

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 38
September 29, 2019



Council of Nicea and the Arian Controversy artist unknown
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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah
Message Thirty-Eight
GENTILES AIDING ISRAEL
September 29, 2019
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Isaiah 18:1–7

Ah, the land of the rustling of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia; ²that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of papyrus upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth, to a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide! ³All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth, when an ensign is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye.

⁴For thus hath Jehovah said unto me, I will be still, and I will behold in my dwelling-place, like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. ⁵For before the harvest, when the blossom is over, and the flower becometh a ripening grape, he will cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and the spreading branches will he take away and cut down. ⁶They shall be left together unto the ravenous birds of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them. ⁷In that time shall a present be brought unto Jehovah of hosts from a people tall and smooth, even from a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide, to the place of the name of Jehovah of hosts, the mount Zion (ASV, 1901).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter, which is quite short as it only encompasses seven verses. It deals with events which, have uncertain fulfillment in Isaiah's time or thereafter and therefore must be yet future to us today. The "burden of Damascus," still appears to be the general context of this chapter and no other "burden" starts until chapter nineteen. Previously we saw Damascus (Syria) made an alliance with the ten Northern Kingdom to attack the Southern Kingdom of Judah. In the past these were the ten tribes, headed by Ephraim, and frequently referred to as that tribe in a synecdoche. Now, following that, is a prophecy that should be understood in the repetition of the same sort of alliance, Jew and Gentile united in a political alliance and treaty under the future Antichrist.

THE LAND OF ETHIOPIA

Isaiah 18:1

Ah, the land of the rustling of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia (ASV, 1901);

Our translation says *the rivers of Ethiopia*. The term in Hebrew actually says *the rivers of Cush*. Land, translated here from the Hebrew word *eretz* is also used to denote the entire earth (Genesis 1:1). There are two areas named Cush in the Bible. One is the African Cush (Isaiah 20:3-5), and the other is in Western Asia (Genesis 2:13). These two rivers are the Euphrates in Western Asia, and the Nile in Africa, which frame the boundaries of the Land of promise, as given to Abraham in Genesis 15:18, from the river of Egypt, the Nile, the African boundary, unto the great river, the river Euphrates, the Asiatic. Then, all the land outside of the Promised land, is what is being alerted and warned with the “Ah”. This is a message to the Gentile nations. It conveys a message to all the earth outside the area of the Land promised to Israel. This deals with the final gathering of Israel from all lands outside of Israel’s Millennial boundaries. The term *rustling of wings*, is better translated as “*shadowing of wings*”. It depicts the protection of a mother hen gathering her chicks together under the shadow of her wings in a protective gesture. So, the Gentiles will aid the process whereby the Israelites will return to the Land. But, only for a time.

Isaiah 11:11–12

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth (ASV, 1901



Promised Land of Israel from www.khouse.org

The phrase, "*beyond the rivers of Cush*," occurs in only one, other place in Scripture, and this is "*From beyond the rivers of Cush shall they bring My suppliant, even the daughter of My dispersed to Me as an offering*" (Zephaniah 3:10). This deals with the final gathering of Israel from all lands outside of the Promised Land boundaries (Isaiah 18:7; Isaiah 43:5; Jeremiah 29:14: "*I will gather you from all nations*").

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE REGATHERING FROM BEYOND THE RIVERS

Isaiah 27:12–13

¹²And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. ¹³And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem (ASV, 1901).

The view here is on the *totality* of the regathering, for every Jew one by one will be brought back into the Land of Israel. The key locality of the regathering will be from outside the rivers of Cush. These are the nations whose boundaries the Jews will be taken one by one out of Egypt and Assyria (modern Iraq). But in the regathering, they will be rescued from the land of their enemies. The regathering will be from all over the world, but with special emphasis on the Middle East nations.

Isaiah 43:5–7

⁵Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; ⁶I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth; ⁷every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made (ASV, 1901).

The text shows that the regathering will be worldwide, and uses the phraseology “all four points of the compass” are mentioned. Then the magnitude is illustrated by the usage of three words: *created*, *formed* and *made*. These three words were used interchangeably in the creation account of Genesis 1–2. Therefore, what God is saying is, the final regathering will be on the magnitude of the original creation.

THE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Isaiah 18:2–3

² That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of papyrus upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth, to a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide! ³All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth, when an ensign is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye (ASV, 1901).

Ships made of literal papyrus would be woefully inadequate to convey the multitude emigrating to Israel for the Messianic Kingdom. But examining the root of the word rendered "papyrus," *gomah*, its first meaning is "to drink," to "absorb" water, and from this root comes the word for papyrus (*gomeh*). That plant does "drink up water" (Job 8:11) and therefore the translators assumed

a reference to "vessels of papyrus." But looking at this generically it reads "*in vessels that drink up water*". This is frequently the case with Hebrew generic references which get translated according to the technology of the time of the author.

The word for "vessels" strengthens this literal rendering. It one that is never used in Scripture for either wind-propelled sailing ship, or ancient oared galleys propelled by humans. There are other specific words for these, so that the "vessels" referred to here must have another prime mover for propulsion. This word for "vessel" always tells of careful construction and delicate adjustment fitting for a specific purpose. So, these carefully constructed "vessels" are propelled by "*drinking up water*."

