

CbC to Aug 1

July 26 Su Reading B207 — Isaiah 17-18 — Hope for Nations

Audio: [Isaiah 17-18 \(ESV\)](#)

Life After Death — These two chapters are tied together by the repetition of the word, “Ah” in 17:12 and 18:2. This word, sometimes translated as “Alas” or “Woe,” often calls attention to something striking or painful. In chapter 17 it refers to “*many peoples ... [or] nations*” (vv. 12, 13), and in 18:1 the attention is on Cush, an area around southern Egypt and western Ethiopia. At the beginning and end, they are called “*a people tall and smooth ... a people feared ... a nation mighty and conquering*” (18:2, 7b). There is hope offered for these people because it is prophesied that they “*will be brought to the LORD of hosts*” (v. 7a). The prediction of the future for the two main nations mentioned in chapter 17 involves widespread destruction, and then a restoration of a remnant of the people. God said that the nation of Israel was destroyed and exiled by Assyria because “*you have forgotten the God of your salvation*” (17:10). Later, however, the Israelite “*will look to his Maker ... the Holy One of Israel. He will not look to the altars, the work of his hands, and ... the Asherim*” (vv. 7-8). From the other nation of Syria, a remnant would survive and “*be like the glory of the children of Israel*” (v. 3). God offered hope even after judgment for a pagan nation. He also offers hope for the Christian who falls into sin. There is forgiveness through repentance and faith. It is somewhat like being given life after death.

July 27 M Reading B208 — Isaiah 19 — Oracle Against Egypt

Audio: [Isaiah 19 \(ESV\)](#)

Striking and Healing — This chapter presents both negative and positive prophecies regarding Egypt, the nation that enslaved God’s people in their formation period. First would come judgment on them as God supernaturally and powerfully rides “*on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt*” (v. 1). Their judgment will take the form of internal deterioration and external destruction as they fight each other in confusion, experience a devastating drought, and are ruled by fierce kings (vv. 2-15). The last part of the chapter looks to an unidentified future through the six uses of the expression, “*in that day*” (vv. 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24). The nation that enslaved Hebrews for about 400 years will someday “*tremble with fear*” (v. 16) from the God of Israel, speak the language of the Jews (v. 18), and come to know and worship their God (v. 21). Isaiah calls this punishment and restoration process, “*striking and healing*” (v. 22). It is the process seen throughout the Bible for God’s dealings with sinful mankind. It is like the proverbial farmer who had to hit his stubborn donkey on the head with a big stick to get his attention. Because of our inborn sinful nature, we often ignore God despite His attention-getting dealings with us.

July 28 Tu Reading B209 — Isaiah 20-21 — Egypt and Babylon

Audio: [Isaiah 20-21 \(ESV\)](#)

Purpose-Driven Nations — Chapter 20 is really a continuation of the previous chapter’s oracle against Egypt. Ashdod, a major city of the Philistines, had sought help from Egypt against an invasion of Assyria, but the Egyptians had backed out. Now, both Egypt and Cush would be embarrassingly conquered by Assyria, too, which God told Isaiah to illustrate by walking around “*naked and barefoot*” (20:2). Sure enough, three years later, the Assyrians led away “*the Egyptian captives and the Cushite exiles ... naked and barefoot*” (v. 4). Chapter 21 begins another set of oracles against nations. Babylon is the first nation mentioned for future destruction, which becomes clear in verse 9 when God would declare, “*Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the carved images of her gods.*” We have already read about the coming Babylonian disaster in Isaiah 13, and we will later

read Jeremiah's account. These major events, told in advance, emphasize not only the ability of God to see the future but also to direct it for His own purposes. We are in the midst of God's overall and individual plan, too, even though we don't always see it clearly. His ways are always good and just, so we should seek and follow where we know He is leading us.

July 29 W Reading B210 — Isaiah 22 — Jerusalem's Coming Fall

Audio: [Isaiah 22 \(ESV\)](#)

ACCOUNTABILITY TIME!

