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Let's resume our study now. We're looking at, in Genesis chapter 46 and 47, and the arrival of Jacob and his retinue, his entire family, in the land of Egypt. Joseph has presented his brothers to Pharaoh.

For the third time in the immediate context, we've seen the number five occur in connection with five brothers that are presented to Pharaoh, and the two uses of five in connection with Benjamin. And we also see that the author is at some pains to demonstrate to us that there are a total of 70 individuals that arrive in Egypt as a part of the family of Jacob. And these numbers are the occasion causing us to take a look at the use of symbolic numbers in Scripture.

Of course, we can't do a full and detailed study, but we're looking primarily at some of the numbers that we've seen already in Genesis, and particularly in this context. And as I mentioned before the break, the number five, it seems to me, speaks of mankind in particular. Mankind in contrast to God, mankind in some cases in need of God.

Dan made a fascinating observation over the break about the fact that even in our physical bodies, God has used the number five and the dual of it in terms of the symmetry of our body. Obviously, we have five fingers and five toes, and this is the basis of the decimal system, which is what most of our non-computer math is based on. And the other principle of two, where we have two eyes and two ears and so forth, and base two is the mathematical system that computers are based on.

But there are a number of things that God has given us by way of evidence in Scripture to point us to the fact that these numbers have a significance and should be considered as we go through the accounts. And in connection with the number five, I wanted to mention, and I wasn't sure if I should mention this or not, because you might think I've just gone completely into the wild and fanciful camp of biblical interpretation, but I will go ahead and mention this. There are a number of passages where we have five kings that show up.

The first one we've already seen in the life of Abraham, where there were four kings under the leadership of Keter Laomer. You'll remember back in Genesis chapter 14, this confederation of four kings came down from the north and oppressed and attacked the plains where Abraham and these others were dwelling. And you have the Valley of Siddon.

You'll remember the asphalt pits that were there. But chapter 14 of Genesis, it came to pass in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellessar, Keter Laomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of nations, that they made war. And so you have those four coming down and making war with the five kings of the plain.

These five kings are a confederation that includes Sodom and Gomorrah. You have Bera, the king of Sodom, Bersha, the king of Gomorrah, Shenab, the king of Adma, Shemeber, the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bila, which is Zoar. These joined together in the Valley of Siddon, which is at the Salt Sea.

And evidently, the five kings didn't come out too well in that battle. The four overcame them and caused them to serve Keter Laomer for 12 years. Then in the 13th year, they rebelled.

And in the 14th year, Keter Laomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashtaroth, Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathayim, and the Horites in the mountain of Seir, as far as El-Paran, which is by the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En-Mishpat, that is Kadesh, and attacked all the country of the Amalekites and also the Amorites, who dwelt in Hazazan-Tamar. Well, if you want to boil this down to its essentials, you've got these four kings who have come down and have made life miserable for the people under the five kings.

And they subdued them for a dozen years. There was a rebellion in the 13th year, and a reprisal against the rebellion in the 14th year. And in verse 8, you find out that the king of Sodom, of Gomorrah, of Admah, of Zeboim, and Bela, these five kings, went out once again and joined together in battle in the valley of Sinim, against Keter Laomer, Tidal, Amraphel, and Ariak.

Four kings against five. And it makes a point in verse 9 of saying, four kings against five. Well, we already noticed in our first lesson this morning that four is one of your basic numbers because it talks about space, and it talks about the organizing principle of directions.

You have the north, east, south, and west. And you'll also remember, particularly from some of the apocalyptic passages of Scripture, Revelation, and elsewhere, where you have angels associated with the four corners of heaven or with the four points of the compass. They seem to bind up the winds and be stationed at the four points of the compass.

The cherubim that were woven into the fabric of the tabernacle are found on four walls and face specific directions and so on. And so I will just suggest to you, if you consider this to be fanciful, well, just treat it as such and don't worry about it. But it is possible, in my mind, if you stretch a little bit, to see in this conflict a picture, perhaps a blurry picture or a far-off picture, of the situation we find ourselves in as human beings.

