

Is. 20:1 In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

Is. 20:2 At the same time spake the LORD by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

Ashdod was one of the 5 main Philistine cities located in the territory of the tribe of Judah a couple of miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea. According to Easton's Dictionary, the year being referenced is 711 BC. At this time the Lord gave Isaiah a strange command--to take off his sackcloth from his loins and his shoes and walk around naked and barefoot. *Sackcloth* is a mesh, coarse cloth used in mourning and for begging. *Loins* is a reference to the waist, the place where your garments were tied. As usual, Isaiah obeyed.

I can't help but think what special, unique people the prophets were. Most did not hesitate to obey without question whatever the Lord asked of them. We, as believers, are also asked to obey God. The scripture says that if we love Him, we will obey Him.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words....

Our directions are certainly much easier to follow than Isaiah's and still we question and/or disobey.

Lord, make me sensitive to the leading of the Spirit in my life and grow me to the point of obedience without question.

Is. 20:3 And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia;

Is. 20:4 So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with *their* buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.

Isaiah had to walk around for three years in his birthday suit. The message from the Lord is that Isaiah is a picture of judgment to come upon Egypt and Ethiopia—an initial fulfillment of the prophecies in the last two chapters. The judgment to come is identified as capture by the king of Assyria. At that time the captives, young and old, would be led away naked and barefoot. And just to ensure that there is no misunderstanding, *naked* is defined as having your buttocks uncovered. Being uncovered is associated with shame; the application to today's fashion is obvious.

Is. 20:5 And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

This is a reminder that Isaiah is speaking to the people of Judah. God is reminding them that their confidence should be in Him, and not in other nations. They had a history of looking to Egypt for help and evidently were also in league with Ethiopia at that time. Why is it that our tendency is always to look to others

for help before we look to God? His desire is that we depend on Him for everything.

Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

1Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

When they saw things come to pass as He had foretold, it also served as a continual proof to them that the Lord is God and there is no other.

Is. 20:6 And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?

The word *isle* can refer to an island or a coastline. In this case it is probably referencing the other coastal cities of the area. They should all recognize that there is no escape for those who look to other than the God of Israel as Lord.