

In the thirtieth chapter of Isaiah the prophet declares the certainty of God's judgments to an unrepentant people. Verses 15-17 strikingly portray the divine confrontation with the arrogant leaders of Israel. In verse 15 God tells how He had promised to deliver the nation if they would but trust Him. He says, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength:" But He gives their answer: "and ye would not." This answer is elaborated in verse 16: "But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses;" God answers: "therefore shall ye flee:" They continue: "We will ride upon the swift;" God replies: "therefore shall they that pursue you be swift." Man in his pride and haughtiness cannot successfully oppose the will of God. God continues: "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill."

Note the unexpected and interesting twist at the end of this denunciation. What an unusual picture of defeat! What is left is not a few fragments lying on the ground. It is not said that the wind will carry them away, so that no trace will be left. They are to be like a beacon on the top of a mountain and an ensign on a hill. Even in suffering and punishment Israel is to be a witness to God's power and to the certainty of His purposes.

It is said that Frederick the Great, the cynical Prussian militarist, who delighted in the conversation of Voltaire and other caustic despisers of Christianity, once turned to his court chaplain and brusquely said, "Give me, in a word, a valid argument for Christianity," and that the chaplain immediately replied, "The Jews." Here is a factual argument that is undeniable. The great powers and lesser peoples of antiquity have all disappeared. When other ancient nations have been destroyed, their people have either completely died out or