If you associate the four kings with the four points of the compass and the angels who dwell therein, these four kings might suggest the angelic hosts, particularly the fallen angelic hosts. The five kings, five being the number of mankind, and especially these five, who are all pagans, living in the valley there with Sodom and Gomorrah and the

other three cities, they wind up in a bad way as a result of the actions of these four, and they need deliverance. They try to fight and are unsuccessful.

Paul tells us our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, rulers and dominions and so forth. And you have Abraham, who doesn't appear to be a factor at the beginning of this conflict, and yet turns out to be the pivotal factor. He does, in fact, deliver the people belonging to the five kings from the oppression of the four kings.

And, of course, Abraham is the father of the nation of Israel. In his loins all of the subsequent Israelites dwell. The author of Hebrews makes this point in talking about Melchizedek and that the Levitical priesthood that was in Abraham's loins had to do obeisance or submit to the priesthood of Melchizedek.

Symbolically, the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the priesthood of Levi because Abraham was submissive and received a blessing from Melchizedek. The point is made that the whole nation, including the tribe of Levi, was in his loins at this point. So, in a way, the future Messiah, the deliverance not only of Israel but of the entire human race, comes through Abraham.

Jesus was a Jew. It has been pointed out in recent days. There's a book by that title that sometimes Christians tend to forget that Jesus was a Jew.

It's amazing to me that the Church can wind up being anti-Semitic when salvation is of and from the Jews. This is the path that God has chosen. But, anyway, you see a suggestion there.

Once again, this bears out our hypothesis for the moment that the number five suggests to us mankind, the human race at large. Not only in Genesis chapter 14 do you have five kings, but you can also see this in Joshua chapter 10 where we have a different confederacy from a different source. You have Adonai Zedek, the king of Jerusalem, sending in verse 3 of chapter 10 of Joshua to Hoham the king of Hebron, Pyram the king of Jarmuth, Japhia the king of Lachish, and Debir the king of Eglon, saying, Come up to me and help me that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

So the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up. They and all their armies had camped before Gibeon and made war against it. Of course, the Gibeonites are the ones that fooled the Israelites with their moldy bread and their worn-out sandals and made out like they were very far away when in fact they were very near.

And there's a lot that you can work on in thinking about that in connection with the unique relationship between Israel and the church. Paul says specifically that those who

were far off had been made near. It came as a surprise to the Israelites that the Gentiles were going to be incorporated into the plan of God in the same way that the Gibeonites were.

And Joshua ascended from Gilgal and so forth. Do not fear them, I have delivered them. And so Joshua, this is when you have the sun standing still over Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Aijalon.

So the sun stood still and the moon stopped until the people had revenge upon their enemies. And the oppression of the Gibeonites is the occasion for Israel to conquer these Amorite kings. It's written in the book of Jasher and so forth.

So you have a confederation of five kings there. You find this again, going backward a little bit, in Numbers chapter 31 and verse 8. Numbers 31, you have the warfare against the Midianites. And you have to wonder what Moses thought about this because the Lord says, Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel.

Afterward you will be gathered to your people. Of course, Moses' wife was a Midianite. Jethro, his father-in-law was a Midianite.

Moses spoke to the people, Arm yourselves for war. Go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the Lord on Midian. And they go and take 1,000 from each tribe.

So there's 12,000 armed for war. Moses sent them to the war, 1,000 from each tribe. He sent them to war with Phinehas, the son of Eliezer, the priest, with the holy articles and the signal trumpets in his hand.

They warred against the Midianites just as the Lord commanded Moses, and they killed all the males. They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of those who were killed, the five kings of Midian. So once again, you have the enemies of Israel ranged about.

They're organized on the principle of five. And so not only do you have five as a picture of the human race at large, but also you have it representing humanity and distinction to Israel. And they killed Balaam, the son of Baor, with the sword.

Here's Balaam that pronounced blessing on Israel, and here he winds up getting whacked along with the Midianite kings. And they took the women of Midian captive with their little ones and took as spoil all their cattle, all their flocks, and all their goods. They burned with fire all their cities.

They took all the spoil and all the booty of man and beast. They brought the captives' booty and spoil to Moses, Eliezer and the congregation in the plains of Moab. And Moses was angry with them.

