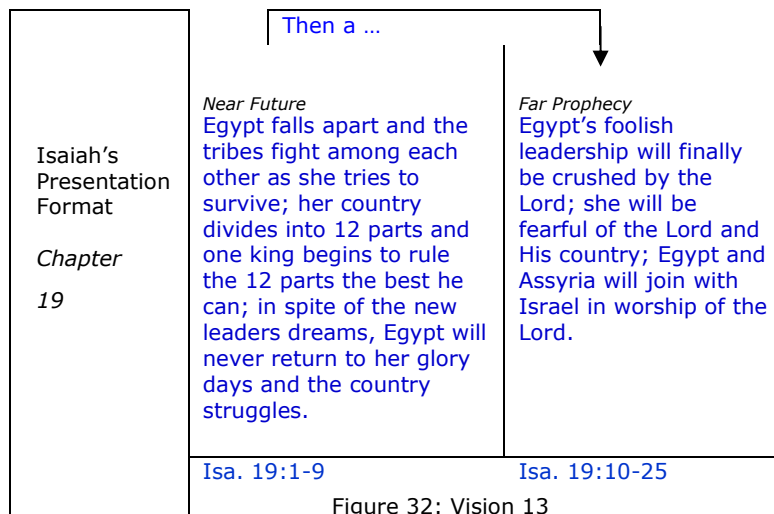


The Prophecies of Isaiah ³⁷

Lesson 15



Egypt's Oracle – Vision 13

Near Future

Egyptian against Egyptian

Isaiah 19:1 The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, And the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. ² "So I will incite Egyptians against Egyptians; and they will each fight against his brother, and each against his neighbor, city against city, *and* kingdom against kingdom.

For three years, from 714 BC to 711 BC, Sargon II has hammered Egypt. He has acted as the Lord's ally in the destruction of the Northern Kingdom and surrounding countries. In 711 BC, after Sargon II returns to Assyria, Egypt falls into full-fledged anarchy. Over time, Egypt divides into 12 states controlled by 12 tyrannical kings, all fighting against each other.

Near Future

Confound Strategy

Isaiah 19:3 "Then the spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them; and I will confound their strategy, so that they will resort to idols and ghosts of the dead, and to mediums and spiritists.

The internal strife in Egypt sets the environment for the people to call out to their many gods to bring an end to the internal turmoil in their land.

³⁷ All Scriptures in this lesson entitled "The Prophecies of Isaiah" are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, Copyright (C) 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1988, by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Deities of Egypt

Hapi (also called Apis)	bull god of the Nile
Isis	goddess of the Nile; goddess of healing
Khnum, ram god	guardian of the Nile
Heqet	goddess of birth, with a frog head
Set	god of the desert
Re	sun god
Uatchit,	god possibly represented by the fly
Nut	sky goddess
Osiris	god of crops and fertility
Sekhmet	goddess with power over disease
Sunu	pestilence god
Osiris	god of crops and fertility
Set	god of storms
Horus	sun god
Hathor	sky goddess
Min	god of reproduction
Heqet	goddess who attended children at childbirth
Pharaoh's firstborn son	a god

Near Future

Cruel Master

Isaiah 19:4 "Moreover, I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel master, and a mighty king will rule over them," declares the Lord GOD of hosts.

The Assyrian king, Esarhaddon conquers Egypt in 671 BC placing her under the thumb of Assyria for almost half a century in name only, but in reality, for less than a decade. Around 663 BC, Psammetichus, a cruel leader who is one of the 12 kings in Egypt, unifies the 12 states.³⁸ Psammetichus rules Egypt for 54 years when, upon his death in 609 BC, his son, Necho, takes the throne. In 606 BC, Necho marches to Assyria to unite with forces against Babylon. In the valley of Megiddo he sees Josiah and kills him. Three months later in 606 BC, Nebuchadnezzar takes Assyria and then attacks Egypt to take it for the Babylonian Empire. Nebuchadnezzar will set a Babylonian throne in Tahphanes, where Jeremiah has buried some stones and foretold the establishment of the Babylonian throne in that location.

Near Future

Water Parched

Isaiah 19:5 And the waters from the sea will dry up, and the river will be parched and dry. ⁶ And the canals will emit a stench, The streams of Egypt will thin out and dry up; The reeds and rushes will rot away. ⁷ The bulrushes by the Nile, by the edge of the Nile and all the sown fields by the Nile will become dry, be driven away, and be no more. ⁸ And the fishermen will lament, and all those who cast a line into the Nile will mourn, and those who spread nets on the waters will pine away. ⁹ Moreover, the manufacturers of linen made from combed flax and the weavers of white cloth will be utterly dejected.

The whole Egyptian economy depends on the yearly overflow from the banks of the Nile River to water all the crops. Without the yearly flooding, famine quickly comes to the land. The floods also provide fresh waters and fish through the vast canals that supply the villages. When the Nile drops below a certain level, all the canals become stagnant, the fish die and the crops fail.

³⁸ Psammetichus is the father of Pharaoh Necho.

