

# Isaiah 17:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.

## Analysis

---

'In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.' The 'strong cities' (fortified urban centers) become like abandoned tree branches—once verdant, now forsaken. The phrase 'which they left because of the children of Israel' likely refers to Canaanite cities abandoned during Joshua's conquest, now serving as parallel for Israel's own coming desolation. Ironic role reversal: Israel will experience what they inflicted on Canaanites. This demonstrates the principle that covenant unfaithfulness leads to experiencing the curses meant for covenant breakers. God's covenant includes both blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28).

## Historical Context

---

The reference to Canaanite cities 'left because of children of Israel' recalls the conquest under Joshua, when Canaanite inhabitants fled or were destroyed as God drove them out. Cities like Jericho, Ai, and Hazor fell to Israel. Now Israel faces similar conquest—their strong cities becoming desolate as Canaanite cities were. This fulfills Deuteronomy 28's covenant curses for disobedience. Archaeologically, many Israelite cities show 8th century destruction layers from Assyrian conquest, validating the prophecy. The covenant's reciprocal nature means blessings and curses both come from the same divine source based on faithfulness.

## Related Passages

---

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

---

1. What does Israel experiencing Canaanite-like desolation teach about covenant curses applying to God's people?
2. How does this demonstrate that divine election doesn't guarantee exemption from judgment for unfaithfulness?
3. In what ways do Deuteronomy 28's covenant curses find fulfillment in historical judgments?

## Interlinear Text

---

בִּי וּם	הָהּ וּא	יְהִי וּן	עָרֵי י	מְעוֹז ו	עָזָב ו
<b>In that day</b>	H1931	H1961	<b>cities</b>	<b>shall his strong</b>	<b>be as a forsaken</b>
H3117			H5892	H4581	H5800
הָחֵרֶשׁ	וְהָ אֶמֶת יֵר	אֲשֶׁר ר	עָזָב ו	מִפְּנֵי י	
<b>bough</b>	<b>and an uppermost branch</b>	H834	<b>be as a forsaken</b>	<b>because</b>	
H2793	H534		H5800	H6440	
בְּנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	וְהָיְתָ ה	שְׁמָמָה:		
<b>of the children</b>	<b>of Israel</b>	H1961	<b>and there shall be desolation</b>		
H1121	H3478		H8077		

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Isaiah 27:10** (Parallel theme): Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

