

Is. 19:1 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.

This chapter begins a prophecy directed to Egypt. It begins with a picture of the Lord coming into Egypt on a cloud in such a way that causes fear in the heart of the Egyptians and overpowers their idols. This immediately makes me think of the cloud by which the Lord led the Israelites out of Egypt during the Exodus (Exodus 14). It would be interesting to know whether this connection was/is made in the minds of the Egyptians.

As in the previous chapter, I believe that the prophet Ezekiel adds insight to this passage.

Ezekiel 30:6–9 “Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed. In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, lo, it cometh.”

Emphasis is made that the fire that is set in Egypt will spread to destroy the nations surrounding her.

Is. 19:2 And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.

Evidently, the fear and panic that ensue will cause the Egyptians to turn on each other.

The truth of this scripture is emblazoned on headlines across the world even as I am working on this section of scripture (July 2013). The military has just unseated President Morsi and the nation is experiencing great infighting. This is just two years after a divided country succeeded in removing President Mubarak from power.

Is. 19:3 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.

In their fear and panic, the Egyptians will seek help from idols, charmers, them that have familiar spirits, and wizards—translate that, from their false god to others that are considered to have otherworldly wisdom. God will prove that counsel to be useless, powerless and ineffective.

I thought the Hebrew for the word *idol* was to the point—good for nothing, no value, thing of nought.

Is. 19:4 And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

Emphasis is made that it is the Lord who is going to give Egypt into the hands of this cruel, fierce king. Could this be a reference to the coming antichrist? Could it mean a leader that precedes him that holds to the radical tenants of Islam?

Is. 19:5 And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

Is. 19:6 And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

Is. 19:7 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*.

Is. 19:8 The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

Is. 19:9 Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded.

Is. 19:10 And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish.

Not only is the Lord going to hand them over to a fierce king, He is going to restrict their water resources. Egypt was and is very dependent on the Nile. The proper rise and drop in the river level at appointed times affect their food supply and their industry.

“Brooks of defence” seems to be referencing “hemmed in channels” of water for irrigation purposes. “Reeds” are a reference to a category of plants that were used in making perfumes and incense. “Flags” are a reference to papyrus, which was used to make baskets, ropes, boats, sandals, mats, and paper. Fish will no longer be abundant. “Fine flax” is used in the making of linen as well as in making cooking oil and lamp oil. “Sluices” is a word meaning “wages”; so this is a reference to those who make their living from stocked fishing ponds. All of these industries will be negatively affected.

Interesting to note in light of this prophecy are the headlines in the news today of the plans of Ethiopia to build a great dam that would severely affect the water supply to Egypt.

Some teachers make a connection between this section of scripture and the construction of the Aswan Dam. This dam stopped the annual flooding of the Nile River and prevented the spread of silt and sediment that nourished and fertilized the soil. It also caused a gradual increase in the salt content of the ground water. The result was a very negative impact on both agriculture and the fishing industry.

Is. 19:11 Surely the princes of Zoan *are* fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I *am* the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

Is. 19:12 Where *are* they? where *are* thy wise *men*? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

Is. 19:13 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.

Zoan and Noph were two of the main cities in lower Egypt. The Lord is declaring that the advisers and “wise counselors” of the Pharaoh (ruler of Egypt) would prove useless. No matter how distinguished their lineage may be, they will not be able to tell Pharaoh what God has purposed upon Egypt.

Is. 19:14 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* staggereth in his vomit.

The Lord is going to cause a wicked spirit to work among the counselors and advisors. This will result in their advice bringing disaster upon Egypt. The gross comparison is that Egypt could be compared to a drunken man wallowing in his own vomit.

We don't often think of God using evil spirits to accomplish His purposes, but the Bible is very clear that He uses wicked men to that end as well. God is the creator of all, both good and evil.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

God will accomplish His purposes in spite of and sometimes in conjunction with the choices of His creation. He is Lord whether we accept Him as such or not.

Isaiah 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: **I am the LORD; and there is none else.**

Is. 19:15 Neither shall there be *any* work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

Isaiah continues in his poetic repetitive form of speaking. Isaiah 9:14-16 helps us to understand that the Lord is speaking to the Egyptian leaders.