The Nile begins as two rivers, the White Nile whose genesis is in Victoria Nyanza and the Blue Nile which flows out of the Abyssinian Mountain range. Once they join in the village of Khartoum, the new river flows north for over 1,800 miles and then, just outside Cairo, it divides into several branches before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea.

Psammetichus envisions Egypt's return to her glory days when she controlled Syria and this land of Canaan but it does not occur. Several times during his 54 years in power, the waters of the Nile fail to flood the lands as usual. The small lakes and rivers dry up and the crops fail, causing a famine.

Far Prophecy

Grieved Souls

Isaiah 19: 10 And the pillars of Egypt will be crushed; all the hired laborers will be grieved in soul. ¹¹ The princes of Zoan are mere fools; the advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has become stupid. How can you *men* say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"? ¹² Well then, where are your wise men? Please let them tell you, and let them understand what the LORD of hosts has purposed against Egypt. ¹³ The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly, the princes of Memphis are deluded; *Those who are* the cornerstone of her tribes have led Egypt astray. ¹⁴ The LORD has mixed within her a spirit of distortion; they have led Egypt astray in all that it does, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. ¹⁵ And there will be no work for Egypt which *its* head or tail, *its* palm branch or bulrush, may do.

No trace of Zoan exists today. The city of Tanis was constructed on its ruins seven years after the Israelites built Hebron in the land of Canaan.³⁹ Zoan is especially important to the Israelites because Pharaoh held his court there in the days of Moses and the exodus. The psalm writer praised the Lord for the miracles that occurred in Zoan in Psalm 78:12,43. It became the capital of Egypt in 1070 BC with Pharaoh Smendes I and was destroyed in 655 BC by Assyria while Psammetichus is Pharaoh.

However, Ezekiel's prophecies against Egypt contain the same information concerning the Nile and the cities of Memphis, Pathros, Zoan, Thebes, Sin, On, Pi-beseth, and Tehaphnehes.

Ezekiel 30:12 "Moreover, I will make the Nile canals dry And sell the land into the hands of evil men. And I will make the land desolate, And all that is in it, By the hand of strangers; I, the LORD, have spoken." ¹³ Thus says the Lord GOD, "I will also destroy the idols And make the images cease from Memphis. And there will no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt; And I will put fear in the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ "And I will make Pathros desolate, Set a fire in Zoan, And execute judgments on Thebes. ¹⁵ "And I will pour out My wrath on Sin, The stronghold of Egypt; I will also cut off the multitude of Thebes. ¹⁶ "And I will set a fire in Egypt; Sin will writhe in anguish, Thebes will be breached, And Memphis *will have* distresses daily. ¹⁷ "The young men of On and of Pi-beseth Will fall by the sword, And the women will go into captivity. ¹⁸ "And in Tehaphnehes the day will be dark When I break there the yoke bars of Egypt. Then the pride of her power will cease in her; A cloud will cover her, And her daughters will go into captivity. ¹⁹ "Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt, And they will know that I am the LORD.""

Ezekiel's prophecy will be fulfilled at the Second Coming of the Lord; therefore, the Isaiah passage must pertain to the same period.

³⁹ Numbers 13:22

Far Prophecy

Lord's Hand

Isaiah 19:16 In that day the Egyptians will become like women, and they will tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which He is going to wave over them. ¹⁷ And the land of Judah will become a terror to Egypt; everyone to whom it is mentioned will be in dread of it, because of the purpose of the LORD of hosts which He is purposing against them.

When the Lord establishes His kingdom in Jerusalem, the nation of Egypt will still exist but it will be in total subjection to the Lord as will the entire world. When the passage says "like women" it means the men will be feeble and fearful before the Lord. They will fear the "waving of the hand of the Lord," which is a signal for destruction rather than a sign of acceptance. His hand will "wave over them" and they will feel His destruction when He returns, but the remaining remnant will continue to fear the Lord while He is on the throne for His 1,000 year reign, constantly in dread of His judgment if they step out of line with His divine plan.

Far Prophecy

Swearing Allegiance

Isaiah 19:18 In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing *allegiance* to the LORD of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction.

We do not know the names of these five cities but we can assume that they are major cities in Egypt at the time of the Lord's Second Coming. The language of Canaan is Hebrew and the City of Destruction is called by the Greeks, Heliopolis, the Hebrews, Beth Shemesh, and the Egyptians, On. In the past, it was the center of worship for the sun-god, Ra (Atum), and it sits about five miles northeast of Cairo. When the Lord returns, her people will swear allegiance to Him.

Far Prophecy

Pillar to Lord

Isaiah 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 near its border. ²⁰ And it will become a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them.

The Egyptian name On means the city of the pillar and it sits on the border of the Promised Land that will be set aside for the Lord's kingdom and the habitation of the twelve tribes of Israel. Egypt will be protected in that day by the Savior and Champion of the world as He delivers them from the evil oppressor of the Revived Roman Empire that the Lord will destroy upon His return.

