

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 20

Chapters 13-23 of Isaiah: The Oracles against the nations

Major points

1. These chapters of Isaiah deal primarily with **foreign nations** who persecuted Judah.
2. These oracles teach the **universal sovereignty of God**.
3. The Lord addresses **Judah** concerning these nations. Judah is the frame of reference for the Lord's dealings with pagan nations.
4. The oracles form a threefold pattern:
 - a. Predicted **future destruction** for relying on human power instead of the Lord.
 - b. **Interim** fulfillment: **imminent disaster** a proof of the greater destruction to come.
 - c. Predicted **hope** for the **distant future** after turning to the Lord.
5. Message to Judah: Do not place your trust in horses or princes. **Trust the Lord** at all times.
6. All of these nations would one day be conquered and destroyed – including the most powerful **world empires** of Assyria and Babylon.
7. The Lord is sovereign over the affairs and destinies of **all nations**. (Psalms 20:7; 118:8-9)

Oracles concerning the nations in Isaiah chapters 13 to 23

Nation	Description	In Isaiah
Babylon	Would overthrow Judah and send her people into exile in 586 BC. Babylon was the dominant world power from 605 BC to 539 BC. When it fell to the Medes and Persians.	13-14:23; 21:1-10
Assyria	The dominant world empire during Isaiah's lifetime. The armies of Sennacherib invaded Judah in 701 BC and laid siege to Jerusalem. They suffered a serious setback when the Lord miraculously rescued Jerusalem (Isa 37:21-38).	14:24-27
Philistia	Judah's neighbor to the west. A fierce enemy of Israel in David's time. Stirred up revolts against Assyria. They would be defeated by the Assyrian invasion of 701 BC.	14:28-32
Moab	Judah's neighbor to the east. Ruth was a Moabite (Ruth 1:22). The Moabites were descendants of Lot (Gen 19:37). In 714 BC, Moab formed an alliance with the Philistines to oppose the Assyrians. It failed.	15-16
Damascus (Syria)	A nation to the northeast of Israel. Syria was a threat to the Jews from the rule of David onward. Syria was an ally of Israel in opposition to Assyria. In 734 BC the Assyrian king Tiglath Pileser III invaded and took the Syrians into exile .	17:1-3
Ephraim (Israel)	Shalmaneser V took Samaria (the capital of Israel) in 722 BC and deported most of the population (Isa 17:3-4)	17:4-14

Cush (Ethiopia)	Ruled over Egypt at that time. Territory immediately south of Egypt near modern-day Sudan.	18
Egypt	Ancient nation along the Nile. Egypt was divided during much of the 8 th century BC as 3 cities vied for control. Egypt would be defeated by Sennacherib in 701 BC.	19-20
Nation	Description	In Isaiah
Edom	The land where the descendants of Esau lived. It was in the extreme southern Palestine in the barren territory below the Dead Sea. The Edomites were the historic enemies of Israel.	21:11-12
Arabia	The desert region southeast of Judah between Babylon and Edom. It was hot, dry and sparsely populated. The territory was 1,400 miles long and 800 miles wide. The queen of Sheba came from southern Arabia.	21:13-17
Jerusalem (Judah)	The city of Jerusalem would be miraculously rescued by the Lord from the Assyrians in 701 BC. However, they would not be as fortunate when the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar attacked in 586 BC.	22
Tyre	Judah's neighbor to the northwest, north of Philistia. It was a great seafaring nation and a world center for commerce. They conducted lucrative trade and planted colonies throughout the Mediterranean Sea region. When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the mainland city, the economies of Mediterranean nations – including Egypt -were ruined.	23

Case in point: Egypt (Isaiah 19:1-20:6)

The oracle against Egypt follows the threefold pattern (see #4 on page 1), but in its own order.

In this oracle, Isaiah is warning Judah not to rely on Egypt for her security. Egypt will be destroyed in the future by the Assyrian king Ashu(663 BC). *Isaiah 19:1-15*

Before that, Egypt will be overrun by Assyria. Her soldiers will be humiliated and taken captive (701 BC). This historical event (within the lifetime of Isaiah and the then current rulers of Judah) guarantees that the undated future event will occur. *Isaiah 20:1-6*

There is a day coming - the second coming of Christ - when Egypt will turn to the Lord and be healed. There will be one Lord, one world, and one people. The Egyptians will join Israel and the Assyrians in worshipping the Lord. The Lord will call Egypt "My people"! *Isaiah 19:16-25*

Therefore, Judah and her leaders should rely on the Lord, not Egypt, for protection from Assyria.

Let's read the entire passage, chapters 19 & 20, picking things up in 19:11.

Chapters 24-27 of Isaiah: The Ultimate Destiny of the earth and all of its inhabitants

Next, we will tackle **chapters 24-27**. Make every effort to read those four chapters in the next week.

They deal with the **end times**: the **Tribulation** period, the **(Second) Coming** of the Lord, and the Messianic **Kingdom**.

While chapters 13-23 dealt with specific individual nations, chapters 24-27 deal with **all the inhabitants of the earth**.

There are two classes of mankind in view in chapters 24-27: **the wicked**, and **the faithful**.