

SYRIA GRANULATED

Isaiah 17 and 18

INTRODUCTION:

History is repeating itself. Prophet speaks in terms of a burden for another nations that is soon to drink the cup of judgment.

Describes it as being reduced to ashes, or small particles, hence granulated to dust.

Chapter 17 and 18 tells the account in Syria.

Divisions for consideration are:

- I. Syria Ear-Marked - Verse 17:1-3.
- II. Shaking The Olive Tree - Verse 17:4-8.
- III. Seas Run High - Verse 17:9-14.
- IV. Seeking A Refuge - Verse 18:1-7.

I. Syria Ear-Marked 17:1-3.

Verse 1 - Rod of Judgment is announced.

Damascus - Head city of Syria - representative of Syria. Must be destroyed.

Houses, walls, gates of the city reduced to ruinous heap of granuals.

Ring leader of a confederacy against Judah.

10 Tribes joined Syria in offensive alliance against House of David - Judah.

Ephraim joined Syria.

History of Damascus - there were traditions dating it back to the times of

Abraham. Gen. 15:2, states "The steward of Abraham was Eliezer and his home was in Damascus".

No reference to Damascus until the time of David. He had a war with the Syrians - 2 Sam. 8:5-6; I Chron. 18:5.

Solomon's time there was friction between Damascus and Israel: also, Rezin, I K. 11:23; 15:19.

Hadad with 32 subject Kings marched against Ahab and laid seige to Samaria. I K. 20:1. Ahab prevailed I K. 20:13. Then three years later Ahab was slain near

Ramoth gilead. I K. 22:1-4.

Syrians continued to plan invasions of Israel.

Prophet - Fair city will be destroyed and Israel who sided with her. Share same fate. Reproduced over and over again by nations that are partakers of evil deeds. Visitation of judgment is the Prophets burden.

2 Kings 15:29 gives the story.

Verse 2 - Scene of a great battle - Sargon beseiged it and reduced it to ashes. The country abandoned. The fine houses will become pens for sheep.

Verse 3 - Ephraim's fortress - Samaria - Kingdom of the 10 tribes brought to ruin. Syrians were ring leaders, but sinful confederacies will not bring strength when Judgment comes.

II. Shaking the Olive Tree - 17:4-8.

Verse 4 - Glory in Judgement - Syria Ear-Marked. What about those of faith? Will the man of God be granulated?

Glory of Jacob. Described:

A. Thin - remnant brought low - just a stem, a shoot from a stump, fresh twig shoots up.

Shrinks - few left - wasted like a man with a disease.

Fatness - people become a skeleton - ten tribes wasted away - gradually -- withers.

Deportation - Sargon took from Samaria 27,290 inhabitants, required them to pay taxes, placed a number of Arabs in Samaria, deported the natives to make room for them. Depopulated.

Verse 5 - B. Quick Judgement - Glory of Jacob going like a man going to harvest corn.

He just pulls the ear, there is no time to cut the stalk.

They were ripe for ruin due to sin - Glory was going to be quickly, easily, irresistibly cut by the harvestman. Like thrusting in the sickle when the

harvest is ripe. Rev. 14:15.

Verse 6. C. Small Portion of Jacob's glory left. Uses a contrast - olive tree like 2 or 3 berries in top bough. Olive crop harvested by shaking and by beating the trees. Deut. 24:30. (Owner forbidden to go over the boughs again - left for stranger, widow, the orphan.)
Few - a remnant - the tree will not be completely stripped - a few will find mercy reserved for them.

✓ Luke 17:34 - one left behind - in bed. Field - one taken.

Pointing out the fewness.

Verse 7 - D. Secret of Jacob's glory.

"Man looks to his maker" - thoughts turned Heaven-ward.

Prospects of this judgment - look not to man. Respect for the Holy One.

Trouble this is the way to look. Job 35:10-11.

Acknowledge his hand of power.

Submit and give him the glory.

This is something we should do at all times - keep your eyes towards the Lord. Confidence in your Maker.

