

# Isaiah 18-20 – 16 November 2023

## “The Unstable Powers Of Man”

### Introduction

- \*In chap 13-23, God has Isaiah address mostly the foreign nations that have influenced Israel
- \*It's appropriate that 'judgement should begin at the house of God' (I Pet 4:17), but it doesn't end there!
- \*Isaiah is told to give these prophecies (hard messages) to many foreign nations
  - \*They're designed to remind Israel that God is just & won't let others get away w/ their wickedness
  - \*Additionally, they're designed to show God's heart to save & bring righteousness to ALL people
- \*We're prone to become intimidated by the powers over us – as Israel is of the nations around them
- \*We need to see the powerful of this world thru the lens that God's see them in

**So today, let's look at 3 characteristics of the powers of men in this world**

# #1: The powers of men are subdued very easily by God (Chap 18) – *Burden of Ethiopia*

Read Chap 18:1

1. “Beyond” is better translated ‘borders’
2. Ethiopia (Gk for ‘*black*’) is same as Cush (Hb)
3. Territory in the Bible called Cush or Ethiopia is the modern territory of Sudan, Ethiopia, etc
4. Ham’s 3 sons (Phut, Cush, Mizraim) (Gen 10)
5. Later, Moses married Ethiopian woman (Num 12)

Read Vs 2

1. ‘Scattered & peeled’ is tall & pale
2. Current events are detailed in II King 18-19
  - a. Assyria is coming against Hezekiah (Judah)
  - b. Ethiopia rules Egypt & is feuding w/ Assyria
  - c. Ethiopia & Judah are sending ambassadors seeking an alliance against Assyria

Read Vs 3-4

1. When the Lord raises a banner or blows a trumpet you know He’s calling armies for war
2. But we see ‘God takes His rest’

- a. God doesn't need Ethiopia's help for Judah to survive coming onslaught on the Assyrians
- b. In fact, we read (II Kings 19), this is time God smites 185,000 Assyrians with ONE angel

### Read Vs 18:5-6

1. This's pic of judgement on the land of Ethiopia
2. It seems this is Ethiopia's constant problem, that of trusting in man instead of turning to God
  - a. We'll see Ethiopia later in the coalition of nations from Eze 38-39 coming against Israel
  - b. We see Ethiopia listed in Dan 11 as helping Anti-Christ leading to Battle of Armageddon
3. You say, 'well this judgement seems harsh'
  - a. They had many chances to know Jesus
  - b. Gospel even came thru Philip & Ethiopian Eunuch thru royal house to whole land (Acts 8)
  - c. Apostle Matthew went & was martyred there
  - d. God's judgement is always just

### Read Vs 7

1. Certainly, there's thriving Ethiopian church now
2. Ultimately Ethiopia will come to Israel in the Millennial Kingdom with gifts (Read Zec 14:16)

## #2: The powers of men are given chances to change (Chap 19) – *Burden of Egypt*

Intro- Nice study of Egypt: Isa 19-20, Jer 46 & Eze 29-32

Read Chap 19:1-3

1. Between 720-710, Egypt fell into civil war dividing into 12 sections
2. With political weakness they resorted more to their powerful demonic sorcerers for guidance
3. This civil war was called God's judgement
  - a. What does God need to do to subdue men?
  - b. Just let them to their own devices

Read Vs 4

1. By 671 BC Assyrian king Esarhaddon ruled Egypt & was known as an especially cruel ruler
  - a. Civil strife isn't always God's judgement, but it can be

Read Vs 5-10

1. A great drought will bring disaster to a land whose economy is completely dependance upon it

- a. Natural disasters aren't always God's judgement, but they can be

Read Vs 11-15

1. Egypt will be left with only politically inept leaders to govern
  - a. Poor leaders aren't always God's judgement, but they can be
2. Why would God send them "a perverse spirit"?
  - a. B/c they've already rejected the true wisdom of God especially thru Moses & others
  - b. Read II Thes 2:8-11
3. Notice in vs 15 that poor political leadership even results in a bad economy

Read Vs 16-17

1. When judgement of God comes, the subdued nation produces reverence toward the Lord & toward His people Israel
2. Quite a switch; never happened yet for Egypt
  - a. Not in the days of Moses, David or Jesus
  - b. But it will during the Millenium

## Read Vs 18-21

1. It produces a changed national heart in that they begin to take on the identify of Israel
  - a. Take on the language (vs 18)
  - b. Build altars (vs 19) & commit to God (21)

## Read Vs 22

1. During the Millenium there will need to be further chastisement on the nation of Egypt
  - a. But notice, it's for their healing
  - b. Read Zec 14:16-19 – Egypt specially here

## Read Vs 23-25

1. Peace between bitter enemies, peace among the whole world in the Millenium
  - a. With Israel “in the midst of them”
2. See, ‘My people’ is b/c they all belong to God
  - a. Like Judas the Zealot and Matthew the tax collector becoming friends
  - b. Even great enemies find friends under the banner of Jesus Christ

### **#3: The powers of men will soon be forgotten (Chap 20) – *The Sign of the Prophecy's Veracity***

Read Chap 20:1

1. It's the year 713 BC & Assyria has been pushing closer to Egypt thru the land of Israel
2. Tartan = "a general officer" not specific name
3. This mention of Sargon was, for a while, the only mention of Sargon in ancient writings
  - a. Til 1842 when Botta discovered the ruins of Sargon's palace on northern edge of Nineveh
  - b. Many treasures & inscriptions showing him great, yet his name completely disappeared except for the Bible
  - c. Much of it is now in the Louvre in France

Read Vs 2

1. God often had his prophet perform visible signs to catch interest of the mind: what's going on
2. What's the message?
  - a. The message isn't nudity but poverty

- b. Not representing a pervert but a prisoner
- c. Wants them to know he already sees them as subjected to Assyria

### Read Vs 3-4

1. The point of the sign; this is what will happen to Egypt & Ethiopia
2. Warning is to Israel; don't trust unredeemed man
  - a. Not one is better than the other
  - b. Read Psm 118:8 – Whom do you trust?
3. Isn't it just like the devil to rob, kill, destroy and lead away empty and naked?
  - a. Yet with God it's different – Read Rev 19:8

### Read Vs 5-6

1. This is God's direct warning to Hezekiah to not trust in the Egyptians to help against Assyria
2. Read all about it in II King 18-9
  - a. Read II Kings 18:20b-22 – Whom do you trust?
  - b. That's always the question



## Conclusion

So what kind of powerful people do you have around?  
Remember these principles to aid our relations w/ them

1. **Powerful people are subdued very easily by God**
  - a. That mean boss might be gone tomorrow
  - b. Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world
  - c. Nothing is too difficult for God
2. **Powerful people are given chances to change**
  - a. Never forget, God is seeking to change our mean boss's heart and bring salvation
  - b. Let not be praying justice on them but mercy and grace on them
3. **Powerful people will soon be forgotten**
  - a. Saddam Hussein thought he was the reincarnation of Nebuchadrezzar – He's gone
  - b. Every evil name will be forgotten w/ all their influence over you
  - c. But those that love the Lord will be remembered (Read Rev 3:5)

Man's unstable, but God's always worthy to be trusted