Far Prophecy

Known to Egypt

Isaiah 19:21 Thus the LORD will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the LORD and perform it. ²² And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to the LORD, and He will respond to them and will heal them.

Egypt will be punished on the Day of the Lord but not destroyed. The evil people will be annihilated but survivors will become believers. Punishment brings healing; when they call out to the Lord, "He will respond to them and will heal them".

Far Prophecy

Egypt to Assyria

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

From the Nile to the Euphrates, the entire land that incorporates most of old Egypt, most of Assyria and all of the Promised Land will be joined together with a highway which will run through the mount of the Lord where all can travel to worship Him.

Far Prophecy

Israel Third Party

Isaiah 19:24 In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, ²⁵ whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

The people of Assyria and Egypt who trust in the Lord will not be forgotten. They will be blessed because they are important to the Lord.

Figure 33: Fulfillment of Vision 13

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 19:1-9	<i>Near Future</i> Egypt falls apart and the tribes fight among each other as she tries to survive; her country divides into 12 parts and one king begins to rule the 12 parts the best he can; in spite of the new leaders dreams, Egypt will never return to her glory days and the country struggles.	Fulfilled between 711 BC and 663 BC
Isa. 19:10-25	<i>Far Prophecy</i> Egypt's foolish leadership will finally be crushed by the Lord; she will be fearful of the Lord and His country; Egypt and Assyria will join with Israel in worship of the Lord.	Fulfilled after Armageddon during the 1,000 year reign of the Lord

715 BC - Egypt and Cush's Sign – Vision 14

Isaiah provides another time-marker to establish the placement of this passage in history. Sargon II becomes the king of Assyria in 722 BC when his father, Shalmaneser V, dies. Sargon attacks the cities around Jerusalem with that city as his final goal.

<p>Isaiah's Presentation Format</p> <p>Chapter 20</p>	<p><i>Near Future</i> Isaiah goes naked from his hips down for three years as a sign to Egypt and her Ethiopian Pharaoh that within three years her people will be captured and led away in shame with their buttocks exposed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Isa. 20</p>
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Figure 34: Vision 14 for Egypt and Cush

Near Prophecy

Isaiah Naked

Isaiah 20:1 In the year that the commander came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and captured it, ² at that time the LORD spoke through Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go and loosen the sackcloth from your hips, and take your shoes off your feet." And he did so, going naked and barefoot.

Ashdod is not part of the Southern Kingdom. She belongs to the Philistines. Sargon sends his commander to capture the city and he successfully takes it over in 715 BC. In that year, the Lord instructs Isaiah to go naked from his hips down to his feet for three years. Is Isaiah exposing his private parts to the city? No. He has removed his hairy sackcloth robe that prophets wore over their undergarments; however, the undergarments were short, covering only to just below the hips.

Near Prophecy

Three Years

Isaiah 20:3 And the LORD said, "Even as My servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot three years as a sign and token against Egypt and Cush, ⁴ so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old, naked and barefoot with buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.

Three years later, in 712 BC, the Lord reveals why Isaiah has gone naked. It is a sign to Egypt and Cush that they will soon experience the same shame. Being naked from the buttocks down in public sight is thought to be one of the ultimate humiliations for a Jew or an Egyptian. In the next year, 711 BC, Sargon's commander captures Egypt and Cush and leads the captives and exiles away with their buttocks exposed and they legs and feet naked.

Why is Cush associated with Egypt in this passage? Previously in 722 BC and unrelated to other events in the Promised Land and Aram, the Cushite king had overthrown the Egyptian Pharaoh and taken the throne. In this passage, the Cushites are the Ethiopians and with this change, the first black Pharaoh sits on the throne of Egypt. The first Ethiopian king bows to the scepter of Sargon II in 711 BC and many of Pharaoh's people are marched off to exile. The Ethiopian king rules Egypt as a puppet under the strong thumb of Assyria until 682 BC and then Egypt falls into anarchy and the land is segregated into 12 portions controlled by 12 kings.

Near Prophecy

Dismayed and Ashamed

Isaiah 20:5 "Then they shall be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush their hope and Egypt their boast. ⁶ "So the inhabitants of this coastland will say in that day, 'Behold, such is our hope, where we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and we, how shall we escape?'"

Hezekiah is the new king of the Southern Kingdom. He has been in that position since 726 BC. During the early part of his reign, he sought the help of Egypt and Cush to help ward off Sargon. In 711 BC, Hezekiah's hopes are dashed as are those of the entire Southern Kingdom. To whom will they turn for help? Perhaps Hezekiah could lead them to the Lord for help. For those who place their hopes in Egypt and Cush, where can they turn now? How can the Southern Kingdom escape from the sword of Assyria? They have the answer but Hezekiah will have to have an encounter with the Lord first.

Figure 35: Fulfillment of Vision 14 to Egypt and Cush

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 20: 1-6	<p><i>Near Future</i> Isaiah goes naked from his hips down to his feet for three years as a sign to Egypt and her Ethiopian Pharaoh that within three years her people will be captured and led away in shame with their buttocks exposed.</p>	Fulfilled in 718 BC