



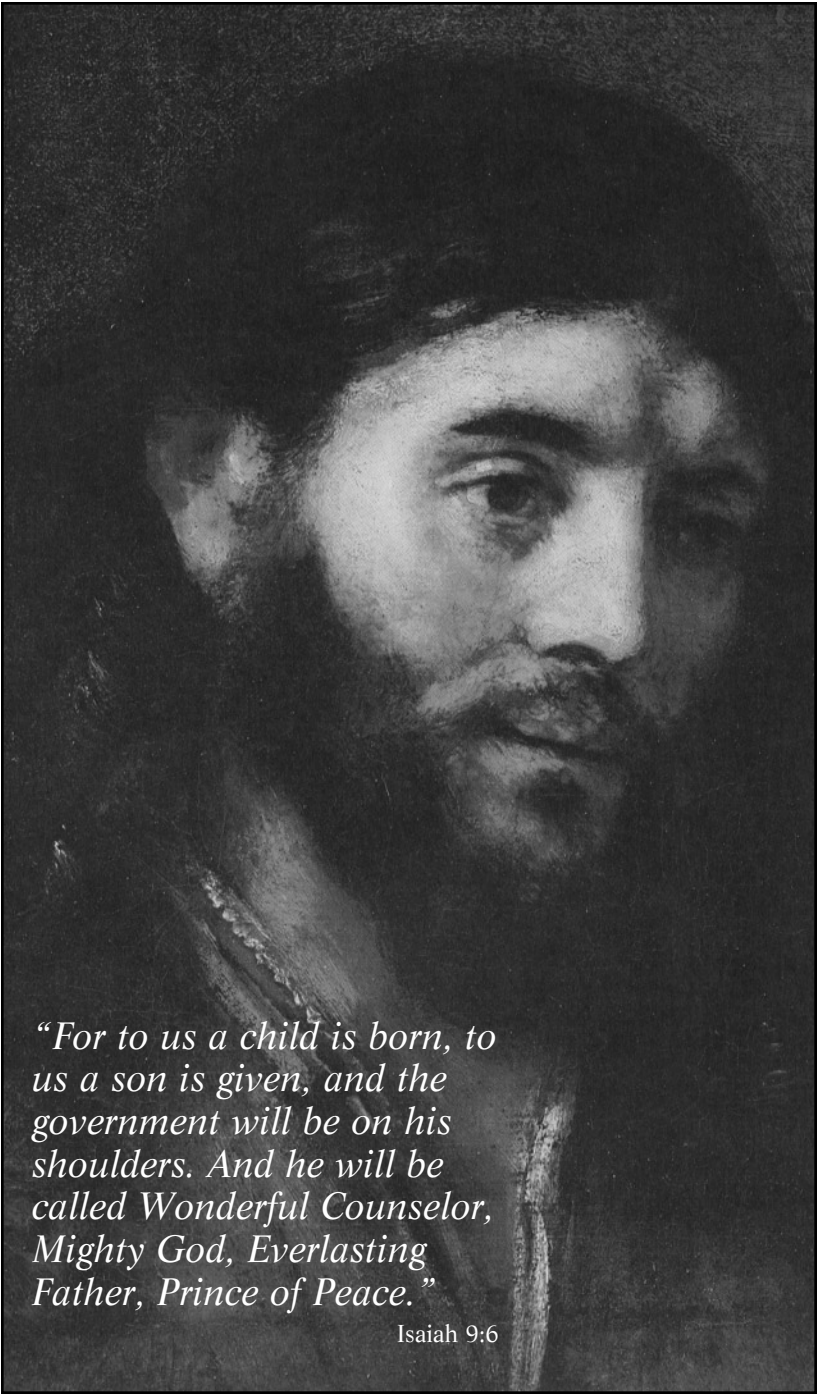
CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

# BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

ISAIAH 1-39

Week 2



*“For to us a child is born, to  
us a son is given, and the  
government will be on his  
shoulders. And he will be  
called Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting  
Father, Prince of Peace.”*

Isaiah 9:6

# A Child Is Born, a Son Is Given

DAY 8

Isaiah 9

Have you ever seen a great public figure brought down by immorality?

1. Zebulun and Naphtali were two tribes of northern Israel, which would soon be punished for their sin and abandonment of God (v. 1). What does Isaiah say will bring honor back to these tribes in the future (vs. 2-3)?