Isaiah 9:14-16 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.

Most commentators consider this prophecy of Egypt fulfilled when Assyria conquered Egypt. In my mind that doesn't preclude it being a foreshadowing of more to come.

Is. 19:16 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 shaketh over it.

When the Lord brings this prophecy to fulfillment in Egypt, the people of Egypt will stand in fear of the "Lord of hosts." I don't think this statement applied when Assyria conquered Egypt; neither did the following.

Is. 19:17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.

"The land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt." That doesn't sound too far off from the truth today, even though I'm sure they wouldn't admit it. I tend to think this will be a more obvious fact in the future. It will get to the point that even the mention of Judah (the Jews) will instill fear in the Egyptians because of Judah's connection to the "Lord of hosts"—the One who purposes to punish Egypt.

Is. 19:18 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.

Canaan is a reference to the land of Israel.

The day is coming when people in the land of Egypt will speak Hebrew and recognize God as their Lord. One of the first cities to be converted will be the "city of destruction." Some commentators connect this with the city of Heliopolis or On, which was devoted to the worship of the sun god, one of Egypt's major deities. Instead of worshipping the sun, they will worship the Son (Jesus). I think this part of the prophecy will find fulfillment in the millennium.

I wonder if this is a hint that we will all speak Hebrew in the millenium. I tend to think so. The languages were confused to keep the people from joining in rebellion against the Lord. It would make sense to me that we would convert back to one language to facilitate service and obedience to the Lord.

Is. 19:19 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.

Is. 19:20 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.

The day is coming when Egypt will cry out to the Lord God because of their oppression. They will build an altar to the Lord in the center of the land and a

memorial stone at the border of the land acknowledging God as their Lord. At that time the Lord will send them a deliverer.

As a note of interest, there are some bible teachers that make a connection with these verses and The Great Pyramid, and some of their articles are quite thought provoking. The pyramid is in the midst of that land and sits on the border of what was known as lower and upper Egypt. They have come up with some very interesting connections with the specific measurements and parts of the pyramid and how they testify of Jesus.

Is. 19:21 And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform it.

When the time comes that Egypt openly acknowledges God as Lord, they will prove their commitment to Him by their actions. They will offer Him sacrifices and give Him gifts. When they make vows to God, they will keep them.

The application is obvious. One who truly acknowledges God as Lord will serve Him with obedience, devotion and commitment.

Is. 19:22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

The message to Egypt begins with punishment and ends with hope. Although the Lord will smite (defeat, strike, put to the worse) Egypt, He will eventually bring them healing. They will “return” to the Lord.

As I thought about it, that would be a true statement about any nation that chooses to follow God. We all come from the same root, the same forefathers. Adam and Eve were created in fellowship with the Creator. Noah and his family were saved through the flood through obedience to and faith in God. Somewhere along the way, their descendants chose to depart from the truth—to depart from God. This prophecy ends up in a promise that the day is coming when Egypt will return to God, and He will hear their prayers and will provide healing—will make them whole again in relationship to Him. I think we can all agree that this is yet future.

Egypt is often a type of the Gentile world, and I think represents those who will turn to the Lord in faith after the time of God’s wrath.

Is. 19:23 In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

Is. 19:24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:

Is. 19:25 Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

The day is coming when there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria that will pass through Israel. The people of these nations will travel freely and safely from one nation to the other; these three former enemies will be friends. They will all enjoy blessings from the Lord God.

I think verse 25 is a way of stating in poetic style that all these nations will be on equal footing before the Lord. I don't think you can make a difference in God's people, the work of His hands, and His inheritance. Israel will enjoy a covenantal position of prominence and prosperity in the millennial kingdom, but Egypt and Assyria will also enjoy a position of blessing without jealousy and in acceptance of God's sovereignty.

There is application here for the body of Christ. We are all part of one body. We are called to serve in different positions. The toe is just as important to God as the head. We are to be content with how and where the Spirit calls us to serve. Jesus made it clear that humility and a servant spirit are traits He values—and He set the example.

John 13:14-17 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Matthew 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.