

This is God's answer to the Ethiopians. He is going to bring the present Assyrian attack to an end. There is no need for them to try to get the Israelites to join with them in an alliance. As Isaiah has told us so often elsewhere in the book, it is not necessary for the Israelites to pour out every bit of strength they can muster, helping the Ethiopians and the Egyptians in their plans to resist Assyrian aggression. This particular attack God Himself is going to stop.

In the last verse of the chapter the Lord looks on to the distant future. He tells us that a time is coming when the Lord of hosts will receive homage and sacrifice from the very people to whom the message was sent in verse 2. Ethiopia itself is to be a present to God; the people from this great heathen land of mighty warriors are themselves eventually to be God's own. There is a foretaste of the fulfillment of this promise in the visit of the Ethiopian eunuch to the temple in Jerusalem. On the way back from the temple he was met by Philip, the evangelist, and was given the knowledge of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ from this very book of Isaiah. Here there is a promise of much greater supremacy of Christ in Ethiopia than that land has yet seen.

Isaiah 19

After speaking of the great Egyptian empire, the prophet goes on in chapter 19 to deal with the future of Egypt itself. The chapter divides naturally into two main sections; verses 1 to 16 (or 17) describe God's judgment against Egypt; verses 17 (or 18) to 25 portray His future blessing upon that land.

The first of these is in turn divisible into smaller sections, as follows:

1. Verses 1-4, Political disruption in Egypt.
2. Verses 5-10, Natural disaster and economic depression.
3. Verses 11-14, Confusion among the Egyptian leaders.
4. Verses 15-16 (or 17), Frustration and fear.

It will be noticed that we have left the position of verse 17 indefinite. The question whether it ends the first part of the chapter, or begins its second part, will be discussed later on. What a remarkable difference there is between the tone of this chapter and that of the Burden of Babylon. In chapters 13 and 14 the prophet considered Babylon and all that it