2. What does God promise to give to this area (v.6)?

3. How will the rule of the coming child (vs.6-7) differ from Israel's leaders of that day (v. 16)?

4. True or false: The inhabitants of Ephraim (Israel's largest tribe) and Samaria accepted that their condition was serious (vs. 9-11).

5. Who caused Israel to abandon her God (vs. 14-16)?

1. When you read the description of the Messiah in 9:6-7, which aspect of his character and activity mean the most to you, and why?

2. When you vote in elections, what do you look for in a leader? List five criteria for a good leader.

3. Can you think of recent instances when a prominent religious or political leader led people into great danger? What does that tell you about the responsibility that accompanies leadership?

*Zebulun and Naphtali were part of the northern kingdom of Israel, but Isaiah used them to represent all of Israel. In 732 B.C. this part of Israel was conquered and made an Assyrian province by Tiglath-Pileser III. "A great light" (v. 2). Matthew 4:15-16 applies this passage to Jesus, who began his ministry in "Galilee of the Gentiles." "The bricks have fallen down, but we will re-build" (v. 10). Ephraim and Samaria felt that their recent setbacks were only temporary and they would rebound. But this judgment was from God, and inevitable. No human activity could thwart God's mighty hand.*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

## DAY 9

# Let the Punishment Fit the Crime

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Isaiah 10

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Do you think the laws in your country, and the punishments for breaking them, are just, lenient, or too harsh? Why do you think so?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

1. In verses 1-4, Israel's leaders are accused of six things by God. What are they?
2. What question does God ask the leaders of Israel who have been so callous toward the the poor and oppressed (v. 3)?
3. What best describes Assyria's attitude (vs. 12-14)?  
(a) willing to be used of God, (b) understanding the spiritual purpose behind their invasion, (c) feeling they accomplished everything themselves, (d) giving God glory for their victory.
4. What did God ask the Assyrian king (v. 15)?
5. Despite their threats and power, what attitude did God encourage the people of Judah to take toward Assyria (vs. 24-34)? Why?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

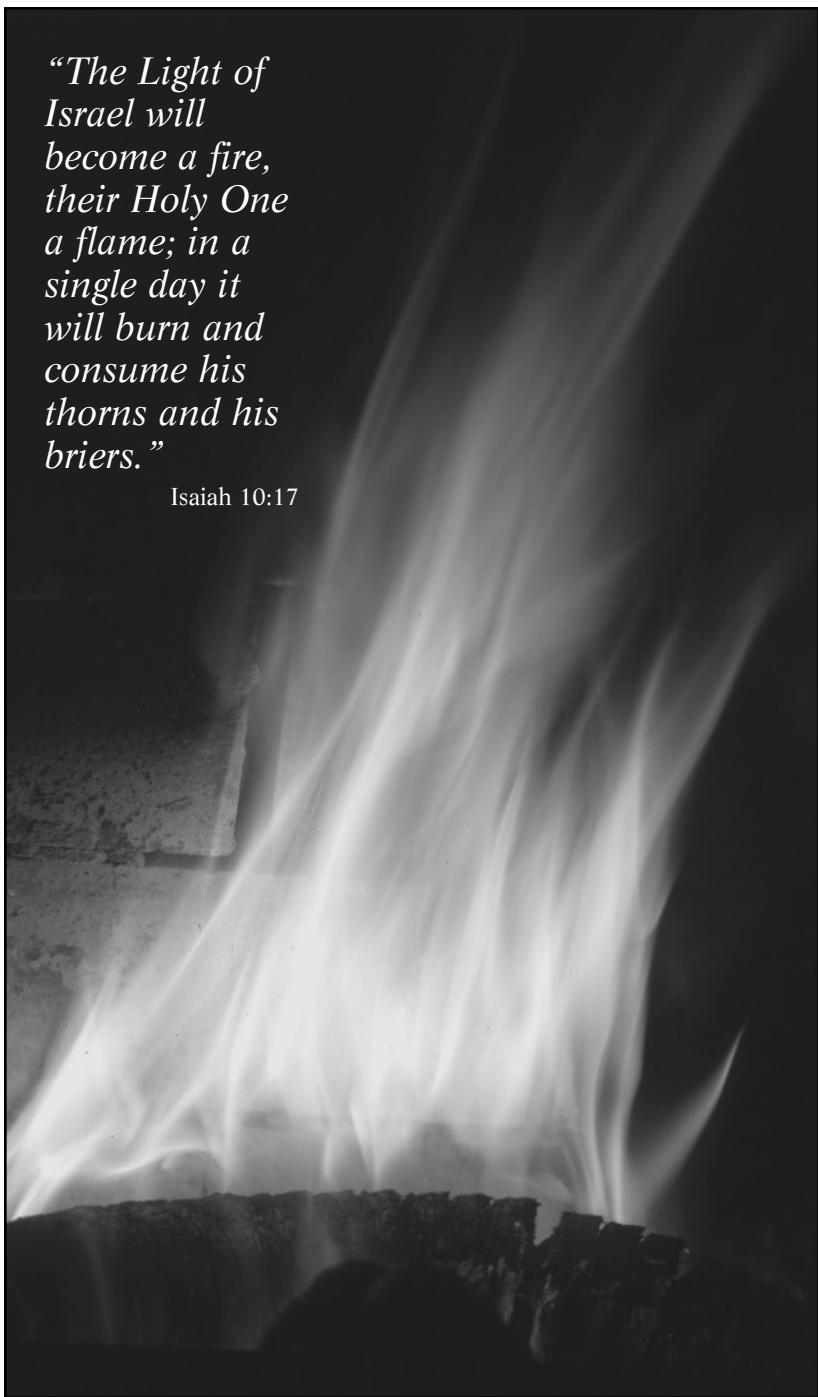
1. Do you believe God has used someone in your life to bring you closer to him? If so, was God's choice surprising to you?
2. Do you believe God can use someone to serve his purposes without them even knowing it? Try to think of three scriptural examples (hint: Ge 50:15-21).

