

Tools & Leftovers
(Isaiah 10:5-11:16)
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I. Introduction

- A. Why do the wicked prosper?
 - 1. "It's just not fair"
 - 2. I make good decisions, do the best I can, try not to hurt people and I just can't get a break while there are those who are less than honorable, who don't even seem to try, and they're cruising sweetly along.
- B. If God is really righteous and just, then what the heck is wrong with this picture?
 - 1. God is first and foremost committed to his children. They are the ones that Jesus sacrificed His life for. That 's why He drank the cup of God's wrath – so that we are forgiven and free.
 - a. We all have preferences.
 - b. God has preference.

**God's attention is on His children first, but that doesn't mean He ignores the rest. He wants more children.

II. Tools

- A. Recap: Judah's choice of Assyria over God and God's use of Assyria to discipline Judah.
- B. God's desire is to discipline His people. (5-6)
 - 1. He will even use wicked brutal people to reach those who belong to Him (remember Travis' story?)
 - 2. God deals with His own first.
 - 3. God is using Assyria to discipline, but Assyria chooses to destroy instead and refuses to acknowledge God and His supremacy. (7-11)
- C. God's justice and Assyria (12-34)
 - 1. God hates arrogance.
 - 2. Assyria is a tool.

- a. Tools do not exalt themselves in pride. Tools are fools if they think highly of themselves
- b. Equation: Boasting about self – Giving God glory = Judgment of biblical proportions.
- c. God did use Assyria to discipline but would not allow them to go beyond His purposes of holiness.

**God may use unbelievers (even evil men) to accomplish His purposes but He is always limiting and faithful

**We need not fear discipline that comes from God because He always does it in perfect love.

D. Tools vs. Servants

1. Tools = used by God yet never acknowledge God's authority or glory. In fact, they steal God's glory.
2. Servants = used by God and then, because they see God for Who He is and they trust Him, they share in His glory.
3. Is there hope for a tool?
 - a. Yes
 - b. 796 – Jonah; 732 – Ahaz and Judah; 642 – Nahum; 612 – Fall of Ninevah

**God's love and mercy is overwhelming! Nahum 1:1-3 says God is slow to anger! That's why the sinful seemingly prosper – God's incredible patience.

E. God's people will come back, the Assyrians will be destroyed, and God's people will get fat – in a good way.

III. Leftovers

A. Remnant? Better term for us is Leftover.

1. I hate leftovers. Except for Tri Tip.
2. Leftovers have it rough – in a plastic container in the fridge. If they're lucky, they get a piece of masking tape that has something like, "taco meat" scribbled on it.
3. The thing about leftovers is that they're still there. For some reason, they didn't go down the disposal.

B. Leftovers in the Bible

1. The ones who remained faithful, the ones who were still hanging on if even barely
2. They had prayed for a day that things would be set right. They were abused, battered and probably looked older than they were.
3. But, they were always the ones who were the conduit of salvation for the people of God.

C. Life out of a stump (1-5)

1. Out of this remnant will come someone who will be unique. Out of this remnant will come life out of something mostly dead. They were exhausted, they were mostly dead all day.
2. He will be someone like we have never seen before.

D. What it will look like (6-10)

1. There would be not just peace, but ridiculous peace. A peace that is not natural, it is inconceivable!
2. Imagery

E. In that day

1. Jesus Christ will cause ...
 - a. A suffering people to have peace – real peace.
 - b. A scattered people to be regathered and find ultimate belonging.
2. They will walk a road that He has prepared for them rather than them wandering in a forest or wilderness.

****BUT ...**

That day is not yet. We can see glimpses of it. I see glimpses of it here in our fellowship. In my relationships with some of you, in the times we worship as a body, but I am always reminded that we are not there. Things are said (some intentional and some accidental) and things are done that break our hearts and we remember that we are not there. It's like we stick our hand in the cobra den and whoops, he still bites.

IV. So what now

A. First question: Are you a tool?

1. God's gonna use you either way. He wants a relationship with you.

2. You have to make a decision. You can be a tool or a servant. He will keep reaching for you but at some point, time runs out.

B. Second question: Do you feel like a leftover?

1. Know this, that day is coming and you will see glimpses of it.

2. In the meantime, hold on. Hold tight to Jesus and those who He has placed in your life. Don't let go. Let go of everything else. Why? Because you need all your focus and strength to hang on to Him. The cool part of this is that He won't let you go. But a half hug is just awkward.