In verse 15 it says, Have you kept all the women alive? These women caused the

children of Israel through the council of Balaam to trespass against the Lord in the incident of Peor. And there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now therefore kill every male among the little ones.

Kill every woman who has known a man. Keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man. Remain outside the camp seven days and so forth.

And this is the God of the Old Testament. This is the policy of God in enslaving and killing that people don't like to hear about and choose to gloss over. But what is going on here? Not only is this an immediate circumstance for the nation of Israel, but it's recorded in Scripture.

It's a picture. All of these things have been written down for our instruction. And it's a reminder that when you're out in the human race at large, you're either for God or against Him.

You're either for the people of God or you're against them. And you will either be brought together with and blessed with the people of God or you will be annihilated. And it's a harsh message.

It seems to have been subtracted out of the gospel that you see preached and presented in so much of Christianity today and so much of the media, the broadcasting networks and the radio programs and the books and things that come out soft-pedal the wrath of God and the judgment that is in store for those who reject God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Historically, there has been judgment on nations that were anti-Semitic or anti-Israel, especially in the Old Testament days. In the same way, there is judgment from God.

He is merciful. He's gracious. He's compassionate.

He's long-suffering. He is the very embodiment of everything that is good and everything that we consider to be love. But He does not compromise His character.

He is also just. And He will pour out the wine goblet of His wrath on those who reject Him, who disregard His grace, who ignore His mercy, who afflict His people, who reject His Son. God's love is balanced by His righteousness and His justice.

And there is no disharmony in His character at all. And people want the love part, but they don't want the justice and the judgment part. And those are all wrapped up in God's dealings with the human race.

And so when you see these five king confederations coming against the people of God, it's a reminder, as you see in the Psalms, why do the kings of the earth rage and why do the nations imagine a vain thing. It's a vain thing to run counter to the plan and purposes of God. If you have the Son, you have life.

If you have not the Son, the wrath of God is going to abide on you. And we don't tend to hear enough about the wrath of God these days. But that's the rule for the human race at large.

You can also see over in Judges 3, yet another five king confederation. This is a situation in Judges 3. In verse 3, "...the nations that the Lord left so that He could test Israel by them, all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan. This was so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those that had not formerly known it." Don't get this passage mentioned very often either.

But God left some of the people in the land to test Israel and to give them practice in warfare, to give them something to fight against. Here they are in the land of promise, and yet they still have opposition. They still have to gird on their armor and pick up their swords and spears and fight.

And isn't this what God does with us? Even when we have been saved, even when we have been delivered, when we've been brought to a measure of maturity by the grace of God and by His Word and Spirit, we still have these challenges. We think, well, I thought I was doing everything right, and yet here's this big crisis, here's this big test, and here I've got this conflict, this terrible stress that has come into my life. Well, look at verse 2. This was only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those who had not formerly known it.

Namely, five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians and the Hivites who dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to the entrance of Hamath. They were left that He might test Israel by them to know whether they would obey the commandments of the Lord which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.

They took their daughters to be their wives and gave their daughters to their sons, and they served their gods. This is precisely the thing that God warned Israel against. What are you going to do when you come up against the five kings? What are you going to do when you come up against people who are ungodly? Well, it's either beat them or join them.

And they used to have, I believe it was Tarleton cigarettes way back in the 60s when they still advertised cigarettes on TV. And you remember they used to show people with a black eye and they'd say, well, I'd rather fight than switch. And, well, here are people that would rather switch than fight.

And so instead of taking up arms and learning war as God intended against this remnant that was in the land, this is the principle of vaccination, isn't it? You put a weakened enemy out there for your body to fight and this keeps your antibodies up to speed. It

knows how to fight that infection. If the real thing ever comes along, it's ready.

But you're not supposed to become one with the enemy and unite in marriage with them and make alliances with them and adopt their practices and serve their gods. But that's what Israel did in the days of the judges. Took their daughters to be their wives and so forth.