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

***Calno, Carchemish, Hamath, Arpad, Samaria and Damascus*** (v. 9) were cities that Assyria had conquered. Assyria thought that since Jerusalem was like any other city, and her God was not considered as powerful as gods of other cities they had conquered, victory would be simple. But God promised he would destroy the Assyrian army by disease and fire (v. 16). In 701 B.C., 185,000 Assyrian soldiers surrounding Jerusalem were killed by God (Isa 37:36-37). In 609 B.C., Babylon conquered the Assyrian Empire, burning many Assyrian cities in the process.

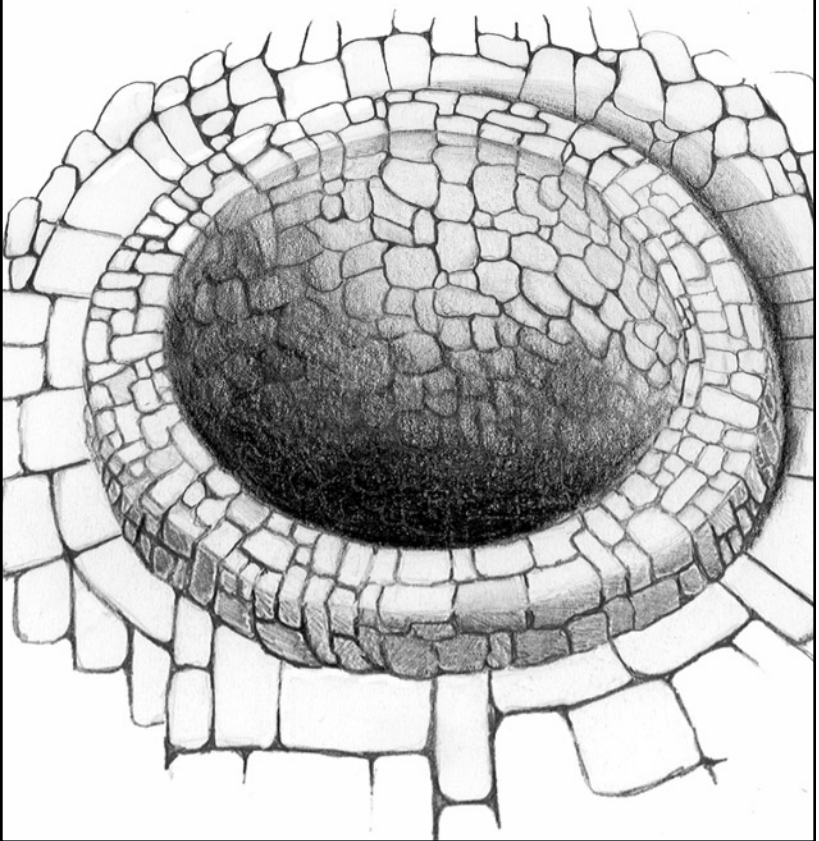
*“The Light of  
Israel will  
become a fire,  
their Holy One  
a flame; in a  
single day it  
will burn and  
consume his  
thorns and his  
briers.”*