Verse 8 - Look not to the Earth. Altars of Baal. 2 K. 17:16. Turn from your idols. Deut. 4:19; Job 31:26. Why turn?

III. Seas Run High - 17:9-14.

Verse 9 - "That Day" - Prophet returns to the desolations soon to come - strong cities be deserted. They should have protected the country.

But the city like a bough on the top of the tree is decaying and leaves are falling.

Israel will now flee before the enemy as when the Canaanites fled before Israel.

Lev. 18:28.

Once more land be left desolate. Just a stem left.

Verse 10 - Forgetfulness of God.

Sin brings same consequences. Forgetting God, not having faith in their Father's God.

They had planned and planted a garden. Thought it was beautiful -- "Strange" plants, not follow principles of faith.

Pleasant at first to behold.

Got their plants from a "Strange hot-bed".

Not honour the rock of strength.

Verse 11 - What results did he get from this special garden?

Clear - Deceptive prosperity. Like starting them under hot beds - looked good - flourish - harvest is time of joy, but this is a time of grief.

False trust leads to bitter disappointments. Abundance of fruit was expected.

A life dedicated to fashion, pleasure, or worldly ambition necessarily ends in a reaping-time of despair.

Result of a godless life - heart never satisfied.

"Strange" symbols, forms and accessories of religion.

Shrine is more important than devotion.

Prophet was thinking of King Ahaz who went up to Damascus and came back with the pattern for a false god. 2 K. 16.

Creed for creeds sake.

Art for arts sake.

People forget the doctrines of the church and add ecclesiastical finery and soon they have turned God's house into a theatre serving more than a place for performers.

Spiritual worship passes away.

If we cannot lift up our eyes, hearts, and voices to the eternal God with joy either in a cathedral or a barn we have a strange religion.

Baal - worshipped by wrathful lust is still acceptable in the world.

The religion of God - Micah 6:7 states "To do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God". These are requirements of true religion.

Baal is worshipped by impure character and profane women.

Religion of God is a covenant between his people. Prophet must ever be upholding purity of doctrine, the requirements of conscience, put before men's pure religion.

Verse 12 - Rolling Sea.

Picture the sea in a storm - constant roar - rushing of waves - noise pounding the beach.

Punishment of wicked - sounds like the roar of Cannon's in a war. Sennacherib.
2 K. 18:17.

No hope was heard - rising sounds - everything in the path of judgment must go.

Luke 21:25 "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear..." Part of this prophecy yet to be fulfilled.
Granulated.

Verse 13 - Restless waves foretells. God will rebuke. Wheel - make them like a wheel - rolling - God can dispirit the enemies of the church. They may be courageous and confident and consolidated -- but suddenly storm of judgment a whirlwind. Ohio last week a whirlwind took away most of a small village, leaving 4 dead. One man was quoted "And it had to happen on such a pretty day". The sun was shining, beautiful weather and in a few seconds the roaring wind destroyed the town.

Verse 14 - Trouble at Evening Tide

Night will bring trouble - trouble always is sad in the evening. In the morning you seem to have more strength to bear it.

Time of rest and sleep.

Assyrians would be destroyed at night.

Power of the churches enemy would be broken. The church suffers from Syrian forces to this very hour.

- A. Spirit of the world robs her of strength.
- B. Spirit of Discord within her ranks.
- C. Spirit of unbelief robs her of power.
- D. Spirit of inactivity robs her of witness.

Gen. 32:31 - Jacob - Night of darkness - tribulation - sun rose. Hope.

Syria - "He is not" - different - granulated.

IV. Seeking A Refuge - 18:1-7

18:1 - Short Chapter. Interesting. Prophecy of the future. Still under "Burden of Damascus". Representative of the Gentiles. Alliance with part of the Jewish household against Judah. One of the 10 Tribes headed by Ephraim united in a Jew and Gentile political Alliance which will end with the coming of our Lord.

Calls attention to whole earth.

Woe - or 55:1 - Attention.

What land is he speaking to? One people, or whole earth - or nation.

Rivers: Euphrates in Asia.

Nile in Africa.

Wings: Taking under protection nations - Assyrians shadowing the lands. America - Great Britain.

