



Isaiah 18-20

Tape #7250
Isaiah 18-20
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to the eighteenth chapter of Isaiah. In prophecy of scripture, there often times was a near, immediate kind of situation that was being addressed, but in a secondary sense, there was a prophetic foreview of the yet future. So many of the prophecies have, what we refer to as the dual fulfillment. That which would be happening in the immediate, and that which would be happening in the future.

Now as far as the immediate, and the prophecies of Isaiah, in the immediate situation, at this period of history, Assyria was the world dominating power. It was during the time that Isaiah was prophesying that the Assyrians conquered over the northern kingdom of Israel. They had also conquered and moved their troops on down through, and into Saudi Arabia through Moab. They'd gone into Egypt, and they had conquered Egypt, and it, they had conquered Babylon. It was the dominant world empire of Isaiah's day.

They were going to try to take Judah, but Isaiah kept encouraging Hezekiah to just trust in the Lord, that the Lord would deliver them from the Assyrians. As we will read, the Lord did deliver them from the Assyrians, for as the Assyrians were camped on mount Scopus, besieging the city of Jerusalem, the angel of the Lord in one night, killed a hundred and eighty five thousand of the Assyrian troops camped on mount Scopus.

Now this eighteenth chapter has to do with that particular event, and the reaction of the Ethiopians to that event. So the eighteenth chapter is addressed to the Ethiopians, and it deals with their response and their reaction to Judah when it was through the work of the Lord, that in the siege of Jerusalem, there in Judah, the Assyrians were wiped out. So that's your historic background to this particular prophecy.

There are those who have tried to force the text and make this refer to the United States. But that is poor biblical exposition at its best. It, it just is a forcing of the text and I believe that you don't have to force a text to get the proper meaning. If God didn't mean what He said, He would've said what He meant. I believe that He did, and you don't have to force an interpretation into a text. So this is calling to the land.

The shadowing with wings (18:1),

In the King James. The New King James has, buzzing with wings, which is a more correct translation. The idea of "buzzing wings", Ethiopia with its jungles, and of course, teeming with the flies and all. There was that constant buzzing of wings in Ethiopia, so it's addressed to the land that is "buzzing with wings",

which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: [Of course the Nile river coming through, and many of the tributaries coming out of Ethiopia into the Nile.] *That sends its ambassadors by the sea,* [And that is a reference really to the Nile river, the ambassadors coming from Ethiopia into Egypt.] *even in vessels of bullrushes (18:2)*

And that's why we say it's the sea referred to as that of the Nile, because the Ethiopians did come down the Nile in those boats made of bull rushes, but those boats are not sea worthy. It could not refer to the Red sea, nor to the Mediterranean, because those vessels of bull rushes were just not sea worthy for that. But they did come on down the Nile.

And they say, Go, ye swift messengers ["Go ye swift messengers"] *to a nation that is scattered and peeled (18:2),*

Now the word "scattered", literally is, "stretched out", and in this sense it is stretched out this way because the interpretation is, "tall". The Ethiopians were very tall people, and the word "peeled", is better translated, "sleek", and so the Ethiopians were tall, and they were very sleek, and it's a reference to their sleek bodies, and their tall stature. So this, this nation that is tall and sleek.

to a people who are awesome from their beginning hitherto; a nation that is meted out and trodden down, whose lands the rivers have cut through (18:2)!

So the rivers that feed the Nile cut deep canyons through Ethiopia. They brought that muddy silt on into

the Nile, and the Nile up until the building of the Aswan dam was always a very muddy, muddy river. Much like the Colorado river above the Boulder dam, it's just, just a muddy, muddy river. You can pick up a handful of the Colorado river there in the Grand Canyon, the bottom of the canyon, and you can't even see the bottom of your hand it's so muddy! Thus was the Nile river, as these tributaries of Ethiopia that fed it, cut through the enriched soil, and carried the soil into the Nile, and on out to the Mediterranean sea. So a river, or a land that the rivers have cut through. Now he turns to them.

To all the inhabitants of the world and the dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifts up a signal on the mountains; and when they blow a trumpet, hear. For so the Lord said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider my dwelling place like a clear heat upon the herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For before the harvest, when the bud is perfecting, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall cut off both the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches (18:3-5).

Now this is a reference to God's destruction to the Assyrian forces, and it will take place before summer actually, while the grapes are still sour, still being formed, God is going to cut off the Assyrians, and...

