

A Sign Against Egypt and Cush

20 In the year that the commander in chief, who was sent by Sargon the king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and captured it—² at that time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, “Go, and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals from your feet,” and he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

³ Then the LORD said, “As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush, ⁴ so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptian captives and the Cushite exiles, both the young and the old, naked and barefoot, with buttocks uncovered, the nakedness of Egypt. ⁵ Then they shall be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush their hope and of Egypt their boast. ⁶ And the inhabitants of this coastland will say in that day, ‘Behold, this is what has happened to those in whom we hoped and to whom we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria! And we, how shall we escape?’”

Fallen, Fallen Is Babylon

21 The oracle concerning the wilderness of the sea.

As whirlwinds in the Negeb sweep on,
it comes from the wilderness,
from a terrible land.

² A stern vision is told to me;
the traitor betrays,
and the destroyer destroys.

Go up, O Elam;
lay siege, O Media;

The chapter is the Epilogue to chapters 18-19. It is set in the year 711 B.C. Ashdod revolted against the Philistines and asked EGYPT for help. Hezekiah, King of Judah considered joining Egypt but listened to ISAIAH's warning against this alliance. His warning was walking around naked for 3 years. In the end Sargon sent his Army who defeated the city and took the citizens captive.

① Sargon only appears here and is otherwise unknown. Sargon sent a general to handle the battle for him. Ashdod was located 5 km from the sea on the way to EGYPT.

② Isaiah is recounting what he was told to do 3 years earlier. His warning preceded the battle. Debatable over exactly how naked he was: covers from wearing underwear like David 1 Sam 6:20 to being totally naked as the disciple in John 21:7. Either way it was a dramatic and highly visible message from God, through Isaiah, of the coming defeat of Ashdod & Egypt BY THE ASSYRIANS.

③-4 Isaiah's sermon illustration lasted 3 years. Comes true in the defeat and capture of the people of Ashdod & Egypt. Here complete nakedness is implied for prophet and captured people.

⑤ Those who hoped in EGYPT as their salvation will be defeated physically and emotionally.

⑥ Judah will realize how right Isaiah was about not trusting Egypt for help. Leaving them wondering if they will be next to fall.

① The rolling desert is seen like a great sea of sand where one can be easily lost. The coming defeat will sweep over them like the wind storms do. There is nothing to stop it from happening. The Medes and the Persians crossed the desert sea like the wind to conquer.

② The nations that will overthrow Babylon are named.

all the sighing she has caused
I bring to an end.

3 Therefore my loins are filled with
anguish;

pangs have seized me,
like the pangs of a woman in labor;

I am bowed down so that I cannot hear;
I am dismayed so that I cannot see.

4 My heart staggers; horror has appalled me;
the twilight I longed for
has been turned for me into trembling.

5 They prepare the table,
they spread the rugs,
they eat, they drink.

Arise, O princes;
oil the shield!

6 For thus the Lord said to me:
"Go, set a watchman;

let him announce what he sees.

7 When he sees riders, horsemen in pairs,
riders on donkeys, riders on camels,
let him listen diligently,
very diligently."

8 Then he who saw cried out:

"Upon a watchtower I stand, O Lord,
continually by day,
and at my post I am stationed
whole nights.

9 And behold, here come riders,
horsemen in pairs!"

③ What Isaiah sees is so horrific like a sick man he bows over as if ready to throw up.

④ Everything is overshadowed by what he sees. Twilight calmness is shattered by what he has seen is coming.

⑤ In contrast the Babylonians have no idea what is coming. Everything continues as always. The call to Arise changes to screw. Suddenly they must prepare for war. (oil the shield!)

⑥ the message from God shows who is in charge. Here is what God sees and God ordains. The watchman is to look ahead in time and show what is coming.

⑦ The approaching army is what the watchman is waiting to see. He will listen to hear the approaching army.

⑧ Those who are paying attention will be ready to warn of the coming army.

⑨ The warning cry will awaken the people, but it will be too late. The army is already arrived. The enemy has appeared.

