

The Book of Isaiah, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 9: Judgment and Hope Among the Nations

Isaiah 18:1–23:18

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

These six chapters cover a lot of ground and many nations, so resist the urge to treat them as a geography quiz. The unifying aim is to expose misplaced trust and to call the class to rest their security in God alone, not in alliances, wealth, or human strength. Judah's besetting temptation was to run to Egypt for help instead of trusting the LORD, and chapter after chapter dismantles every false refuge: Egypt and Cush will fall, Babylon will fall, even glittering Tyre will fall. Use a few vivid moments, Isaiah walking barefoot for three years (chapter 20), the rooftop party in Jerusalem (chapter 22), the watchman in the night (chapter 21), to make the theme land, rather than marching through every verse. Keep pressing the personal question: where is the class's security actually resting?

Two passages carry special weight and deserve the most careful handling. First, the hope of 19:18–25, where Egypt and Assyria are blessed alongside Israel. Teach this as a foreshadowing of the gospel reaching the nations and gathering a people from every land into the one church of Christ, the true Israel of God. Be explicit that this is not a political prediction about modern Egypt, modern Iraq, or modern Middle Eastern geopolitics, but a glimpse of God's heart for all peoples fulfilled in the gospel age. Second, the key of the house of David given to Eliakim (22:20–25), which Revelation 3:7 places in the hands of the risen Christ. Use this to point the class to Jesus as the One who holds all authority over entrance into God's house and kingdom. Let both passages lift the class from judgment to the hope that runs underneath all these oracles.

Question 1

Student Question:

In Isaiah 18 and 19, God pronounces judgment on Cush and Egypt, the very powers Judah was tempted to rely on for protection against Assyria. What does it teach us about misplaced trust when the nations we lean on for security are themselves under God's judgment (compare Isaiah 31:1; Psalm 146:3)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapter 18 turns to Cush, the land beyond the rivers of Egypt (roughly ancient Ethiopia and Sudan), a distant power that sent ambassadors, probably seeking alliances against Assyria. Isaiah's word is striking: God tells the swift messengers to go home, because He is in no hurry and needs no human help. 'For thus the LORD said to me: I will quietly look from my dwelling' (18:4). God watches calmly, like heat shimmering in the sun, and at the right moment He will act, pruning the spreading branches before the harvest.

The point for Judah was pointed. While the nations scramble and send envoys and form coalitions, God sits enthroned, unhurried and unthreatened. He does not need Cush, and neither does Judah. The frantic diplomacy of the nations is unnecessary to the God who controls the harvest of history.

The chapter ends on a hopeful note (18:7): in the end, gifts will be brought to the LORD of hosts at Mount Zion from this distant people. Even the far-off nations will one day bring tribute to the true God. This anticipates the wider hope of chapter 19 and ultimately the gospel reaching the ends of the earth, including, beautifully, the Ethiopian eunuch from this very region who comes to Christ in Acts 8.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Cush sends envoys seeking alliance, but God tells them He needs no human help; He 'quietly looks' from His dwelling (18:4).
- While nations scramble to form coalitions, God sits enthroned, unhurried and in full control of history's harvest.
- Judah is being weaned off the impulse to secure itself through diplomacy rather than through trust in God.
- The chapter ends with distant peoples bringing gifts to the LORD at Zion (18:7), anticipating the nations coming to God.
- This foreshadows the gospel reaching even distant Cush, fulfilled in the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26–39).

Discussion Prompts

- What does God's calm, unhurried watching teach us when we feel the frantic urge to fix things ourselves?
- Where are you tempted to 'send envoys,' to scramble for human help, instead of trusting the God who needs no help?
- How does the hope of distant peoples bringing gifts to God (18:7) point toward the gospel going to all nations?