Celebrating and Weeping — This chapter looks ahead to the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. The city is ironically called "*the valley of vision*" (v. 1) because it was literally set on a mountain and its vision from God was being ignored. The people were celebrating on the housetops in the face of their destruction (v. 1-2), saying irresponsibly, "*Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*" (v. 13). Their fearful leaders had already fled the city (v. 3). Isaiah wept "*bitter tears*" (v. 4) as he saw the reality of what was about to happen. The great tragedy of the people's thinking was that they "*looked to the weapons*" (v. 9), while they "*did not look to him...*" (v. 11). Like many of us today, they depended on their own limited strength rather than on God's almighty power. That amounts to a lack of knowing who God really is and what He wants to do in our lives. God would replace Jerusalem's unworthy steward, Shebna (v. 15), with the worthy steward, Eliakim (v. 20), but he would not be able to bear the weight of responsibility, resulting in Jerusalem's fall.

ACCOUNTABILITY TIME! If you are up to date in your reading as of today, please let me know at accbibleread@gmail.com.

July 30 Th Reading B211 — Isaiah 23 — Tyre's Turn

Audio: [Isaiah 23 \(ESV\)](#)

ACCOUNTABILITY REMINDER

Working for Us — The city of Tyre was built on an island off the northern coast of Canaan. Its location made it ideal for both safety and shipping. It had become known as "*the merchant of the nations*" (v. 3). It was famous and necessary for the nations of the Mediterranean Sea, but Tyre's sin was pride. This "*exultant city*" (v. 7) was to be destroyed by God for its "*pompous pride*" (v. 9), so that it "*will no more exult*" (v. 12). God hates human pride. Like Judah in Babylon, the doom God pronounced on Tyre was only temporary, for 70 years (vv. 15, 17). It would be internationally "*forgotten*" during those years (v. 15), losing all its wealth and influence. Then, Tyre would "*return to her wages*" (v. 17), but God would arrange that those "*wages will be holy to the LORD ... [and] will supply abundant food and fine clothing for those who dwell before the LORD*" (v. 18), even though it continued its sinful merchandising ways. God has His ways of rewarding the righteous at the expense of those who rebel against Him. That is the One who loves us and is the God we serve. He benefits us in many surprising ways.

ACCOUNTABILITY REMINDER If you are up to date in your reading as of today, but did not report yesterday, please let me know at accbibleread@gmail.com.

ACCOUNTABILITY FINAL DAY

Judgment Sandwich — These next four chapters of Isaiah point ahead to the final judgment of God that will happen “*on that day*” (v. 21; a phrase used seven times in these chapters). This chapter presents a “judgment sandwich,” with three verses speaking of the “meat” of hope (vv. 14-16a) between two slices of the “bread” of worldwide punishing disaster. All this is clearly God’s doing: “*the LORD will empty the earth and make it desolate*” (v. 1). The reason for this devastation is also very clear: “*they have transgressed the laws ... Therefore a curse devours the earth ... and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt*” (vv. 5-6). It was payment for the wages of sin. In contrast to the former worldly “mirth” and “joy” (vv. 8, 11) of the majority, is the joyful crowd of future redeemed followers of God, who “*lift up their voices ... [and] sing for joy ... from the west ... east ... coastlands ... [and] the ends of the earth ... [with] songs of praise*” (vv. 14-16). From then on, “*the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders*” (v. 23).

ACCOUNTABILITY FINAL DAY! If you have not yet reported for this month, please let me know your reading status today at accbibleread@gmail.com.

Waiting for Salvation — This is another picture of the End Times, when everything will be changed on earth and nations will turn to God: “*...strong peoples will glorify you ... ruthless nations will fear you*” (v. 3). That God will rule from Jerusalem is indicated three times by the words, “*on this mountain*.” First, He will provide a feast “*for all peoples*” (v. 6). Then, He will “*swallow up death forever*” (v. 8). That these will be all-inclusive events is emphasized by the repetition, “*all peoples ... all peoples ... all nations ... all faces ... all the earth*” (vv. 6-8). The last event “*on this mountain*” will be the trampling down of Moab because of their “*pompous pride*” (v. 11). Isaiah told the people in his day about these future events, and we are still waiting for them 2,700 years later. When it does happen, people like us will declare, “*Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him ... This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation*” (v. 9). In the meantime, born-again believers have already found personal salvation through the indwelling Spirit of God. We can “*be glad and rejoice in his salvation*” right now. Stop right now and praise God for what He has done for you in bringing you salvation!