

# (The Word for Today) Isaiah 9:8 - Part 2

by Chuck Smith

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*God's judgment will continue to fall on Israel unless they repent and turn to Him.*

**Duration:** 25:59

**Scripture:** Isaiah 9:1, Isaiah 9:8-9, Matthew 4:15-16

**Topics:** "Expositional"

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## Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the pride and arrogance of the people of Ephraim and Samaria. Despite the destruction of their buildings and trees, they boast that they will rebuild with even stronger materials. However, God warns them of the consequences of their actions and their mistreatment of the needy and poor. He declares that He will send a nation against them as a punishment for their hypocrisy. Pastor Chuck also highlights the hypocrisy of the nation, where they claim to trust in God but engage in ungodly practices.

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## Transcript

Welcome to The Word for Today. The Word for Today is a continuous study of the Bible taught by Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently teaching from the Old Testament.

And for those of you following along in your Bibles, we'll be continuing today in Isaiah 9, beginning with verse 8, as we continue with an in-depth And all of the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and the stoutness of their hearts, The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones. The sycamores have been cut down, but we will change them into cedars. Now, you see, God had begun the judgment.

The Assyrians had moved in, and the Assyrians had destroyed the brick walls of their cities. The Assyrians cut down their trees. There was another cruel kind of a method of destroying a land was by destroying the trees, the forest.

And so the people, rather than turning to God, rather than learning their lesson, they in the stoutness of their hearts said, well, we'll just build new cities, but we'll not use bricks. We'll use hewn stones. They'll be even stronger.

The sycamores that have been cut down, we'll go ahead and plant cedar trees. And they were resolved in their wickedness, rather than to turn from it and turn to the Lord, we'll just go ahead and we'll make do. We'll improve even our position.

Therefore, the Lord shall set up the adversaries of resin against him and will join his enemies together. The Syrians before them and the Philistines behind them, and they will devour Israel with an open mouth. So because they did not turn to the Lord, those that they had trusted in as an ally, Syria, King resin, he will turn against them.

And from the South, the Philistines will attack them. And God declares for all of this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still in all of this. They didn't learn.

They didn't turn. They didn't learn the lesson they needed to know. And so God's hand is stretched out.

So he has to become even more severe in his judgment against them. But God and his love is going to persist until they learn. And God and his love will persist in pursuing you.

And if you haven't learned, you've been going through some real hardships, then you'll say, well, put a few more coals on the fire, make it a little hotter, you know. For the people did not turn to him that was smiting them. The purpose of God bringing this was that they might turn to God, but they wouldn't.

Neither do they seek the Lord of hosts. Therefore, the Lord will cut off from Israel, the head and the tail, the branch and the rush in one day, going to smite the nation. Now the ancient and the honorable men are the head and those lying prophets are the tail.

For the leaders of this people are the ones who are causing them to err and they that are led of them are being destroyed. When I read of the legislation that is coming out of Washington, out of Sacramento, I realized that the leaders of this nation are bringing us into shame and disrepute causing the people to err. Therefore, the Lord shall have no joy in their young men.

Neither will he have mercy on their fatherless or their widows. For everyone is a hypocrite and an evildoer. God usually takes up the cause of the widow, the fatherless, the orphans.

God has special mercy upon them, but no longer because they're hypocrites, they're evildoers. Every mouth is speaking folly. And for all of this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

This is a oft-repeated refrain now in the next chapter or so, because he is giving them opportunities to repent, giving them opportunities to change their ways, but they are obdurate in their wickedness. And thus, the continued stretched out hand of judgment. For wickedness burns as the fire, the fire among the briars and thorns, these prairie type fires, the underbrush, the dry underbrush, the kindling and the thickets of the forest.

And they shall mount up like the lifting up of the smoke. And through the wrath of the Lord of hosts, the land is darkened. The people will be like fuel for the fire.

And no man will spare his brother. Actually, there will come civil, internal strife and civil war. And this, as you read the history, is what happened.

They began to destroy each other. People were hungry, and they began to kill each other for food. They turned against themselves.

It's a horrible, horrible thing. When a city is besieged, the supplies are cut off, and people get so hungry that they begin to fight each other for what food supplies are there. There are many people today who are teaching, and I believe falsely, that the church is going to have to go through the Great Tribulation.

And we know that during the Great Tribulation, probably as a result of nuclear fallout, there is going to be tremendous shortages of food. There will be such a shortage of grain that a quart of wheat will be selling for about \$60. And so there will be a tremendous shortage of food.

