

A Highway Out of Egypt



David Wilkerson January 1, 1985

Isaiah 19 contains an astounding prophecy that concerns every lost child of God and every backslider in the world. This chapter contains a dual prophecy, directed both to literal Israel and to spiritual Judah — the church of today. Moffatt's translation brings it out in its most powerful form.

It is called, "A Prophecy On Egypt." It is so far-reaching, so incredible, we will hardly believe it. Yet everything Isaiah prophesies in this chapter is confirmed by Christ Himself in the New Testament.

The prophecy focuses on a highway God has built out of Egypt, through Syria, to the promised land. It is a spiritual highway upon which multitudes of lost children will return to the Lord.

Egypt is a type of the world and its bondage. Pharaoh and his many magicians and seers are a type of Satan and his demon hordes. Assyria is a type of discipline and God's rod of correction. God said, "Assyria! He is my club in anger, the rod I wield in wrath..." (Isaiah 10:5).

Please keep in mind that what happened between Israel, Egypt and Assyria were "examples and shadows of heavenly things." Paul said, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our instructions, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Here Is the Prophecy:

(1) The Spirit of God will roll in like a cloud over this worldly scene and shake every idol and melt the courage of the rebellious.

"No spirit shall be left in Egypt; I will confound their plans, melt their courage..." (verse 3).

What a powerful word. The backslidden, who have gone back to Egypt (the world) to indulge, will lose heart. They will be totally confused. Their stubborn spirit, their outward facade of rebellion — will melt. There is even now this great shaking of every idol — the melting down of haughty spirits and proud looks. The Spirit of God intends to make things very miserable for all who have drifted back to the world. God will take away their joy in pleasure, confound their self-centered plans and melt their pride — so they will be driven to thoughts of returning to the Father's house.

(2) God has unveiled a plan of spiritual terrors to strike fear in Satan's kingdom and cause the wicked to tremble.

"Then shall Egypt tremble in terror like a woman, as the Lord of hosts swings His hand over it; the land of Judah (God's people) shall be a terror to Egypt the very mention of Judah will make Egyptians dread what the Lord of hosts has planned against Egypt..." (verses 16 and 17).

Let us quit mentioning the power of Satan. Let us not fall for the lie that he and his demon hordes can harass the children of the Almighty at will.

Let us not believe the world and the devil can keep our unsaved loved ones in slavery. God has a glorious plan — a plan to bring out of the devil's clutches those who have gone astray. By the time God is through with His plan, the world will yield its stolen prisoners. Our unsaved will be brought back.

This prophecy tells us that it is the devil who will tremble. He and his kingdom will tremble with terror at the mere mention of God's holy people taking dominion by faith. The ungodly are going to shake and tremble in our presence, like a woman stricken with fear, as we appropriate the prophetic promises of Isaiah and Christ.

The prophecy states that the world and the devil will dread and tremble over a plan of God designed against it. "The Egyptians dread what the Lord of hosts has planned against Egypt" (verse 17).

What is this plan that will terrorize hell?

(3) God's Spirit is going to move beyond the walls of the church and send a Holy Ghost revival to the world — right on Satan's territory.

All the walls and barriers are coming down. No longer can the devil or the world say, "This is our territory. This is our realm — stay away!"

Every barroom, every brothel, every gambling den is now under attack. The Holy Spirit has descended like a cloud upon every backslider, every drifter, every lost child of God. Whether it be junkies shooting drugs on rooftops; adulterers and fornicators in secret hotel rooms or in parked cars at drive-in theaters; alcohol and wine-bibbers in bars and restaurants; passion-crazed sex abusers sitting in dirty movie houses; wild parties; orgies; or race tracks — no one, no place is off limits to the wooing, brooding Spirit of almighty God.

"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name" (Isaiah 65:1 KJV).

No backslider or lost child of God has to go to church to fall under Holy Ghost conviction. There is even great conviction where there is no preacher or witness. The prophecy is very clear — God is going to invade the world and brood over all of Satan's territory — terrorizing demonic powers and convicting the fallen and backslidden.

