

ISAIAH 18 vs 1

¹ HO!

(Now... that should get somebody's attention! Don't you think? But seriously for starters... eliminate the **woe**. This chapter is NOT a curse. The Hebrew word is *hoi*. It's an interjection... and can also mean reactions like: Ah! ... Ha! ... Oh! ... or as in Isaiah 55, HO! everyone who thirsts! In other words: Hey! the Lord wants somebody's attention!

But let me add, the Lord wants our attention on His faithfulness to His word. He wants us to know, when He makes any promise, He keeps His word. This promise is not because of anything some people did... though I imagine God would be pleased if they were thankful for His goodness and mercy.

This chapter is about a promise the Lord gave over 2,500 years ago... to a nation that would rise... at the end of the time of the Gentiles; that was supposed to be faithful to the God who gave it birth; as well as to be a blessing to the rest of the world. Now quite honestly, a nation... any faithless nation that turns its back on God; that becomes over populated with two-faced fools and thieves and robbers in every position of leadership... embezzling His goodness for their own greedy gain; who are no longer a blessing, but a curse to many nations... will undoubtedly be worthy of...

well, even old Nebuchadnezzar tells us in his own words what he'd do: *every people, nation, and language, which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill*. Well, if old Nebuchadnezzar knew that; then what do you think a faithless nation... presumptuously luxuriating in blessings from God... can expect? It sounds like history is gearing up for a pretty big shit pile)

(But back to Isaiah; keep your eyes on God and His faithfulness...)

HO! ...to the land shadowing with wings (...with out-stretched eagle's wings; Matthew Henry in 1706—70 years before the American Revolution... began his comments on this chapter by saying, *Interpreters are very much at a loss where to find this land that lies... beyond the rivers of Cush*)

(Well then... let's just listen to Isaiah...)

beyond the rivers of Cush (...Isaiah is talking; he's looking WEST),

beyond the rivers of Cush (...far, far to the WEST!)

(To a land...)

² **That sends ambassadors by the sea** (...Isaiah sees... it's a land with international influence),

even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters (...as Dr. Gene Scott pointed out, and he's absolutely right... Isaiah is using his language... 2500 years ago. He doesn't have a technical manual for the 21st century. He sees: ships like sponges... taking up water... gobbling up water. He's not writing a scientific journal. How would you describe steamships... in primitive words?)

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HEY! to a land with outstretched eagles' wings.

Go, ye swift messengers,

to a nation scattered and peeled (...that can be translated)

to a tall and smooth faced people (...smooth faced... as in clean shaven people. To Isaiah, these people didn't look like the bearded people in his part of the world)

to a people terrible from their beginning (...to a people... able to cause FEAR from their beginning)

onward to the end (...many times we read... God put the terror of His people into the surrounding nations; and these people are like a nation whose... first shot... was heard around the world!)

a nation meted out and trodden down (...it is *laid out... and organized*. It's perfectly tilled; and it's perfectly surveyed—north, south, east, west; every square inch of the country is mapped out)

whose land the rivers have divided (...even its rivers are a distinguishing mark... dividing up and cutting through the land. Rivers... plural... like the Mississippi... and the Missouri... and the Ohio)

Verse ³ All ye inhabitants of the world,

and all ye... dwellers on the earth (...on this planet, Isaiah is speaking to all of us; nobody is left out! Everyone is invited to pay attention)

See ye! (...see ye what? Isaiah says... WORLD be looking!)

See ye!

when he lifts up an ensign on the mountains (...WORLD... when you see him... lift up his national symbol... his flag: like when the Marines raised the flag on Iwo Jima)

and Hear ye... when he blows a trumpet (...for war! In other words, WORLD... you shall see and you shall hear... so watch out! Pay attention!)

Verse ⁴ For so the LORD said unto me,

I will take My rest (...again, Matthew Henry writes about these words, **I will take My rest**: It is not as if HE is weary of governing the world... or, as if He either needed or desired to retire from it... and repose Himself. But it intimates that the great GOD... has perfect, undisturbed enjoyment of Himself.

