

Good News in the Midst of Bad News

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[0:00] Isaiah chapter 19. We'll read the entire chapter. An oracle concerning Egypt. See the Lord rides on a swift cloud in his coming to Egypt.

! The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt within them. I will stir up Egyptian against Egyptian. Brother will fight against brother.

Neighbor against neighbor. City against city. Kingdom against kingdom. The Egyptians will lose heart, and I will bring their plans to nothing.

They will consult the idols and the spirits of the dead, the mediums and the spiritist. I will hand the Egyptians over to the power of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them, declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty.

The waters of the river will dry up, and the riverbed will be parched and dry. The canals will stink. The streams of Egypt will dwindle and dry up.

[1:09] The reeds and rushes will wither. Also the plants along the Nile at the mouth of the river. Every sown field along the Nile will become parched, will blow away, and be no more.

The fishermen will groan and lament. All who cast hooks into the Nile. Those who throw nets on the water will pine away. Those who work with combed flax will despair.

The weavers of fine linen will lose hope. The workers in cloth will be dejected. And all the wage earners will be sick at heart.

The officials of Zoan are nothing but fools. The wise counselors of Pharaoh give senseless advice. How can you say to Pharaoh, I am one of the wise men, a disciple of the ancient kings?

Where are your wise men now? Let them show you and make known what the Lord Almighty has planned against Egypt. The officials of Zoan have become fools. The leaders of Memphis are deceived.

[2:11] The cornerstones of her people have led Egypt astray. The Lord has poured out into them a spirit of dizziness. They make Egypt stagger in all that she does as a drunkard staggers around in his vomit.

There's nothing Egypt can do. Head or tail, palm branch or reed. And that day, the Egyptians will be like women.

They will shudder with fear at the uplifted hand that the Lord Almighty raises against them. And the land of Judah will bring terror to the Egyptians. Everyone to whom Judah is mentioned will be terrified because of what the Lord Almighty is planning against them.

And that day, five cities in Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty. One of them will be called the City of Destruction. And that day, there will be an altar to the Lord in the heart of Egypt and a monument to the Lord at its border.

It will be a sign and witness to the Lord Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the Lord because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them.

[3:26] So the Lord will make himself known to the Egyptians. And in that day, they will acknowledge the Lord. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings. They will make vows to the Lord and keep them.

The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague. He will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord and he will respond to their pleas and heal them.

And that day, there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together.

And that day, Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people, Assyria, my handiwork, and Israel, my inheritance.

Well, in our studies of the book of Isaiah, we've come to chapters 13 to 23. They're all about God and the nations.

[4:31] Some ten different nations are listed. And as we read our Bibles, we soon learn that the Old Testament does not give us an in-depth study of all the nations of the earth.

That's not its intent at all. Rather, it centers upon one nation, the nation of Israel, the nation that God chose out of all the nations of the world to fulfill a special role in his plan for the whole world. Namely, to receive the words from God, his revelation. To be his witnesses to the world about him and to bring forth the Redeemer, the Savior of the world.

So the focus of the whole Old Testament is upon this one nation of which God said, You will be my people and I will be your God. And if you remain true to my commands, I will bless you.

But if you break my covenant and forsake me and my laws, I will curse you. In fact, I will stir up the nations who are around you to come and destroy you and to take you away as their captives.

[5:42] So what about all these other nations around Israel? They don't have the same relationship to God as Israel does. But do they have any relationship to him?

And if so, what is it? Is his power and rule limited just to the nation of Israel? Is he just a localized deity for Israel?

And these chapters answer loud and clear. No, the God of Israel is the Lord of all the nations. For from one man he made all every nation of men.

From Adam he made all the different nations. And therefore he is the Lord of all those nations. He's the one who judges those nations. And these 11 chapters in Isaiah are full of the prophecies that God is going to judge these nations.

Last week we saw some of the sins that bring down God's judgments on the nations. Their pride, their violence, their idolatry, and their mistreatment of God's own people, Israel.

[6:56] Those sins deserve every bit of the devastation that is portrayed in these 11 chapters. God is holy and he expects his commandments to be obeyed.

Or else suffer the punishments for them. So this morning I want us to see before we leave these 11 chapters.

We're dipping into them one more time. To see that in the midst of all this judgment and destruction. There is good news. There's good news.

Good news for God's people Israel. But most shockingly good news for the very nations. That God is judging.

That God has anything good to say to any of us sinners. Is grace. And we find him in these chapters. These 11 chapters.

[7:56] Speaking not only words of judgment. But also words of grace. Let's be amazed again at the good news this morning. First of all we'll look then at the good news for God's people Israel.

When I say God's people Israel. I trust you. You'll put this context on. I'm not talking about that nation over in Palestine. Not at all. I'm talking about Old Testament Israel.

