

A BETTER KING, SERVANT, CONQUEROR

The Book of Isaiah

Isaiah 19—23

Verse to Remember

...and in that day they will acknowledge the LORD. from Isaiah 19:21

In Isaiah 19—23, Isaiah continues his oracles against the nations. The nations he addresses either believe they have control of their destiny or are desperately trying to get it, but these chapters make it clear that God alone is in control. He has a plan for each nation, which they are powerless to change. In the oracles, Isaiah continues to alternate between predictions of devastation and destruction – which highlight God’s anger and justice – and promises of reconciliation and redemption – which highlight his mercy and love. This lesson will focus on the oracles addressed to Egypt (Isaiah 19) and Jerusalem (Isaiah 22). You may want to begin by reading Isaiah 19—23 to get the overall feel of Isaiah’s remaining oracles.

Days 1 & 2 — Read Isaiah 19:1–22.

1. In his oracle, Isaiah could simply have said “God will thoroughly destroy Egypt.” Why do you think he gives so many details?
2. How do we know that the LORD is responsible for the devastating judgment Egypt will suffer? (Is. 19:1–4, 12, 14, 16)

3. God’s judgment of Egypt affects every area of Egyptian life. Some of that judgment comes through the Assyrians. (The “fierce king” of verse 4 is the king of Assyria.) Describe the effects on Egyptian...
Idols (Egyptian gods) (Is. 19:1b)

Relationships (Is. 19:2)

People (Is. 19:3, 16)

Leadership (Is. 19:4, 11–14)

Natural Environment (Is. 19:5–7a)

Livelihood/Economy (Is. 19:7b–10)

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4. The Egyptians looked to all the things described in question three for hope, security, and salvation. What does God's judgment make clear about these sources of "salvation"? (Consider Is. 19:15.)

5. Why does God have a right to be angry and to bring judgment on the nations? (Is. 13:11; Rom. 1:18–23; Rom. 2:5–11)

6. What was God's ultimate goal in bringing divine punishment upon Egypt (and on the rest of the nations as well)? (Is. 19:19–22; Is. 16:4b–5; Is. 17:7–8)

Day 3 — Read Isaiah 19:23–25.

Considering the scope of God's anger toward Egypt and the fierce judgment he brings upon her, his promises of blessing are unexpected and amazing. "In that day" appears five times in this passage. This phrase points forward to Jesus' Messianic kingdom, which began with his earthly ministry, continues in our day through the work of his Spirit, and will be completed at his second coming. At that time all prophecies made in the Old Testament will be fulfilled, including the promise that after God strikes Egypt he will heal her (Is. 19:22).

1. What will characterize the healing God has in store for Egypt? (Is. 19:19–25)

In light of the oracle in Isaiah 19:1–17, why is the promise of God's healing so amazing?

Day 3 continues on page 3 ➡

2. What kind of relationship have Egypt, Assyria, and Israel had with one another?
Egypt and Assyria (Is. 19:4; Is. 20:3–6)

Assyria and Israel (2 Kgs. 17:5–6; Is. 8:3–8)

Egypt and Israel (Exod. 3:7–9)

What transformations will God bring about? (Is. 19:23–25)

3. What aspects of God's character are on display in these transformations?

Day 4 The people of God were to be a light to the nations, attracting others to him by demonstrating the blessing of worshipping the one true God. Tragically, instead of drawing the nations into light and truth, Israel was drawn into their darkness and idolatry. As a result, God's people also became objects of God's judgment.

Chapter 22
most likely describes Babylon's
destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.
This took place 115 years after
Assyria's attempt to conquer
Jerusalem failed because of
God's mercy.

Read Isaiah 22:1-14.

1. Describe the situation in Jerusalem. (Is. 22:1–8a)
2. God is judging his people (v. 14). What sin do they commit that brings about the destruction of Jerusalem? (Is. 22:8b–11)

3. What is God calling his people to do? (Is. 22:12)

What are they doing instead? (Is. 22:13)

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4. What do you think the underlying attitude of the people was during this time? (Consider what they say in verse 13b).

5. In contrast to God's people, Isaiah is inconsolable over the impending destruction of Jerusalem. How does God feel? (Ezek. 18:30–32; Ezek. 33:11; Lk. 19:41–44)

Day 5

1. The judgment and destruction in Isaiah's day were not the final word. Throughout history God has been seeking to bring people together from every nation to create a new people to worship him. Read Ephesians 2. How is God bringing this about?

2. The world of Isaiah's day was a mess. Over and over again, the nations tried - unsuccessfully - to solve their problems by making alliances, worshipping idols, accumulating wealth or weapons - anything other than trusting in the one true God. Our world is a mess as well.
 - a. What are you tempted to trust in other than God?

 - b. How does this lesson encourage you to trust the only true Savior?

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