Question 2

Student Question:

Egypt was Judah's go-to ally and Israel's ancient house of bondage, yet God still judged it. Where have you leaned on a relationship, an institution, or a source of help that, deep down, you knew could not ultimately save you? What pulled you toward it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapter 19 delivers a full oracle against Egypt, the superpower Judah most often ran to for protection. God announces He will come against Egypt, and its famous idols will tremble at His presence (19:1). He will stir up civil war, confound the wisdom of its renowned counselors, dry

up the Nile on which all Egyptian life depended, and ruin its economy (19:2–15). The mightiest, most sophisticated nation in the region is shown to be utterly helpless before the LORD.

Notice the targets of judgment. God strikes Egypt's idols (its false gods), its wise men (its vaunted human wisdom), and its Nile (its source of life and wealth). In other words, He dismantles everything Egypt trusted in. This is the recurring lesson of these chapters: every false refuge will be exposed and brought to nothing, so that people will know there is no security apart from God.

For Judah, the message could not be clearer. The nation you keep running to for help is itself helpless before your God. To trust Egypt is to trust a broken reed that will pierce your hand (compare Isaiah 36:6). Isaiah will say it bluntly later: 'Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help... but do not look to the Holy One of Israel' (31:1). The folly of trusting human power instead of God runs straight through to our own hearts.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God judges Egypt by dismantling everything it trusted: its idols, its famed wisdom, and its life-giving Nile (19:1–15).
- The mightiest regional power is shown helpless before the LORD; no human strength can stand against Him.
- The lesson for Judah is direct: the nation you run to for help is itself helpless before your God (Isaiah 31:1).
- Trusting Egypt is trusting a broken reed that pierces the hand (Isaiah 36:6); false refuges always fail.
- Psalm 146:3 applies the same truth: 'Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.'

Discussion Prompts

- Why does God specifically target Egypt's idols, its wisdom, and its Nile, the very things it trusted?
- What 'Egypt's' do we run to for help that are themselves helpless before God?
- How can we tell the difference between using ordinary means wisely and trusting them instead of God?

Question 3

Student Question:

In Isaiah 20, God has Isaiah walk stripped and barefoot for three years as a living sign that Egypt and Cush will be led away captive. What does this dramatic, costly sign-act reveal about how seriously God wanted His people to abandon their false confidence in Egypt?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Then comes one of the most beautiful and surprising passages in all the oracles: 19:18–25. Five times the phrase 'in that day' rolls out a future hope. In that day Egyptians will speak the

language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD (19:18). There will be an altar to the LORD in the heart of Egypt (19:19). When they cry to the LORD, He will send them a savior and deliver them (19:20). 'And the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day' (19:21).

The climax is breathtaking (19:23–25). A highway will run from Egypt to Assyria, and the two ancient enemies will worship together. And God says, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.' The enslaver and the terrorizer are folded into the family of God alongside His covenant people. Three old enemies, one people of God.

We must read this rightly. This is not a political prediction about modern Egypt, modern Iraq, or Middle Eastern geopolitics. It is a glimpse, in Old Testament terms, of the gospel age, when God would reach beyond Israel and gather a people from every nation into the one church of Christ, the true Israel of God (Galatians 3:28–29; Ephesians 2:11–22). The 'altar in Egypt' and the shared worship picture Jew and Gentile united in Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8) and Cornelius (Acts 10) are the first fruits of this very hope.

Teach this passage as the high point of hope in these chapters. After so much judgment, God reveals His ultimate purpose, not the destruction of the nations but their salvation, the gathering of all peoples to know the LORD. This is the missionary heart of God on full display, centuries before the Great Commission.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- 19:18–25 is a soaring hope passage: Egypt and Assyria, ancient enemies, worship the LORD alongside Israel as one people of God.
- 'Blessed be Egypt my people' (19:25) folds former enemies into God's family, displaying His heart for all nations.
- This is a foreshadowing of the gospel reaching the nations and gathering a people from every land into the church, the true Israel (Galatians 3:28–29; Ephesians 2:11–22).
- It is NOT a political prediction about modern Egypt, Iraq, or Middle Eastern nation-states; it is fulfilled spiritually in Christ.
- First fruits appear in the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8) and Cornelius (Acts 10); the missionary heart of God is on display.
- Keep the class anchored: the fulfillment is the one body of Christ from all peoples, not earthly geopolitics.