That unique relationship that God had with those people. I'm talking about them. Let's look then at the good news for those people. And their spiritual counterpart in the new covenant.

There's a lot of bad news. In Isaiah. And if you've been reading these 11 chapters. You've seen that. But even from the opening chapters.

Of his prophecies. We saw. The announcements of God's judgments. Upon Israel. Herself. Now.

[8:58] Isaiah was given this. Unenviable task. Of. Proclaiming. God's judgments. That were to fall on Israel. Now we like to be bearers of good news.

It's. It's tough being bearers of bad news. How would you like to. To have the job of a doctor. Who must look at the. The young mother in his office. And tell her. You have three to six months to live.

Or to be that policeman. Who must come. To your place of business. And tell you. That your child. Was just killed. In an automobile. Automobile accident. Or. Or that military personnel.

That must come to that mother. And say. Your son. Has been killed. In Afghanistan. To be a bearer of bad news. Is a. Is a very difficult. Position.

And Isaiah. Was sent. To tell Israel. That God. Is going to. Punish her. Is going to. Devastate her. For her sins. And he's going to bring. Ruthless nations.

[9:59] To slaughter her people. To destroy the land. And to take their youth away. Into exile. Into a foreign land. And so he's been. Announcing this bad news.

And during his own lifetime. He saw plenty of that bad news. Come to pass. Indeed. During his lifetime. He'd already seen. The Assyrian war machine. On a roll. Already had swallowed up. The whole northern kingdom. Of Israel. And took them away. Into captivity. And they were to come down. And to wreak havoc. In the southern kingdom. Of Judah. Though. They would just barely escape. By the skin of their teeth. But then. Isaiah was going to have to tell them. About God raising up. The dreaded Babylonians. To come down into Judah. And finish the job. And they would destroy. The capital. Jerusalem. [10 : 54] And burn its temple. And carry their young people. Away into exile. And slaughter their people. But now. For. Eleven chapters. Isaiah gets to announce. The news of God's destruction. Of their enemies. You see. Bad news for the nations. Is good news for Israel. Who is being destroyed. By those nations. If I'm fighting against you. And. And you get a message. Of bad news. That you're going to be devastated. That's good news for me. And so. Though these eleven chapters. Are full of judgments. They're judgments. Upon God's. Enemies. Israel's enemies. And so. They become. Good news. For God's people. Because by destroying. Their enemies. God will bring relief. To his own people. People. And so. We have sprinkled. [11 : 51] Throughout these words. Of judgment. On the nations. Words of relief. For. The downtrodden. People. Of Israel. In chapter 16. We find. It's a prophecy. Against Moab. And in verse 4. We see. That the oppressor. Will come to an end. And destruction. Will cease. And the aggressor. Will vanish. From the land. In chapter 17. He's talking about. The judgments. To fall. Upon Damascus. The capital city. Of Samaria. And in that. Devastating. Chapter. Section. On judgments. For Syria. He speaks. Of Israel's relief. From the plundering. Nations. Around her. Those who loved. And loved. Looted. And plundered. Israel. Are to be driven. Before. The wind. Like. Chaff. They are to. Be like. Tumbleweed. Before a gale. In the evening. Sudden tear. [12 : 46] By the morning. They're gone. So. God's going to. Judge. These nations. That are abusing. Israel. That's good news. For the people. Of God. But it's especially. In the chapters. Concerning God's judgments. Upon Babylon. That we find. This encouragement. To Israel. Remember. Babylon. Is the. The nation. That would come down. And take them. Captive. Into Babylon. And right. In the middle. Of chapters. 13 and 14. All these judgments. Falling. Upon Babylon. There's this nugget. Of good news. For Israel. Who's. Going to be. Under the heel. Of this. Dreaded. Foe. Chapter 14. One to four. Here's the good news. For Israel. The Lord. Will have compassion. On Jacob. Another name. For Israel. Once again. He will choose. Israel. And will settle. Them. In their own land. They were going to be. Far from their homeland. [13 : 42] But he's going to once again. Settle them. In their own land. Aliens will join them. And unite with the house of Jacob. Nations will take them. And bring them to their own place. And the house of Israel. Will possess the nations. As men servants. And maid servants. In the Lord's land. They will make captives. Of their captors. And rule. Over their oppressors. On the day. The Lord gives you. Relief from suffering. And turmoil. And cruel bondage. You will take up this taunt. Against the king of Babylon. How the oppressor. Has come to an end. How his fury. Has ended. So the destruction. Of Babylon. Israel's enemy. Will be the end. Of their suffering. And turmoil. And cruel bondage. Chapter 21. Is another chapter. On the destruction. Of Babylon. [14 : 38] Coming toward the end. Of these. Chapters on judgment. And in verses 8. Through 10. We have this scene. Of a lookout. A sentry. Looking for a messenger. Bringing news. And. Verse 8. The lookout shouted. Day after day. My Lord. I stand on the watchtower. Every night. I stay at my post. Look. Here comes a man. In a chariot. With a team of horses. And he gives back. The answer. Babylon. Has fallen. Has fallen.

