

Isaiah 10:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand
is mine indignation.

Analysis

A dramatic shift: God addresses Assyria directly as His instrument. 'O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger' reveals that Assyria, though pagan and wicked, serves as God's tool for disciplining Israel. 'The staff in their hand is mine indignation' emphasizes God's complete sovereignty over even hostile nations. This illustrates the Reformed doctrine of providence—God orchestrates all events, even using evil agents to accomplish His righteous purposes. Assyria thinks they act autonomously, but God controls their movements.

Historical Context

Assyria dominated the ancient Near East (745-612 BC), conquering kingdoms systematically. Yet Isaiah reveals they were unwittingly fulfilling God's purposes. Tiglath-Pileser III, Shalmaneser V, Sargon II, and Sennacherib all thought they acted from imperial ambition, but God directed their campaigns to discipline His people. This demonstrates God's sovereignty over world history—pagan empires serve His redemptive plan.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God use even hostile forces to accomplish His purposes in our lives?
2. What does God's sovereignty over pagan nations teach about His control over world events?
3. How should recognition that God controls all things affect our response to difficult circumstances?

Interlinear Text

בְּיָדָם הַזֹּאת וּמִטָּה אֲפִי שֶׁ בָּט אֲשֶׁר וְהָיוּ
O Assyrian the rod of mine anger and the staff H1931 in their hand
H1945 H804 H7626 H639 H4294 H3027

זַעֲמִי:
is mine indignation
H2195

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 10:15 (Parallel theme): Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.

Isaiah 30:30 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

Isaiah 14:25 (Parallel theme): That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

Zephaniah 2:13 (Parallel theme): And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.

Isaiah 66:14 (Parallel theme): And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.

Isaiah 13:5 (Parallel theme): They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.