

Isaiah 28:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

Analysis

Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. God's judgment against prideful Ephraim comes through a powerful agent. **The Lord hath a mighty and strong one** (chazaq ve'amits la-Adonai, חֲזָק וְאַמִּיץ לַאֲדֹנָי, literally "a strong and mighty one belonging to the Lord") refers to Assyria, God's instrument of judgment (Isaiah 10:5 calls Assyria "the rod of mine anger"). Though Assyria doesn't know it, they serve God's purposes.

Three metaphors depict unstoppable devastation: **tempest of hail** (zerem barad, זֶרֶם בָּרָד)—destructive storm; **destroying storm** (sa'ar qetev, שַׁעַר קֶטֶב)—whirlwind of ruin; **flood of mighty waters overflowing** (zerem mayim kabbirim shofim, זֶרֶם מַיִם כְּבִירִים שׁוֹפִים)—overwhelming deluge. The triple imagery emphasizes total, irresistible destruction. **Shall cast down to the earth with the hand** (hiniach la'arets beyad, הִנִּיחַ לָאָרֶץ בְּיָד, means forcibly thrown down—violent conquest leaving the proud city prostrate in the dust.

Historical Context

In 722 BC, Assyrian king Shalmaneser V besieged Samaria; his successor Sargon II completed the conquest. Assyrian annals boast of deporting 27,290 Israelites and destroying cities. The Northern Kingdom ceased to exist, never restored. This fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of overwhelming judgment. For Judah watching their sister kingdom fall, this warned of similar fate if they persisted in sin (which came via Babylon in 586 BC). God uses even pagan empires as instruments of His sovereign purposes (Habakkuk 1:5-11), though He later judges them for exceeding His mandate (Isaiah 10:12-19).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that God sovereignly uses even hostile powers for His purposes affect your view of current events?
2. What does Assyria's role as God's 'mighty and strong one' teach about divine judgment sometimes coming through natural consequences of sin?
3. How should the suddenness and totality of Samaria's fall warn against presuming on God's patience?

Interlinear Text

הִנֵּה ה	חֲזָקָה	וְאַמֶּץ	לֹאדֹנִי	כְּזָרָם	כְּדָד
H2009	hath a mighty	and strong one	Behold the Lord	as a flood	of hail
	H2389	H533	H136	H2230	H1259
שֶׁעַר	קָטֹב	כְּזָרָם	מַיִם	כְּבִירֵי יָם	שֹׁטֵף יָם
storm	and a destroying	as a flood	waters	of mighty	overflowing
H8178	H6986	H2230	H4325	H3524	H7857
הֵנִי יִם	לְאֶרֶץ	בְּיָד:			
shall cast down	to the earth	with the hand			
H3240	H776	H3027			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 30:30 (References Lord): 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.

Nahum 1:8 (Parallel theme): But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.

Ezekiel 13:11 (Parallel theme): Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it.

Isaiah 29:6 (References Lord): Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.

Isaiah 27:1 (References Lord): In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.