So once again, when you have this number five cropping up, here's a picture of compromise with the world, with the human viewpoint, the human way of doing things. This is the opposite of what Abraham did when it came time to separate from the people of the plains, even those that he delivered. He was a blessing to them, he delivered them, the five kings of the plain, but he did not join them.

He didn't go down and live in Sodom the way Lot did. He didn't become distracted and deflected by their practices. Judges 18, we were in this passage not too terribly long ago where there were people in the tribe of Dan who wanted to come down and get some additional land.

So in chapter 18, verse 2 of Judges, they sent five men of their family from their territory, men of valor, from Zorah and Eshtoel to spy out the land and search it. They said, go search the land. So they went to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah and lodged there.

You remember the whole story of Micah and they make him a priest and so forth. Then there's a visitor and there's a concubine and she winds up getting chopped up and sent throughout the land and so on. But here you have the Danites who are the worst tribe in Israel for any kind of faithfulness to God.

They wind up being a center of idolatry, a center of complete adoption of Canaanite ways and Canaanite worship. Interestingly, when in Revelation you find 144,000 witnesses for Israel, the tribe of Dan is not even represented. Instead, you have both the tribes of Joseph listed and the tribe of Dan isn't even in the list.

It's interesting that along with all of these confederations of pagan kings, you have Philistines and Amorites and so forth. Here you have Danites who have sort of taken on the model. They're five spies that they're going to send in.

On the good side, you have fives used in other contexts. Another fascinating passage that we studied a few years back is in 1 Samuel 6. You remember the story of Eli and his wicked sons using the three-pronged hooks to get the meat out of the pot and eat the sacrifices they weren't supposed to eat and didn't exercise good leadership. They abused their authority.

Israel went into spiritual decline during the times of Eli and you have the battle with the Philistines and they send the Ark of God out and it's captured and taken away by the

Philistines. Eli falls over on the wall when he hears that his sons have been killed and the Ark has been captured. When I was a little boy and heard this story, I kept thinking of Humpty Dumpty and sat on the wall.

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. Eli is old and heavy and he falls over and breaks his neck. You remember the aftermath of that.

The Ark of God is captured by the Philistines and they take it down to their area there. In verse 9 of 1 Samuel 5, after they had carried away the Ark, the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction. He struck them into the city, small and great, and tumors broke out on them.

So they sent the Ark of God to Ekron. This is after it had already gone to the house of Dagon and Dagon fell and broke his hands off and everything. So they brought the Ark of God of us, these Ekronites say, to kill us and our people.

So they sent and gathered all the lords of the Philistines and said, Send away the Ark of the God of Israel. Let it go back to its own place so it does not kill us and our people. There was deadly destruction throughout all the city.

The hand of God was very heavy there. So the men that did not die were stricken with tumors and the cry of the city went up to heaven. So they go to their diviners in the next chapter and they say, What shall we do with the Ark of the Lord? Tell us how we should send it to its place.

So the diviners say, Well, if you send it away, don't send it empty. Return it with a trespass offering. Then you will be healed and it will be known to you why his hand is not removed from you.

So they said, Well, what trespass offering should we return to him? 1 Samuel 6, verse 4. They answered, Five golden tumors and five golden rats, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines. For the same plague was on all of you and on your lords. So here is another case where the human race at large, the human race outside of Israel, is represented by the number five.

And their mode of propitiation of the God of Israel are these five golden tumors and five golden rats. You think, Well, there is a pleasing offering to the Lord. Tumors and rats.

But this gives you an idea of when the Bible says, We are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags and we do fade as a leaf and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. Well, here is the best offering that mankind can come up with. Golden rats and golden tumors.

I can't even imagine what a golden tumor would look like, but I'm not sure I would want to see one. I'm not sure I would recognize it if I did see it. Of course, the story of David

facing Goliath.

He goes to the brook. How many stones does he take with him in his pouch? Five smooth stones. And why is that? He is only facing one giant, but Goliath has four brothers.

When you study, you find the other four and their ultimate fate later on in the account. But he is ready. There are five Philistine giants who are known in the land and David is ready to take them all on if he needs to.