Modern ships are propelled by steam boilers heated either with fossil fuel or nuclear reaction to convert the water into steam. The Hebrew utilized generic terminology which is easily applied to modern technology. This modern or future advanced technology of seafaring vessel utilizing rapid propulsion is affirmed by the call to them to: "*Go, ye swift messengers*."

Now that there a revived Jewish Sovereign State, Daniel 9:27 tells us that the "Prince" of the Imperialistic Empire (the same people that destroyed Jerusalem) shall make a covenant with Israel for seven years, thus taking it under its "*wing*." He is the Antichrist. The "*land shadowing with wings*" is, therefore, that worldwide Imperialistic Empire, and the incident here referred to is the making that "covenant" or treaty that begins the Tribulation. The Antichrist will initially be very helpful to the nation Israel including helping those outside Israel emigrate to Israel. This then is *the sender of the embassy*. The proper translation of the English *a nation tall and smooth* is scattered and ravaged.

The other remark to decipher is: "*Whose land the rivers have divided*." In Revelation 16:12, the Euphrates used in a manner of dividing or restricting. This symbolic interpretation of a "river" is also used in Isaiah 8:7. There it is "*the Assyrian and all his glory*," because he and his army, as a river breaking over its banks in irresistible flood, invades Israel. In the light this gives, it is obvious that these "*dividing rivers*," those nations which have from time immemorial divided, by their constant ebb and flow, the land of Israel and are subject to judgment.

Joel 3:1–2

For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, ²I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land (ASV, 1901).

It is surely inappropriate to think of literal rivers as dividing that land. It has only one, the Jordan, and that one, far from being destructive, was really a guard along its eastern frontier. But let Egypt (symbolically the Nile) attack Assyria, or let Assyria (the Euphrates) attack Egypt, in either case, the land lying between them, Israel, must be overrun and so "*divided*" by those rivers.

Yet divided as it ever has been, here are its own people back again in it, but not yet in believing on the God of Jacob; their trust is not in *the shadow of His wing*. Their return has been simply a matter of world-politics; and instead of honoring the God of their fathers, they, under their leader, honor the god of fortresses or military strength (Daniel 11:38), therefore will be relying on that protection of the "*land shadowing with wings*" which is the, making of a treaty, as Daniel tells us (9:27), for seven years.

GOD IS SILENT

Isaiah 18:4–6

⁴For thus hath Jehovah said unto me, I will be still, and I will behold in my dwelling-place, like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. ⁵For before the harvest, when the blossom is over, and the flower becometh a ripening grape, he will cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and the spreading branches will he take away and cut down. ⁶They shall be left together unto the ravenous birds of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

God's attitude toward this arrangement, or "covenant." Is simply He has nothing to do with it directly and His will has not been sought. It has simply been the outcome of human politics, and He is not active in the movement. He leaves the earth, so to speak, to His own dwelling; leaves the "earth-dwellers" to pursue their own ends. His providences indeed seem to favor the scheme, and just as clear warm days and dewy nights favor the ripening of grape and corn, so do all events seem to further the plan, with which all goes well for a time. God knows the outcome and in the end the nation Israel who will be punished by the Antichrist will finally experience national regeneration. The temple is rebuilt; morning and evening sacrifices are being conducted. The sacrifices are again burning on the brazen altar and whole mass of returned Jews go up to worship there, without any discrimination marking out the true from the false; all is about to come to full fruition, nothing could be more promising. Peace and safety, they proclaim under the Antichrist's treaty with them.

They think that all Israel's former glory is about to be restored, then comes the realization of the false nature of the treaty. In an hour everything is changed. The Antichrist turns on them. He goes into the Temple, declares himself god and begins to persecute the Israeli population so that in the last three- and one-half years of the Tribulation two-thirds of the Jews will die. Then *the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.*

Three years and a half have elapsed since those ambassadors came in their swift vessels to make the covenant. It is "the midst of the week," of Daniel 9:27, and during that time, while things have gone thus on earth, in heaven there has been war; and now the conquered in that war, under the leadership of the Devil, are cast out to the earth, nevermore to defile Heaven. He and his Antichrist, false Prophet and the demons will leave the abyss, to their final abode of all of them in that Lake of Fire prepared for them; and a malignancy beyond all that is merely human characterizes that short stay, for the Devil has great wrath, for "*he knoweth that he hath but a short time*" (Revelation 12:12).

GOD ACCEPTS THE NATION ISRAEL

Isaiah 18:7

7In that time shall a present be brought unto Jehovah of hosts from a people tall and smooth, even from a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide, to the place of the name of Jehovah of hosts, the mount Zion (ASV, 1901).

This will be a distinctly different restoration than the return of the present day. Jehovah takes less direct interest in this present movement; but here and now the very recovery of the scattered Jews is welcomed and accepted by Jehovah as a holy offering, a "gift-offering." Our translation uses the terminology *tall and smooth* to refer to the people of Israel, which should be translated *scattered and ravaged*. It is the time more fully referred to by Isaiah in chapter 66:20. It is the time referred to by all the prophets that so clearly foretell the final recovery of all Israel. It is the time referred to by our Lord when He said the Son of Man "*shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*" (Matthew 24:31 and the prophet Ezekiel in his chapter thirty-seven). The fruition of the hopes of the present Zionistic movement may be seen by the genuine believers in the Church still upon earth, but this joyous recovery shall be witnessed indeed by the heavenly redeemed, only as accompanying the Lord on His triumphant return.

NEXT MESSAGE: THE WOE TO EGYPT

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