

Isaiah 20

This is a short chapter that ties together Isaiah 10, 18 and 19. God has described Judah as a rebellious nation in need of realignment with God. The children of Israel want to align with a superpower. He used Egypt, Cush and Assyria to quell the nonsensical ideas of reliance on foreign powers instead of God. As part of that, God subsequently deals with those invading nations according to their own accountability. The dirty deed has to be done, but woe to does it.

Read Isaiah 20: In 711 BC, the Assyrians ventured further away from home in their conquests. They captured Ashdod; which is in coastal Israel. Ashdod had been already been snatched from Israel by their arch-enemies the Philistines. The Philistines were in league with the superpower Egypt. You could say that the Philistines were land steelers, backed by the cartel. They were pillagers, who were a thorn in the side of Israel. The Philistine plague against Israel was the result of Israel's discontinued quest to do what God said.

²⁰ Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel and said, "Because this nation has violated the covenant I ordained for their ancestors and has not listened to me, ²¹ I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died. ²² I will use them to test Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the Lord and walk in it as their ancestors did." ²³ The Lord had allowed those nations to remain; he did not drive them out at once by giving them into the hands of Joshua. (Judges 2)

There are layers to this artichoke. The Philistines paid a tribute to Egypt, so they were both collaborating to loot Israel and other nations. The Egyptians were supposed to keep the unstoppable Assyrian war machine out of these areas. Once again, Israel and Judah were in the cross fire of so many competing foreign interests.

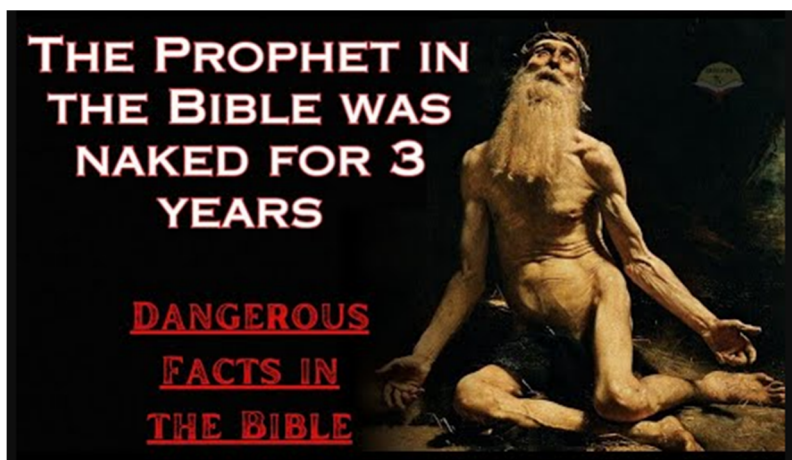
Israel lost the philistine neighborhood bullies to the regional champion brawlers. It was a temporary concession, but it actually put them in an even worse position.

King Sargon of Assyria sacked the Sumerians, Uruk, Kish, Mari, the regions of Elam (Iran), and the regions Syria. Now he was making his quest for control a coast to coast land grab. The further you go into sin, the bigger and more impossible your problems become.

Assyria will wipe out the Philistines, the Cushite's and the Egyptians; so all of those ill-gotten gains from skirmishes and wars are all gone.



Sin makes you delirious. The children of Israel refused to repent and make God's course corrections. They gave their love to enemy nations, in return for keeping a godless lifestyle. Bad choice! The hopes that Judah had in Egypt and Assyria just went out the window. Isaiah was required to walk around in a semi naked outfit to demonstrate how the Hebrew people and the Egyptians would be carted off by Assyria.



The bullies just got bounced by a bigger bully. This pattern would repeat itself. God's people would take refuge in a godless nation despite God's warning not to. It is not a safe asylum at all.

'This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: I will send for my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and I will set his throne over these stones I have buried here; he will spread his royal canopy above them. ¹¹ He will come and attack Egypt, bringing death to those destined for death, captivity to those destined for captivity, and the sword to those destined for the sword. ¹² He will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt; he will burn their temples and take their gods captive. As a shepherd picks his garment clean of lice, so he will pick Egypt clean and depart. ¹³ There in the temple of the sun^[b] in Egypt he will demolish the sacred pillars and will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt.'' (Jeremiah 43)

Not only would those depending on Assyria not be helped either, but Assyria took Israel into captivity and attacked Jerusalem. There are unlimited enemies waiting for those who throw God's word to the side. It will return to roost.

Woodcut of
Assyrian
Stone
Relief

Assyrian King Palace relief

7th C. BC

**"The LORD brought the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria against them, and they captured Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze chains to Babylon."
(2 Chronicles 33:11)**

2 Chron 33:11; 36:6; Ezek 19:4,8; 2 Ki 19:28; 25:7; Isa 37:29

