



**MAJOR PLAYERS
IN ISAIAH'S DAY**

GET TO KNOW ISAIAH'S WORLD BY FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT SOME OF THE THE PEOPLE AND PLACES HE MENTIONED.

1 Assyria (Nineveh)—Powerful and expanding empire in Isaiah's day. Conquered and ruled by terror. Destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and scattered the ten tribes. Under leadership of **Sennacherib**, they also besieged Jerusalem during Hezekiah's rule in Judah.

2 Israel (Ephraim)—Northern kingdom of ten tribes, wicked and idolatrous in Isaiah's day. Led by **Pekah**. Together with Syria, attacked Judah but were turned back. United with Syria in an unsuccessful revolt against Assyria. Then carried away captive by the Assyrians and scattered, becoming the "lost ten tribes."

3 Syria (Damascus)—Collection of kingdoms northeast of Israel. Grew weaker as Assyria grew stronger. Combined with northern kingdom of Israel and attacked Judah during the reign of Ahaz. Later, after a failed revolt against Assyria, Damascus was destroyed.

4 Egypt—Powerful force in the region. Rival of Assyria. For many years the policy of the kings of Judah was to be allied with Egypt against Assyria. However,

Isaiah opposed this alliance, warning against relying on Egypt and saying the Lord would deliver Judah against the Assyrians, which He did (see Isaiah 30–31; 36–37).

5 Babylon—Capitol of Babylonia, a rival and subject of Assyria during Isaiah's day. Isaiah prophesied of its future—that it would rise to power, conquer Judah, destroy Jerusalem and the temple, take captives from Judah back to Babylon, and eventually fall. In Isaiah, it is often a metaphor for the world and its wickedness.

6 Judah (Jerusalem)—Southern kingdom, where Isaiah lived. During reign of King **Ahaz**, attacked by Syria and Israel. In Isaiah's day, subject to Assyria, which threatened to destroy it. Miraculously spared. Enjoyed relative prosperity under King **Hezekiah**, who was righteous and took advice from Isaiah.

7 Persia—A great empire that conquered Babylon. Almost 200 years beforehand, Isaiah prophesied that King **Cyrus** of Persia would let the captive Jews in Babylon return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (see Isaiah 44:28; 45:1, 13; Ezra 1).