

# INITIATION INTO ISAIAH

by

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## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### **THEME:**

The Burden of Egypt. Through gloom to glory.

### **REMARKS:**

No nation figures so prominently on the pages of Scripture besides Israel than does Egypt. She has a longer history than any nation mentioned in Scripture including Israel. Egypt was one of the most ancient of the great nations of the past. It is in existence today and plays a prominent part in world events. It has a glorious future predicted on the pages of Scripture. This chapter contains all elements which enter into the history of the nation—its past, present, and future.

Egypt comes into prominence early in Scripture when Abraham ran away to Egypt and got into difficulties. Later Joseph was sold into Egypt and during a famine Jacob and his twelve sons went down into Egypt with their families. There Israel became a nation in the slavery of the brick yards of Egypt. Ahaz and Hezekiah both made an alliance with Egypt and found her an unreliable ally.

During the inter-Testament period Israel suffered grievously at the hand of Egypt.

When Jesus was born He was taken down into Egypt. The Gospel made many converts in Egypt during the first three centuries of the Christian era. Currently, Egypt is the thorn in the side of the new nation of Israel.

### **OUTLINE:**

1. **FULFILLED PROPHECY Concerning Egypt.** Verses 1-15
2. **UNFULFILLED PROPHECY Concerning Egypt.** Verses 16-25

### **COMMENT:**

Verse 1—**The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.**

The idolatry of Egypt is the chief target of God's condemnation of this nation. Perhaps no people were ever given over to idolatry more than the Egyptians, with the possible exception of the Babylonians. The very fountain head of idolatry, Egypt, because of her long history, is a perfect example of Romans 1:21-23.

**Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.**

The people were originally monotheistic, but they gradually lapsed into the basest sort of idolatry where every creature was worshipped; the bull, the frog, the scarab (a bug), the fish and all sorts of birds. The contest of Moses with Pharaoh to let Israel go free resolved itself about a battle of the gods. The Lord God struck at all forms of idolatry in Egypt—from the sun and the River Nile to frogs and lice, now He comes down again in a cloud like a chariot to destroy the idols of Egypt.

It is interesting to know that idolatry has long since disappeared from the land, though the people dwell in the ignorance and superstition of the Moslem religion. This has been fulfilled literally.

**Verse 2—And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.**

A Pharaoh arose about the time of Isaiah who could no longer control this great kingdom and the army no longer obeyed him.

This caused the setting up of weak city states that were self-governing for a period of time.

**Verse 3—And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmings, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.**

This proud nation, that had advanced its civilization so much farther than other nations, was brought down to a low level. The people turned to their idols to no avail and finally in desperation resorted to Spiritism.

**Verse 4—And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts.**

This “**cruel lord**” is generally identified as Psammetichus who arose in the 9th Century B.C, however, there is good reason to believe he might have been the Ottoman Turk who reduced Egypt to a poverty stricken nation.

**Verse 5—And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.**

The sea refers to the River Nile that was the main artery of the nation and the rivers are the canals that were built especially at the mouth of the river.

**Verse 6—And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.**

The brooks are the outlets to the sea and most of them are filled today. All vegetation of a valuable nature was to disappear from the brooks of the river. This has been fulfilled literally.

**Verse 7—The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.**

The “**paper reeds**” are the papyri which was used in that day as paper is used today. It was one of the main industries of Egypt and afforded a great volume of the wealth of Egypt. It disappeared and no longer grows along the banks where it was indigenous and where Moses was hidden along the River Nile. This has been fulfilled literally.

**Verse 8—The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.**

Fishing was another great industry as the Nile abounded in fish. The fish have disappeared and to this day fishing is not one of the industries along the Nile. This was fulfilled literally.

**Verse 9—Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded.**

The linen of Egypt was world renowned. Linen taken from mummies is superior to any linen that is made by the linen mills of Ireland. The fine twined byssus linen was used in the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness by Moses. That industry disappeared. This prophecy was literally fulfilled.

**Verse 10—And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish.**

The entire fishing industry was to disappear. This has been fulfilled literally.

Dr. F.C. Jennings writes. “Egypt’s wealth, as already said, practically consists in her river, because of its volume here called a sea.”

**Verse 11—Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?**

Zoan is the Tunis of secular history. Mental weakness as well as material depletion was to be a judgment. This was fulfilled literally (See Ezekiel 29:14-15).

Verse 12—**Where are they? where are any wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.**

All the leadership would disappear.

Verse 13—**The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are flit stay of the tribes thereof.**

Noph is Memphis as we know it.

Verse 14—**The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have cause Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.**

This is a vivid picture of the reduction of Egypt to a base kingdom.

Verse 15—**Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.**

Industry and commerce would die, and poverty and wretchedness would overtake the nation. This continues to be the plight of Egypt. God's Word has been fulfilled literally.

This first section could be further divided:

- (1) **FAILURE OF FALSE RELIGION.** Verses 1-4
- (2) **FAILURE OF MATERIAL RESOURCES.** Verses 5-10
- (3) **FAILURE OF SPIRITUAL POWER.** Verses 11-15

Verse 16—**In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shaketh over it.**

“**In that day**” places this section in the future. It occurs six (6) times.

This verse surely characterized Egypt in the recent conflict with Israel. The armies of Egypt crumbled and fled.

Verse 17—**And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he hath determined against it.**

This could likewise have a present day application. This entire section looks toward the Day of the Lord for a complete fulfillment.

Verse 19—**In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.**

Verse 20—**And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.**

“**An altar to the Lord**” has been interpreted by some of the cults as the pyramid. The pyramid is neither an altar nor a pillar but a monstrous mausoleum for the burying of a king and his queen. The cross will yet be the place to which Egypt will look instead of to a crescent.

Verse 21—**And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.**

Verse 22—**And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.**

Egypt has a glorious future. The nation will enter and enjoy the Kingdom with Israel, how different from the present hour.

Verse 23—**In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.**

This freeway will not be for soldiers and armies but for those going to Jerusalem to serve Christ, the King.

Verse 24—**In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:**

Note the exalted position of Egypt in the Kingdom.

Verse 25—**Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.**

Note this statement. “**Blessed be Egypt.**” A blessing is yet to come to this despised and debased nation.

~ end of chapter 19 ~

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