

Isaiah 8:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

Analysis

God commands Isaiah to create a public legal document as a prophetic witness. The 'great roll' (large tablet or scroll) and 'man's pen' (ordinary writing) emphasize public accessibility—this prophecy would be clearly visible to all. The name 'Mahershalalhashbaz' means 'speed the spoil, hasten the prey,' prophesying Syria and Israel's imminent defeat by Assyria. This demonstrates God's sovereignty over nations and His use of prophetic signs to authenticate His word. The public nature reflects the Reformed principle that God's word must be proclaimed openly.

Historical Context

Written around 735-732 BC during the Syro-Ephraimite crisis. Public records served as legal witnesses in ancient Near Eastern culture. The tablet would be displayed prominently, likely in the temple courts. This occurred when Syria and Israel allied against Judah, attempting to force Ahaz into their anti-Assyrian coalition. Within three years, as prophesied, both Damascus and Samaria fell to Tiglath-Pileser III (732 BC).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God use tangible, public signs to strengthen faith and confirm His word?
2. What is the importance of proclamation and public witness in spreading God's truth?
3. How does God's control over historical events demonstrate His sovereignty and faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוָה	אֶל־י	קַח	לְךָ	גִּלְיֹן	גֹּד וּלְ
said	Moreover the LORD	H413	unto me Take	H0	roll	thee a great
H559	H3068		H3947		H1549	H1419
וְכָתַב	עָלָיו	בְּחֶרֶט	אֶנֶךְ וְשׁ	לְמַהֲרָה	שׁ שׁ שׁ	
and write	H5921	pen	in it with a man's	H0	H0	H0
H3789		H2747	H582			
	בָּזָז:					
	concerning Mahershalalhashbaz					
	H4122					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 30:8 (Parallel theme): Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever:

Isaiah 8:3 (References Lord): And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

Revelation 21:17 (Parallel theme): And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

Revelation 13:18 (Parallel theme): Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

Jeremiah 36:2 (Parallel theme): Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day.

Jeremiah 36:32 (Parallel theme): Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.

Jeremiah 36:28 (Parallel theme): Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.

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