

Egypt

Isaiah 19

By Scott Huckaby

12/18/2022

BIG BEND
BIBLE
FELLOWSHIP

Egypt was one of the great powers of the ancient world, and being immediately to the south of Israel, it was an empire that Israel constantly had to reckon with. Many times, Egypt had been the enemy of Israel, at times Egypt had been a refuge for Israel, and sometimes Egypt offered a tempting but ungodly alliance to Israel.

- In this chapter, the LORD presents both a prophecy against and for Egypt.

Isaiah 19:1-17 – Proclamation Against Egypt

The burden against Egypt. Behold, the Lord rides on a swift cloud, and will come into Egypt; The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence, and the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst.

² *“I will set Egyptians against Egyptians; Everyone will fight against his brother, and everyone against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom.*

³ *The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst; I will destroy their counsel, and they will consult the idols and the charmers, the mediums and the sorcerers.*

⁴ *And the Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them,”*
Says the Lord, the Lord of hosts.

⁵ *The waters will fail from the sea, and the river will be wasted and dried up.*

⁶ *The rivers will turn foul; The brooks of defense will be emptied and dried up; The reeds and rushes will wither.*

⁷ *The papyrus reeds by the River, by the mouth of the River, and everything sown by the River, will wither, be driven away, and be no more.*

⁸ *The fishermen also will mourn; All those will lament who cast hooks into the River, and they will languish who spread nets on the waters.*

⁹ *Moreover those who work in fine flax and those who weave fine fabric will be ashamed; ¹⁰ And its foundations will be broken. All who make wages will be troubled of soul.*

¹¹ *Surely the princes of Zoan are fools; Pharaoh’s wise counselors give foolish counsel. How do you say to Pharaoh, “I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?”*

¹² *Where are they? Where are your wise men? Let them tell you now, and let them know what the Lord of hosts*

has purposed against Egypt.

¹³ *The princes of Zoan have become fools; The princes of Noph are deceived; They have also deluded Egypt, Those who are the mainstay of its tribes.*

¹⁴ *The Lord has mingled a perverse spirit in her midst; and they have caused Egypt to err in all her work, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit.*

¹⁵ *Neither will there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, palm branch or bulrush, may do.*

¹⁶ *In that day Egypt will be like women, and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He waves over it. ¹⁷ And the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts which He has determined against it.*

v1 – How would Egypt react to the arrival of the Lord?

The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence: Egypt was known for its worship of many, many different gods. Through His hand of judgment, the LORD will “knock over” these many different gods.

- In Isaiah’s day there was no other nation on earth that was so much in the grip of superstition and idolatry as Egypt. Apes, cats, frogs, crocodiles, lizards — everything was venerated by them.

How did God make Egypt totter at His presence at the time of the Exodus?

When the Pharaoh of Egypt would not release the children of Israel from their captivity, the LORD also made the idols of Egypt to totter at His presence. He directed each of the plagues against a particular idol of Egypt...

1. The LORD knocked down the god Khnum, the guardian of the Nile, the god Hapi, the spirit of the Nile, and the god Osiris (who had the Nile as his bloodstream) when the waters were turned to blood.
2. The LORD knocked down the goddess Heqt, the frog-goddess of fertility, with the plague of frogs.
3. The LORD knocked down the goddess Hathor, a cow-like mother goddess, with the plague on livestock.
4. The LORD knocked down the god Imhotep, the god of medicine, with the plague of boils.
5. The LORD knocked down the god Nut, the sky goddess, with the plague of hail.

6. The LORD knocked down the whole system of Egyptian worship of their gods with loathsome lice and swarms of insects.
7. The LORD knocked down the god Seth, thought to be the protector of crops, with the plague of locusts.
8. The LORD knocked down the god Ra, thought to be the sun god, with the plague of darkness.
9. The LORD knocked down Osiris, the Egyptian god thought to be the giver of life, with the plague against the firstborn.

v2 – How would God judge Egypt this time?

I will set Egyptians against Egyptians: Isaiah prophesies a coming civil war in Egypt, which was indirectly the hand of God's judgment against them.

- Not many years after this prophecy Egypt was divided into twelve different kingdoms, between whom there were many cruel wars.

Are we seeing this aspect of God's judgment in the USA today?

The political divide between the conservatives and the "progressives" has never been greater. Ultimately it is a spiritual divide that we should expect to increase as we get closer to the end of the Age...

Matthew 13:30 – *Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."*

v3 – What else would God do in judgment of Egypt?