Discussion Prompts

- What does it reveal about God's heart that He calls Egypt 'my people' and Assyria 'the work of my hands'?
- How is this vision of enemies worshipping together fulfilled in the church gathered from every nation?
- Why is it important to read this as gospel hope rather than as a prediction about modern political nations?

Question 4

Student Question:

Isaiah acted out a hard, humbling message with his own body for three years. When God has asked you to do something costly or humbling for the sake of His message, how did you respond, and what held you back or carried you through?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapter 20 is one of the most dramatic sign-acts in the prophets. God commands Isaiah to take off his sackcloth and sandals and to walk 'naked and barefoot' (likely stripped to a loincloth, dressed like a prisoner of war) for three years (20:2-3). It was a living, walking parable, deeply humiliating, and it ran for three years. Isaiah made a public spectacle of himself at God's command.

The meaning is given plainly (20:4-5): just as Isaiah walked stripped and barefoot, so the king of Assyria would lead away the Egyptians and Cushites as captives, stripped and barefoot, to their shame. And then the punchline for Judah: 'Then they shall be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush their hope and of Egypt their boast' (20:5). The nations Judah was counting on would themselves be marched off in chains.

What strikes us is the cost. God did not merely send a memo; He had His prophet embody the message in a humiliating, prolonged, public way. This tells us how urgently God wanted His people to abandon their false confidence in Egypt, and how seriously He takes the work of His messengers. The prophets repeatedly paid a personal price to deliver God's word, a pattern that climaxes in Christ, who did not merely speak the message of salvation but became it, bearing our shame in His own body on the cross.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Isaiah performs a costly sign-act, walking stripped and barefoot for three years, to portray Egypt and Cush led away as captives (20:2-4).
- The message to Judah is blunt: 'Cush their hope and Egypt their boast' will be put to shame (20:5); their false confidence will collapse.
- God did not merely announce the message but had His prophet embody it, showing how urgent and serious it was.
- The prophets often paid a personal, humbling price to deliver God's word; faithfulness can be costly.
- This points ultimately to Christ, who did not merely speak salvation but embodied it, bearing our shame on the cross (Hebrews 12:2).

Discussion Prompts

- Why would God have His prophet embody the message in such a humbling, costly, public way?
- What does the cost Isaiah paid teach us about the seriousness of delivering God's truth?

- When has God asked you to do something humbling for the sake of His message? What carried you through?

Question 5

Student Question:

In Isaiah 21:9, the watchman cries, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon,' a line Revelation 18:2 later echoes. Why does God repeatedly announce the certain fall of the proud world-powers, and what comfort and what warning does this hold for God's people in every age?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapter 21 contains three short, vivid oracles, beginning with 'the wilderness of the sea,' which is Babylon (21:1–10). The vision is grim and disorienting; the prophet is so distressed by what he sees that his loins are filled with anguish and he is 'bowed down' so he cannot hear (21:3). A watchman is posted, and at last the cry comes: 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the carved images of her gods he has shattered to the ground' (21:9).

That double 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon' is unforgettable, and the New Testament reaches back to it. Revelation 18:2 cries, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great,' announcing the certain doom of every proud, idolatrous, God-defying world power. The shattering of Babylon's images underscores the point: the gods people trust in are powerless, and they fall with the empires that worship them.

Why does God repeatedly announce the fall of the great powers? For His people it is both comfort and warning. Comfort, because the empires that oppress and terrify will not last; God will bring them down. Warning, because the same God who judges Babylon will judge every proud heart and every false trust, including those found among His own people. The certainty of Babylon's fall is meant to detach our hearts from the world's glittering powers and fasten them on the God who outlasts them all.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The oracle against Babylon (21:1–10) is so weighty it leaves the prophet in anguish; the watchman finally cries, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon' (21:9).
- Revelation 18:2 echoes this cry over 'Babylon the great,' announcing the certain doom of every proud, God-defying power.
- The shattering of Babylon's idols shows that the gods people trust are powerless and fall with their empires.
- God announces the fall of the great powers as comfort (the oppressors will not last) and warning (He judges all pride, even among His people).
- The certainty of Babylon's fall is meant to detach our hearts from worldly powers and fasten them on God.

