

# Isaiah 24:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up,  
that no man may come in.

## Analysis

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**The city of confusion is broken down**—qiryat tohu (קִרְיַת תֹּהוּ) literally means "city of emptiness/chaos." Tohu appears in Genesis 1:2 describing pre-creation chaos ("without form")—judgment returns creation to primordial disorder. The city represents human civilization organized in rebellion against God (Gen 11:4, Babel's tower-city). **Broken down** uses shabar (שָׁבַר), depicting violent demolition—walls breached, structures collapsed.

**Every house is shut up, that no man may come in**—sagar (סָגַר, "shut up") indicates sealing or closing, possibly from plague quarantine (Lev 13:4) or defensive measures during siege. The phrase me-bo (מֵבֹא, "from entering") suggests complete isolation—no commerce, fellowship, or hospitality. The house (bayit, בַּיִת), normally the center of domestic life and security, becomes a prison or tomb. This previews Revelation 18:2's description of fallen Babylon as "the habitation of devils... the hold of every foul spirit."

## Historical Context

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The 'city of confusion' could reference any rebellious city, but many scholars identify it with Babylon, which Isaiah later depicts extensively (chapters 13-14, 47). Others suggest it represents all cities organized in autonomous rebellion against God. Ancient Near Eastern cities were centers of political power, economic activity, and often idolatrous worship. Their fortified walls provided security—but judgment breaches walls and empties streets. Archaeological evidence from

destroyed ancient cities (Lachish, Hazor, Jerusalem in 586 BC) shows burned houses sealed shut, sometimes with skeletal remains inside—graphic evidence of siege warfare and plague.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the term 'tohu' (chaos/emptiness from Genesis 1:2) emphasize that judgment un-creates God's ordering work?
2. What does the 'city of confusion' represent in your life—areas organized around autonomous rebellion rather than submission to God?
3. How does this image of houses 'shut up' with no one entering challenge modern confidence in urban civilization and technology?

## Interlinear Text

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נִשְׁבַּב	ה	קָרִית	תֵּהַ	תֵּרֶ	סְגֻּר	כָּל	בָּ	אֶת
is broken down		The city	of confusion	is shut up		H3605	every	house
H7665		H7151		H8414				H1004

מִבָּאָן:

that no man may come in

H935

## Additional Cross-References

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**Revelation 18:2** (Parallel theme): And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

