

Isaiah Chapters 18-21 – Proclamation Against Ethiopia, Egypt; Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed; The Sign Against Egypt and Ethiopia; The Fall of Babylon Proclaimed!

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – [Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com); email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

IN CHRIST ALONE – Keith & Kristyn Getty -

1 In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song. This cornerstone, this solid ground, Firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease! My Comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand.

2 In Christ alone, Who took on flesh, Fullness of God in helpless babe! This gift of love and righteousness scorned by the ones He came to save. Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied. For every sin on Him was laid, here in the death of Christ I live.

3 There in the ground His body lay, Light of the world by darkness slain. Then bursting forth in glorious day, up from the grave He rose again! And as He stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me. For I am His and He is mine bought with the precious blood of Christ.

4 No guilt in life, no fear in death. This is the power of Christ in me. From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand. Till He returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I'll stand... No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand. Till He returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF ISAIAH: Referred to as the “Fifth Gospel” since the third century!

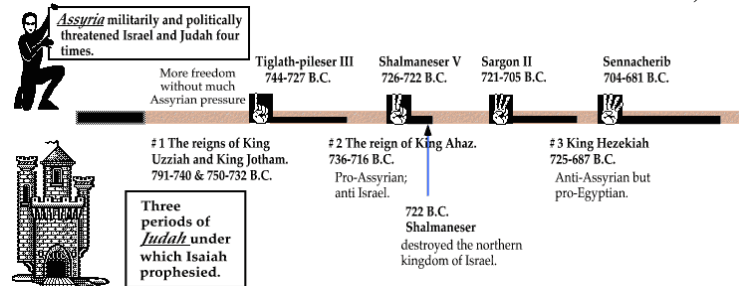
Possible date of kings reign” - Uzziah, - 792-740; Jotham, - 750-736; Ahaz, - 735-720 Northern Kingdom of Israel falls to Assyria in 722BC; Hezekiah, - 715-699/686; Manasseh – 687-642

Isaiah’s time of prophecy - About a minimum of 40 years and possibly more than 60 years!

In the tenth year of Nabopolassar (616 BC) the Babylonians defeated the Assyrian army.

Cyrus takes Babylon. In October (539 BC), the Persian king Cyrus took Babylon.

- I. THE ASSYRIAN PERIOD - CONFLICT AND VICTORY ([Isa 1-39](#))
 - A. PROPHECIES CONCERNING JUDAH AND JERUSALEM ([Isa 1-12](#))
 - B. PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE NATIONS ([Isa 13-27](#))
 - C. DELIVERANCE FOUND NOT IN EGYPT, BUT IN THE LORD ([Isa 28-35](#))
 - D. HISTORICAL INTERLUDE ([Isa 36-39](#))
- II. THE BABYLONIAN PERIOD - HOPE FOR TROUBLED TIMES ([Isa 40-66](#))
 - A. THE ONE TRUE GOD VERSUS IDOLS ([Isa 40-48](#))
 - B. LORD'S SERVANT WILL BRING SALVATION THROUGH SUFFERING ([Isa 49-57](#))
 - C. THE FUTURE GLORY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE, THE NEW ZION ([Isa 58-66](#))



Isaiah – Bible Timeline

739 BC	Isaiah Complains of Zion's Corruption	Isaiah 1 - 5
739 BC	Isaiah's Vision and Commission	Isaiah 6
735 BC	Isaiah's Prophecy of Immanuel	Isaiah 7
734 BC	Uriah/Zechariah Verification	Isaiah 8
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies a Child Is Born	Isaiah 9
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies Judgments Upon Israel	Isaiah 9:8
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies Judgment on Assyria	Isaiah 10
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies The Root of Jesse	Isaiah 11
730 BC	Isaiah's Joyful Thanksgiving	Isaiah 12
725 BC	Isaiah Prophesies against the Nations	Isaiah 13 - 22
725 BC	Isaiah's Valley of Vision	Isaiah 22
725 BC	Isaiah's Burden of Tyre	Isaiah 23
725 BC	Devastation on the Earth	Isaiah 24
725 BC	Isaiah's Songs of Praise	Isaiah 25 - 27
725 BC	Isaiah's Further Warnings	Isaiah 28 - 32
725 BC	Isaiah Prophesies a King Shall Reign	Isaiah 32
725 BC	Isaiah Declares God's Judgments	Isaiah 33, 34
725 BC	Isaiah Declares the Joyful Will Flourish in Zion	Isaiah 35
712 BC	Hezekiah's Illness and Healing	2 Kings 20, Isaiah 38
711 BC	Hezekiah Shows Treasures	2 Kings 20:12, Isaiah 39
711 BC	Isaiah Prophesies Captivity and Restoration	Isaiah 40 - 66
701 BC	Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem	2 Kings 18, Isaiah 36, 2 Chron. 32
701 BC	Hezekiah's Prayer	2 Kings 19, Isaiah 37