Discussion Prompts

- Why does the prophet find this vision so distressing, even though it announces the fall of an enemy?
- What comfort and what warning does 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon' hold for God's people today?
- How does the certain fall of the world's proud powers help loosen our grip on them?

Question 6

Student Question:

Isaiah 21 portrays a watchman straining through the night, waiting for the morning (21:11-12: 'The morning comes, and also the night'). Where in your life are you in a season of watching and waiting on God in the dark? How are you keeping watch, and where are you tempted to give up?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The second and third oracles of chapter 21 are brief but evocative. The oracle concerning Dumah (Edom) gives us one of Scripture's most haunting exchanges (21:11-12). Someone calls out from Seir, 'Watchman, what time of the night? Watchman, what of the night?' And the watchman answers, 'The morning comes, and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; come back again.' It is a riddle of hope and warning together: morning is coming, but so is more darkness. The answer to the anxious question is essentially, keep watching, keep asking, return again.

The third oracle (21:13-17) concerns Arabia, picturing caravans fleeing from the sword and the swift decline of the glory of Kedar within a year. Like the others, it shows a proud and seemingly secure people brought low on God's timetable.

The image of the watchman in the night is rich for application. The Christian life often involves long seasons of watching and waiting in the dark, straining toward a morning we trust is coming. The watchman does not abandon his post when the answer is mixed; he keeps watch, keeps inquiring, keeps returning. Paul urges believers to be awake and alert (1 Thessalonians 5:1-8), for we are children of the day, watching for the dawn that Christ has secured. 'Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning' (Psalm 30:5).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The Edom oracle (21:11-12) gives the haunting watchman riddle: 'The morning comes, and also the night'; hope and warning together.
- The Arabia oracle (21:13-17) shows another proud people brought low on God's timetable.
- The watchman image speaks to the believer's long seasons of watching and waiting in the dark for a coming morning.
- The faithful watchman does not abandon his post but keeps watch, keeps inquiring, and returns again.
- Christians are children of the day, called to stay awake and alert for the dawn Christ has secured (1 Thessalonians 5:1-8; Psalm 30:5).

Discussion Prompts

- What does the watchman's mixed answer, 'morning comes, and also the night,' teach about life's seasons?
- Where are you keeping watch in the dark right now, waiting on God? How are you keeping your post?
- How does the promise that 'joy comes with the morning' sustain you through the night seasons?

Question 7

Student Question:

In Isaiah 22, Isaiah turns from the foreign nations to judge Jerusalem itself, God's own city, for partying in the face of judgment (22:12–13). Why is it significant that God holds His own people to account along with the nations, and what does this say about presuming on our status as God's people (compare 1 Peter 4:17)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Chapter 22 is the great surprise of this section. After judging nation after foreign nation, Isaiah suddenly turns the spotlight on Jerusalem itself, calling it 'the valley of vision' (22:1). God's own city, the place of His temple, is put under the same scrutiny as Babylon and Egypt. This is jarring, and it is meant to be. Being God's chosen people does not exempt Jerusalem from God's judgment; if anything, it heightens the accountability.

The specific charge is devastating. Facing a real threat, the people of Jerusalem busied themselves with frantic defensive preparations, counting houses, building reservoirs, repairing walls (22:8–11), but, as 22:11 says, 'you did not look to him who did it, or see him who planned it long ago.' They trusted their engineering and ignored their God. And when God called for weeping, mourning, and repentance (22:12), they threw a party instead: 'Behold, joy and gladness, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep... Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die' (22:13).