Babylon. Has fallen. Has fallen. That's the message. He brings. All the images. Of its gods. Lie shattered. On the ground. Oh. My people. Crushed.

On the threshing floor. I tell you. What I have heard. From the Lord Almighty. From the God of Israel. And so. When Israel. Will be. Like. Crushed. Chaff.

[15 : 32] On the threshing floor. Under the heel. Of Babylon. This message. Will come to her. Babylon. Has fallen. And that. Will be. Their great joy. That. Will be. Good news.

For Israel. And isn't it. Interesting. That we find. These same words. Toward the end. Of our Bibles. Because they point. To a greater. Destruction. Of God's enemies.

At the end. Of time. The very end. When God. Will judge. All of his. And our enemies. Revelation 18. The angel. Is found. Shouting. Fallen.

Fallen. Is Babylon. The great. In one hour. She's been brought. To ruin. Rejoice. Over her. Oh heavens. Rejoice. Saints. And angels. And apostles.

And prophets. God has judged her. For the way. She treated you. So God. Will destroy. All. The enemies.

[16 : 27] Of his. Believing people. And that. Will be a matter. Of great joy. To them. To be delivered. We need to remember. That all these chapters.

About judgments. Upon the nations. Were not sent. First to the nations. Themselves. But rather. To Israel. It was meant. To comfort them. Look what.

God's going to do. To your captors. Once. God is done. Punishing you. He's going to destroy. Them. So don't be afraid. Of them. And don't put your trust.

In any of these nations. That was ever. Their continuing. Temptation. Let's trust. In Assyria. To save us. From Babylon. Now let's trust. In Babylon. To save us. From Assyria. Now let's trust. In Egypt. To save us.

From Babylon. Back and forth. Trusting in men. Fearing men. And these messages. Come and say. How foolish. It is. To trust. In nations. That are. Under the ban.

[17 : 20] Of God's destruction. They cannot help you. But the God of the nations. Can. And so God sends. These prophecies. About the nations.

To encourage. His people. While they're going through. All these trials. This week. I was reading. In my own devotions. In the little book. Of lamentations. Written.

Over a hundred years. After Isaiah. Was dead. By Jeremiah. The prophet. But he is now. Writing. About. The times. When. Isaiah's prophecies.

Are coming to pass. And Babylon. The dreaded. Babylonians. Have come. They have. They've slaughtered. The people of Judah. They have taken. Their young. Into captivity.

And they've. They've got. The capital city. Of Jerusalem. Surrounded. And Jeremiah. Is on the inside. Of the besieged.

[18 : 15] City. Of Jerusalem. And everywhere. He looks. He sees. Judgment. And devastation. Dead bodies. Are everywhere.

Filling the streets. You see. They're starving. Them out. They're not letting. Any food. Or water. Get into Jerusalem. And so. Mothers. Are eating. Their own children. It is.

Horrificing. Judgment. Of God. Upon. Judah. And everywhere. The eye. Can see. There's only. Death. And destruction. What's going.

To carry. The righteous. Through that. Kind. Of trial. In Jerusalem. Under the siege. Of Babylon. Well. How about. Those old. Promises.

That old. Prophet. Isaiah. Over a hundred. Years ago. That talked. About what. God's going. To do. To Babylon. One day. And that's. Exactly. What I found. As I read. In.

[19 : 09] Lamentations. One. Verse. Twenty. One. And. Twenty. Two. Jeremiah. Says. People. Have heard. My groaning.

But there. There's no one. To comfort. Me. All my enemies. Have heard. Of my distress. They rejoice. At what you have done. May. And he's talking. To God. May you bring.

The day. You have announced. So that they. May become. Like me. Let all. Their wickedness. Come before you. Deal with them. As you have dealt. With me. Because of all.

My sins. Oh God. Bring the day. You announced. Upon them. You see.

Long ago. Isaiah. Had announced. A day of judgment. Upon Babylon. And now. Hundred years. Later. They're in. Judgment. Under. Babylon. And their faith.

[20:03] Looks to that. Sure promise. Of God. For their comfort. For their hope. For the only. Good news. They have. When everything. They have to look at.

Is nothing. But judgment. God. Was sustaining. His people. With the promise. Of Israel. Of Isaiah. His. Prophecies.

Here's. Good news. After God. Has judged. Us. For our sins. He'll judge. The nations. Who are judging. Us. And though.

Our enemies. Are triumphing. Now over us. Their time. Is coming. So. This is the good news. For God's people. Our. God. Reigns. Our God. Reigns. Over all the nations.