And so these people who are declaring that the church is going to go through the Great Tribulation are recommending that the Christians lay up food, that you get some remote area, preferably in Oregon, where you can survive. And they are survivalists, and they give you--in fact, they'll even sell you the food that you will need, the grain and the canned vegetables and the water and all that you'll need to survive for seven years. And so you buy a unit for each number of people in your family.

And then they also will sell you automatic weapons, because they said, if you have the food when the rest of the world is hungry, you're going to have to use the weapons to drive them off, lest they--you know, what a tremendous witness you're going to be during the Great Tribulation, with your automatic weapons, you know, destroying the hungry people that are coming, you know, around. Hear the Word of the Lord. I can't quite agree with that.

But if you will read Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, and you read of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, there came such fighting within Jerusalem, the Jews against the Jews, that more Jews were probably killed by their own brothers than were killed by the Romans. As there came these gangs and the mob rule, and it was a horrible, horrible strife within the city of Jerusalem under the siege. He gives you graphic details that you need a strong stomach in order to keep reading.

But here he speaks that this is what will happen. No man will spare his brother, but he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry, and shall eat the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied. They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm.

Cannibalism. Manasseh, Ephraim, Ephraim, Manasseh--brothers, actually, they were the sons of Joseph--but they together shall be against Judah for all of this, all of the turmoil and all that they go through. Still, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Woe to them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that right grievousness which they have prescribed. Woe. Coming.

There's one thing that I should have brought out in the previous chapter, going back to verse 1. The prophecy of Zebulun and Naphtali, the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. Actually, Jesus began his ministry in Zebulun and in Naphtali. He was in Nazareth, and he went to Capernaum, and the majority of the ministry of Christ was in and around Galilee, the area of Naphtali and Zebulun.

And in Matthew's gospel, chapter 4, verse 15 and 16, Matthew refers to this prophecy of Isaiah, speaking, he left Nazareth, and he came and dwelt in Capernaum. He left Nazareth and Zebulun, came to the area of Naphtali, which Capernaum, which is upon the seacoast and the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea beyond the Jordan, the Galilee of the Gentiles, the people which sat in darkness saw a great light.

And to them which sat in the region in the shadow of death, the light is sprung up. And so that is the fulfillment of that prophecy there. So now woe to those that are decreeing these unrighteous decrees.

And that right grievousness which they have prescribed. These laws that are being enacted, woe to them that are enacting these unrighteous laws. Boy, I'll tell you, these men who sit in judgment and pervert judgment, woe to them when they come before the judge of the earth.

These men who are writing these laws, when they stand before the great lawgiver, what they'll have to answer for. For in the laws they turn aside the needy from judgment. They take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows might be their prey, that they may rob the fatherless.

What will you do in the day of visitation and in the desolation which will come from far? To whom will you flee for help? You've been guilty of taking advantage of the weak and the poor. And so what will you do when God begins to visit in his judgment, in his wrath? Where are you going to flee for help? For without me they shall bow down under the prisoners and they shall fall among the slain. They'll try to hide.

They'll try to hide with the prisoners. They'll try to hide under the bodies of those that have been slain. But for all of this, his anger is not turned away but his hand is stretched out still.

They still haven't learned. Oh Assyrian, now God addresses the Assyrian nation. And here God calls them the rod of my anger.

In other words, Assyria is to be used as God's rod of punishment. God is going to use this wicked nation of Assyria to be his instrument of judgment against his people that have turned from him. You are the rod of my anger.

You're the staff in their hand of my indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation. Remember the Lord said that they were hypocritical and all.

And so he said, I'm going to bring them against this hypocritical nation. Talk about a hypocritical nation. We put on our coins in God we trust and then we use them for every ungodly thing.

A teacher was ordered by the court not to read his Bible in his classroom to himself during the 20 minutes that he had, which was his break time. Because that sort of constituted a message to the children that he believed in the Bible. And thus it was sort of a state kind of a separate, you know, I mean, they're using such stupid things.

Now had he been reading a book on Satanism, witchcraft, Zen Buddhism, the Arantia? He would have read it. No problem. You read all that junk you want.

In fact, you can even teach the kids. The schools are the ones that are promoting Halloween more than any other religious holiday in the year. They're having parties and everything else.

Halloween parties and kids, you know, making the jack-o'-lanterns and everything else. And Halloween is a religious holiday, but a pagan religious holiday. And being strongly supported by the schools.