That defiant fatalism, 'let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die,' is the cry of people who have given up on God and given themselves over to distraction. Paul quotes the line in 1 Corinthians 15:32 as the philosophy of those with no hope of resurrection. God's response is severe: 'this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die' (22:14). The lesson stings: God holds His own people accountable, and judgment begins with the household of God (1 Peter 4:17). Presuming on our status while ignoring our God is a deadly error.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Chapter 22 shockingly turns judgment on Jerusalem, God's own city ('the valley of vision'); being God's people does not exempt them from accountability.
- Jerusalem trusted its defensive engineering but 'did not look to him who did it' (22:11); they relied on their works, not their God.

- When God called for mourning and repentance, the people partied instead: 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die' (22:13).
- This fatalistic cry is the philosophy of those without hope, quoted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:32.
- Judgment begins with the household of God (1 Peter 4:17); presuming on our status while ignoring God is a deadly error.

Discussion Prompts

- Why is it significant that God judges His own city alongside the pagan nations?
- How can God's people fall into trusting their own preparations while failing to 'look to him who planned it'?
- When trouble looms, are you more tempted toward the rooftop party of distraction or toward honest repentance?

Question 8

Student Question:

The people of Jerusalem, facing crisis, threw a fatalistic party: 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die' (22:13). When trouble looms, are you more tempted toward denial and distraction or toward honest repentance? What would genuine mourning and turning to God look like in your current trouble (22:12)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The second half of chapter 22 (22:15–25) zooms in on two individuals, and the contrast between them is rich with gospel foreshadowing. First there is Shebna, a high official, a steward 'over the household,' who is proud and self-serving, busy carving out a magnificent tomb for himself in the rock (22:16). God declares He will hurl Shebna away and strip him of his office. Self-promotion in God's service ends in disgrace.

In his place God will set Eliakim son of Hilkiah, a faithful servant. The language God uses over Eliakim is remarkable: 'I will clothe him with your robe... I will commit your authority to his hand... I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open' (22:21–22). Eliakim is given the key, the symbol of total authority over who enters and who is excluded from the royal house. 'And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem' (22:21).

Here the text reaches beyond Eliakim. The risen Christ takes these exact words for Himself in Revelation 3:7: 'The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.' Eliakim, the faithful steward given the key, foreshadows Jesus, who holds all authority over entrance into the house and kingdom of God. Christ alone opens the door of salvation that no one can shut, and shuts the door that no one can open. He gave the keys of the kingdom to the apostles to proclaim the terms of entrance

(Matthew 16:18–19), but the authority itself is His, for ‘all authority in heaven and on earth’ has been given to Him (Matthew 28:18).

There is a sober note even here. Eliakim, faithful as he was, was still a man, and 22:25 warns that the ‘peg’ on which everything was hung would eventually give way; even the best human steward fails. Only Christ, the true holder of the key, never fails. Every earthly authority points beyond itself to Him.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Shebna, the proud self-serving steward building his own grand tomb, is stripped of office; self-promotion in God’s service ends in disgrace.
- Faithful Eliakim is given the robe, the authority, and ‘the key of the house of David’ (22:22), total authority over entrance to the royal house.
- Revelation 3:7 places these exact words in the hands of the risen Christ; Eliakim foreshadows Jesus who opens and no one shuts.
- Christ alone holds the key of salvation and the kingdom; He gave the apostles the keys to proclaim the terms of entrance (Matthew 16:18–19) but the authority is His (Matthew 28:18).
- Even faithful Eliakim, a mere man, would eventually fail (22:25); only Christ, the true key-holder, never fails.
- Every earthly authority and steward points beyond itself to the supreme authority of Christ.

Discussion Prompts

- What is the contrast between Shebna and Eliakim, and what does it teach about serving God faithfully versus self-promotion?
- How does Eliakim’s ‘key of the house of David’ foreshadow Christ, who opens and no one shuts (Revelation 3:7)?
- What does it mean for your salvation that Jesus alone holds the key, the authority over entrance into God’s kingdom?