Isaiah 10:17



*“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. In that day you will say: ‘Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.’”*

Isaiah 12:3-4



# The Coming Kingdom

DAY 10

Isaiah 11-12

If you were to imagine a perfect world, what would it look like?

1. Who is the shoot who would rise from the stump of Jesse (11:1)?
2. What attributes does this coming King have to rule and reign perfectly (v. 2)? How is the Messiah's reign different from that of human world leaders (vs. 3-5)?
4. Verses 6-9 speak about changes in animals. Do you think these statements are to be taken literally, or does this symbolize the character changes that will occur in humans?
5. Before the kingdom is complete, what will the Messiah do (vs. 12, 15-16)?
6. How does Isaiah's song of praise reflect the joy of salvation (12:1-6)?

1. As you read the description of the kingdom of God, what aspect of it excites you most? Why?
2. Have you ever imagined living in a perfect world? Does it fill you with: (a) fear, (b) boredom, (c) confusion, (d) joy, (e) excitement?
3. Do these perfect conditions seem to you to be: (a) mythical, (b) truthful, (c) symbolic, (d) impossible, (e) unnecessary?

*Jesse was the father of King David, who had been promised that his dynasty would last forever. Though Israel was cut down, and Judah would be taken away, a remnant would be left and David's line kept intact. It would be like a **stump of a tree** that begins to grow branches again. "**The wolf will live with the lamb**" (v. 6). This passage indicates that not only is the Messiah different from all earthly rulers, but that his kingdom is also significantly different from every other kingdom. Harmony replaces acrimony on every level.*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

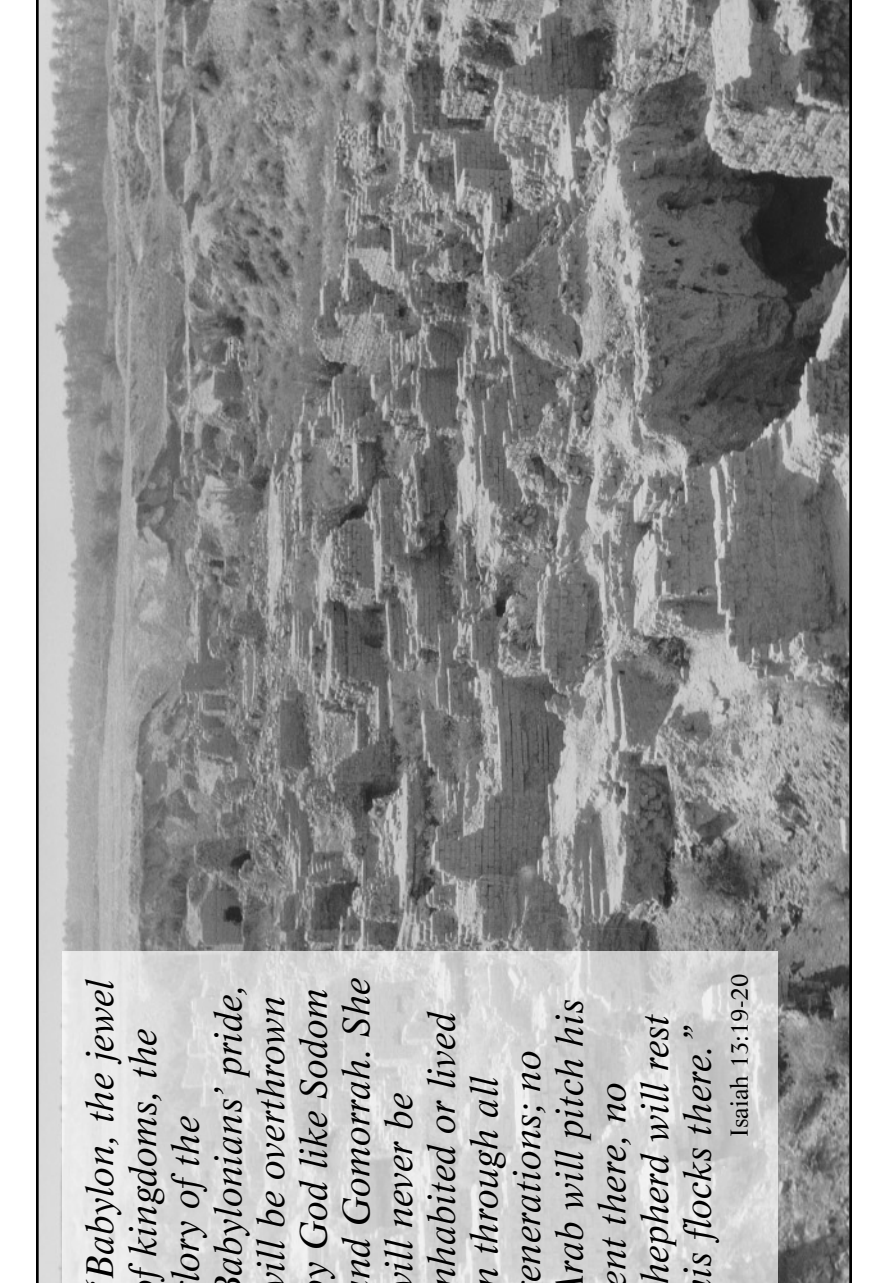
into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word