And he reigns. Over all the nations. For the good. Of his people. That's. That's what. Paul writes. In Ephesians. One. Twenty. Two. That. That. That. God. Has. Highly.

[21:02] Exalted. The Lord. Jesus. And he's. Placed. All things. Under his feet. And appointed him. To be head. Over everything. For the church. His body.

The fullness. Of him. So the. The picture. In the old testament. And the reality. Under the new. Is that. King Jesus. Is reigning. Over everything. All the nations. For the benefit.

For the good. Of his people. The church. And we see. Then. The central role. Of the church. In all that God. Is doing. In the nations. Today.

Or back. In Isaiah's day. He's dealing. With the nations. For the good. Of his church. To purify. Them. To deliver.

Them. To save. Them. So the scepter. That rules. The nations. Is in our. Savior's hand. That's the encouragement. That comes to us. He gathers.

[21:55] Nations. For war. He overthrows. Kings. And kingdoms. And all. For the good. Of his people. Yes. At times. That will be a sifting. Good. For his people. When he judges.

Them. And cleanses. Them. But he also. Will come in. For them. And deliver them. For if. This God. Is for you. Who can be. Against you. Now.

No Christian. You're. You're to. You're to draw. Comfort. From this. Whatever your trouble. Be it. May not be. Babylon. It may not be. You're starving. But you may have. Other issues. And it's the same.

Sovereign Lord. That rules over. Everything. For your good. Rest in that. God. And it would be by. The coming of Messiah. Then.

That God's people. Would experience. This ultimate salvation. From our enemies. So 700 years. After Isaiah. A virgin. Did conceive. By the power. Of the Holy Spirit. And brought forth.

[22:48] A son. But before. He. He was born. When. She had first conceived. She went. To visit. Her relative. Elizabeth. In the hill country. Of Judea. Who was.

Pregnant. In her old age. And Elizabeth's husband. Zechariah. Remember kids. He had been struck. Dumb. He couldn't speak. Because he didn't believe. The message. That the angel announced.

That his old wife. Elizabeth. Was going to have a son. John. John the Baptist. Who would be the forerunner. Of the Lord Jesus. The Messiah. And because he didn't believe.

He was struck down. But once Elizabeth. Gave birth. And they named him. John. Suddenly. Old Zechariah's tongue. Was let loose. And he was filled.

With the Holy Spirit. And he praised God. You know what he praised God for. For raising up a savior. To rescue us. From our enemies.

[23:44] They're still under the iron heel. Of the nations. Now it's Rome. No longer Babylon. Persia. Greece. Now it's Rome. And they're ever looking for this.

This coming king. To deliver them. And now filled with the spirit. He praises God. For bringing salvation. From our enemies.

And from the hand. Of all who hate us. To rescue us. From the hand. Of our enemies. And to enable us. To serve him. Without fear. In righteousness. And true holiness. All the days.

Of our life. But as you read on. In Luke chapter 1. You find that that salvation. Is a salvation. Through the forgiveness. Of our sins.

You see. Most people heard. About the coming. Redemption. And the coming. Destruction of their enemies. And they thought. Rome. Rome. Rome. God's going to deliver. Our nation from Rome.

[24:39] They saw no further. And so they missed. The whole. Purpose of Jesus coming. Which was to save his people. From their worst enemies. Of sin.

Of Satan. Of death. How do you deal with those enemies? How do you get rid of your sin? I'm bringing a savior. Who will put an end to sin.
By dying on the cross. Instead of you. And receiving the judgment. That you deserve. I'll get rid of that enemy. How do you deal with Satan? How do you deal with his temptations.
And his desire to send you to hell? He's far wiser. He's got a whole horde. Of fallen angels. To work with him. How do you ever. Get victory over him?
And here comes our savior. And he's tempted. And tried. In every way like we are. And yet he. He conquers him. And then he goes to the cross. And there he puts Satan. To an open show.
[25 : 37] An open defeat. Over the devil. He frees us. By dying for us. He sets us free. From Satan's snare. And.

Yeah. Death. The last enemy. The last enemy. That he delivers us from. Is death. And that he will do. When he raises us from the grave.

Never again to die. But to live forever more. Yes. God has sent. A salvation. To us. To set us free. From our enemies. Who hate us. And so God's reign over all things. Is for the good of. His people. And he brings it about.

Through his. His son. Our savior. And the future is with the people of God. You see. He's going to destroy all of our enemies. For our good. For our everlasting good.

[26 : 35] The future belongs to the people of God. Have you joined the people of God? Are you on God's side? You entered this people by. Conversion to Jesus Christ. Have you joined the people of God?

Who are under the blessing of God? Everlastingly. There's that time when Moses. Spoke to his. Midianite father-in-law. When they were leaving.

