

EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH

Message #27

Isaiah 19:1-25

I want you to think for a moment of a person on this earth who has done you the most harm; a person who has mocked you and made life miserable for you. This is the kind of person who makes your skin crawl when you see them. Now just imagine for a moment if a prophet of God came to you and said this - there is coming a day when this person who has caused you so many problems will love you, esteem you and even bow down before you and then will want to worship God with you. In fact, he will want to praise you forever. That is precisely the prophecy Isaiah makes here against Egypt.

On May 15, 1948, the Egyptian government officially notified the U.N. security council of the following, "Now that the British Mandate in Palestine has ended ... Egyptians armed forces have started to enter Palestine." The Arab states, led by the Egyptians, were seeking to overturn the British mandate that declared Israel to be an independent state in her promised land. This was the first of many invasions and aggressions that continue to this very day. Today, Egypt is "the most populous nation in the Arab world."

Now you would think if any people on this earth should get the message that you do not mess with Israel it would be the Egyptians. You would think that ever since that Red Sea episode, Egypt would have learned its lesson. But just as Israel has not learned its lesson to depend on God, so Egypt has not learned its lesson either. But all of that will change in the future, especially during the Great Tribulation. God has kept all the records of the trouble caused by the Egyptians and God will pay Egypt back in full force. The message is clear:

GOD HAS A CRITICAL PROPHETIC PROGRAM CONCERNING EGYPT WHICH INCLUDES HIM FIRST BREAKING HER AND THEN BLESSING HER.

There is no doubt that God has a major eschatological plan for Egypt. G. Campbell Morgan said that this prophecy is remarkable because it pronounces a doom on the nation that has "cruelly oppressed the Hebrews," but also presents a word of hope in the far ahead future (*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, Vol. 1, p. 117).

Dr. Wilbur Smith said **Isaiah 19** "contains the most important prophetic utterance concerning Egypt in all of the Old Testament" (*Egypt in Biblical Prophecy*, p. 77). Now this section breaks down nicely into two main prophetic parts:

PROPHETIC PART #1 – God will judge Egypt. 19:1-17

Notice from **verse 1** that we are in an oracle against Egypt, which means God is giving a heavy and weighty pronouncement against Egypt. Some have said that these things were fulfilled when Assyrian invaded Egypt. But when you look at what is actually predicted here, there is no possible way these things have been fulfilled yet. There are twelve amazing predictions:

(Prediction #1) - God Himself is coming against Egypt. **19:1a**

Now the image of God “riding on a swift cloud” means that judgment is coming from heaven and when it starts it will come quickly. Some have suggested that this was partially fulfilled in 670 B.C. when the Assyrians conquered Egypt. To this we also would agree. However, the entire data found in this context has not ever been fulfilled and will be during the Tribulation.

The thing that we do want to see here is that God is the Sovereign God who can direct any political power He wants to go and do whatever He wants it to do. He can direct Assyria to go and take Egypt and He can do the same with the Antichrist.

Political powers are ordained by God and they are used by God and if a certain President or Prime Minister is being used of God to do things contrary to His Word and will, that political leader should fall down before God and beg for His wisdom and forgiveness.

(Prediction #2) - God’s presence will cause Egypt’s idols to tremble. **19:1b**

When the Assyrians moved in to conquer Egypt in 670 B.C., the Egyptians realized their many idols were powerless to save them. But she did not learn her lesson and one day she will.

Ninety-three percent of the Egyptian Arabs are the Islamic “Sunni Muslims.” It is an idolatrous and satanic religious system. In fact, some of the Egyptian Muslims are so extreme that during the 1980s they began attacking Christians in Egypt. All of their false religious systems will be destroyed by God during the Tribulation. God is going to demolish their entire religious system during the Tribulation, and all of the things the Egyptians trusted in will prove to be nothing.

There is nothing more demoralizing than to learn that everything you believed in means nothing. There is nothing more depressing than to learn all that you trusted in is false. That is what will happen to the entire Arab world.

(Prediction #3) - God’s presence will cause the Egyptians’ heart to melt. **19:1c**

The Hebrew word “melt” is one that means to be in such fear and terror that the heart melts or wastes away to nothing (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 490). What I find very interesting is that this is the same Hebrew word used concerning the melting away of manna after God had led Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 16:21). As God caused the manna to melt away, He will do the same for the Egyptians. The color of the word means that any internal strength and hope will be completely gone; the Egyptians will melt away into nothing.

(Prediction #4) - God will cause Egyptians to fight against each other in civil war. **19:2**

Civil war is a terrible judgment of God. It breaks up family life, social life, civic life, religious life and national life. What most don’t realize is that God is a sovereign God who can and will cause internal divisions and wars in any nation, including Egypt. We know that this will be one of the specific judgments of God during the Tribulation (Revelation 6:4).

Always remember, **God is the source of sweet unity and harmony when people are right with Him, but He is also the judgment source of disunity and chaos when they are not.**

(Prediction #5) - God will completely demoralize the Egyptians. **19:3a**

The Hebrew word “demoralize” is one that means to pour out something until it is empty, such as when you empty something from a bottle (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 136). God is going to cause the Egyptians to be emptied in spirit of all understanding and hope.

(Prediction #6) - God will so confound them that they will seek satanic help. **19:3b**

The people will be so demoralized that they will turn to occult practices and even try to contact the dead for help.

(Prediction #7) - God will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel, mighty king. **19:4**

Just as Egypt had at one time been a cruel taskmaster over Israel (Exodus 1:11-14), so God would see to it that they would get some of their own medicine. In history, Esarhaddon, the Assyrian king, conquered this part of the world in 671 B.C. But there is coming another cruel king who will surpass them all. The Antichrist will specifically target Egypt and will be the most cruel dictator of all (Daniel 11:41-42).