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

*An Oracle Concerning Cush (Ethiopia—
Isa 18:1 Woe (hello, lo, ho, listen up) to the land shadowed with buzzing wings, Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, Isa 18:2 Which sends ambassadors by sea, Even in vessels of reed on the waters, saying, "Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth of skin, To a people terrible from their beginning onward, A nation powerful and treading down, Whose land the rivers divide."*

Isa 18:3 All inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth: When he lifts up a banner on the mountains, you see it; And when he blows a trumpet, you hear it.

Isa 18:4 For so the LORD said to me, "I will take My rest, And I will look from My dwelling place Like clear heat in sunshine, Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."

Isa 18:5 For before the harvest, when the bud is perfect And the sour grape is ripening in the flower, He will both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks And take away and cut down the branches.

Isa 18:6 They will be left together for the mountain birds of prey And for the beasts of the earth; The birds of prey will summer on them, And all the beasts of the earth will winter on them.

Isa 18:7 In that time a present will be brought to the LORD of hosts From a people tall and smooth of skin, And from a people terrible from their beginning onward, A nation powerful and treading down, Whose land the rivers divide—To the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, To Mount Zion.

Chapter 18 is a great chapter for anyone experiencing a great crisis. Note the message for such situations:

1-2 Woe – probably better translated “Ho”, or Lo”, “Listen”! A word directed to Ethiopia. *Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia (Cush)*: In the days of Isaiah, Ethiopia, a term much larger than present day Ethiopia, was a major world power, ruling Egypt and a chief rival to Assyria. Since Judah was caught in the middle between this conflict, it might make sense for Judah to align herself with Ethiopia against Assyria. *Shadowed with buzzing wings*: The Nile Valley is famous for its many whirring insects. *Which sends ambassadors by sea*: The scene pictures Ethiopian ambassadors who come to make an alliance with Judah and the other nations of the region against Assyria. *Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth of skin*: As the Ethiopian ambassadors invite Judah to rebel against the Assyrians, they ask Judah to send *swift messengers* back to Ethiopia (*to a nation tall and smooth of skin . . . a nation powerful*), and the Ethiopians would hope to hear that Judah has rebelled against Assyria and aligned itself with Ethiopia and Egypt.

3-6 The LORD rejects the offer of help from the Ethiopians. *The LORD said to me, “I will take My rest”*: The LORD God rejects the alliance with Ethiopia, because He is more than able to deal with the Assyrians Himself. He can *take His rest* without the help of the Ethiopians. If God wanted to muster an army against Assyria, He would have raised a banner or sounded a trumpet. He is fully able to do it, and would do it when the time is right. Significantly, there is no rebuke or judgment against Ethiopia announced in this chapter. It wasn’t as if God was going to judge Ethiopia for their offer of an alliance. Perhaps the idea is that it is a well-intentioned but unnecessary offer. Instead, Judah was to trust in the LORD! *He will both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks and take away and cut the branches*: God can “prune” Assyria all by Himself. He will destroy the Assyrian army so completely that *they will be left together for the mountain birds of prey*.

7 Ethiopians come and worship God. *A present will be brought to the LORD of hosts*: Isaiah announces a day when Ethiopians will come and worship the LORD, and bring gifts to Him *to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, to Mount Zion*. Instead of Israelite messengers *bringing news to Ethiopia of an alliance against the Assyria, the day will come when Ethiopians will come and worship at Mount Zion*. This may have been fulfilled in some way close to Isaiah’s time. But we know it was fulfilled in **Act 8:26-40**, when an Ethiopian came to worship the LORD at Jerusalem, and then trusted in Jesus at the preaching of Philip. It was also fulfilled in the strong Ethiopian church the first few centuries, and the enduring Ethiopian church today. It is believed that **it will be fulfilled when Christ returns in His Second Coming!**

Summary main points one major section -- **11 chapters, Isaiah 13-23** Woe pronounced on these primarily Gentile nations: 1) Because of their wickedness and their pride God would judge these nations! 2) **Also communicated though Isaiah so Judah would overhear this prophecy of coming judgments on the nations, they would realize it would be of no use to try to find security or hope in these nations’ instability and uncertainty. Not much different from us – when difficulty hits, how common it is for us to turn to someone or some worldly source of hope. Some who has money power, rather than turning to God! God says, you are left to Me and to Me alone! Christ alone, corner stone!**

1-2 Ethiopia is being told when we’re in great danger, when all hope seems to be failing in terms of security and safety, we must trust in the LORD and not in any nation or nations or anything of the world. Such troubles are intended to cause us to go deeper into our relationship with God than ever before.

