

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site todbc.org email us at opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org

May memory verse Psalm 119:105 (KJV) Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

Chapter 18

Woe to the land shadowing with wings ([Isa 18:1](#)),

which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia ([Isa 18:1](#)):

That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, in vessels ([Isa 18:2](#))

What it is basically dealing with is Ethiopia itself, which was making..., which had sent ambassadors to Jerusalem to the king to make a confederacy with them against Assyria. In other words, Assyria was conquering and these Ethiopian ambassadors, big, tall dark skinned, handsome men, were there trying to get Judah to join with them in a confederacy to withstand this invasion from Assyria. And Isaiah was counseling against the confederacy. Not to make a covenant with them, for God was going to watch over them and take care of them and don't get involved in a treaty, mutual defense pact with these Ethiopians. So, "Woe to the land."

God is pronouncing the woe that is going to come upon Ethiopia that sends the ambassadors by the sea. They came in these boats down the Nile River from Ethiopia and the boats of bulrushes were light so that when they get to the rapids and all, they could carry them and then put them in. And they came from Ethiopia in these boats of bulrushes to Israel or to Judah, the Southern Kingdom and sought then to make this covenant.

saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation that is scattered and peeled, to a people that is awesome from their beginning hitherto; a nation that is meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have cut through! All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye. For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For before the

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches ([Isa 18:2-5](#)).

So Isaiah is saying we don't need to make the covenant with these people. God is going to take care of them. He's going to cut them down before they're able to really fully develop. And so here is the prediction of Assyria's destruction by God.

They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them ([Isa 18:6](#)).

In other words, the vultures will eat the carcasses during the summertime but there are so many, by the time winter is come, even the animals the coyotes and all will be eating the bones of them even through the wintertime.

In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people awesome from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have cut through, the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, mount Zion ([Isa 18:7](#)).

So the prediction of Assyria's destruction by the hand of God and no need to join hands with the Ethiopians in a mutual defense pact because God is our defense and God will take care of us.

Chapter 19

Now he turns to Egypt.

The burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians ([Isa 19:1-2](#)):

So God is speaking here of a civil war.

and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom ([Isa 19:2](#)).

There's going to be civil turmoil and war within Egypt.

And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. And the Egyptians will I give over into

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts ([Isa 19:3-4](#)).

And then he begins to make some very interesting predictions.

The waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away ([Isa 19:5-6](#));

The word there is translated in one of the new versions, "And they shall dam the river far away."

and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more. The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast their hook into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread their nets upon the waters shall languish. Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded. And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make the sluices and ponds for fish. Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say you of the Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? ([Isa 19:6-11](#))

Now here is a prediction that the river shall be dammed far away. The Aswan Dam surely answers to this prediction. As early as 1970 they began to discover some of the ecological problems that were created by the building of the Aswan Dam. In a report made to the Congress and has become a part of the Congressional record, number S3448, in an ecology report the first thing that they drew the attention to was the smog in Los Angeles as an ecology disaster. But the second thing was the DDT problem that since has been resolved by laws. But then the third thing was Egypt, and here is what was said, "The Aswan Dam has slowed down the Nile. Six hundred miles downriver the sandbars have stopped building up on the delta. The Mediterranean is flooding the delta and one million fertile acres have disappeared under saltwater. Below the dam, snails carry the blood flukes of schistosomiasis. And thousands of men and women and children are going to die of this painful, cruel disease. The Nile no longer carries its nutrient-rich sediments out to sea, and the fish are disappearing and the fishing families are moving to the slums of Cairo and Alexandria. That source of food is disappearing. Also, oxygen from the loss of the greenery and water."

Now ten years later, as further studies are made concerning the ecological damage of the building of the Aswan Dam, the first thing, of course, that the prophet here does talk about is the saltwater intrusion into the delta, the rich delta farmland area. And this has continued. The idea of damming up the Aswan

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

was, of course, to create a control of the water flow into the irrigation canals and so forth and hopefully to open up thousands of new agricultural acres by the irrigation projects. But they have discovered that through the saltwater intrusion and into the most fertile area of Egypt, into the delta, the Nile delta, through the saltwater intrusion, they have lost over twice the acreage, agriculture acreage as they were gaining. You see, it used to be at the flood tide as the Nile River would bring the silt and all into the Mediterranean, that it built up these silt dams against the Mediterranean creating this very fertile delta area much like we have down in El Centro and so forth, that fertile area that has been built up by the Colorado over the years.