Listen to this incredible prophecy:

"Then shall there be as many as five cities in the land of Egypt, speaking the language of Canaan, and loyal to the Lord of hosts" (verse 18).

Think of it! Five cities, representing all five senses. Right in the center of the devil's territory where the fallen are indulging their senses — God will begin to move and seek out those who, in their hearts, are still loyal and who inwardly speak the language of faith.

Look at this: "In Egypt — speaking the language of Canaan — and loyal to the Lord" (verse 18).

An Incredible Promise — An Altar in Egypt!

"Then shall there be an altar to the eternal in the heart of the land of Egypt" (verse 19).

Who will believe it? A revival in the world! Before they ever get back to the church — while they are still on the devil's territory — an altar to the Lord, speaking the language of faith, and loyal to the Lord.

Ezekiel prophesied that God would be a sanctuary to His people while in exile and captivity. Sin brought them into captivity; they were under the rod of God; yet, He promised to protect them, collect them, and put a new heart in them.

It, too, is a dual prophecy. God is even more concerned about spiritual Israel, and He has pledged to bring back all the exiles and captives in these last days.

"But I will be a sanctuary for them in their place of exile for a while, and then — says the Lord the Eternal — I will

gather them from the nations and collect them from the countries where they have been scattered and give them the land of Israel...And I will give them a new nature and put a new spirit into them, I will remove their hard nature and give them a nature that can be touched, that they may live by my laws and observe and obey my orders; so they shall be my own people, and I will be their God" (Ezekiel 11:16–20 Moffatt).

A New Development

An ironic development is taking place, both in the church and in the world. You can now hear church-going Christians talking the language of Egypt — unbelief, murmuring, materialism, and sensuality. There are many sensuous Christians leaning toward the world. Amazingly, you now see the backslidden, the lost — leaning back toward the altar, talking in loving terms about the Savior; and deep in their hearts, still loyal to the Lord while they are still in the world.

Don't judge your unconverted or backslidden loved ones by outward appearances. Many of them cry themselves to sleep. I can't begin to count the numbers of prisoners who confess to me they cry out to God from their cells. You can look at one who appears hard and unreachable, yet inwardly he may be calling out to heaven with desperation.

I have known backslidden drug abusers who would get high on heroin, then huddle like helpless babies in a dark corner, praying aloud, "Oh God, don't give up on me! I'm hooked; I'm so helpless — but I still need You; I still respect and love You. Please be patient — save me — bring me back."

It may not fit into your theology, but our blessed Lord has Himself established an altar in Satan's territory. No sinner, no backslider has far to go to get back to God. He can kneel by any bar. He can reach out in the midst of drugs, prostitution and ungodliness — and discover the Spirit of God and an altar — right there!

Why this altar in the world itself? It is for the immediate rescue of those who call for help — in the world.

"This shall serve as a reminder and as a witness to the Lord of hosts, within the land of Egypt; so that, when any who are oppressed cry to the Lord to send a champion, he will intervene and rescue them." (verse 20).

"So the eternal Lord strikes Egypt, striking them and healing them; whenever they turn to the Lord, He will heal them; whenever they turn to the Lord, He will heal them, in answer to their entreaty" (verse 22).

Now we see the Lord, by His Spirit, brooding over the whole world, and proclaiming, "The whole world is now under my beck and call. The altar is anywhere hurting mankind calls out for help. I will reach out, search out, any and all in the world whose heart still yearns for God."

(4) Best of all — God has built a highway out of Egypt. It runs through Assyria, then on to the promised land.

"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (Isaiah 43:18, 19 KJV).

"Then shall there be a highway between Egypt and Assyria. Egyptians and Assyrians alike shall worship the Lord. "Then shall Israel form a triple alliance with Egypt and Assyria — ablessing to the world around, and blessed by the Lord of hosts, who said, Blessed be my people Egypt, Assyria, whom I have made; and Israel my own possession..." (verses 23–25).