And he answered,

“Fallen, fallen is Babylon;
and all the carved images of her gods
he has shattered to the ground.”

10 O my threshed and winnowed one,
what I have heard from the LORD of
hosts,
the God of Israel, I announce to you.

11 The oracle concerning Dumah. (Eoom)

One is calling to me from Seir,
“Watchman, what time of the night?
Watchman, what time of the night?”

12 The watchman says:
“Morning comes, and also the night.
If you will inquire, inquire;
come back again.”

13 The oracle concerning Arabia.

In the thickets in Arabia you will lodge,
O caravans of Dedanites.

14 To the thirsty bring water;
meet the fugitive with bread,
O inhabitants of the land of Tema.

15 For they have fled from the swords,
from the drawn sword,
from the bent bow,
and from the press of battle.

9b The report jumps from the approaching army to the results. There is no hope. Defeat has been complete. The false Gods have not protected them and are themselves destroyed.

10 The prophet now turns to Judah who had been defeated by Babylon. Judah had been threshed for their sins now sees the enemy defeated. Isaiah's message of Babylon's terrible defeat is a message to God's people he has not forgotten them.

11 Eoom also suffers under the threat of Assyria. In the darkness the question is 'How much longer?' When will we see some light or relief?

12 The prophet says he has no answer, ASK AGAIN LATER IF THEY want, God may answer their question then. This also implies that the very lack of an answer is somehow deserved at this time, or they need to ask till God is ready to answer them.

13 The nomadic tribes of Dedan & Tema are shown being defeated.

14 These fleeing the enemy will flee to the desert in a desperate move of survival. The coming army follows close behind.

15 These desert people are no match for the enemy. They have only bow and arrows. The enemy is a professional army w/swords, javelins, shields, cross bows, and well trained in hand to hand combat.

¹⁶For thus the Lord said to me, "Within a year, according to the years of a hired worker, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end. ¹⁷And the remainder of the archers of the mighty men of the sons of Kedar will be few, for the LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken."

An Oracle Concerning Jerusalem *

22 The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

What do you mean that you have gone up,
all of you, to the housetops,
² you who are full of shoutings,
tumultuous city, exultant town?
Your slain are not slain with the sword
or dead in battle.

³ All your leaders have fled together;
without the bow they were captured.

All of you who were found were captured,
though they had fled far away.

⁴ Therefore I said:

"Look away from me;

let me weep bitter tears;

do not labor to comfort me

concerning the destruction of the daughter of
my people."

⁵ For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day
of tumult and trampling and
confusion
in the valley of vision,

⑩ A Fixed time has been set for their defeat.

⑪ Only a few will survive this enemies attack. The Kedar region may represent all of Arabia. The exact fulfillment of this prophecy has been lost in history, but he assured it happened.

* THE DATING OF THIS GENERIC PROPHECY IS HIGHLY DEBATED BUT W/out ANY CONCERNS. THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING IT LIES IN THEIR total disregard for God even in the most trying times. Young II P. 89 say the key is "the terrible worldliness and paganism found in the city of Jerusalem when that enemy comes."

① For some unknown reason the people have gone to their roofs to celebrate. Isaiah cannot understand how some small positive event can cover up the coming destruction.

② while the people celebrate they have forgotten that things are so bad people are dying but not in battle. Possibly from famine or disease.

③ The leaders have tried to escape but were captured, everyone who the enemy finds they enslave. No one escapes they are "All" taken.

④ Isaiah is overcome with grief by what he sees. Before this he grieved over Moab (16.11) and Babylon (21.3) Here he sees the future downfall and it overwhelms him. Isaiah sees a defeated people who have turned away from God. Isaiah ask that no one try to comfort him. THE PROPHET SEES THE DESTRUCTION OR "PLUNDERING" OF THE WOMEN BY THE ENEMY. THERE IS NO ONE TO PROTECT THEM.

⑤ Here the city walls are breached as judgment of God. THE SHOUTING may be the people calling on anyone to help or it may be the shouting of the victorious army entering the defeated city. 2 Kings 25:10 speaks of just such an event happening to Jerusalem.