They shall be left together unto the fowls [The army of Assyrians, of course, what a feast for the birds, a hundred and eighty five thousand carcasses laying out there on the hillside, so,] for the wild animals, and the beasts of the earth: they will summer and winter on them. [Actually they'll provide food for the animals throughout the summer and into the wintertime.

In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts from the people that are tall and sleek, from the people who were awesome in their beginning up until now; a nation that is been meted out and trodden under foot, whose lands the rivers have cut through, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion (18:6-7).

So he is speaking about the Ethiopians in their appreciation, that their, this nemesis, Assyria has been destroyed, by the God of Judah, they will bring unto Judah a token of, of thanks, of appreciation for the fact that the Assyrian enemy has been destroyed.

Chapter 19

Now as we go into chapter nineteen we have interesting prophecies that deal, and this is one of those that you have a immediate kind of a fulfillment, and yet the future fulfillment down the road, which fulfillment is, is being yet, part of it is still future. We have seen some of it, but some of it is still yet future, and has not yet taken place. So...

The burden of Egypt. [Or the oracle for Egypt.] Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: they shall fight every one against his brother, every one against his neighbour; city against city, kingdom against kingdom (19:1-2).

So a civil war is predicted for Egypt, internal strife. This has happened in its past history, but it is very likely that it will be happening again, that this chapter will yet have a future fulfillment, as I said. Because all of this has not yet taken place.

The spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they will seek to their idols, and their charmers, and to those that have the familiar spirits, and to wizards (19:3).

So this confusion that will take place in Egypt, this civil war, the internal strife, and the confusion that will come as they seek for counsel from spirits, familiar spirits, those that have wizards. Their idols, their charmers.

And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel Lord; [Historically, to Esarhaddon] the fierce king and he'll rule over them, saith the Lord of hosts (19:4).

When he conquered over Egypt, he divided it into twenty provinces, and he set an Assyrian over each province with the order to, "Plunder and destroy!" So the cruel Lord that was set over them.

And the Egyptians will I give over to the hand of a cruel Lord; The waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; [Another translation has that, "they will dam the rivers far away", and there are those who see this as a prophecy of the Aswan dam that was to be built upon the Nile for flood control purposes.] and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and

dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, and be driven away, and be no more. The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast their hooks into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread their nets upon the waters will languish (19:5-8).

Now interestingly enough the environmentalists today point to the Aswan dam as the classic example of the problems that can be created in building something of this nature, without making a thorough environmental study on the issue. They didn't require any EIR, and as the result, the Aswan dam which was built of course, as a power source for Egypt. It was built to control the flooding of the Nile river, and it was built to create an irrigation system whereby they could irrigate a lot of the land of Egypt that, all they needed was water to grow great crops. So the idea of the Aswan dam seemed very practical, and seemed like a very useful project.

However, what they didn't do was take into account, the environmental changes and the problems that would be created from an ecological standpoint by the building of the dam. Every year of course, the Nile river would flood, and it would bring all of this silty, muddy water into the Mediterranean. In Israel today, along the coast there are these great sand dunes that are really from the silt that was brought into the Mediterranean by the Nile river when it floods every year.

The interesting thing is that these sand dunes, there in Israel, covered many of the relics, or the cities of the past. You go to Caesarea today and it used to be that at Caesarea there were just these sand dunes. They started to dig the sand away and they found these large Roman amphitheaters. They found these Roman buildings and all, all buried by the sand that was washed up on the beach. Of course all of the beaches along the coast of Israel there, are beautiful sandy beaches, as the result of all of this silt and sand that has been brought in over the years by the Nile river.

It also created this silt dam, and thus it sort of pushed out further, and further into the Mediterranean, creating this tremendous delta. In the Nile delta is some of the most fertile soil in the world. They grew all kinds of specialty crops there in the Nile delta. Extremely fertile, rich farm land. With the damming of the Nile river, the Aswan dam, no more flooding, and thus no more great amounts of silt being brought into the Mediterranean. The Nile river is now relatively clear. Relatively, in that it surely isn't mud like it used to be. You, you look at it today, and it's a relatively clear river as it flows into the Mediterranean.

Well, as the result now of several years without the bringing in all of the silt, and the maintaining of that silt dam, gradually there is an eroding of the silt dam, and the salt water intrusion into the rich, delta area, which is destroying thousands, upon thousands of acres of lush farmland, are now being destroyed by the salt water intrusion.