Now with the Nile no longer flooding, they've lost the agricultural area by saltwater intrusion from the Mediterranean. First thing he predicted. But not only that, all the reeds and so forth that used to grow along the Nile were killed because there is a little snail that sort of feeds, eats at its roots, but it used to be carried away every year in the flood season. But now that there is no more flood season, these little snails have destroyed all of the reeds and everything that used to be along the Nile River. Even as Isaiah said.

Now in 1970 the fishing industry was beginning to disappear, it has now totally disappeared. It doesn't exist. They do not have any more fishing industry. There in the Mediterranean there used to be tremendous schools of fish that supplied Egypt with one of its greatest protein sources. Just an overabundant supply of fish, because they would feed on the rich nutrients that were carried by the Nile River on into the Mediterranean Sea. But now that there is no great flooding and the carrying of these nutrients in, the fish, they don't know what happened to them, if they just left and gone someplace else, or just disappeared. But there is no more fishing industry. It is amazing to me that 2700 years ago, God inspired the prophet Isaiah to not only prophesy the building of the Aswan Dam as they will turn away the river far away, but also to prophesy those ecological disasters that would be created by the damming of the Nile River. There has even been suggestions by the Egyptians that the Aswan Dam be blown up in order to seek to correct the ecological disasters that have resulted from its building.

It is interesting then that at the end of the prophecy he sort of takes off against those engineers and counselors that advised them to build the Aswan Dam. "The counselors of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish. How can they say, 'I am wise, the son of the ancient kings'?"

Where are they? where are the wise men? and let them tell you now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts has purposed upon Egypt ([Isa 19:12](#)).

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

Men are so wise. Now let them tell you. God has already told you what damages are going to happen. These men are so wise let them tell you what God has purposed.

The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof. The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man who is staggering in his own vomit ([Isa 19:13-14](#)).

What a graphic picture.

Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do. In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which he shakes over it. And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that makes mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it ([Isa 19:15-17](#)).

And so interesting as we look at the situations today and see how clearly and concisely God has actually spoken of these things. "The land of Judah even again becoming a terror unto Egypt."

In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction. In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day ([Isa 19:18-21](#)),

"In that day," begins to go ahead into the future into the day of the Lord. When God is going to work, of course, in the coming of Jesus Christ throughout the world. But Egypt is going to become a religious center for the worshipping of the Lord. Right now, of course, Egypt is strongly Moslem. They have laws in Egypt against witnessing, proselytizing; it's a capital crime. If you seek to lead a Moslem to Jesus Christ in Egypt, you could be put to death. It's a capital offense to seek to convert a Moslem to another faith. But in that day, the Lord shall be known to Egypt. They'll know the Lord.

and they will do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform it. And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and

Commentary on Isaiah chapters 18 and 19, by Chuck Smith 5.17.23

they shall return even to the LORD, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them ([Isa 19:21-22](#)).

Now Egypt will be smitten by the antichrist, actually, when he takes his forces and he starts a move towards Africa to conquer Africa. He will pass through Egypt. He'll get to the borders of Ethiopia, at which time tidings out of the north and the east will trouble him, for he will hear that the Chinese have been moving their armies westward. And he will turn in all of his fury to meet the invading armies of the east and of the north, the regrouped forces of Russia, and they will meet in a deadly conflict in the valley of Megiddo. So Egypt is going to suffer. They will be conquered by the forces of Europe as they begin their invasion of Africa. But it is an invasion that will never be completed, because as soon as Egypt is taken, as they start to move against Ethiopia, is when the news comes of the invading forces from the east and from the north at which time the antichrist will turn to meet them with the European forces. And thus the battle of Armageddon.

In that day ([Isa 19:24](#))

The day of the Lord after He has healed them and established them, actually Assyria, which is modern-day Iraq, and Egypt will have a highway going between them passing through Israel. And the three nations will be joined together in a beautiful harmony and accord in the glorious day of the Lord.

it shall be that Israel shall be a third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance ([Isa 19:24-25](#)).

And so God's glorious work in that day; that day when Jesus comes to establish God's kingdom.