The Egyptian here is the backslider, the straying child of God who went back to the world. The Assyrian here is the child of God who is crushed and spiritually immobilized by chastisement and correction from the Lord. It is not that he is worldly, but simply too overwhelmed by trouble, sorrow and loneliness. It has caused him to drift about in a stupor.

We must tell the truth to those who are coming back to the Lord. The road back from Egypt goes through Assyria. You must come under the loving rod of correction; for those whom God loves, He corrects.

No one can enter the promised land of peace and rest, except by the way of discipline. You can tell sinners and backsliders that it's easy to travel that highway back to the Lord's presence — but you aren't telling the truth if you

don't tell them it's not an easy road.

Yes, you can escape out of the world and its habits, its bondage and fear. Yes, the road to holiness and happiness is open to all. Yes, the Holy Spirit bids the lost to come. But the road first leads to the rod of correction. That is not to be feared. It is a purging process to get the world out of you so you can enjoy the promised land of God's presence. If you yield to His discipline, you will break through to joys never before experienced.

The promise is that the backsliders and the broken and despairing will return and worship the Lord.

What is this triple alliance God has so blessed? It is:

First — going to the altar while still in Egypt — for deliverance.

Second — returning to the Lord for loving discipline.

Third — claiming the promised rest for God's children.

The Prophecy Confirmed by Christ

I told you at the beginning of this message that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself confirms this glorious prophecy. The confirmation is given in two parables of our Lord in Luke 15. Here is even greater proof that our Lord has made a commitment to bring back our backslidden, straying loved ones. It confirms Isaiah's prophecy that the world must give up what the Lord goes after to rescue.

I. The Good Shepherd will not quit searching until He finds the lost sheep!

"Which of you with a hundred sheep, if he loses one, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open field and go after the lost one until he finds it?" (Luke 15:4).

How long will the Lord go out after our straying, lost loved ones? Until He finds them!

We give up on our lost loved ones. We become accustomed to their lostness. It no longer bothers or concerns us. We seem to gloss over the horrible danger they are in.

Thank God, our Shepherd never gives up on them. He is ever in pursuit; He never wearies, never slumbers nor sleeps. He keeps on their trail — yearning after them, saying, "Lost, but still Mine! I will seek and I will find."

God's Action Not Limited to Our Prayers

The Lord has not limited Himself to our prayers. We should pray for lost friends and relatives, but we seem to think God quits pursuing them if we do not pray. When we do not pray for them, we come under a cloud of guilt. We are deeply condemned.

God has given us these wonderful promises and prophecies, not to urge Him on, but to encourage our faith in His ability to find them and bring them back. We must pray with confidence, but only that our unsaved will be receptive when the Shepherd comes to them.

Whether we pray for them or not, the Good Shepherd states emphatically, "I will go after them — until I find them..." It is a commitment He has made by grace alone. We ourselves are not saved by merit, nor can we reach our lost loved ones by the merits of our prayers alone. He has promised to pursue — by grace alone.

If the Lord waited for us to pray, no one would be saved. God does not build on such flimsy foundations. It is not by works, including prayer, but by grace alone.

Pray conviction upon the backslidden and lost. Pray for open hearts and melted pride. But never pray, "Lord go after them; seek them." That would be unbelief, since He has already pledged to do the work of a faithful shepherd.

II. The woman who lost a silver coin will not give up until she finds it!

"Suppose a woman has ten pieces of silver. If she loses one, does she not light a lamp and scour the house, searching carefully until she finds it?" (Luke 15:8).

In this parable, our Lord puts a great worth on that which was lost. Again, the search goes on until she finds it!

Perhaps the lost lamb could wander back to the fold, but what can a lost coin do to be found? Nothing! The coin is helpless!

I believe our blessed Lord goes after even the helpless. Those without strength, totally weak and powerless. So many are weakened by sin, helplessly lost, and unable to reach out. To these I say — someone is earnestly scouring the place seeking after you. And, the Spirit will not stop until you are found and restored. "For when we were without strength...Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6).

Lost — in the House

This is also a word of encouragement to those who are lost in the house! The lamb was also lost to the world. The coin was lost in the house.