3-6 Assyria is in and expansionary conquering mode and their strength is too great for any nation, alone to withstand, so nations were gathering together. Ethiopia, without having done anything wrong, appears to be asking Israel to join them, but God is responding by saying trust in Me, I’m going to defend Judah! I’m going to defend Jerusalem! I’m your only hope, which is exactly the same message for every one of us, as well!

7 When crisis strikes our life, we have a tendency to put our trust in some human institution. God says to us as He did to the Ethiopians, trust in Me alone. I’ll take care of you and in the end you will be worshipping Me, at Mt. Zion – in Jerusalem!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

An Oracle Concerning Egypt
Isa 19:1 *The burden against Egypt. Behold, the LORD rides on a swift cloud, And will come into Egypt; The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence, And the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst.*
Isa 19:2 *"I will set Egyptians against Egyptians; Everyone will fight against his brother, And everyone against his neighbor, City against city, kingdom against kingdom.*
Isa 19:3 *The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst; I will destroy their counsel, And they will consult the idols and the charmers, The mediums and the sorcerers.*
Isa 19:4 *And the Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, And a fierce king will rule over them," Says the Lord, the LORD of hosts.*

Summary – Chapter 18 – Ethiopia - God says to send Ethiopia back home. I'm going to defend Jerusalem. One day I'll handle Assyria and then send messengers to you. God is saying, I'm not concerned with Assyria. I'm at peace. I don't need your help. My people don't need your help. I will take care of the Assyrians. You will hear then you will come and worship the God of Judah for what I have done. This **chapter is a very important one for anyone in crisis**. We have a tendency to put our trust in something or someone from the world. That's the temptation, rather than to turn to God. "I want to turn to something human, that I can touch, and I can hear directly, to hear a promise from someone, even if they can't keep that promise.

1-4 The LORD strikes Egypt by giving them over to civil war and submission to a cruel master. **The LORD rides on a swift cloud, and will come into Egypt**: Egypt was one of the great powers of the ancient world, and being situated immediately to the south of Israel, it was an empire that Israel constantly had to reckon with. Many times Egypt had been the enemy of Israel, at times Egypt had been a refuge for Israel, and sometimes Egypt offered a tempting but ungodly alliance to Israel. In this chapter, the LORD presents both a prophecy against and for Egypt. **The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence**: Egypt was known for its worship of many, many different gods. Through His hand of judgment, the LORD will "knock over" these many different gods. In Isaiah's day there was more superstition and filthy idolatry in Egypt, than anyplace else. Apes, cats, frogs, crocodiles, lizards - everything was venerated by them. At the time of the Exodus, when the Pharaoh of Egypt would not release the children of Israel from their captivity, the LORD also made **the idols of Egypt to totter at His presence**. He directed each of the plagues against a particular idol of Egypt. He knocked over ten of their gods, one with each of the plagues - *Khnum*, the guardian of the Nile, *Hapi*, the spirit of the Nile, and the god *Osiris* (who had the Nile as his bloodstream), when the waters were turned to blood; the goddess *Heqt*, the frog-goddess of fertility, with the plague of frogs; the goddess *Hathor*, a cow-like mother goddess, with the plague on livestock; the god *Imhotep*, the god of medicine, with the plague of boils; the god *Nut*, the sky goddess, with the plague of hail; whole system of Egyptian worship of their gods with loathsome lice and swarms of insects; the god *Seth*, thought to be the protector of crops, with the plague of locusts; the god *Ra*, thought to be the sun god, with the plague of darkness. He knocked over *Osiris*, the Egyptian god thought to be the giver of life, and the supposed deity of Pharaoh himself, with the plague against the firstborn. God made all **the idols of Egypt to totter at His presence** before, and Isaiah tells us He will do it again! **I will set Egyptians against Egyptians**: Isaiah prophesies a coming civil war in Egypt, which was indirectly the hand of God's judgment against them. "Not many years after this time it was divided into twelve several kingdoms, between whom there were many and cruel wars, as is related by the historians of those times. **I will destroy their counsel, and they will consult the idols and the charmers**: When a nation is under the judgment of God, He often seems to "remove" sound **counsel** and wisdom from their leaders, and they turn to vain, pagan things for wisdom instead (**idols and the charmers**). Egypt was known for her wise men (**1Ki 4:30**), but they would not be able to cope with this judgment from the Lord. **The Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them**: God may judge a nation through their leadership in two ways. First, by removing competent leadership (**I will destroy their counsel**). Second, by giving them **cruel** and oppressive rulers. This is a curse and a judgment to any people!