He is not bothered by the agitations; He is not astonished by the commotions. He's going to sit back for a while)

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and I will consider in My dwelling place (...in the eternities... in His heavenly home... He is going to be watching... and thinking about what is going on)

and I will consider in My dwelling place (...from My vantage point... what is to be done)

like a clear heat upon herbs (...after rain which is very reviving... and makes the **herbs** ...to flourish),

and like a cloud and dew in the heat of harvest (...both are welcome! The dew to the ground; and the cloud to the laborers.

And the Lord GOD will watch... because He is most concerned about His people.

Now, there is... a bump in the road coming... that involves: His people... the faithful ones; this great nation with outstretched wings; and the world—ALL the world. And God sees this bump in the road... coming)

Verse ⁵ For before the harvest (...hmm?! What harvest? the end-time harvest. The prophet Joel in chapter 3 of his book... says, *Put ye in the sickle... for the harvest is ripe!* And he tells us in much more detail about this harvest.

And isn't it interesting... that the next great **Feast Day**... a specific Day appointed by the Lord God... that we in the church anticipate to somehow be fulfilled... by something Christ does... that next great Day is: **the Feast of Trumpets**—usually in September or early October... when the summer season of growth is over... and all the labor to produce a good yield is finished... when the trumpets blast 100 times that Day... and with joy they rush out... and gather up the harvest.

That's the harvest we are learning about: the one fulfilled in Christ)

But... before the harvest (...this Hebrew word is: *pamiym*... it means: in front of, facing; even... leading up to the presence of)

(Isaiah says...)

before the harvest...

when the bud is perfect (...when the sprout... or growth is complete; it is finished... and whole: and without any more room to grow),

when the bud is perfect,

and the sour grape is ripening in the flower (...now, is the Lord talking about the ripe grapes in His vineyard? Jesus told us the night He was betrayed, *His Father is the worker in the vineyard* looking for healthy growth in the lives He planted: lots of love and joy and peace. (John15)

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Definitely here we are learning: when life has matured... and come to fruition; suddenly... and quite unexpectedly... at least to the life that is growing)

He shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks (...literally: the quivering tendrils – the fruitful, fragile vines...with pruning tools and clippers),

and take away (...and remove; this word was first used when Noah... took away the covering off the Ark; it is a common word used over 300 times in the OT almost exclusively in a negative sense: to discard.

Without over analyzing this verse... these words tell us: the Lord Himself... will come to His vineyard when the fruit is ripe... and what?

Will He remove what little fruit could be found? Will He take away the grapes? We are reminded to: Pay attention to what He says! Does this hint at: the next great Feast day that even Paul would not have us ignorant of? When the Lord himself shall descend and gather up His people)

and cut down the branches (...to lop off; and chop down the branches. GOD Himself... messed up everyone's day! Notice, the ripening vines are pruned and the fruit taken away... but the leftover branches)

⁶They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains (...ravenous fowls of the mountains),

and to the beasts of the earth (...Daniel tells us the 4th great beast government will still be working, hard as iron, smashing and destroying until the whole world is broken):

and the fowls shall summer upon them (...birdbrains will peck away on the leftovers of summer),

and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them (...this Hebrew word for winter... is *charaf* ... used 41 times in the OT most frequently: in defiance to the Lord... such as Goliath the Philistine who... *defied the armies of Israel*.

Here Isaiah tells us, *What is left after the fowls nibble on... the beasts will continue to go after and will chomp on!*

Happening before our eyes... again in the news today! And for one last time, GOD has allowed His gift of life on earth... to be nearly decimated and destroyed... picked upon and munched on by beasts and birdbrains!

Verse ⁷In that time (...right before the harvest)

shall the present (...the gift God prepared for this special time)

be brought unto the LORD of hosts (...the Lord of ALL things!

And... what is that gift?)

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of a **PEOPLE** (...this **NATION** with outstretched wings... THAT is the gift)

the present... of a people... tall and smooth faced,

and from a people...

to be feared *far and wide*... from their beginning... onward to the end;

a nation measured out (...and organized)

and surveyed *foot by foot* (...every piece of the land),

whose land the rivers have divided.

(And where is this present being brought? Where are the armies of this great nation being brought?)

to the place of the name of the **LORD** of hosts,

the **Mount Zion**.

Someday... the **LORD** will call on this Nation...

and they will come quickly to help protect **His Jerusalem!**