And heading for the promised land. He says to his father-in-law. We're setting out for the place. About which the Lord. Said I will give this. To you. Now come on with us. And we will treat you well. For the Lord has spoken good. Concerning Israel. I don't know. Whether you're a part of the Lord's people or not. If you're not. I can tell you this. The Lord has spoken good.

About his people. Jesus has conquered all. His and our enemies. Come with us. And we will do you good. For the Lord has spoken good.

[27 : 32] Concerning. Israel. So we've seen these judgments upon the nations. Are good news. For the people of God. God's going to destroy. Their enemies.

But the real shocking thing. About these chapters. Is that in these 11 chapters. There's good news. For the very nations. That God. Destroys. And is judging. These nations.

Are the enemies. Of God's people. Can there be good news. For them. We've already seen this theme. In the opening chapters. Of Isaiah. God.

Is going to judge. His own nation. Israel. But then. Afterwards. He's going to restore her. Isn't he? Judgment. Followed by grace. That's the most repeated message.

Not only of. Of Isaiah. But of all the prophets. God's judgment. Will fall on his people. They'll go into exile. But then he'll bring them back. Restore their fortunes. And bless them.

[28 : 29] Blessing that reaches. To the very coming. Of Christ. For us. So man's sin. Doesn't get the last word. Rather God's grace. That triumphs over judgment.

Does. So now. What Isaiah is saying. Is that that pattern. Is not only true of Israel. Judgment. Followed by grace. But that pattern. Is followed as well.

For the nations. Who are under. The judgment. Of God. God will judge them. And then. God will be gracious. Toward them.

So in these 11 chapters. We see God. Being the Lord of the nations. Not only because. He judges the nations. But because. He saves the nations. So in chapter 16.

We have Moab. And. Here are these two chapters. Telling us of the ruin. That is coming. From God's hand on Moab. And right in the middle. Of these judgments.

[29 : 25] Is this good news. That the oppressor. Verses 4 and 5. Of chapter 16. The oppressor. Will come to an end. Destruction. Will cease. The aggression. Will vanish. From the land.

And in love. A throne. Will be established. And. And in faithfulness. A man. Will sit on that throne. One from the house. Of David. One who in judging. Seeks justice.

And speeds. The cause. Of righteousness. Who is that king. It's Jesus. And he's not only. The king of Israel. But he is the king.

Of all who find refuge. In him. He'll be the king. For Moab. If they will. But seek him. And. Pour out their. Allegiance.

To him. And so in the midst. Of this. Judgment. Upon the Moabites. We find this. Gospel promise. About the coming king. And his loving reign.

[30:21] Of pure justice. And righteousness. Israel's only hope. Is the coming Messiah. And that is also. The hope of the nations. Even Moab.

Remember I told you. That Isaiah. Is not the only one. Who has a whole. Set of chapters. About the nations. Isaiah. Or Jeremiah. Has his set. Of chapters. About the nations. Ezekiel does. And Jeremiah.

At least. On three different. Places. Is in his. Speaking of the nations. And God's judgments. Upon her. Has this. Strange statement. He's talking about.

God bringing judgment. Upon Moab. Yet. I will restore. The fortunes. Of Moab. In days to come. Declares the Lord. He's talking about. His destruction. Upon Ammon.

Yet. Afterwards. I will restore. The fortunes. Of the Ammonites. And so on again. With Elam. I will restore. The fort. That's the promise.

[31:18] Of Israel. I'm going to judge her. Yet. I'll restore. The fortunes. Of Israel. And what we find. Is that gracious promise. Is not just true. For Israel. But it's also true. Of these nations. Under the judgment.

Of God. So we have Tyre. In chapter 23. Of Isaiah. Capital of the Phoenicia. The marketplace. Of the world. Symbol of materialism.

Man's proud attempt. To find his identity. And what he has. And owns. God says. I'm going to destroy. The city of Tyre. I'm going to destroy.

Their trading ships. And he says. At that time. Tyre will be forgotten. For 70 years. Do you know any other nations. That had judgment. For 70 years.

Well that was Israel. That was Judah. Wasn't it? And the same program. Is here for Tyre. I'm going. Chapter 23. 15. At that time.

[32:13] Tyre will be forgotten. For 70 years. The span of a king's life. But at the end. Of the 70 years. The Lord. Will deal with Tyre. And she will. Ply her trade again.

With all the kingdoms. On the face of the earth. Yet. Her profits. And her earnings. Will not now go. For herself. But will. Come. To the kingdom. Of God.

And her earnings. Will be set apart. For the Lord. Holy to the Lord. So Tyre. Is going to experience. 70 years of judgment. And then blessing. Salvation.

Will come to Tyre. And they will bring. Their profits. To the Lord. Indeed. Ezra says. That it was those from Tyre. That brought materials. To rebuild the temple.