Egypt has lost much more tillable land as the result of the dam, than they have gained by irrigating new territories that were once quite arid. So it is a negative loss to the agriculture of Egypt to have the Aswan dam being built. So as he makes mention here, "The water shall fail from the sea", the salt water intrusion, "as the river is wasted and dried up", and as is, "far away".

Also, the flooding of the Nile carried away these little snails. These snails are, they are attached to the base of the reeds and all along the banks of the Nile, and have destroyed the reeds that were along the banks of the river. Thus, "The paper reeds by the brooks and by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing that is sown by the brooks, shall wither and be driven away, and be no more." And, that is one of the other effects of the building of the Aswan dam, and the no more flooding of the Nile is as these reeds, paper reeds by the brooks and so forth, are not there any more.

"The fishers also shall mourn", there in the Mediterranean, there was a tremendous abundance of fish. It was a very large and prosperous fishing industry, because again, as the Nile brought its soil and all in, they were all kinds of nutrients there on the soil, upon which the fish thrived, and thus a very healthy fishing industry, which has been totally wiped out as the result of no more nutrients, the fish have gone elsewhere, and thus as verse eight says, "The fishers also shall mourn, those that cast their hook into the brook shall lament, and those that spread their nets upon the waters shall languish."

Interesting that as Isaiah prophesied of the river being turned away, and turned far away, or dammed up, and he told of the problems that would develop, those are exactly the problems that have developed, as the

result of the building of the Aswan dam.

So those that work in fine flax, and they that weave the networks will be confounded. [It is thought to be a reference to the linens, the beautiful linens, and of course the cotton that Egypt is so famous for, languishing.] And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make the sluices and the ponds for the fish. For surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say you unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, and the son of ancient kings? Where are they? where are the wise men? let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of hosts has purposed upon Egypt (19:9-12).

Now this is one of the many places in Isaiah, where God more or less chides, and challenges those who say they are wise, those who say that they have the wisdom of the ancients, or those that supposedly speaks for their gods, and God challenges them through the book of Isaiah, to declare in advance, what God is gonna do. In other words, "Let them give some prophecy, let them reveal something that has not yet happened, that is going to happen!" It's an interesting challenge that God throws out throughout the book of Isaiah, and here is again one of those places. "Let them tell you what the Lord of hosts has purposed upon Egypt. Let them go ahead and tell us what God's gonna do! Then when that happens, we'll know that they really know what they're talking about!"

It is interesting that the Bible is almost half or more, prophecy. Where God speaks of yet future things, and as Jesus said, "Now I have told you these things before they come to pass, so that, when they come to pass, you might believe." Thus, the prophecies in the Bible become one of the strong apologetics, as the proof that the bible is the word of God.

This prophetic element to the Bible, is something that really has the Bible critics climbing the tree over. Because they do not ascribe divine inspiration to the scriptures. They try to have you believe that the scriptures were written by the men of those days, with the understanding that they had in their time, and thus cannot be reliable, even as a historic document, and the bible has been challenged many, many times on many on the historic aspects that the bible referred to.

For years they did not have any reference to Pontius Pilate, and so it was declared by the Bible critics that Pontius Pilate was just a fictional kind of character, made up in the scriptures. "He didn't actually exist. Had he existed, surely there would've been records in the Roman files, on Pontius Pilate", and so forth. They had so many people convinced that the bible was an unreliable book as far as history is concerned, referring to fictional characters. Then there at Caesarea, they found this stone, with Pontius Pilate's name on it and it blew them all out of the water, and they had to find something else to criticize.

In the next chapter, and we'll just for a moment jump ahead. As long as we're on this subject. "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon, the king of Assyria sent him". Now for a long time they did not find any historical references to Sargon. So they were accusing Isaiah, of uh, you know, just making up names. "Sargon did not really exist. There's no secular records of Sargon", and so forth. Then in later archeological diggings, in Mesopotamia, here they found a whole slew of records on Sargon, found out that he was one of the most powerful of the Assyrian kings. He was the, he was the father of Sennacherib, and he had a very powerful reign. So again, there was that whole discrediting of those critics who had tried to discredit the Bible.