I believe I have met the most helplessly lost people in the house of God. They attend church; they are a part of a collection of believers. They are one of ten, so to speak. Still they have little or no faith. They have no power, no usefulness. They are not far off in some distant land like the prodigal son. They are near the altar, near the Lord's table, near all the others. But they are as lost as the sheep and the prodigal mentioned in Luke 15.

They no longer speak to God and He no longer speaks to them. Of them, Isaiah said, "It is your own iniquities that interfere between your God and you; your sins have made him veil his face from you, until he will not listen" (Isaiah 59:2). Yet His Word still stands to the lost sheep "of the house" of Israel. He will seek until He finds.

III. The Lord is calling His people to rejoice with Him over the returning of those who were lost!

"And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing..." (Luke 15:5).

These are more than parables of the finding of lost sheep, lost coins, or runaway prodigals. It is the account of God's rejoicing heart — His extreme joy in the restoration of the lost.

He did not lash the lost lamb. The thought of retribution toward the lost coin is too foolish to think of. Even the returning prodigal was invited into the father's house to rejoice and make merry. No guilt, no wrath, only reconciling love.

God is revealing to us His heart. He is the yearning Father who waits with love for the lost son. Christ is the Shepherd who tenderly carries the wounded lamb back to the fold. There is even great rejoicing over the finding of the helpless coin.

Rejoice With Me

Not only does our Lord rejoice over the returning lost — we are commanded to rejoice with Him.

"He calleth together his friend and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost..." (Luke 15:6).

Is there any lamb too lost, too far astray, that our perfect Shepherd cannot find and restore? If He has committed Himself to seek until the lost one is found — is there any question about the result? None! "For he feeds his flock like a shepherd, and gathers them in his arms; he is carrying the lambs in his bosom, and leading the ewes gently..." (Isaiah 40:11).

So we should begin to rejoice even now! For He who has promised, will fulfill his word. He has given us His great and precious promises to find and bring back our lost loved ones — so that we may look beyond all contrary circumstances and, by faith, rejoice in the fulfillment of His Word.

Be no longer sad or downcast about our lost and straying loved ones. The loving Shepherd of heaven is even now in full pursuit of them. He will scour the earth for them, if need be. He knows where they are — He waits only to lift them to His shoulder at the proper time. He has each one in view — but He wants the lessons to be learned first. At just the right time, the Shepherd will stretch forth His hand and rescue them. And, they will be ready — for He told us He WILL find them. He waits until they "lose their fight" and quit resisting.

An Overflowing Highway

I see, by faith, that highway of holiness — out of Egypt — overflowing with prodigals on their way home! If even one lost sheep returning with repentance causes great rejoicing in heaven, with angels ablaze with praises, what will it be like when multitudes of the lost come back to Zion?

No wonder Satan has such great wrath. No wonder the devil and his demon hordes tremble. Enemy strongholds are coming down. The enemy's hold is being broken. The deceiver is being exposed. God is being exalted among the heathen. The Spirit is at work at the very gates of hell. The saints are beginning to take dominion by faith. There is a new song to be sung — a song of the redeemed of the Lord being restored!

"So precious are you to me, so honored, so beloved, I will sacrifice lands for you, and nations instead of you. From the far east will I bring your offspring, and from the far west will I gather you. I will bid the north lands give them up, and bid the south, Let go, bringing my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, all whom I claim as mine, whom I have formed for my glory..." (Isaiah 43:4–7).

Some Final Promises

From the prophet Isaiah —

"Forsaken shall no longer be your name. Your land shall no more be called desolate...You shall be My Delight. As a bridegroom thrills to his bride, so shall your God thrill to you..." (Isaiah 62:4,5).

"The Eternal recalls you like a wife broken hearted by neglect; 'But a young wife' your God asks — 'how can she be thrown aside...?' I did forsake you for awhile. But I will take you back right tenderly; I did turn from you in a rush of wrath, but with a lasting love I pity you: That is the promise of your Eternal Redeemer" (Isaiah 54:6–8).

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:8–10 KJV).

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