And that's just a picture. Of what is to happen. With the real temple. The church of Christ. With living stones. And people from Tyre. Came. And became living stones.

[33:09] And provided the building materials. For the. The real temple. That's being built. Indeed. When Paul. In Acts 21. Gets to Tyre. He finds a group of disciples there.

You see. God was. Bringing salvation. To the people of Phoenicia. To the people in Tyre. We remember Jesus. And the faith. Of that Syrophenician woman.

The woman from Phoenicia. Of which Tyre is the capital. And of the mercies. That she received. From the Son of God. Blessing. After judgment. Chapter 18.

Of Isaiah. Is all about Cush. Modern day Ethiopia. Another enemy nation. Of Israel. And they too. Are to experience God's wrath. But then grace. For at that time. Chapter 18. Verse 7. Gifts will be brought. To the Lord Almighty. From a people. Tall and smooth skin.

[34:05] From a people. Feared far and wide. An aggressive nation. Of strange speech. Whose land is divided. By rivers. The gifts will be brought. To Mount Zion. The place of the name. Of the Lord Almighty.

God is saying. That Ethiopians. Are going to bring. Their worship. To Israel's God. Is Israel's God. Just the God of Israel. No. He's the God of the nations. He not only judges.

The nations. He saves the nations. And here come. The Ethiopians. Bringing their worship. To God. 800 years later. An Ethiopian eunuch.

Would be making his way. Home. From Jerusalem. And would be reading. Isaiah's prophecy. Chapter 53. And Philip. Directed by the spirit. Would come on board.

And point him to Jesus. The prophet. The promised. Messiah. Who came to take away. The sins. Of his people. And that Ethiopian.

[35 : 02] Would put his faith. In Jesus Christ. And so salvation. Blessing. You see. Would come upon. The Ethiopians. Who once. Were under this.

Judgment. Of God. And. 2800 years later. Today. An Ethiopian. Baby. Named. Cademan. Is coming.

To Plymouth. And we trust. With. Purposes. Of grace. To taste. These salvation. Blessings. These who. Were once.

In. In nations. Under the curse. Of God. Are to be. Brought into. The people. Of God. And most. Shocking. Of all. Is Egypt. Because Egypt.

Was the most. Unlikely. Nation. Chapter 19. That was read. For you. Is the. Account. Of. Both. The judgment. And salvation. Of Egypt.

[35 : 55] The long. Standing. Enemy. Of God. And his people. Who were. Oppressed. Them. Many. Many. Times. In their history. And the first. Seventeen. Verses. Of chapter 19.

Is all about. God. Judging them. He's going to. Destroy them. And they deserve. Every bit of it. Handed over. To fierce.

Kings. Cruel. Masters. Just as they. Had been. And yet. Grace. Is coming. To Egypt. As well. Six times.

We read. In that day. In that day. In that day. A future. Unannounced time. There's coming. A time. When salvation. Blessings. Will come. To Egypt. Of all people.

And verse 18. In that day. Five Egyptian cities. Will speak. The language. Of Canaan. And swear. Allegiance. To the Lord. Almighty. We don't know. Exactly. What all that means. But the Egyptians.

[36 : 49] Despise. The Israelites. And yet. Here's five cities. In Egypt. Actually. Speaking. The language. Of Canaan. And swearing.

Allegiance. To Israel's God. No longer. Serving. Their idols. And their false gods. But swearing. Allegiance. And faith. In the God.

Of Israel. Verse. 19. And 20. Tells of these Egyptians. Worshipping. Worshipping. The God of Israel. In that day. There will be an altar. To the Lord.

In the very heart of Egypt. And a monument. To the Lord. At its border. It will be a sign. And witness. To the Lord Almighty. In the land of Egypt. It's a monument. We are followers. Of Israel's God.

Yahweh Almighty. And when they cry out. To the Lord. Because of their oppressors. He. Will send them. A savior. And a defender. And he will rescue them.

[37 : 44] In their desperation. They'll. They'll cry out. To Israel's God. And he'll. He'll send a savior. To them. And save them. And so. Verse 21. The Lord. Will make himself.

Known. To the Egyptians. And in that day. They will acknowledge. The Lord. The Lord's going to reveal. Himself. To the Egyptians. And they will know. The Lord. And own him. As their God.

Verse 21. And 22. Goes on to say. They will worship. With sacrifices. And grain offerings. This is. This is putting. In old covenant. Worship language. The reality.

That will happen. In the new covenant. In a day. In a different way. But the only way. The prophet. Could speak of it. Was to speak. In terms. That they were familiar with. And that's the worship. Of the old covenant.

With sacrifices. And grain offerings. They will make vows. To the Lord. And keep them. And the Lord. Will strike Egypt. With a plague. He will strike them. And heal them.

