

## Isaiah Chapter 10 - John Karmelich

Title: Does God have emotions?

I'll focus on the title in a second. Chapter 10 essentially focuses on a growing empire big in the Middle East at the time of Isaiah, called the Assyrians (located in what is Iraq today). They started the first big empire in that area. Technically, Egypt was the first great empire, but they never really expanded their territory as much as just "beat up the neighbors" to show who was in charge. Anyway, Assyria was the "big dog" during Isaiah's day! Obviously, the Assyrians didn't believe in God, yet Isaiah says God was "pulling their strings", as God wanted to use that empire to judge the Israelites for ignoring Him.

That empire destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel and much of the Southern One! An angel killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers before they reached Jerusalem (mentioned later in Isaiah). In essence, we're reading about historically what happened to the land of Israel in the 7th Century BC. In Chapter 10 we get Isaiah describing the Assyrian conquering route (future to him) as if he was a sports announcer at a ballgame! He is describing the future conquest of Israel specifically as the Assyrians did it! Okay, why should we care about all this ancient history?

What I pondered as I read this, is the fact God has emotions. In this chapter God's ticked off (for a lack of a better term) at the Israelites for not living as He desired. I don't know about you, but the thought of God being angry at me for ignoring Him scares me and gets me to confess sin daily! I always consider God to be perfect. I also believe He knows all things. (See Isaiah 46:10 as an example!) It puzzles me to consider God has emotional highs and lows. We grieve God when we're not living as He desires! Is there a limit to His anger? Can His anger be satisfied by killing people or hurting many of His chosen? At that time, the Israelites were losing badly in war. It was soon to get worse as the Empire of Assyria was on the warpath! Isaiah implies God was controlling that foreign army and He's going to punish the Israelites for ignoring Him. It's God saying in effect, "They're still My Chosen! Many Israelites will die to show you don't mess with Me!" He won't completely wipe them out since He made an unconditional promise to make them a great nation as He will literally rule over the world one day from Israel, for all eternity! So why is it necessary to play out this way? What are the limits to God's emotions to control His those of us that He calls His people? Those are the questions I'm pondering! Speaking of which:

A summary of this chapter is God expresses His anger at the Israelites for failing to be His witnesses to the world around them including Israelites suffering. The text condemns their leaders who hurt citizens under them for financial gain. God says in effect, "I've had it up to here with your bad behavior and I'll use the Assyrian Empire to destroy most of the land of Israel to prove My point!" God also makes clear that He's keeping His unconditional promise that a descendant of David (i.e., Jesus), will rule the world from Israel. In short, it shows there are limits to God's anger and He does have emotions in a way He'll make that obvious to readers of Isaiah and students of Middle East history!

Let me share something I learned many years ago. God loves us and desires we use our lives to glorify Him. At the same time, He's always fully angry at sin and can't tolerate any sin whatsoever! What this boils down to is the question of how does God show we'll suffer for disobedience, and still show all the rest of the world that He alone is God? In that sense God MUST have emotions to show the world that He alone is God! There's a limit to His patience with us if we turn from Him! God intends to keep His unconditional promise that He'll literally rule the world one day! So why does He allow good people to suffer (e.g., cancer and martyrs)? The answer is God wants us to be a good witness for Him despite all

we are dealing with! If we live FOREVER with Him, then it's not a matter of how long we live, but it's the issue of what do we do with the unknown but specific amount of time He gives us!

My point is I do believe in a God that knows all things, but at the same time it appears as if He's acting with emotions at our behavior! It means there is a limit to His anger in order to fulfill His promise of a ruling Messiah over the world one day! I'd argue one reason why God's going to allow the horror show of Revelation (with its specific time limit as stated in that book) right before Jesus returns is to make it obvious to the entire world that He is God and not to be messed with!

Bottom line, if you think I'm trying to scare you into better obedience, I am! Everything applies to me as well! I'm not saying we must work harder; I'm saying God wants to be "Number One on a list of 1", meaning He desires that everything we do is God centered. I realize it is not possible to concentrate on God "24/7". I'm saying we pray daily for guidance, and daily spend time with Him, so He guides us as it appears His emotions are working for us and not against us. Will bad things still happen to us? Yes, I am sure God allows us to be tested daily as if He's saying, "You trust Me now even through this?"

Meanwhile a few details on the chapter! The first four verses continue God's condemnation of Israel as Isaiah's focusing on the specific sin of their leaders making corrupt laws to hurt innocent people and to take property from those who can barely afford to live. One has to read that in context of Chapter 9. It is in effect the last reason why God says, "I've had it up to here and now it's too late!" Some years after Isaiah wrote that the Assyrians conquered the Northern Israel kingdom, and much of the Southern One. As I said Isaiah described the conquering of the land of Israel like a ballgame announcer: "They are at this city 40 miles away! Now they're conquering a different city 5 miles away!" Isaiah described it that way to validate he was a true prophet of God!

Then God's saying in effect, "While I'm on the topic of anger, let me express a little on Assyria!" Yes, God used them (even though they didn't realize it), to conquer Israel like they did other places near the land of Israel. Isaiah mentions specific cities not too far away and says in effect, the Israelite cities are going to fall the same way! Keep in mind one of the things the Israelites were guilty of was turning to other gods for help. So, God wants to show He and He alone is God through this judgment to Israel!

By Verse 12 Isaiah is saying when I (God) have finished punished the Israelites (let's just say many of the Israelites died and many others were taken into captivity) then God is going to punish Assyria. He still needs to show the God of the Israelites is the true God despite their sins. The Assyrian Empire was going to be destroyed roughly a hundred years later by the Babylonian Empire. Centuries after all that, Alexander the Great conquered them. History records the Babylonians destroyed that Assyrian capital so thoroughly Alexander didn't realize he was walking through it! Anyway, Isaiah stays on the case of the Assyrians through Verse 19 to say in effect, "One day they'll get theirs!"

From Verse 20 to the end of the chapter discusses the return of the Israelites. It became partially true when the Babylonians were conquered by the Persians who let them return to the land. Israel did not become their own country again until 1948. The ONLY country in history to be conquered, scattered and become a country again! Bottom line, this chapter discusses the fall of most of Israel and the fact God will bring them back NOT because they deserve it, but only to show He keeps His promises!

I realize all of this is ancient Middle East history. The lesson for you and me is God is still ruling, and He is still interfering in the affairs of mankind, as it is His desire that we live as a witness for Him. It's not saying we'll live a carefree and happy long life if we obey Him. God desires we surrender our life to Him in that it should be our desire to do His will! What He does with our lives is His business. I've

got no idea what God has planned for me, so I make my To Do Lists, and do what I believe God wants me to do. If He guides me elsewhere, again that's His business to do so!

With that said, I hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on one of the links below. It's still a joy to study this text and again I'm grateful for you reading this. The rest of this email is links to questions you may have. If you are new here, realize you are always welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again for reading this!

-----

You can read the EXACT SAME FILE by either clicking on

Option #1:

[biblestudyemail.com/karmelich\\_isaiah/Isaiah\\_Chapter\\_10.htm](http://biblestudyemail.com/karmelich_isaiah/Isaiah_Chapter_10.htm)

OR

Option #2 Reading the same file in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) Format:

[biblestudyemail.com/karmelich\\_isaiah/Isaiah\\_Chapter\\_10.pdf](http://biblestudyemail.com/karmelich_isaiah/Isaiah_Chapter_10.pdf)

Personally, I prefer reading options #2. It is easiest on the eyes.

That's it. Hope you enjoy it. Don't forget to fire up a prayer prior to your reading.