So the fact that God has spoken, and given in advance, prophesies of things that were going to take place, and the prophesies of the scripture, up until this point, have had a thousand percent batting average. Every one has come to pass! Now if you had a fellow step up to the plate a thousand times, and get a thousand hits, and he's coming up for the thousandth and first time, to bat, you could probably say with pretty good assurance, "Well I'll bet he gets a hit. He's had a thousand in a row, ha, ha! So it's pretty sure that he'll make a hit this time."

So that, because of all of the prophesies that have already been fulfilled, you're not really going very far out on a limb, to believe that the remaining prophesies will yet be fulfilled. You see, that doesn't take any great step of faith. It is very practical, and is very reasonable to expect the prophesies yet to be fulfilled that God has told us, the things that are gonna happen, you can be sure that they will happen. Because, He has been completely accurate up to this point.

Now one inaccuracy and the whole scripture could be challenged, and brought into question. "Yes, but God said this, and it didn't you see?" And the whole scriptures could be brought into question if there was one failure. "But not one good thing, hath He not performed, which He said He would do." Thus you can rely upon the word of God. You can rely upon its historical accuracy which you can also rely upon it's future accuracy, those things which God has said will come to pass, will surely come to pass!

We are, right now, in the midst of the fulfillment of many prophecies. Just a few weeks ago we dealt with God's prophecy against Iraq, in chapter thirteen. Gathering the nations from the far countries, from the end of heaven, and mustering His forces to destroy Iraq. It would appear that, that we're right in the, in the midst of that thing right now! It's shaping up, and thus we see so many other things.

The Bible predicted a time when we would no longer use money for our purchasing of goods, but that we would use marks that would be upon our hands, or upon our foreheads. All of the buying and selling would be done with these marks, rather than with money.

We can see how we are moving in that direction. We can see how that more and more we're being encouraged to use cards for our purchases. More incentives are being given for the use of cards. Every few weeks I get some application from some bank, or whatever, wanting to offer me a gold Visa, or a Master Card, and the benefits of using it, and all of this. They are trying to move us into the mode of buying and selling with cards, and not with cash.

You notice in the store how, how most of the time people are paying for their groceries with checks, or they're paying with cards. At Lucky's market the other day, I was behind this lady that used a little automatic check kind of a card, there at Lucky's market. We're, we're moving in that direction. We haven't come there completely yet, we still have problems with the cards. Now they're talking about a new "Smart Card", that they've developed.

Then the next step is, is to get rid of the card. What if you're at the beach, and you, you want a coke? You go up to the stand, and you know, you didn't take your wallet on the beach, you're not a fool, and so you don't have any money, but no problem just hold out your hand you know, and get your coke and your hamburger, and hold out your hand and you get it charged off to you.

We're moving in that direction. We haven't arrived yet, but we can see it's feasible. We know that the, the system is in place in the banks, as far as the cards, and as far as the automatic check writing, and all of this. It's all ready. The systems are there. We're just one step away from a mark put on your body that would be picked up by the little scanner as they scan the bars, just run your hand over the top, and "beep", and it, it's done. We're moving in that, the Bible says that that's what's going to be. It's interesting to see that our technology now up to speed on that kind of stuff, so that it isn't far fetched. It isn't some kind of a thing where you say, "Well that could never be!" You know, because we realize that it is within the realms of practical reality at the present time.

So over, and over, and over, and not one, but in hundreds of things, we see that they have been fulfilled, or they are in the process of being fulfilled, or we can see on the future where things are shaping up. It looks like this is the way things are shaping up right now and can possibly happen in the future. That's what makes the bible such a fascinating book, such an interesting book, and as I say, that's one of the strongest apologetics that you can give, that the bible is indeed, inspired by God. For only God can tell you with such accuracy that which is going to happen in the future. Can tell you two thousand years in advance! Can tell you twenty seven hundred years in advance that they're gonna dam up the Nile river, and gonna have ecological problems when they do. So they did, and we do.

The princes of Zoan [verse thirteen] are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; and they've also seduced Egypt, and they that are of the stay of the tribes thereof (19:13).

It is thought that the princes of Noph, and Zoan encouraged the Egyptians to rebel against the Assyrians. Egypt suffered as the result.

The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man who staggers [or slips] in his own vomit. Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or the tail, or the branch or the rush, may do (19:14-15).

Now, when we get to the scriptures, "In that day, in that day, in that day..." we usually are moving into

a yet future time.

In that day shall Egypt be like unto a woman: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shakes over it. And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that makes mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he hath determined against it. In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts; and one shall be called, The city of destruction. In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the middle of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. [A monument to the Lord.] And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them (19:16-20).