(Prediction #8) - God will completely dry up waters of the sea and the Nile. **19:5-7**

It has been said that the Nile river is the “lifeblood” of Egypt. Without the Nile Egypt cannot survive. She depends on this water for fishing and industry. This water provides irrigation for the land and even water needed to construct buildings. During the Tribulation, God will cut off this water supply. In fact, Isaiah names this very river and says God will cause it to dry up.

(Prediction #9) - God will destroy manufacturing businesses and all labor. **19:8-10**

The fishing business will close down, the manufacturing business will shut down, the entire economy will shut down. **Please take note, Mrs. Governor of Michigan. Please take note, Mr. President of the United States. It is the God of the Bible who controls a nation’s economy.** Just a week ago was a national day of prayer and for the first time in our history, we have a President who refused to go to any church to pray. We have several leaders of our country right now who refuse to promote turning to the true God of the Bible and who promote that which is contrary to His Word. Just watch what God does to this economy.

(Prediction #10) - God will show the stupidity of Egyptian leadership that led Egypt astray. **19:11-14**

When a nation falls under the judgment of God, the smartest people in the nation with the highest IQs cannot stop it. At one time “Zoan” (**v. 13**) was Egypt’s political capital as was “Memphis” (**v. 13**). In fact, ruins of Memphis have been discovered about ten miles south of Cairo. Zoan was a city built some seven years after Hebron (Numbers 13:22). Both of these cities were considered to be places of great learning (Acts 7:22). Egyptian wisdom was considered to be the finest in the world. Kind of like the way people in this country view a Harvard or Yale graduate. But to God it is nothing more than arrogant stupidity.

It doesn't matter where you look to find answers - you can consult with any university professor of Harvard or Yale or any political leader in Lansing or Washington. You can summon the most brilliant economic minds or the most scholarly in their fields; apart from a true focus on God, God considers them all to be nothing but fools. Refuse to turn to God and no advisor will be able to help because as God says, they are all "stupid."

(Prediction #11) - God will destroy all labor and income from labor. **19:15**

Look at what this verse says - God is the one who eliminates jobs as a judgment. **When you see a nation that has no jobs available for its people, you are seeing a nation that is under the judgment of God.**

(Prediction #12) - God will cause the Egyptians to fear Him and Israel. **19:16-17**

There will come a day when the Egyptian world will recognize the value and the importance of the Israeli world. They will not be proud or arrogant, but humble and submissive. They will realize that everything came from the hand of God. **There will come a day when all proud Egyptians and all arrogant Arabs and all nations of the world will acknowledge that Israel is the most important and dominant nation in the entire world because she belongs to the LORD.**

PROPHETIC PART #2 – God will save Egypt. **19:18-25**

Notice that **verse 16** begins with the repeated phrase "in that day" (**vv. 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24**). This is a reference to the Tribulation and what will happen in its aftermath. There are six amazing predictions made in these verses:

(Prediction #1) - Egyptian cities will speak Hebrew and swear allegiance to God. **19:18**

Now it is predicted that five key cities will be speaking Hebrew and will swear allegiance to the true God of Israel. In fact, one of the cities is given a name, "the City of Destruction." There is a debate among interpreters over which specific city this is a reference to. In ancient times some have said it could be Heliopolis which is better known today by its modern name Cairo.

Now the official language today of the Egyptian world is Arabic. Almost all Egyptians speak this language. When God does the things predicted here, the Arabic world will become a Hebrew speaking world. Arabs will want to know Hebrew so they may worship God.

(Prediction #2) - The Egyptians will build an altar to the true God near Israel's land. **19:19**

The Egyptian world today is known for its pyramids. But there will come a day when she will be known for building a spectacular memorial for God. Egypt is going to show the entire world and Israel that she is serious about worshipping the true God. She is actually going to build a monument to God, showing that she is now only worshipping the God of Israel. She will build this monument near the Israeli border of the Promised Land.

(Prediction #3) - The Egyptians will actually cry out to God and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the only true Savior. **19:20**

This will be the national admission of the Egyptian world. As the Tribulation nears its conclusion, many Egyptians will be crying out to Jesus Christ for help.

(Prediction #4) - The Egyptians will know and worship God and God will accept their worship and let them know Him. **19:21**

God is going to let the Egyptian world know Him and He will accept their offerings. As one commentator said, this is “almost unbelievable.” But you may be certain that it is exactly what will happen when Jesus Christ returns.

(Prediction #5) - After God strikes Egypt, He will heal Egypt. **19:22**

No matter how rebellious a nation or a person has been, if he will turn to God and cry out for help, wonderful blessing and healing may be experienced.

(Prediction #6) - God will cause Egypt, various Arabs and Israel to worship in harmony. **19:23-25**

This prophecy has far reaching ramifications to the entire Arab world. Notice how God describes these powers - Egypt, He calls “My people”; Assyria, He calls “the work of My hands” and Israel, He calls “My Inheritance.”

What is described here is nothing short of miraculous - you have Israel, the Egyptians and a hodge-podge of other Arabs all worshipping the true God together. All of them are experiencing the blessings of God and all of them are known for this all over the world.

There is no place in history where you can find this. The only place this fits is at the end of the Tribulation when Jesus Christ is reigning in Jerusalem during the one thousand year millennium.

It does not matter what your past history, those who choose to be in a right relationship with God have a golden future. One could have previously been a God hater, God mocker or God people persecutor. It doesn't matter. God can do something miraculous with you. He can take you in your present state and so bless you so that people will stand in awe of what He has done. That is the story of the whole Egyptian world in **Isaiah 19**.