[38 : 39] They will turn to the Lord. And he will respond. To their pleas. And heal them. I want you to notice. The pattern. Of God's dealing. With Egypt. Is the same. As his dealings.

With Israel. He will strike them. And then he will heal them. Strike them. Heal them. He will. He will. He will. It's a blessing. To be struck. By the Lord. When. It's intended. That he might. Thereby. Heal. Us. He strikes them.

With devastating blows. Making them. Desmart. For their sins. He's bringing them. To an end. Of their own. Self-confidence. Self-love.

Self-glory. Self-righteousness. Self-will. He's bringing them. To despair. Hopeless. As he strikes them.

[39 : 34] You see. He's emptying them. He's emptying them. Down they go. Under his hand. That they might. Then look outside. Of themselves. To him.

For help. To the very one. Who's striking them. That he might. Save them. And what do they find. When they look to him. When they. In the words of. Verse 22. When they turn. To the Lord. What happens. As God's striking them. And they turn to the Lord. They find him. Willing to receive them. To hear them. And to rescue them. I trust some of you. Are saying. You know. That's this. That's exactly. How it was with me. I was full of myself. I was going. My own way. And God brought. Some hard. Things in my life. And started striking me. And he brought me low. To where I. [40 : 29] I cried out to him. And I found him. A willing. And an able savior. That was the prodigal. Wasn't it? God had to strike him. He had to get him.

All the way down. To the very bottom. Where he's. Wanting to feed himself. On pigs food. Until he would. Come to his. His senses. And see himself. For what he is. And turn. To his father's house. God's going to do that. For Egyptians. As he. Open armed. Receives them. And saves them. Amazing. Prophecy. Of good news. In the midst. Of this. Bad news. And Isaiah.

Is not done. He speaks next. Of the coming harmony. And worship. Between Egypt. And Assyria. These were the two. Great superpowers. Of the day. Both pagan nations. Hating each other. Both enemies.

[41 : 21] Of Israel. Assyria. To the north. And Egypt. To the south. And here we have. This. Prophecy. How that. The gospel.

Will remove. The ancient. Enmity. Between them. And will unite them. Verse 23. In that day. There will be a highway. From Egypt. To Assyria.

And the Assyrians. Will go to Egypt. And the Egyptians. To Assyria. Why is there. This traveling. Between the two cities. They're not coming. To Egypt. To see the pyramids. And the Sphinx. Why is there. This highway. Why is there. This commerce. Between them. To worship. The Lord. Together. It's the Lord. That brings them.

Together. The Egyptians. And Assyrians. Will worship. Together. Verse 23. Says. It's Israel's God. That brings. Them. Together.

[42 : 15] Together. And isn't that. What we find. In the gospel. That. That. People. Who were far apart. And had enmity. Between them. Meet.

At the cross. And. And there's no. Jew. Or Gentile. Here. And there's no. Greek. Or barbarian. Or Scythian. Or slave. Or free. But Christ. Is all. And is in all. And we're one.

In Christ Jesus. And we see this unity. The ancient. Hostility. Removed. And we see. These enemies. Now. Worshipping. Together. That is what.

God does. For his people. And then. These Gentile nations. Are said to be. Co-equals. With Israel. As the people. Of God.

They're now part. Of the people. Of God. As much. As Israel. Is a part. In that day. In that coming day. This is the way. It's going to be. It's no longer. Going to be.

[43 : 10] Israel has the special. Place of relationship. With God. Now. It's going to be. The nations. And Egypt. And Assyria. And Israel. As a third nation. They'll all be equal.

They'll all be. God's people. Notice verse 24. In that day. Israel will be the third. Along with Egypt. And Assyria. A blessing. On the earth. The Lord Almighty.

Will bless them. Saying. Blessed be. Egypt. My people. Assyria. My handiwork. And Israel. My inheritance. All of this. Is saying.

That Gentiles. And Jews. Together. Will make up. The new covenant. People of God. People of God. Today. Don't think of Palestine. Over there. Think. Of yourself.

The church. Of Jesus Christ. Made up of Jew. And Gentile. The people of God. It was Abraham's seed. Remember. That was blessed. By God. And made a blessing. On the earth. Genesis 12.

[44 : 07] 3. I will bless you. He said. To Abraham. And his seed. And you will be a blessing. And all peoples on earth. Will be blessed. Through you. Abraham. Because from you.

And your people. Will come the Savior. Who will bring that blessing. To all the earth. It was just Israel. That was the people of God. With the blessing of God.

That became a blessing. To the earth. But here. Isaiah speaks about a day. When all these three nations. Are now blessed.

By God. And are a blessing. On the earth. To others. So they. The blessing of God's covenant. Rests on. Assyrians.

And Egyptians. As much as Israelites. And notice the three words. My people. My handiwork. My inheritance. All those terms.