*“Babylon, the jewel  
of kingdoms, the  
glory of the  
Babylonians’ pride,  
will be overthrown  
by God like Sodom  
and Gomorrah. She  
will never be  
inhabited or lived  
in through all  
generations; no  
Arab will pitch his  
tent there, no  
shepherd will rest  
his flocks there.”*

*Isaiah 13:19-20*



# What Goes Around Comes Around

DAY 11

Isaiah 13-14

Have you ever wondered if certain evil people were ever going to get what they deserved?

1. Who would be in the army that God would use to punish Babylon, the evil city (13:4-5)?
2. What would be scarcer than gold in Babylon during her judgment (v. 12)?
3. What ultimate punishment was given to Babylon for her many sins against God (vs. 19-22)?
4. What outrageous claims did the king of Babylon make concerning himself for which God humbled him (14:12-14)?
5. What three things did God promise to do to the Assyrians in his land (v. 25)?
6. The Philistines were warned against rejoicing over the defeat of Assyria, who had conquered them. What would Assyria rise to do (v. 29)?

1. Can you think of public figures who seemed to be guilty of some crime, yet weren't punished?
2. Are there any of your acquaintances, friends or family, who also seem to have gotten away with offenses?
3. What is your reaction when someone seems to get away with sin and escape punishment?

**Babylon**, from its very beginning (Ge 11:1-9), was a hotbed of pagan activity, and over the centuries a number of dynasties ruled there. **Stir up the Medes** (13:17) may refer to the Assyrian destruction of Babylon in 689 B.C. **The king of Babylon** (14:3), may refer to Sennacherib. Although he was king of Assyria, he was also king of Babylon, since Babylon was made a vassal to Assyria. **"I will ascend to heaven"** (14:13-14). Some commentators see Satan being described here, while others see only a boastful and arrogant human king.

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

## Moabite Refugee Cities

*Cities mentioned in Isaiah 15, as destinations for refugees from the Assyrian invasion.*

Mediterranean  
Sea

### Horonaim

A Moabite city whose exact site is unknown. It was probably located on one of the roads leading from the Moabite plateau to the Arabah.

### Zoar

A city located at the southeast corner of the Dead Sea near a salty plain called Sebkha. This city had a historical connection with Sodom and Gomorrah.

### Eglath Shelishiyah

A town near Zoar mentioned in prophecies concerning Moab. Exact location is unknown.

The Arabah

### Luhith

A Moabite city associated with Horonaim. The exact location is unknown but it may have been situated on a hill between Rabbath-moab and Zoar.

MOAB

• City of Moab

• Rabbath-moab

*“My heart cries out over Moab; her fugitives flee as far as Zoar, as far as Eglath Shelishiyah. They go up the way to Luhith, weeping as they go; on the road to Horonaim they lament their destruction.”*

Isaiah 15:5

### Isaiah 15–16

Have you ever known anyone who was a refugee from his or her homeland? What emotions do they express as they speak of their former homeland?

