

man builds his own religion and works out for himself the way in which he thinks he can glorify God. What God desires most of all is a humble and contrite heart and a desire to do His will as it is revealed in His Word.

The third section, verses 9-11, continues the prediction of the disaster to the Northern Kingdom, but dwells upon the reason for the disaster.

If one does not have the historic situation in mind these three verses can be readily misunderstood. It is to be feared that this was the case when the King James Version was made. The translators of that version may have considered the verses as isolated verses instead of thinking of them as part of the whole picture. It is true of course that we should not let our idea of the meaning of an entire passage lead us to misinterpret a particular verse. Yet a word or a phrase is often susceptible of more than one interpretation, and it is sometimes necessary that a translator select one of several possible interpretations. In these verses the King James Version has selected interpretations which do not fit with the historic background, and the resulting translation seems not to give much sense. Except for one word, the American Standard Version gives a better presentation of the meaning of these verses. Consequently, we shall direct our attention in verses 9-11 to the American Standard Version.

Verse 9 compares the coming desolation of the Northern Kingdom to the desolation of the old Canaanite cities which were destroyed at the time of the Israelite conquest. The remains of some of these Canaanite fortresses were still to be seen in the mountains or in the wooded sections. Just as these were forsaken in the face of the attack of the children of Israel, so their own cities are to be a desolation as a result of the coming destruction. The phrase in the King James Version "as a forsaken bough and an uppermost branch" is equally possible with the translation of the American Standard Version "as the forsaken places in the wood and on the mountain top." The following phrase, which the King James Version translates "which they left because of the children of Israel" and which the American Standard Version renders "which were forsaken from before the children of Israel"