[44:59] All three of those terms. Once belonged exclusively. To Israel. Oh. But a day is coming. When those three terms. Will be shared equally.

With the Gentile nations. So that God is able to say. Assyria. You are my. Handiwork. Egypt. You are my. People.

As much. As Israel. Ever was. Egypt. Who was once told. Let my. People go. Will now be.

Called. My people. Themselves. As God. Brings them. Into his people. Through the Lord Jesus. So the Gentile nations. Are co-equal.

With Israel. They're not second class. Citizens. They don't just get. Some of the promises. No. They inherit. All the promises. Along with. Israel. As Ephesians 3 says. Through the gospel.

[45:54] The Gentiles. Are heirs. Together. With Israel. Members. Together. Together. Of one body. Shares. Together. In the promise. In Christ. Jesus. So Isaiah.

Was pointing. The head. To gospel days. What Christ. Would accomplish. You remember. We studied. Hosea. And Hosea. And Hosea said. In the place. Where it was said. To them. You are not my people.

They will be called. Sons of the living God. And I will say. To those called. Not my people. You are my people. And they will say. You are my God.

Egypt was not my people. Assyria was not my people. But in that day. They will be my people. Paul in Romans 9 says that's true of all who receive God's mercy whether Jew or Gentile and he quotes Hosea yes we are the ones who were once not my people who have now become the people of God well in these 11 chapters then Isaiah's God is or Israel's God is seen to be the Lord of all the nations he's Lord of all the nations and you see that because he judges all the nations but you also see it because he saves those from all the nations and the inclusion of the Gentile nations under the rule of the Lord of the nations we see this unexpected note of good news scattered among the bad news all to happen through the work of Jesus Christ the son of David when he came what did he do he tore down that middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile brought them into the body of Christ the one people Jew and Gentile and Jesus fold so at the beginning of our New Testaments what do we have?

the very beginning of the New Covenant what do we find? the New Testament starts with three kings coming from four and far away lands and bowing down before the king of the nations and how does Matthew's gospel end?

[48:08] with this same king Jesus now raised from the dead with all authority in heaven and earth given to him saying to his followers now men you go into all the world and make disciples to me from all the nations you see that was always God's plan from the very beginning that's why he chose Abraham and his seed the Israelites to be a special people to receive his word and to be a witness to the nations that they might come to know the one and only Savior of the nations Jesus Christ and so blessing would come to all the nations of the earth through them and in the New Testament we see it happening we see it happening in the fact that you and I this morning have come here to worship this king Jesus we rejoice in these Old Testament fingers from Isaiah pointing us he's coming he's coming he's coming we rejoice that he has come and so these these days of grace coming to old enemies is being fulfilled right now and it will be fulfilled in its ultimate in the new heavens and the new earth when those from every nation bring their glory into the new Jerusalem and worship

Christ the king so who is a God like our God who's gathering trophies of grace from the most unlikely places from Assyrians who slaughtered the Israelites from the Egyptians those slave masters of the Israelites the most unlikely candidates for God's people violent idolatrous proud nations mistreating God's people and yet from them God will make a people for himself do you do you know any unlikely candidates to become the people of God do you know anybody that's just so hardened in their sin and pride oh take comfort from this passage you have a king who's over every heart cry to him Lord Jesus here's here's a here's a woman who resists your will oh come come and strike her and heal her come and come and humble her and lift her up come and come and into this man who who will not serve you his feet won't walk in your ways oh king Jesus come come and deal in in grace change the heart and make him to run in the ways of your commandments with love

for the savior god's word still brings to the nations both bad news and good news it's it's all over the new testament romans 6 23 the wages of sin is death that's the bad news your sin deserves and will bring death the second death which is the lake of fire forever that's bad news but the gift of god is eternal life through jesus christ our lord that's the good news you got bad news and good news god is the judge of all the nations but he's also the savior of all the nations have you dealt with the bad news by coming to the good news the bad news is meant to strike you and bring you low that you might come to the good news and trust in the son of god to save you and to find that sweet forgiveness of sins take refuge in christ today and find him to be all that you need let's pray together and then we'll sing our father we have been for three weeks looking at these words of judgment upon the nations and we have we've seen your purpose as being worked out we've seen this morning that to have our enemies destroyed is good news and lord how we thank you for the lord jesus who came to deal with our greatest enemies of sin and death and hell how he comes to save us from ourselves oh make us forever thankful for that good news found in the lord jesus thank you that you take your people from from the gentiles thank you that you come to the the enemy nations of god's people of old and you out of them make trophies of your grace go on doing that do it do it even here this morning do it around the world today and give to jesus the fruit of his suffering the fruit of his work when he says you said to him ask of me and i will give you the nations for your inheritance and show it to to one here this morning who's still stubbornly seeking their own way deal graciously and drawing them into your arms of love we ask it in jesus name amen