1. How long did it take for the Moabite cities of Ar and Kir to be destroyed (15:1)?
2. What was the reaction of the Moabite armed forces to the Assyrian invasion (v. 4)?
3. What did Isaiah suggest the Moabites send as tribute to persuade Judah to allow the Moabites to take refuge there (16:1)?
4. What sinful attitude of the Moabites was so prominent that all knew of it (v. 6)?
5. How long would it be before Moab's final devastation (v. 14)?

1. Do you know people who have immigrated to your country? Why did they leave their native countries? What would make you leave your country?
2. Have you ever had to leave a place of familiarity to go to a strange and unfamiliar place? If so, what was hardest for you to adjust to?
3. The Bible calls Christians "aliens and strangers" (1Pe 2:11). Do you feel like a stranger? Why? What makes you feel strange and alien?

*Moab was a region east of Judah and the Dead Sea. The Moabites were descendants of Moab, a son of Lot and his oldest daughter (Ge 19:31-37). "Destroyed in a night" (15:1). Raids were commonly practiced at night. "Send lambs as tribute" (16:1). Moab's rulers realized they needed to seek help from the house of David, and pay tribute for sanctuary. In ancient times, the Moabites had been compelled to pay tribute to David of sheep and goats. Although Moab had already suffered terribly, more destruction was coming, within **three years** (16:14). This may refer to 701 B.C. when Sennacherib invaded Judah.*

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

**LIVING**  
out the Word

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

## The God That People Forgot

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Isaiah 17-18

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

How do your friends, family and neighbors explain major, unpredictable and unexpected events of their lives? Do they attribute them to fate, luck, themselves or God?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

**1.** A day of destruction was coming for Israel (Ephraim), in which only a few would survive. The destruction would be so severe that it would cause Israel to do something drastic. What change would this make in Israel (17:7-8)?

**2.** Just as it seemed that the Assyrians would overwhelm Judah, what would God do to them (18:5-6)?

**3.** The divine judgment on Assyria caused the people of Cush to do something amazing. What did they do (vs. 7-8)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

**1.** When amazing events happen in your life, to what or to whom do you give the credit?

**2.** Has God ever done something in your life that was so miraculous that it significantly changed your attitude toward him? What was it?

**3.** Has God ever had to bring calamity or pain into your life to bring you back to him? Why do you think God used the methods he did?

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

*Damascus* was the capital city of Aram, or Syria. This was the country that the northern kingdom of Israel had allied themselves with to counter the Assyrian invasion. The **altars** referred to in 17:8 were for idols. **Asherah poles** were wooden symbols of Asherah, the Canaanite fertility goddess associated with Baal. **Cush** included modern-day southern Egypt, Sudan and northern Ethiopia. **"Smooth-skinned"** (18:2). Apparently those people removed the hair from their bodies as a cultural custom. Herodotus (an ancient historian) claims that on every third day, the Egyptian priests shaved their entire bodies.

*“Oh, the raging of many  
nations—they rage like the  
raging sea! Oh, the uproar  
of the peoples—they roar  
like the roaring of great  
waters!”*

Isaiah 17:12



## Useless Alliances

Isaiah 19–20

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Have you ever hoped that your relationship with someone would protect you or shield you from trouble? How successful have your alliances been?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