I will destroy their counsel, and they will consult the idols and the charmers: When a nation is under the judgment of God, He often seems to "remove" sound counsel and wisdom from their leaders, and they turn to vain, pagan things for wisdom instead (idols and the charmers).

- Egypt was renowned for her class of wise men (1 Kings 4:30), but they would not be able to cope with this judgment from the Lord.

How are we seeing this judgment principle in the USA today?

The public policy makers are not considering tried-and-true traditional beliefs, practices, and unbiased science to embrace false doctrines of evolution, global warming, CRT, transgenderism, and transhumanism...

Proverbs 29:2 – *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan*

v4 – How would God escalate the judgment of Egypt?

The Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them: God may judge a nation through their leadership in two ways. First, by removing competent leadership (*I will destroy their counsel*). Second, by giving them cruel and oppressive rulers. This is a curse and a judgment to any people.

How are we seeing cruel and oppressive leadership in the USA today?

- Insisting on the military taking vaccines that no longer work (if they ever did) and actually damage the health of many people despite the pandemic being over due to herd immunity.
- Enforcing regulations that put small business out of business.
- Enforcing global warming policies that have caused inflation to soar.
- Colluding with Big Tech to censor political enemies.
- Passing an "Inflation Reduction Act" that adds 87K agents to weaponize the IRS against political enemies.
- Expanding the use of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) scores to punish political enemies.
- Preparing to replace the dollar with CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency) to be able to track every transaction confiscate money from political enemies.
- Make voting systems so easy to cheat that critical elections can no longer be trusted.

v5-10 – How would God pour out judgment on Egypt's economy?

The river will be wasted and dried up: The Nile River was the key to Egypt's agriculture and economy. For it to suffer a severe drought or lowering would have a devastating effect on the lives of Egyptians.

The rivers will turn foul: Because of this ecological disaster, the workers of Egypt would cry out. The fishermen also will mourn...they will languish who spread nets on the waters...those who weave fine fabric will be ashamed...all who make wages will be troubled of soul.

v11 – What would Egypt's leaders and policy makers be like?

Surely the princes of Zoan are fools; Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish counsel: As the LORD strikes Egypt, not only does He give them cruel rulers, but He also gives those cruel rulers foolish counsel.

v12 – What happened to Egypt's wise men?

God took them away or made them fools. There is a big difference between being a fool for God and a fool of God!

If God had not removed their wise men, what would they have counseled Egypt's rulers?

Let them tell you now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts has purposed against Egypt: Here, the LORD reminds us of what true wisdom is. It is knowing what the LORD of hosts has purposed. True wisdom isn't knowing all kinds of facts and plans and strategies.

Proverbs 9:10 – *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

v13 – Besides becoming fools, what would the leaders of Egypt do?

They have deceived each other and deceived the people

2 Timothy 3:13 – *evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

Leaders deceiving each other and deceiving the public will be a characteristic of the end of the Age. Indeed, Jesus warned of this in the Olivet Discourse...

Matthew 24:11 – *many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.*

What kinds of deception are we seeing today?

- COVID – Lies about how bad it is to instill fear so that the public could be manipulated into embracing their draconian solutions.
- Inflation – The necessary pain to “transition” to a more “sustainable” green energy economy.
- Open borders – Opposition is racism.
- Defund the police – Not tolerating crime is racism.
- Transgenderism – A person can change their genders. A man can give birth.

v14 – What kind of spirit did God allow to plague Egypt?

A perverse spirit – stubborn in being against what is right or sensible, and/or wrong especially in a way that is strange or offensive. This is a pattern of judgment against the ungodly...

Romans 1:28 – *even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting*

A debased mind cannot think rationally... policy decisions are not logical and make problems worse. Earlier in Isaiah, this perverse spirit as part of God's judgment against Judah was described:

Isaiah 5:20 – *Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

How are we are seeing evil being called good in our society today?

The LGBTQ agenda is all about affirming evil to be good. Those who hold to biblical and traditional values are being ostracized as being evil.

- If you question the politically correct narratives on evolution, COVID, global warming, abortion, crime prevention, race relations, etc., you are evil.
- Political opponents are not just called wrong, they are evil.

v15 – Who would not do any work to benefit Egypt?

Neither the rulers or the people (*head or tail, palm branch or bulrush*) ...nobody would seek to Make Egypt Great Again.

v16 – What would the waving of God's hand result in?

