

ISAIAH: GOD'S DIRECTIVES TO THOSE TROUBLED AT GOVERNMENTAL APOSTASY

Part XII: God's Salvation From Finding Our Security In Other People

(Isaiah 20:1-6)

I. Introduction

- A. As Christians, we each have been brought to faith in Christ through the work of some other believer or group of believers. They witnessed to us, gave us the Gospel and then nurtured and encouraged and directed us in our newfound faith in Christ.
- B. Because of our appreciation of this ministry unto us, we can become dependent upon them for the spiritual stability and security their testimony offers us much like a "rock of defense" in hard times.
- C. However, some such "rocks" can shatter in sin, and our faith can be shaken when such people slip into carnality and cease to follow our Lord. When that happens, we can become disillusioned and feel very insecure, wondering what will happen to **us** in the end!
- D. Isaiah 20:1-6 is a lesson to God's people on dealing with this challenge as follows:

II. God's Salvation From Finding Our Security In Other People, Isaiah 20:1-6.

- A. Due to the threat of Assyrian invasion in Isaiah's era, the people of Judah, the Southern Kingdom were tempted to handle their fear of Assyria by making protective military alliances with other Gentile nations like Egypt, Ethiopia or Philistia, cr. Isaiah 18:2; 7:1ff.
- B. However, it was against God's Word and thus His will for Judah to make military alliances with Gentile nations instead of trusting in God for national defense, cf. Exodus 23:31-33; Deuteronomy 7:1-2.
- C. Accordingly, to impress Judah to trust in God and not in godless Gentile nations, God provided an unusual and powerful object lesson through the prophet, Isaiah, cf. Isaiah 20:1-6:
 1. God allowed Philistia's city, Ashdod to fall to Assyria before Isaiah's day, Isaiah 20:1. (Assyria's king Sargon II captured Ashdod in B. C. 711 under his general, Tartan, and that more than 100 years before Judah's fall to Babylon [although the Northern Kingdom of Israel had fallen to Assyria 11 years before then], Bib. Know. Com., O.T., p. 1067; Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, fn. to Isa. 20:1; p. 968.)
 2. To motivate Judah to trust in God to handle Assyria's threat and not to get involved in protective military alliances with Gentiles, God used Isaiah to give a powerful object lesson as follows (20:1-6):
 - a. In the same year the Assyrians captured Philistia's city of Ashdod, Isaiah was called of God to walk around for three years only partially dressed in an attire used by Assyrian prisoners of war, 20:1-2.
 - b. While walking around in this foreboding attire, Isaiah was commanded by God to announce that the Gentile Egyptian and Ethiopian peoples, as had the Philistines of Ashdod, would walk around this way as Assyrian prisoners of war, Isaiah 20:3-5!
 - c. The object lesson was designed to motivate the people of Judah to avoid making protective military alliances with those Gentiles who would be captured by the Assyrians, Isaiah 20:6! In other words, God was showing how futile it was to trust in such vulnerable Gentile allies, that the people of Judah were logically better off trusting the Lord for military security!

Lesson: *The fall of Philistia's Ashdod coupled with Isaiah's object lesson of walking around dressed like an Assyrian prisoner of war together with his announcing this was how other Gentiles would be dressed after their fall to Assyria was designed to reveal how futile it was for Judah to sin against God by making protective alliances with such Gentile nations against Assyrian invasion! As Jeremiah 17:5-8 written a generation after Isaiah put it, he who trusts in man for such protection was "cursed" while he that trusted in God was "blessed." (Note Ryrie's footnote to Jer. 17:5-8 which states: "The background of these verses was Judah's periodic attempts to seek the help of Egypt against Babylon.")*

Application: *(1) If we feel insecure by the spiritual demise of a believer whom we have come to admire, we have become dependent on that party as opposed to trusting in the Lord, and must shift our trust back to Him! (2) If others depend on US this way, we must impress them to shift their dependency back to the Lord! (3) If TRAGEDY occurs to a symbol of human security (such as the fall of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in NYC September 11, 2001), may we respond as Judah was to respond to the fall of Ashdod -- may we shift from trusting in the symbol of human security to rely on the Lord!*