Summary – Chapter 18 – Ethiopia
We need to be careful not to turn to anything that takes away from our dependence upon God – anything that reduces our complete dependence on God! Anything that reduces my commitment to God! No matter how gracious or kind the offer can be. We must say, thank you, but I'm going to depend completely upon God and not anything that causes us to skirt around God. I'm going to trust in Him greater than any other time in my life!

1-4 Chap 19 – Egypt - Often used as a type of the world. Israel is being tempted to go back once again to Egypt. God is telling His children, there is no way you should put your trust in Egypt or in any other country. **How likely are we to put some in things other than the LORD in times of fear and danger?**
 Speaks of the coming judgment on Egypt. Gods will totter. Egypt's heart will melt. I will cause a civil war among 42 provinces. They began to fight each other! God can use many means to stir up division. **How close the USA is to that condition – division within leading to civil anarchy, destroying the nation?**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 19:5 The waters will fail from the sea, And the river will be wasted and dried up.

Isa 19:6 The rivers will turn foul; The brooks of defense will be emptied and dried up; The reeds and rushes will wither.

Isa 19:7 The papyrus reeds by the River, by the mouth of the River, And everything sown by the River, Will wither, be driven away, and be no more.

Isa 19:8 The fishermen also will mourn; All those will lament who cast hooks into the River, And they will languish who spread nets on the waters.

Isa 19:9 Moreover those who work in fine flax And those who weave fine fabric will be ashamed;

Isa 19:10 And its foundations will be broken. All who make wages will be troubled of soul.

Isa 19:11 Surely the princes of Zoan are fools; Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish counsel. How do you say to Pharaoh, "I am the son of the wise, The son of ancient kings?"

Isa 19:12 Where are they? Where are your wise men? Let them tell you now, And let them know what the LORD of hosts has purposed against Egypt.

Isa 19:13 The princes of Zoan have become fools; The princes of Noph are deceived; They have also deluded Egypt, Those who are the mainstay of its tribes.

Isa 19:14 The LORD has mingled a perverse spirit in her midst; And they have caused Egypt to err in all her work, As a drunken man staggers in his vomit.

Isa 19:15 Neither will there be any work for Egypt, Which the head or tail, Palm branch or bulrush, may do.

Egypt, Assyria, Israel Blessed

Isa 19:16 In that day Egypt will be like women, and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which He waves over it.

Isa 19:17 And the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts which He has determined against it.

5-10 The LORD strikes Egypt by drying up the Nile, thus wrecking their economy. *The river will be wasted and dried up:* The Nile River was the key to Egypt's agriculture and economy. For it to suffer a severe drought or lowering would have a devastating effect on the lives of Egyptians. God promises this will happen as a judgment against Egypt. Therefore, the workers cry out: *the fishermen also will mourn . . . they will languish who spread nets on the waters . . . those who weave fine fabric will be ashamed* (Fine Irish linen yields 180,000 feet of strands/pound; Fine Egyptian linen yielded 300,000 feet of strands/pound) . . . *all who make wages will be troubled of soul.*

11-15 The LORD strikes Egypt by sending them with foolish counsel. *Surely the princes of Zoan are fools; Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish counsel:* As the LORD strikes Egypt, not only does He give them cruel rulers, but He also gives those cruel rulers *foolish counsel*. *Where are your wise men? Let them tell you now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts has purposed against Egypt:* Here, the LORD reminds us of what true wisdom is. It is knowing *what the LORD of hosts has purposed*. True wisdom isn't knowing all kind of facts and plans and strategies. *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (Pro 9:10).*

16-17 When God strikes Egypt, there will be terror among the people. *Because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts:* All the LORD will need to do is to wave His hand, and the people of Egypt will respond in terror, they will *be afraid and fear*. *The land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt:* This is a switch! For thousands of years, the *land of Judah* lay submissively in the shadow of the great Egyptian Empire. The LORD prophesies a day when Judah will be more mighty than Egypt, and *the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt*. Of course, this is fulfilled today, when Israel has military superiority over Egypt.