In 1 Samuel 21, when David is fleeing from Saul and he goes to the house of the Lord, you remember Jesus himself refers to this incident in talking with the Pharisees. But Doeg the Edomite is there when David asks and he betrays the fact that the priests helped David and Saul comes down and kills them all. But in 1 Samuel 21, verse 5, when the priest says that David asks him for bread, in verse 3 he says, therefore what have you on hand? Give me five loaves of bread in my hand or whatever can be found.

And there is quite a contrast here between chapter 17 and chapter 21 because in chapter 17, David was on the offensive, operating in faith, depending on the Lord, facing one of the biggest challenges of his entire life with five smooth stones. Now he is fleeing in fear from Saul. He is lying and deceiving and he is asking for these five loaves of bread going from the stones that are imperishable to the bread that is perishable.

There is a lot you can see in that. But he asks specifically for five loaves of bread in his hand or whatever can be found. So instead of five stones, he is going to get five loaves of bread and he is getting them by deceit.

So the number five, and there are countless other places where it shows up, but being suggestive of mankind, the human race, especially the human race, apart from the benefit of God, apart from the nation of Israel in many of these contexts, we realize when we see it in the context of Israel that these things are a part of the nation's responsibility to be a light to the Gentiles. The Law of Moses contained in five books. The Hymnal of Israel contained in five books, and so forth.

This is supposed to be the light that shines beyond Israel to the entire world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven. And in the same way, it's a reminder to us that the Word of God that we study, the goal that we have of personal growth and greater understanding in God's Word should not be an end in itself just for our own good.

It ought to be a light that shines forth. It ought to be a blessing to others beyond our own narrow concerns. So that's the number five.

We've talked about the number 70 in connection with the descendants of Jacob. This is mentioned several places in Scripture, not only here in our passage in Genesis, but also in Exodus 1.5 and in Deuteronomy 10.22. This fact is repeated for us. Lest there be any

doubt that God intended that number to be known to us, He's repeated three times.

You'll remember that Jethro, the Midianite father-in-law of Moses, suggested to him that he take men from each tribe to help him administer and adjudicate matters in Israel. And you wind up having 70 elders in Israel. In Exodus 24, these 70 elders are going to go up and eat a meal on the mountainside in the presence of God.

When you study, no man has seen God at any time, and you come back to chapter 24, and you have God telling Moses in verse 12 of Exodus 24, and so forth. So, you have these 70 elders up on the mountain with Moses when he receives the law. You find that specifically in verse 9, along with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu.

70 of the elders of Israel saw the God of Israel in verse 10. So, as is the case in many passages, the parents of Samson and so forth, they say, oh, well, we've seen God. How come we're still alive and that kind of thing? There are different ways of seeing God.

You also find mention of the 70 elders in Numbers chapter 11, verses 16 and 24 and following. In Judges chapter 1, we were just there in Judges seeing the enemies that were facing Israel in the land following the death of Joshua. But in Judges chapter 1, in verse 7, you find that Adonai Bezek said, 70 kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather scraps under my table.

As I have done, so God has repaid me. They brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died. Remember, he was the thumb and toe remover.

He had oppressed people for a long time, and then the Israelites finally took care of him. You have the 70 sons of Gideon mentioned in Judges chapter 8, in verse 30, and again in chapter 9, verse 2. If you go through the stories of the judges, which are fascinating in themselves, you find out that a man called Abdon had 70 sons who rode on 70 colts. Ahab, in 2 Kings chapter 10, is said to have had 70 sons.

Ezekiel, in his vision of Ezekiel chapter 8, sees 70 idolatrous priests, or elders. When Jacob dies, they're going to mourn for him 70 days in Genesis chapter 50. We'll be there soon.

There are 70 years of trial in Isaiah chapter 23, verse 15, and verse 17, and again in Jeremiah chapter 25. Daniel's great vision of the remaining course of human history, as he could see it, was 70 weeks. And that's interesting in itself.

I've never seen anyone do what I would consider to be a satisfactory treatment. We always talk about the 70 weeks of Daniel. We talked about 69 weeks and then the 70th week, which we know includes the Great Tribulation.

