

Sunday, September 15

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Isaiah 19:1 - 21:17

19 **1** This message came to me concerning Egypt: Look! The LORD is advancing against Egypt, riding on a swift cloud. The idols of Egypt tremble. The hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear. **2** “I will make Egyptian fight against Egyptian— brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor, city against city, province against province. **3** The Egyptians will lose heart, and I will confuse their plans. They will plead with their idols for wisdom and call on spirits, mediums, and those who consult the spirits of the dead. **4** I will hand Egypt over to a hard, cruel master. A fierce king will rule them,” says the Lord, the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. **5** The waters of the Nile will fail to rise and flood the fields. The riverbed will be parched and dry. **6** The canals of the Nile will dry up, and the streams of Egypt will stink with rotting reeds and rushes. **7** All the greenery along the riverbank and all the crops along the river will dry up and blow away. **8** The fishermen will lament for lack of work. Those who cast hooks into the Nile will groan, and those who use nets will lose heart. **9** There will be no flax for the harvesters, no thread for the weavers. **10** They will be in despair, and all the workers will be sick at heart. **11** What fools are the officials of Zoan! Their best counsel to the king of Egypt is stupid and wrong. Will they still boast to Pharaoh of their wisdom? Will they dare brag about all their wise ancestors? **12** Where are your wise counselors, Pharaoh? Let them tell you what God plans, what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies is going to do to Egypt. **13** The officials of Zoan are fools, and the officials of Memphis are deluded. The leaders of the people have led Egypt astray. **14** The LORD has sent a spirit of foolishness on them, so all their suggestions are wrong. They cause Egypt to stagger like a drunk in his vomit. **15** There is nothing Egypt can do. All are helpless— the head and the tail, the noble palm branch and the lowly reed. **16** In that day the Egyptians will be as weak as women. They will cower in fear beneath the upraised fist of the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. **17** Just to speak the name of Israel will terrorize them, for the LORD of Heaven’s Armies has laid out his plans against them. **18** In that day five of Egypt’s cities will follow the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. They will even begin to speak Hebrew, the language of Canaan. One of these cities will be Heliopolis, the City of the Sun. **19** In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the heart of Egypt, and there will be a monument to the LORD at its border. **20** It will be a sign and a witness that the LORD of Heaven’s Armies is worshiped in the land of Egypt. When the people cry to the LORD for help against those who oppress them, he will send them a savior who will rescue them. **21** The LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians.

Yes, they will know the LORD and will give their sacrifices and offerings to him. They will make a vow to the LORD and will keep it. **22** The LORD will strike Egypt, and then he will bring healing. For the Egyptians will turn to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas and heal them. **23** In that day Egypt and Assyria will be connected by a highway. The Egyptians and Assyrians will move freely between their lands, and they will both worship God. **24** In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth. **25** For the LORD of Heaven's Armies will say, "Blessed be Egypt, my people. Blessed be Assyria, the land I have made. Blessed be Israel, my special possession!"

20 **1** In the year when King Sargon of Assyria sent his commander in chief to capture the Philistine city of Ashdod, **2** the LORD told Isaiah son of Amoz, "Take off the burlap you have been wearing, and remove your sandals." Isaiah did as he was told and walked around naked and barefoot. **3** Then the LORD said, "My servant Isaiah has been walking around naked and barefoot for the last three years. This is a sign—a symbol of the terrible troubles I will bring upon Egypt and Ethiopia. **4** For the king of Assyria will take away the Egyptians and Ethiopians as prisoners. He will make them walk naked and barefoot, both young and old, their buttocks bared, to the shame of Egypt. **5** Then the Philistines will be thrown into panic, for they counted on the power of Ethiopia and boasted of their allies in Egypt! **6** They will say, 'If this can happen to Egypt, what chance do we have? We were counting on Egypt to protect us from the king of Assyria.'"

21 **1** This message came to me concerning Babylon—the desert by the sea : Disaster is roaring down on you from the desert, like a whirlwind sweeping in from the Negev. **2** I see a terrifying vision: I see the betrayer betraying, the destroyer destroying. Go ahead, you Elamites and Medes, attack and lay siege. I will make an end to all the groaning Babylon caused. **3** My stomach aches and burns with pain. Sharp pangs of anguish are upon me, like those of a woman in labor. I grow faint when I hear what God is planning; I am too afraid to look. **4** My mind reels and my heart races. I longed for evening to come, but now I am terrified of the dark. **5** Look! They are preparing a great feast. They are spreading rugs for people to sit on. Everyone is eating and drinking. But quick! Grab your shields and prepare for battle. You are being attacked! **6** Meanwhile, the Lord said to me, "Put a watchman on the city wall. Let him shout out what he sees. **7** He should look for chariots drawn by pairs of horses, and for riders on donkeys and camels. Let the watchman be fully alert." **8** Then the watchman called out, "Day after day I have stood on the watchtower, my lord. Night after night I have remained at my post. **9** Now at last—look! Here comes a man in a chariot with a pair of horses!" Then the watchman said, "Babylon is fallen, fallen! All the idols of Babylon lie broken on the