5-15 God says I will send my judgment on Egypt, causing their rivers to be dried up; Egypt's whole economy will fail. There will be a complete collapse of their economy; also of Egypt's "wise" counsellors. They will fail Egypt in time of their greatest need. How difficult when a so called counselor can't understand God or even be aware of the things of God! God has mingled a perverse spirit in their midst causing them to err in all her work! Everyone can talk big during good times but when hard times come , and they always will, then the so called wise people will fail. **We need to listen to the Lord and not in the ways of the world. What does the Bible say? What are we now relying on to raise our children? To save, to improve our marriages? When we're in such a season, we are to realize the world has nothing to offer. If I don't get the mind of the Lord in all my decisions, otherwise even my small problems will become big problems. This seems to be happening right now ion our country. Only God knows what He is doing.**

16-17 Judah will become a terror to Egypt fear will be over them. They recognize their problems are more than other countries, including Assyria. **How quickly do we consider and recognize our trials and afflictions that are from God?**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 19:18 In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the LORD of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction.

Isa 19:19 In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border.

Isa 19:20 And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them.

Isa 19:21 Then the LORD will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the LORD and perform it.

Isa 19:22 And the LORD will strike Egypt, He will strike and heal it; they will return to the LORD, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.

Isa 19:23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians.

Isa 19:24 In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land,

Isa 19:25 whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

18-22 Egypt turns to the LORD. *Five cities in the land of Egypt* will become more identified with the LORD than with Egypt. A better translation of the phrase *City of Destruction* may be, *City of the Sun*, which was a well-known Egyptian city known as *Heliopolis*. Egypt will worship the LORD, with *an altar to the LORD*, and will memorialize God's great works with *a pillar to the LORD*. When Egypt is brought under this oppression, they will *cry to the LORD because of the oppressors*, and then *He will send them a Savior and a Mighty one, and He will deliver them. The Egyptians will know the LORD in that day*: There did come to be a widespread knowledge of the LORD in Egypt. In the days of Jesus, more than a million Jews lived in Egypt. In the early days of Christianity, there was a strong, vital church in Egypt for more than 600 years. The altar and sacrifice described most likely are fulfilled during the Millennium, when sacrifice will be allowed as a memorial of Jesus' great work, but never as atonement. Restored Israel will bring blood sacrifices unto the Lord to keep in remembrance of the all-sufficient blood sacrifice of Christ, so this may also take place in Egypt on that memorable day. *He will strike and heal it*: Whatever judgment God allowed, His desire was that people would repent and return to Him so they could be healed.

23-25 An amazing peace between three formerly hostile enemies. *Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria*: God promises the day will come when there will be peace between Israel, Egypt, and Assyria. There will be trade and travel between the three nations (*a highway from Egypt to Assyria*). In that day, the LORD will bless all three nations. *Blessed is Egypt, My people, and Assyria, the work of My hands, and Israel is My inheritance*: What an amazing work of redemption! This shows that God's salvation will extend to the nations, and He will call forth His own even from *Egypt and Assyria*, not only from *Israel*. It was powerful to say this of Egypt; it was almost unbelievable to say it about Assyria, the nation Jonah hated so much. Assyria was the one power feared by every little nation in the Fertile Crescent. The calculated brutality of the Assyrians probably made them more of an object of general hatred than any other nation of antiquity. The Egyptians, Babylonians, and Persians were all capable of inhuman acts, but the Assyrian record for callous cruelty is difficult to parallel. From this passage regarding the conversion of Egypt, Spurgeon draws these points:

1. God's grace often comes to the very worst of men.
2. God's grace sends a Savior.
3. Grace changes men's language.
4. God's grace sets men on holy service.
5. God's grace teaches men to pray.
6. God's grace instructs men.
7. Grace makes even trouble a blessing to a man. God's grace changes the relations of men to each other.
8. God's grace makes men to be blessed, and to be a blessing to others. (*The Fruits of Grace*)

18-22 Now there is the promise of better days, moving to the end of the age! **The Kingdom Age, the 1000-year Millennial Reign of Christ.** There will be 5 cities set aside, for worship of the Lord. **Egypt will be following the Lord! They will learn Hebrew, learning to worship. God will send them a Savior!** He will strike them and heal them! There will be a highway from Egypt to/from Assyria. All conflict between perennial enemies will be together in the worship of the Lord! **Here is another coming supernatural miracle of the LORD bringing enemies together as one in the LORD!**