But in the Bible, it always talks about it's 62 plus 7. It says there are 62 weeks and 7 weeks. And why is it divided in that way? That's my question, and I don't have an answer

for you, but something else you can puzzle on. It doesn't say 69 weeks.

It says 62 plus 7. So you look to see, well, did something happen at that break-over point in history? I've looked and I didn't see anything in particular. But the Bible chooses to give us the numbers in those terms. So the 70 weeks of Daniel, Psalm 90, verse 10, says that the days of a human life are 3 score and 10.

60 plus 10, 70. In Exodus chapter 15, you find out that there are 70 palm trees in Elim, which is a place that they stopped in their wanderings. It's also mentioned in Numbers 33.

During the days of Hezekiah, you remember the whole Sennacherib invasion and so forth in Hezekiah's day. Second Chronicles 29.32, they offered 70 bullocks. And you have, of course, the 70 who were sent out by Jesus in the New Testament.

After He sends out the 12 in 6 teams of 2, later on He's going to send out 70, which is, in fact, a couple of manuscripts even say 72, which would be 6 teams of 12, or 12 teams of 6, rather. And you figure maybe each disciple took 5 others with him to make a total of 72. Maybe Jesus didn't take any and that's how they arrived at 70.

But there are... Jews believed that there were 70 nations outside of Israel based on the table of nations that we found earlier in Genesis. And they had a list of 70 angels who kept track of these 70 nations. This is extra-biblical history, of course.

And 70 has been significant. The Septuagint, the LXX, as it is called, the Greek translation of the Old Testament that was made about 300 years before Christ, was in legend supposed to have been translated by 70 individuals. And there were several other 70s associated with that translation, like 70 men took 70 days to translate the Old Testament and so forth.

And then you have combinations of 70 and 7, such as Jesus talking to Peter, How many times should I forgive my brother? Some manuscripts seem to say 70 times 7. Probably a better reading would be 70 plus 7, according to some scholars. But 70, of course, is a multiple of 7 and 10, and being a number of fullness, a number of completion, and in particular being a multiple or sort of a super 7, would be the idea there. And, of course, having the idea of completion is fundamental to the number 7. So, back to our study in Genesis.

What does all of this mean as we look at Joseph with his five brothers before Pharaoh, as we look at Jacob bringing 70 individuals down to Egypt? Well, once again, the number 5, as I mentioned earlier, has been associated with Egypt. And I'd like to turn, for our last passage this morning, to Isaiah chapter 19. Isaiah chapter 19.

This, I think, will... It's either going to shed great light on our situation or leave us hopelessly confused. This, as you know, in the prophetic books, the major prophets, you

often find woe songs or pronouncements of judgment against various nations that surround Israel. And God details the role that they're going to play in Israel's history.

He may use them as a scourge nation to discipline his people. But, as Jesus said much later, it is certain that woes are going to come, but woe to him by whom they come. And chapter 19 of Isaiah, actually 19 and 20, is a proclamation by God regarding Egypt specifically.

This is the burden against Egypt. Behold, the Lord rides on a swift cloud. He will come into Egypt.

The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence, and the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst. I will set Egyptians against Egyptians. Everyone will fight against his brother.

Everyone against his neighbor. City against city. Kingdom against kingdom.

The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst. I will destroy their council. They will consult idols and charmers, the mediums and sorcerers, and the Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master.

And a fierce king will rule over them, says the Lord, the Lord of hosts. If you know the context of what's going on here, again, the days of Hezekiah, the Sennacherib invasion, the Assyrian crisis, as it has been called, and Israel sees the Assyrians coming in. They actually do conquer the northern kingdom, and they're pushing in against Judah.

And the remaining people in the southern kingdom, in Judah and Jerusalem, say, where are we going to get some help? Let's look around and see who can help us against these Assyrians. And they say, well, Egypt is down there. Maybe we can get some help from Egypt.

And you remember some of the passages where it says Egypt is a reed that's going to bend over and break and pierce the hand of the one that leans on it. And God tells them through the prophet Isaiah over and over again, don't go to Egypt. You need to rely on God through faith.