ground!" **10** O my people, threshed and winnowed, I have told you everything the LORD of Heaven's Armies has said, everything the God of Israel has told me. **11** This message came to me concerning Edom : Someone from Edom keeps calling to me, "Watchman, how much longer until morning? When will the night be over?" **12** The watchman replies, "Morning is coming, but night will soon return. If you wish to ask again, then come back and ask." **13** This message came to me concerning Arabia: O caravans from Dedan, hide in the deserts of Arabia. **14** O people of Tema, bring water to these thirsty people, food to these weary refugees. **15** They have fled from the sword, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow and the terrors of battle. **16** The Lord said to me, "Within a year, counting each day, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end. **17** Only a few of its courageous archers will survive. I, the LORD, the God of Israel, have spoken!"

Galatians 2:1 - 16

2 1 Then fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas; and Titus came along, too. **2** I went there because God revealed to me that I should go. While I was there I met privately with those considered to be leaders of the church and shared with them the message I had been preaching to the Gentiles. I wanted to make sure that we were in agreement, for fear that all my efforts had been wasted and I was running the race for nothing. **3** And they supported me and did not even demand that my companion Titus be circumcised, though he was a Gentile. **4** Even that question came up only because of some so-called believers there—false ones, really—who were secretly brought in. They sneaked in to spy on us and take away the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to enslave us and force us to follow their Jewish regulations. **5** But we refused to give in to them for a single moment. We wanted to preserve the truth of the gospel message for you. **6** And the leaders of the church had nothing to add to what I was preaching. (By the way, their reputation as great leaders made no difference to me, for God has no favorites.) **7** Instead, they saw that God had given me the responsibility of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as he had given Peter the responsibility of preaching to the Jews. **8** For the same God who worked through Peter as the apostle to the Jews also worked through me as the apostle to the Gentiles. **9** In fact, James, Peter, and John, who were known as pillars of the church, recognized the gift God had given me, and they accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews. **10** Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do. **11** But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very

wrong. **12** When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile believers, who were not circumcised. But afterward, when some friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision. **13** As a result, other Jewish believers followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. **14** When I saw that they were not following the truth of the gospel message, I said to Peter in front of all the others, "Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you now trying to make these Gentiles follow the Jewish traditions? **15** "You and I are Jews by birth, not 'sinners' like the Gentiles. **16** Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law."

Psalms 59:1 - 17

59 1 Rescue me from my enemies, O God. Protect me from those who have come to destroy me. **2** Rescue me from these criminals; save me from these murderers. **3** They have set an ambush for me. Fierce enemies are out there waiting, LORD, though I have not sinned or offended them. **4** I have done nothing wrong, yet they prepare to attack me. Wake up! See what is happening and help me! **5** O LORD God of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, wake up and punish those hostile nations. Show no mercy to wicked traitors. Interlude **6** They come out at night, snarling like vicious dogs as they prowl the streets. **7** Listen to the filth that comes from their mouths; their words cut like swords. "After all, who can hear us?" they sneer. **8** But LORD, you laugh at them. You scoff at all the hostile nations. **9** You are my strength; I wait for you to rescue me, for you, O God, are my fortress. **10** In his unfailing love, my God will stand with me. He will let me look down in triumph on all my enemies. **11** Don't kill them, for my people soon forget such lessons; stagger them with your power, and bring them to their knees, O Lord our shield. **12** Because of the sinful things they say, because of the evil that is on their lips, let them be captured by their pride, their curses, and their lies. **13** Destroy them in your anger! Wipe them out completely! Then the whole world will know that God reigns in Israel. Interlude **14** My enemies come out at night, snarling like vicious dogs as they prowl the streets. **15** They scavenge for food but go to sleep unsatisfied. **16** But as for me, I will sing about your power. Each morning I will sing with joy about your unfailing love. For you have been my refuge, a place of safety when I am in distress. **17** O my Strength, to you I sing praises, for you, O God, are my refuge, the God who shows me unfailing love.

Proverbs 23:13 - 14

23 **13** Don't fail to discipline your children. The rod of punishment won't kill them. **14** Physical discipline may well save them from death.