23-25 Israel will be one of three nations with Egypt and Assyria! **Miracle of miracles! Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands and Israel will be My inheritance.** What a day that will be! Are we ready?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

A Sign Against Egypt and Cush
Isa 20:1 *In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it,*

Isa 20:2 *at the same time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go, and remove the sackcloth from your body, and take your sandals off your feet." And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.*

Isa 20:3 *Then the LORD said, "Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia,*
Isa 20:4 *so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners and the Ethiopians as captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.*

Isa 20:5 *Then they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation and Egypt their glory.*

Isa 20:6 *And the inhabitant of this territory will say in that day, 'Surely such is our expectation, wherever we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape?'* "

1 Isaiah acts out a sign. The political setting for the sign. *In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod (711 B.C.)* This describes the time when the army of Assyria conquered the Philistine city of *Assyria*. Isaiah's sign is a response to this victory of Assyria. The Philistines were both neighbors and thorns to Israel, and the fall of *Ashdod* would certainly make Israel think, "We're next. We need protection."

2 The LORD gives Isaiah a sign to act out. *Remove the sackcloth from your body, and take your sandals off your feet:* Before this, Isaiah wore an outer garment of *sackcloth* - clothes of mourning. Now, God tells him to remove his outer garment of *sackcloth*, and to take his *sandals off*. God would sometimes have his prophets to add to their word a visible sign, to awaken people's minds for a more serious consideration. *And he did so, walking naked and barefoot:* Isaiah was not completely without clothing. Instead, he only wore the inner garment customary in that day - sort of like wearing only your underwear or a nightshirt. The message wasn't nudity, it was complete poverty and humiliation. Isaiah dressed as the poorest and most destitute would dress. Other prophets, such as Ezekiel and Hosea were asked to go through equally difficult experiences as signs to Israel. Hosea endured a trying marriage, and Ezekiel's wife died as an illustration for the nation.

3-4 The meaning of the sign. *My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years as a sign and wonder against Egypt:* Under the command of the LORD, Isaiah dressed in this poor and humble way for three years. It was a message *against Egypt*, because *the king of Assyria* would *lead away the Egyptians as prisoners*. As the Assyrians took the Egyptians captive, they would humiliate them by stripping them and leading them away as prisoners. This would all be *to the shame of Egypt*.

5-6 The sign's message to Judah. *They shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation and Egypt their glory:* When God judges Ethiopia and Egypt, it will be evident how foolish it was for Judah to look to them for protection against Assyria. Whenever our *expectation* is in something wrong, or our *glory* is in something wrong, the LORD will find a way to make those things disappoint us. Judah set their *expectation* on Ethiopia, and looked to Egypt for *glory*, but now they are left *afraid and ashamed*. *How shall we escape?* The LORD allowed Judah to be backed into a corner, caught between two mighty Empires (Egypt and Assyria), without being able to trust either one. There was no *escape* - except in the LORD. Because of the glorious promise of revival and restoration among Egypt in Isaiah 19, Judah might have been even more tempted to say, "Well, we can trust in Egypt. They are all going to come to the LORD someday anyway!" But with the dramatic three-year sign, Isaiah shows Judah how vain it was to make Egypt their *expectation* or *glory*.

Chap 20 - Egypt & Cush - Isaiah will become a living parable.

Vs. 1-6 *Remove the sackcloth from your body, robe off, sandals off, walk* around "naked: in your undergarment, which was like a captive of a conquering nation. Walk about naked and barefoot as a sign and a wonder for three years. Live out this living message for Judah **One of God's reasons for Isaiah's three years naked parable was to get the attention of the people of Judah! Don't put your trust in Egypt. Don't put your trust in Ethiopia. Within three years both will go into captivity.** Isaiah said I'm demonstrating the judgment of the very two nations you want to put your trust in, rather than to trust in God and **show Judah that Ethiopia and Egypt are going to be invaded and defeated by Assyria.**

There is a great lesson for us here. How do you look at it? There is a safe way and there is a risky way to handle the passage. Do we go to the risky or to the safe? Sometime unstable ones will look at this and go downtown, take their clothes off, begin prophesying for God and try to imitate Isaiah. But this example of Isaiah faithfulness to the calling of God, even when it is a very difficult thing for Isaiah to do, it does teach us. It does stretch us. Sometimes we can build these boundaries and say, I don't and won't take risks anymore. I won't even consider it. I got a soft little Christian life and I simply not going to entertain it, if God is calling. But we should respond, God, whatever and however You want to accomplish Your purpose, then ask me to do it. And I'll take the step of faith and do it! Can we say and mean that?