Pointing to final gathering of Israel from all lands outside of those boundaries - 43:5 - Rivers. I will gather you from all nations.

Jewish state here is not under the protection of the wing of Jehovah but a league of nations.

Today Jewish state not under the wing of Jehovah - Roman Empire held rule for years around 500 years.

Verse 2 - How did these ambassadors carry out their rule? Vessels of bulrushes. From plants that absorb water.

Wind - propelled - swift messengers.

Land shadowing with wings must send its ambassadors by sea. America - Protect other people.

God's people - marked out from their very beginning - Gen. 35:5. Under the measuring rod of Jehovah. They have been trampled upon - scattered - peeled.

Impossible to think of Jordan River, but if Egypt, symbol of the Nile and Assyria, symbol of Euphrates attack each other than the land in between - being Palestine must

be over run and spoiled.

Verse 3 - Whole earth take note. Alarm sounded. God is about to...

Great event - summoned to take notice.

Ethiopians and Assyrians have their designs. Sent their Ambassadors.

Ensign - Put up a banner - Proclaims war on the enemies of the church. Calls this to the attention of her friends and well-wishers. Vision.

Trumpet - all the earth is to take notice - Ears.

What can this great event be? The Jew is once more in his land forming a nation or self-governing state. That is a banner worth consideration.

Israel is now making treaties as a restored nation. That is a trumpet blast. You can hear! God's plan is at work. They are capable of government and of rebuilding the Temple.

Verse 4 - Where is God? Assurance to the prophet that He is not a spectator. Soon appear and confuse the enemy.

Men will have their say.

God will have His say. He will take his rest, weary of those who govern the world.

Through human politics, God will care for his scattered people.

"Clear Heat" - Very reviving - Makes herbs flourish.

Cloud of Dew - Welcome - helps the harvest.

Verse 5 - God on his Throne and judgment is prepared.

Israel may rebuild a temple - turn from her wandering, restored, but like a thunder-bolt from a clear sky --

Harvest promises plentiful. Assyria plunders, takes riches of Jerusalem, God can destroy the enemy as easily as a man cuts a sprig from a grape vine.

Verse 6 - Days are to shorten. God is going to appear. They decided their fate.

"We ought to claim these promises and believe that God will still preserve the church. The body may be torn into fragments, and scattered, still by his spirit he will easily unite the members and will never allow the remembrance and calling on his name to perish."

Verse 7 - Divine Recovery of Israel.

Give God the glory for all this.

Interpretation:

First, spoil of Sennacherib's Army will bring honour to God's people.

Second Conversion of the Gentiles symbolized in the Ethiopians to the faith of Christ in the latter days.

Acts 8:27 - Philip baptizing the Eunerch.

Third, Return of Jews to Jerusalem. Caution. Mark the difference in this and the return of Zionism in the present day.

The recovery of the scattered Jews I'm sure is welcomed and accepted by Jehovah.

66:20 - As a holy offering.

It is the time spoken of by all the prophets of the final recovery of all Israel.

Jesus said, "Send His angels with a great sound of the trumpet; and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other". Matt. 24:31.

Return of Zionist may be seen by church on earth, but the joyous recovery shall be witnessed by the heavenly redeemed on his Triumphant return. John 15:14-15.

Next Thursday - May 2, 1969 important celebration will take place in Israel, 20th anniversary of Israel's Rebirth -

Important phase will be parade in united Jerusalem.

Security Council of United Nations has tried prevent because of opposition of Jordan, Part taken in 6 day war with Arabs last June.

Jewish people say we have waited 2000 years for this -

April 30, 1963 - Louisville Courier-Journal - dated London - British Doctor called upon clergymen to stop frightening neurotic patients with sermons on sin & threats of eternal damnation, "The churches by their old fashioned philosophy seem to be doing their utmost to instill such guilt complexes by telling them how sinful they are & frightening them with threats of punishment in the hereafter!"

Matt. 25: 30, 41 almost Jesus saying - I don't want to give you a guilt complex about this thing but the unprofitable servant will be cast in outer darkness -