And, of course, Egypt, cursed is the man who puts his trust in man, who makes flesh his strength. It's our memory verse from last time. And it's the same general context that we have to make a decision of what we're going to rely on for our deliverance and our security.

But this woe song is God's reminder to Israel that Egypt is no place to turn for aid because they themselves are going to come under judgment. And this has both an immediate application in the sense that they are also going to suffer depredation at the hands of these invading armies from the north and east, but also in the larger scheme of things, what is Egypt? What has Egypt been throughout the book of Genesis? Abraham

fled there in a time of famine and talked with Pharaoh and left under a cloud because he had lied and deceived Pharaoh and very narrowly escaped with his life. Isaac was commanded by God not to go to Egypt during his time of famine.

Instead, he goes to Abimelech, the king of Gerar. Jacob, in a time of famine, has now been told by God to go down to Egypt. God has, in fact, made provision for him and his family and is going to make Jacob a great nation in the land of Egypt.

So it isn't so much that Egypt is always a bad place or that you should never go there or never dwell there. It's how you go, when you go, how you dwell that is the issue. So here is the proclamation against Egypt.

God says in verse 5, The waters will fail from the sea and the river will be wasted and dried up. There is nothing that does greater devastation in Egypt than to dry up the Nile. Everything depends on that flood cycle that replaces the fertile topsoil and gives them their crops.

Everything in Egypt revolves around the Nile. If you dry up the river, the nation dies. The river will turn foul.

The brooks of defense will be emptied and dried up. The reeds and rushes will wither. The pyrus reads by the river, by the mouth of the river and everything sewn by the river will wither, be driven away and be no more.

The fishermen also will mourn. All those will lament who cast hooks into the river and they will languish who spread nets on the waters. Those who work in fine flax and those who weave fabric will be ashamed and its foundations will be broken.

All who make wages will be troubled of soul. The princes of Zoan are fools. Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish counsel.

Zoan, of course, is Memphis. If you're familiar with Egyptian topography and geography. Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish counsel.

Egypt was known throughout the ancient world for its wisdom. And God says their wise counselors are going to be foolish. How do you say to Pharaoh, I'm the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are they? Where are your wise men? Let them tell you now and let them know what the Lord of hosts has purposed against Egypt.

The princes of Zoan have become fools. The princes of Naph are deceived. Actually, it's Naph, that's Memphis.

They have also deluded Egypt, those who are the mainstay of its tribes. At different times in Egypt, Zoan was a capital city and then later Memphis, depending on which dynasty and so on. But anyone dwelling in the capital, anyone in a place of authority are

going to be foolish and deceived and they will delude the nation.

The Lord has mingled a perverse spirit in her midst and they have caused Egypt to err in all her work as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. Neither will there be any work for Egypt which the head or the tail, palm branch or bulrush may do. There's a study you can do on palm branch and bulrush.

Palm branch is the highest. Bulrush is the lowest in the land. In that day, Egypt will be like women and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts which He waves over it.

The land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt. Everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts which He has determined against it. You'll notice that in verse 16 there, it says, in that day.

In verse 18, it says, in that day. In verse 19, it says, in that day. And it says in verse 23, in that day.

And verse 24, in that day. Five times in this chapter, you have in that day. And beginning with the first one in verse 16, this rises above the immediate circumstances of the Assyrian invasion and the desire of Israel to lean on Egypt for support and looks forward to the time of the millennial kingdom.

What is going to happen? Verse 18, in that day, five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the Lord of hosts. This has never happened in history. Five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan, and swear by the Lord of hosts.

One will be called, it says in the New King James, City of Destruction, but this is actually City of the Sun or Heliopolis. Heliopolis, which is a well-known place in Egypt, is going to be one of these five cities. In that day, there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt and a pillar to the Lord at its border.

It will be for a sign and for a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. They will cry to the Lord because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a mighty one, and He will deliver them. Now this would have been just the wildest kind of talk for Israel to hear about Egypt.

They're looking to them as sort of a last resort for aid against the invaders. It's sort of a, he who, if your enemy is my enemy, that makes us friends type of a thing, but there was no love lost between Israel.