So in the future, Egypt will turn to the Lord, perhaps in the great tribulation period, as they see the judgments of God upon the earth. As they see the movement of the Antichrist, who will actually move against Egypt. Passing through Egypt, when he gets into Ethiopia, is when the word will come to him that China and Russia have gathered together their troops to invade the western countries, and he will turn and bring his troops back and meet them in the valley of Megiddo, the battle of Armageddon. So the Egyptians will cry unto the Lord.

And the Lord will be known to Egypt, and they will know the Lord in that day, and they will offer sacrifices and prayers; yea, they will make their vows unto the Lord, and perform them. [And so the Great One, the Savior, of course is Jesus Christ, whom God will send to deliver them, and to deliver the world really, from the Antichrist.] And the Lord shall smite Egypt: but he will smite it and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and he shall heal them (19:21-22).

Here again we deal with the ways of God, and the faithfulness of God. As a child of God, God will not allow you to get by with evil. As a child of God, He is going to correct you, and often times we find ourselves smitten of God, but the purpose is not to destroy. The purpose of God is to heal. Many times sin like a cancer, is threatening to destroy you, and it has to be dealt with, and dealt with severely. God often times, when you start getting off the path, you start messing around, you start getting into an area where you can be destroyed, God will deal very heavy with you. He will smite you, He will, He will just pull the carpet out from under you, and you'll be in great distress. But the purpose isn't to destroy you. The purpose is to keep you from destroying yourself!

This is where people so often misunderstand God. They think that God is being mean, they think that God is being cruel because, all of this calamity is come upon them. "The Lord has smitten me!", you know, and "The Lord's just done this, and that!", well it's because He loves you, and you're about to destroy yourself, and He doesn't want to see you destroy yourself.

So He smites to heal. If you're going through a real heavy time, and you're experience with God right now, and it seems like things are just going to pieces, the bottom is falling out from under you, it could be that God is trying to get your attention. That you're walking on dangerous ground. That you're flirting around with a situation that can be destructive to you. God is trying to prevent you from destroying yourself. Thus, He smites in order that He might heal.

The purpose of God was fulfilled, "They returned even to the Lord, and He will be entreated of them, and He will heal them." As you turn to the Lord, the Lord will hear your prayer, and He'll heal you, and touch you.

There's an interesting scripture in James, it says, "Is there any afflicted among you? Let him pray. Is there any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church to anoint him with oil, and to pray over him, and the prayer of faith will save the sick." Now James seems to make a distinction between the afflictions and sicknesses. If you are afflicted, then it seems like God is brought the affliction for a purpose, to turn you to God. So pray, seek God. "Lord what are you wanting to show me? What are you wanting to tell me? What are you wanting to teach me?" And in afflictions we, we pray about afflictions ourselves. God is working through affliction in my life.

If I'm sick, then I call for the elders of the church that they might pray for me, and anoint me with oil in the name of the Lord. But in, in the affliction, then there is that interesting distinction. So here, God smites in

order that He might heal, and thus, “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord. For whom the Lord loveth, He chastens.”

Now we just read that we’ve got a new revised, revised standard version that has just come out. They’ve tried to make it non-sexist. So that it’s not, “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord.”, but “My child, despise not...”. You know, we don’t want to get just men there, we’ve gotta get the women you know. So you become a male person rather than a male man anymore but, such is the world in which we live. So, “Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth.” Now...

In that day (19:23)

In that day, in that day, so it’s good when you’re going through, mark all the “in that day’s”, because it brings you into that future day of the Lord, that glorious day of which Isaiah speaks so much. “In that day”...

there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve the Lord with the Assyrians. [The idea of serving there, is serving the Lord with the Assyrians.] And in that day shall Israel be a third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land (19:23-24):

So in that area that is in such turmoil, that area that is filled with so much strife, all of the wars that we’ve seen in our lifetime in that area, because of the Jews, and the animosity that the Arabs have for the Jews and all, it’s all gonna change, and there’s gonna be a tremendous unity in that day, as the Lord comes and establishes His kingdom. There will be just a, a beautiful joining together of nations that were once foes, and enemies.

Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance (19:25).

That glorious day of the Lord, when all of the nations of the world will live in harmony, and at peace with one another, as we jointly serve the Lord.