Isaiah Chapters 18-21 – Proclamation Against Ethiopia, Egypt, Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed; The Sign Against Egypt and Ethiopia; The Fall of Babylon Proclaimed!

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – [Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221](mailto:Phil.Twente@gmail.com); email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Fallen, Fallen Is Babylon

Isa 21:1 The burden against the Wilderness of the Sea. As whirlwinds in the South pass through, So it comes from the desert, from a terrible land.

Isa 21:2 A distressing vision is declared to me; The treacherous dealer deals treacherously, And the plunderer plunders. Go up, O Elam! Besiege, O Media! All its sighing I have made to cease.

Isa 21:3 Therefore my loins are filled with pain; Pangs have taken hold of me, like the pangs of a woman in labor. I was distressed when I heard it; I was dismayed when I saw it.

Isa 21:4 My heart wavered, fearfulness frightened me; The night for which I longed He turned into fear for me.

Isa 21:5 Prepare the table, Set a watchman in the tower, Eat and drink. Arise, you princes, Anoint the shield!

Isa 21:6 For thus has the Lord said to me: "Go, set a watchman, Let him declare what he sees."

Isa 21:7 And he saw a chariot with a pair of horsemen, A chariot of donkeys, and a chariot of camels, And he listened earnestly with great care.

Isa 21:8 Then he cried, "A lion, my Lord! I stand continually on the watchtower in the daytime; I Isa 21:9 And look, here comes a chariot of men with a pair of horsemen!" Then he answered and said, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground."

Isa 21:10 Oh, my threshing and the grain of my floor! That which I have heard from the LORD of hosts, The God of Israel, I have declared to you.

1-2. The burden against Babylon - An army from Persia marches on Babylon. *A burden against the Wilderness of the Sea:* Babylon is called the *Wilderness of the Sea* because the great plain of Babylon was divided with lakes and marshes, so it was referred to as a “sea.” *Go up, O Elam! Besiege, O Media:* Elam and Media are the ancient names for the peoples of Persia, modern day Iran. The Persian Empire conquered the Babylonian Empire, and Isaiah her prophetically sees their armies marching on Babylon. God often maketh use of one tyrant to punish another; as here he stirs up the Persians to plunder and waste the Babylonians.

3-10 The fall of Babylon. *Pangs have taken hold of me, like the pangs of a woman in labor.* As the people collapse from fear and pain, the nation prepares for war (*Arise, you princes, anoint the shield!*). The report comes to the watchman: *Babylon is fallen, is fallen!* This dramatic scene was fulfilled when the Medo-Persian Empire conquered Babylon, but it also has a prophetic application. Rev_18:2 describes the cry of an angel when God judges the world system, both commercial Babylon and spiritual Babylon: And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!” The repetition of the phrase *is fallen, is fallen* connects the two passages. The same panic and terror the people of Babylon felt when that great city was conquered by the Medes and Persians will be seen again. When the LORD strikes the world system, both spiritual Babylon and commercial Babylon, the world will be terrified and mourn the same way (*Rev 18:9-19*). But God’s people rejoice over the fall of Babylon (*Rev 18:20*).

Chapter 21 – Babylon is Fallen!

1-2 This is all future. Assyria will be overthrown by the Babylonian, but eventually Babylon will be overthrown by the Medes and the Persians, even before they became a world ruling empire. This is all prophesied 200 years before the event. **How prone we are to trust in worldly things!**

3-10 The watchman! In the Book of Daniel, chapter 5, it speaks of Babylon being overthrown during a time of feasting and partying, which is exactly what happened, during King Belshazzar’s reign. The fall of Babylon was so dramatic that it even had an effect on Isaiah, who would not be a part of it, but just saw that during the vision. Vs. 6 God says to Isaiah I want to *set a watchman* to warn them. You’re the watchman! I’m giving you this prophecy so you can be watching. But not just watching but also warning Judah of what’s ahead. **How do we live? How are we processing life! Judah if you expect this to be true, you’ll set out your own watchmen to watch for the fall of Babylon. Live consistently with the prophecy that I have given. For Isaiah it was for him to have Judah set up a watchman in the tower. Likewise, for us, not just to know it as prophetic information, but to know that this is going to happen! We need to live my life in a way that is consistent. And that consistency is not to set up another watchman but for us to be watching, to be waiting and to be working – the three “w’s” (watching, waiting, working) in those parables is in *Matthew 25*, as part of His Olivet Discourse. So that when the Rapture of the Church occurs, we will be watching, waiting and working! We won’t be drunk, partying, engaged in sin! Our life is to be consistent with what He tells us is going to happen, because it will happen! We’re to live that way! God has said it, I believe it! It’s going to happen.**