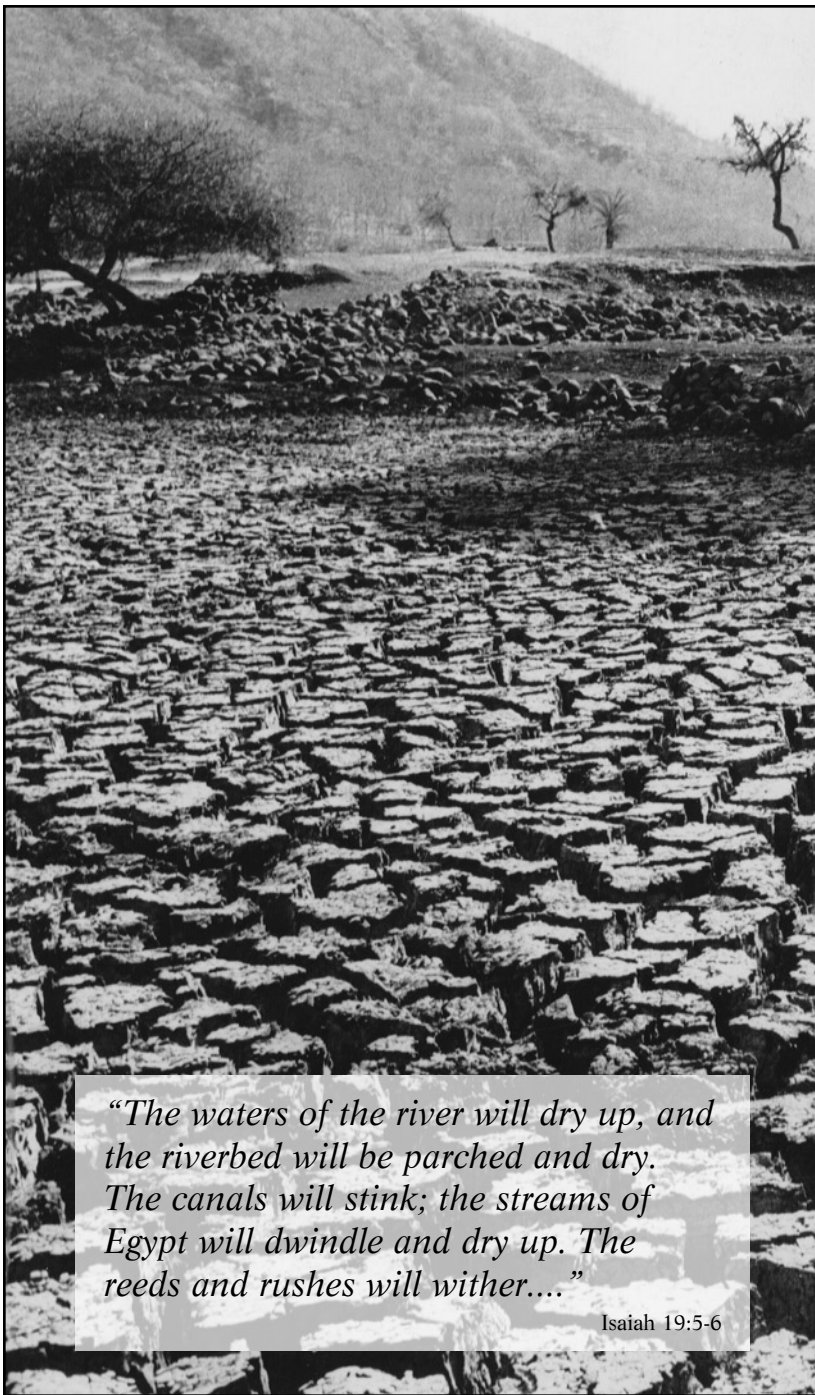
1. What would God do to Egypt so she would know that her disaster was a judgment from God (19:5-7)?
2. What areas and people would be affected (vs. 8-10)?
3. What marvelous transformation would occur in the future in Egypt and Assyria (vs. 18-25)?
4. How did Isaiah say that God would eventually unite Egypt and Assyria (v. 23)? (a) by military alliance, (b) by a highway, (c) by a common worship of God, (d) both B and C.
5. Why did Isaiah go around half naked for three years (20:3-6)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. What, or who, are you expecting to protect you from danger or trouble? List at least five things.
2. Can you think of a time or situation when all those people on your list might be unable or unwilling to help you?
3. Are you placing your hope for protection and assistance in those who could ultimately fail you (Isa 2:22)?

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

*“On a swift cloud” (19:1). In Canaanite mythology, Baal was supposed to travel this way. Here God is showing that he alone is the Lord. “A cruel master” (v. 4) probably refers to the Assyrian King Esarhaddon, who conquered Egypt in 671 B.C. “City of Destruction” (v. 18). Many commentators believe this should be translated “City of the Sun,” or Heliopolis, an Egyptian city dedicated to Sun worship. Ashdod was a Philistine city captured by the Assyrian king Sargon. The capture of Ashdod was a stepping stone toward taking Egypt, with whom Judah was hoping to ally herself against Assyria.*



*“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. The reeds and rushes will wither...”*

Isaiah 19:5-6