axe, and the L'vanon in its splendor falls. ~ Isaiah 10:20-34 (CJB)

The prophecy ends with a sudden reversal. **Assyria** marched on **Yerushalayim**, but the army met with destruction. They will become trees (the final line implies a cedar from L'vanon) that will be felled by none other than God Himself. The **Assyrians** had been the ax in God's hand against His people in verse 15, but God will wield an ax against them.

In my next post, we begin to explore **Yesha'yahu 11** by learning about **The Branch of Yishai (Jesse)** ~ **Part 1**

¹ HCSB Study Bible.