Isaiah Chapters 18-21 – Proclamation Against Ethiopia, Egypt; Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed; The Sign Against Egypt and Ethiopia; The Fall of Babylon Proclaimed!

OBSERVATION

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 21:11 The burden against Dumah. He calls to me out of Seir, "Watchman, what of the night?"

Isa 21:12 The watchman said, "The morning comes, and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; Return! Come back!"

Isa 21:13 The burden against Arabia. In the forest in Arabia you will lodge, O you traveling companies of Dedanites.

Isa 21:14 O inhabitants of the land of Tema, Bring water to him who is thirsty; With their bread they met him who fled.

Isa 21:15 For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, From the bent bow, and from the distress of war.

Isa 21:16 For thus the LORD has said to me: "Within a year, according to the year of a hired man, all the glory of Kedar will fail;

Isa 21:17 and the remainder of the number of archers, the mighty men of the people of Kedar, will be diminished; for the LORD God of Israel has spoken it."

11-12 Burdens against Edom and Arabia - *The burden against Edom (Dumah)*. *Dumah* was another name for the kingdom of Edom, in the mountainous region of Seir. The Edomites descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob (Israel). They settled in the land to the south-east of Israel and were the sometimes enemies of Israel. This is a vague, mysterious burden against *Dumah*. It may speak to the confusion and darkness striking Edom at the time of their judgment. *Watchman, what of the night?* Using a powerful dramatic scene of a cry to a watchman in the night, Isaiah paints the picture of the judgment and terror that will come upon Edom. Edom doesn't like what they hear about the night! All Edom is mourning and crying out to Isaiah for any good news. Fearful night, God's anger toward Edom continues to burn. But *the morning comes* and a light ray of the grace of God is revealed to Edom. - **On the burden against Edom:** Isaiah may be saying is that the long night of Assyrian oppression is almost over, and the night of Babylonian rule would follow a brief 'morning' of respite.

13-17 *The burden against Arabia*. Isaiah pictures the refugees from an attack on Arabia. They are traveling companies of Dedanites; they are thirsty, and they need bread, because they fled from the swords and from the bent bow, and from the distress of war. This attack will come soon: *Within a year . . . all the glory of Kedar will fail*. According to the year of a hired man means an exact year; for workers diligently observe and wait for the end of the year, when they are to receive their wages."

SUMMARY:

Like Isaiah's instruction to Judah, "Go, set a watchman!" God has given His prophecy to me. I'm to tell you! I'm to warn you of what's ahead. Judah if you expect this to be true, you'll set out your own watchmen to watch for the fall of Babylon, asking the question, how do we live? How are we processing life! They were to live consistently with the prophecy.

Likewise, for us, not just to know it as prophetic information, but to know that this is going to happen! We need to live my life in a way that is consistent. And that consistency is not to set up another watchman but **for us to be watching, to be waiting and to be working** – the three "w's" in those parables is in Matthew 25, as part of His Olivet Discourse. So that when the Rapture of the Church occurs, we will be watching, waiting and working! We won't be drunk, partying, engaged in sin! Our life is to be consistent with what He tells us is going to happen, because it will happen! We're to live that way! God has said it, I believe it! It's going to happen.

11-12 *Watchman, what of the night?" Ask, inquire, Return! Come back!* Edom may convert and come to salvation that is available in Israel's Messiah – not a rebuttal or a holy ridicule, but rather an urgent plea for conversion. What a God of grace we serve! How thankful for His grace are we?

13-17 Judah might think one place to hide would be with a Nomadic tribe, who know the hiding places in the desert. But God says, there is no escape in man. The only escape is turning to God! Just like in the Great Tribulation period. There is absolutely no place of escape except to God!

vs. 16-17 Within one year, Kedar will fall! And its mighty men will be diminished, because the Lord God of Israel has spoken it! And it happened exactly as God said it would.