Help us Lord. His hand is stretched out still. I will send them against a hypocritical nation, against the people my wrath, and I will give him charge to take the spoil, to take the prey, to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

God is ordering the Assyrians to come and just to wipe them out. How be it? He meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations, not a few. He doesn't realize that God is using him and that it is God who has given this nation to them.

They don't realize that. It's just they have a heart to destroy. For he says, are not my princes kings? They take great boasting in their power.

Is not Calno as Carchemish? Now, they had already conquered Carchemish. They're at the Euphrates. Calno was a city in the northern part of Syria.

And they said, hey, we've conquered the bigger city of Carchemish, you know, and Calno's no different. We'll conquer it. Is not Hamath another city of Syria, like Arpet, which was already conquered by Assyria? Is not Samaria as Damascus? They'd already conquered Damascus, and so the capital of Israel, Samaria, you know.

And so they were bragging about what they'd already conquered, and these other cities were not really as great or as strong or equal to the cities already had fallen to Assyria. As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, of whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and Samaria. In other words, in those days, they felt that to win in a battle was a sign that your God was greater than the gods of the cities that you had conquered.

And most of the cities had their own local deities, their own idols and images. And so the gods that were worshipped by these other cities that we are already conquered, they're really greater than the gods of Samaria or Jerusalem. They excel them.

So, you know, if these gods of these other nations could not deliver them, surely then, you know, the God of Israel can't deliver Israel. As you read in 2 Kings, the messages that were sent by the king of Assyria to Hezekiah demanding Hezekiah to surrender and telling Hezekiah, Sennacherib sent these messages and telling him the folly of trying to resist. And then when this Rabbechek came to Jerusalem with the messages to Hezekiah and came with his armed men, because he was not getting a response from Hezekiah, he called to the people who were there on the walls looking down on them and he said to them, don't let your king deceive you into believing that your God can deliver from the Assyrians.

For look at the nations that we've already conquered and their gods were unable to help them and neither is your God able to help you. So don't let the king deceive you by saying, trust in God, God will deliver us. And they openly defied God.

Now we know the history, how that God wiped out the Assyrian army when they were gathered in sight of Jerusalem, probably on Mount Scopus. Pastor Chuck Smith will return with a few closing comments, but first I'd like to remind you that today's message is available in its unedited form on cassette or CD. Simply write or call and ask for ordering details on tape or CD number C-3246.

Again that's tape or CD number C-3246. Well it's that time of year again. It may seem innocent, but the symbols of Halloween, like black cats, jack-o-lanterns and trick-or-treat all have roots in sorcery and Satanism.

We would never knowingly get involved with anything related to Satan, but many Christians don't understand what's really behind the pagan holiday. The word for today would like to offer you a presentation hosted by Pastor Chuck Smith called Halloween, Trick or Treat that traces the pagan origins

and history of Halloween. This powerful movie uncovers the mystic rites and ceremonies of Satan and will forever change your opinion of Halloween.

Every year as the end of October approaches, we are faced with the dilemma of family and friends pressuring us to participate in the celebration of this pagan holiday. This documentary will definitely challenge you to decide whether or not you'll continue to participate in this tradition. If you'd like more information on Halloween, Trick or Treat, then simply write or call and ask one of our operators for the ordering details.

Again it's called Halloween, Trick or Treat. And right now if you place an order, the word for today would like to bless you with Pastor Chuck Smith's pamphlet, How Can a Man Be Born Again? Absolutely free. Instead of just giving candy this year, the pamphlet is the perfect tool for Christians to share the gospel with loved ones and friends.

Available in both English and Spanish. Again it's free when you call right now. To order Halloween, Trick or Treat for yourself or for a friend, you can call the word for today at 1-800-272-WORD or write to us at P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California 92628.

Once again that number to call is 1-800-272-9673. And for those of you that would like to visit our website, you can do so at [www.twft.com](http://www.twft.com) or if you would like to email us, you can do so at [info@twft.com](mailto:info@twft.com). Well coming up next time on the Word for Today, Pastor Chuck will be continuing his fascinating study through the book of Isaiah. That's coming up next time on the Word for Today.

And now with our closing prayer, here's Pastor Chuck. Father we pray that we might give heed to your Word tonight. May we hearken, may we listen, may we respond.

Lord we pray that you will help us to make those inner resolves that by your Spirit and through the power of your Holy Spirit, we will, Lord, deny ourselves. Lord we will stand in the strength of your Spirit against these forces of darkness that are flooding our world today. Oh God give us that strength to stand in the face of the pressures and the opposition of the enemy.

And may we determine that as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. In Jesus' name. This program is sponsored by The Word for Today.

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