Now chapter twenty is a very short little chapter, and it’s almost self explanatory. This happened...

In the year that Tartan (20:1)

Now Tartan is not a proper name. Tartan is a title and it is the title of the commander and chief. In this case it would be the commander and chief of the Assyrian army under the rule of Sargon. So Tartan or the commander and chief of the army...

came to Ashdod (20:1)

Now Ashdod is on the coast of Israel, and it was one of the strongest of the Philistine cities, there in the coastal area. So when Tartan came to Ashdod, and this was...

(when Sargon was king of Assyria who had sent him,) and he fought against Ashdod, and he took it; At the same time spake the Lord by Isaiah the son of Amoz, and saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off your loins, and put off the shoes from your feet. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot (20:1-2).

Now the prophets usually wore these rough camel skin clothes. But they wore it with the fur side in, and the camels have this rough bristle kind of a fur. So to wear that up against your skin is absolutely miserable. That was one of the ways by which they sort of afflicted themselves. When you wanted to afflict yourself you would put on this sackcloth. This camel skin coat worn fur side in.

Several years ago when Keith Ritter had first come to the Lord, and had started attending Calvary Chapel, he kept saying to me, “Chuck, I’d like to see a Pentecostal church. I hear you talking about the Pentecostal, I’d like to see a Pentecostal church”. So I saw an ad in the paper of a sackcloth prophet that was ministering up here in Santa Ana. So I said to Keith, “Well you want to see a Pentecostal church, I’ll take you to one.” From the ad of the sackcloth prophet, I knew what was coming! Keith didn’t.

But we, we went up to the church and it was an interesting experience. They spent a lot of time taking up the offering. So they then did some more singing, and shouting and all, and I saw the fellow who counted the offering come out and whisper to the prophet. I said to Keith, “Now watch. They didn’t get enough in the first offering, so they’re gonna take a second offering.” So the fellow says, “Well now you know, tonight we’re really trusting God for so much money, and it didn’t come in. We’ve got to take a second offering.”

Keith looked at me and thought I was a prophet! But I was just, you know, been around, and was observant. It wasn’t anything spiritual at all! I could just, you know, I knew the scam. So the guy did have

on burlap sack robe. He wore this burlap, called himself a sackcloth prophet, because he had this burlap sack robe on. But I said to Keith, "Look it's lined with silk lining inside!" I said, "That's cheating! You know, you're supposed to wear the sackcloth against the skin! You're not supposed to line the thing with silk!" But so they go!

But Isaiah was commanded to take off this rough garment, this sackcloth garment, and to put off his sandals, that he might walk barefoot and naked. Now naked not in the sense of "stark" but, with this just simple little tunic. You remember when David was bringing the ark of the covenant back to Israel, and they had this tremendous ceremony? They would go a little ways, and stop and offer a sacrifice, and then they'd go their ways, offer a sacrifice, and the people were singing and dancing, and it says, "David was dancing before the Lord with all of his might." He came home and his wife Michelle said to him, "Didn't you look smart out there uncovering yourself in front of all of those people like a commoner!"

Now it wasn't that David was uncovered or naked but he had taken off his kingly robe, and he was wearing just a common little tunic. Thus with Isaiah the prophet. Just the wearing of this tunic. The Lord said, "Now walk with this tunic on", or naked in that sense, "before the people for three years."

And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; [So this prophecy is addressed to Egypt and Ethiopia who tried to ally themselves together to stop the Assyrians.] So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners, and the Ethiopians as captives, both young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered to the shame of Egypt (20:3-4).

So here they're conspiring together against the Assyrians, but they're gonna be led away captive. Thus Isaiah was sort of a walking illustration as he was walking barefoot and naked, the people said, "What in the world's happening?" "Well, you know God's gonna lead away Ethiopia, and they're not gonna be able to stand against Assyria, but the Assyrians are gonna take them captive, and lead them away without shoes and so forth, into captivity."

These prophets were illustrious kind of characters. It would've been interesting to have seen them, and to have heard their prophecies. Because they often times did very dramatic things. Ezekiel just lying on his one side for a year. Then rolling over and lying on his other side, for a year. Very dramatic things. The Lord said to Jeremiah, "Now go buy a beautiful new robe." He bought this beautiful new robe. Everybody was oohing, and aahing over this glorious robe. The Lord said, "Now hide it or put it under this rock in the stream, and then several months later the Lord said, "Now go".