
“LET THE METAPHORS
SPEAK TO YOU”

An LDS Commentary on Isaiah

ANN N. MADSEN

Dedicated to those who live in the time about which Isaiah prophesied

Isaiah 19

As Assyria threatened Judah, she was tempted to ally herself with Egypt. In chapters 19–20, Jehovah commands Judah not to trust in Egypt.

19:2. This verse can be translated,

I will stir up Egyptian against Egyptian,
Brother will fight against brother,
neighbor against neighbor,
city against city,
kingdom against kingdom.

But the LORD says, “I will bring their plans to nothing.”

19:4. This prophecy would have been surprising in Isaiah’s day, but would soon become a common occurrence. Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome would all conquer Egypt. Egypt and the flooding Nile were the dependable refuge in time of famine in the Near East.

19:5. This prophecy of the constantly dependable Nile drying up (which would have been extremely rare anciently), with the consequences that would follow (verses 6–10), would have been shocking to Isaiah’s ancient audience. One specific time this prophecy was fulfilled was when Gamal Abdel Nasser decided to build the Aswan Dam (completed in 1970) so that Egypt would have electricity, thus doing away with the

annual flooding of the Nile, which provided fertility and yearly enrichment to the river's banks. Verses 5–10 describe much of what happened in 1970 and thereafter.

19:11–15. Zoan or Tanis, located in the northeastern Nile delta, was the capital of Lower Egypt in Isaiah's day. Verses 11–15 describe the foolishness of the leading officials of Egypt, who were Pharaoh's advisors.

19:13. Zoan (in verse 13) is also called Tannis today.

19:17. One fulfillment of the prophecy that Judah would "bring terror to the Egyptians" might have been in 1967, when the Israeli Air Force destroyed the Egyptian Air Force on the ground, which was largely responsible for Israel's victory in the Six-Day War.

19:18. Verses 18–22 prophesy of a future healing by Jehovah in the land of Egypt.

19:19–25. An amazing prophecy of a future peace between Egyptians, Assyrians, and Israel is described in some detail with verse 25 summarizing, "Jehovah, the LORD Jehovah, will bless them saying, 'Blessed be Egypt, my people, Assyria, my handiwork, and Israel, my inheritance.'"

Credits

Author: Ann N. Madsen

General Editor: Taylor Halverson

Associate Editor: Morgan Tanner

Senior Editor: Sarah Whitney Johnson

Assistant Editor: Jonathan Riley

ScripturePlus Design: Jasmin Gimenez Rapple