All the LORD will need to do is to wave His hand, and the people of Egypt will respond in terror, they will be afraid and fear.

v17 – How would Judah be a terror to Egypt?

This is a dramatic change. For thousands of years, the land of Judah lay submissively in the shadow of the great Egyptian Empire. The LORD prophesies a day when Judah will be mightier than Egypt, and the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt. This seems to be fulfilled in our day and certainly will be the case during the Millennial Kingdom.

Isaiah 19:18-25 – Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed

¹⁸ *In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the Lord of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction.*

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 at its border.* ²⁰ *And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the Lord because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them.* ²¹ *Then the Lord will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the Lord and perform it.* ²² *And the Lord will strike Egypt, He will strike and heal it; they will return to the Lord, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.*

²³ *In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians.*

²⁴ *In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land,* ²⁵ *whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.”*

v18 – When will Egypt swear by the Lord of hosts?

This has to be during the Millennial Kingdom when five cities in the land of Egypt will become more identified with the LORD than with Egypt.

- A better translation of the phrase City of Destruction may be, City of the Sun, which was a well-known Egyptian city known as Heliopolis.

How is it Egypt will speak the language of Canaan?

Apparently during the Millennial Kingdom, Egypt will embrace Hebrew as their official national language in order to more honor God.

v19 – How else will Egypt honor the Lord during the Millennial Kingdom?

This prophecy announces a day when Egypt will worship the LORD, with an altar to the LORD, and will memorialize God's great works with a pillar to the LORD.

- Not only does the Savior deliver Israel from the oppression of the Antichrist at the end of the Tribulation, He also delivers Gentile nations as represented by Egypt in this prophecy.

v20 – Who is it that delivers Egypt from oppression?

The Lord Jesus Christ described here as their Savior and a Mighty One, an apt description of Him when He returns.

v21 – What has to happen for Egypt to be represented in the Millennial kingdom?

The Egyptians will know the LORD in that day: The people of Egypt will all recognize Jesus as Lord.

- This was perhaps foreshadowed in the early days of Christianity when there was a strong, vital church in Egypt for more than 600 years.

What is the sacrifice and offering that Egypt will make during the Millennial kingdom?

Not only will Egypt embrace Hebrew as their national language, they will also adopt Jewish practices as a memorial of Jesus' great work. Just as restored Israel will bring blood sacrifices unto the Lord to keep in remembrance of His all-sufficient blood sacrifice, so this may also take place in Egypt.

v22 – What kind of healing will the Lord do for the Egyptians?

In context this is most certainly spiritual healing. Not only will the spirit of God be poured out on all Israel, many of the Gentile nations represented here by Egypt will also receive God's Spirit.

v23-24 – What does the highway between Assyria and Egypt represent?

Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria: God promises the day will come when there will be peace between Israel, Egypt, and Assyria. There will be trade and travel between the three nations (a highway from Egypt to Assyria). In that day, the LORD will bless all three nations.

v25 – How does this reinforce Gentile blessing during the Millennial Kingdom?

Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria, the work of My hands, and Israel is My inheritance: What an amazing work of redemption! This shows that God's salvation will extend to the nations, and He will call forth His own even from Egypt and Assyria, not only from Israel.

- It was powerful to say this of Egypt and almost unbelievable to say it about Assyria. The brutality of the Assyrians probably made them more of an object of hatred than any other nation of antiquity. The Egyptians, Babylonians, and Persians were all capable of inhuman acts, but the Assyrian record for callous cruelty was difficult to parallel.
- Who could ever have supposed that Egypt would be addressed by God as 'my people'? Or that Assyria, would ever be called 'the work of my hands'? Yet both are the triumphs of divine grace.

How was Israel God's inheritance?

God promised that Israel would inherit the land of Canaan and would live there as His people and He will deliver that during the Millennial Kingdom.

- We are also the Lord's inheritance; in Ephesians 1:18, Paul prayed that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.
- God's people are His riches and inheritance and glory.

What applications came to mind from our discussion?

- God's judgments often target the very thing (idols) that come between Him and ourselves.
- God's judgment against nations often includes:
 - setting the people against themselves.
 - giving them poor leaders and bad counsel.
 - giving them cruel and oppressive leadership
 - allowing great & growing deception
 - giving them a perverse spirit & a debased mind
- Calling good evil and evil good reveals that a society is under the judgment of God.
- Gentile nations will be blessed during the Millennial Kingdom as well as Israel.
- It is good to be the inheritance of the Lord!