Question 9

Student Question:

In Isaiah 22:20–25, the unfaithful steward Shebna is replaced by Eliakim, who receives ‘the key of the house of David,’ the authority to open and shut. Revelation 3:7 places this very key in the hands of the risen Christ. How does Eliakim foreshadow Christ, and what does it mean that Jesus alone now holds the key that opens and shuts, the authority over entrance into God’s house and kingdom (compare Matthew 16:18–19; 28:18)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The final oracle, chapter 23, judges Tyre (and her sister city Sidon), the great Phoenician merchant powers of the Mediterranean coast. Tyre was the New York of the ancient world, a glittering hub of international trade whose merchants were princes and whose traders were ‘the

honored of the earth' (23:8). Her ships sailed everywhere; her wealth was legendary. And God announces her humbling: 'Who has purposed this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns... The LORD of hosts has purposed it, to defile the pompous pride of all glory' (23:8-9).

Once again the root sin is pride, here the pride of commerce and wealth. Tyre trusted in her trade, her ships, her riches, and her strategic island fortress. God strips it all away to show that no amount of wealth can secure a people against the LORD. Riches are a notoriously deceptive refuge; they promise security and deliver none. Jesus warned bluntly against laying up treasure on earth and trusting in riches (Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:16-21).

Yet even here, the chapter ends with an unexpected redemptive turn (23:17-18). After seventy years Tyre will return to her trade, but her merchandise and wages will be 'dedicated to the LORD... it will supply abundant food and fine clothing for those who dwell before the LORD.' Even the wealth of proud Tyre can be redeemed when it is consecrated to God's purposes. The lesson is not that money is evil but that it must be held loosely and devoted to the Lord, not trusted in or hoarded. Wealth that is dedicated to God becomes a blessing; wealth that is trusted in becomes an idol that falls.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Tyre, the glittering merchant superpower, is judged for the 'pompous pride of all glory' (23:9); the root sin is again pride, here the pride of wealth and commerce.
- Tyre trusted her trade, ships, and riches; God strips them away to show wealth cannot secure a people against Him.
- Riches are a deceptive refuge that promises security and delivers none (Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:16-21).
- The chapter ends redemptively (23:17-18): Tyre's wealth is finally 'dedicated to the LORD' for His people.
- Money is not evil, but it must be held loosely and consecrated to God, not trusted in or hoarded; dedicated wealth blesses, trusted wealth becomes a falling idol.

Discussion Prompts

- Why is wealth such a deceptive and tempting refuge, and how does Tyre's fall expose it?
- What does it mean to hold money loosely and dedicate it to the Lord rather than trusting in it?
- What is one way Christ is teaching you to use your resources for Him instead of leaning on them for security?

Question 10

Student Question:

Isaiah 23 judges Tyre, the wealthy merchant city, for her pride and trust in commerce, yet even her wealth is finally 'dedicated to the LORD' (23:18). Looking at your own life, what is one

specific way Christ is teaching you to hold your money, success, or security loosely, trusting and serving Him with it rather than trusting in it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Step back and take in the whole sweep of chapters 18 through 23, and indeed the whole oracle section. The drumbeat is unmistakable: every human source of security is a broken reed. Egypt and Cush, the allies Judah ran to, will fall. Babylon, the rising superpower, will fall. Edom and Arabia will be brought low. Jerusalem, trusting its own walls and reservoirs, stands under judgment. Tyre, trusting its wealth, will be humbled. Not one of these refuges holds. Only the LORD is a sure foundation.

This is precisely the lesson Judah needed and the lesson we need. We are endlessly tempted to rest our security on alliances (the right relationships, the right connections), on wealth (enough money to feel safe), on our own competence and preparations (like Jerusalem counting its houses), or on the dazzling powers of our culture (like Tyre's commerce). Isaiah patiently pries our fingers off each one. 'Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God' (Psalm 20:7).

And underneath all the judgment runs a current of hope that surfaces in the gospel: God's purpose was never merely to destroy the nations but to gather a people from among them. The hope of Egypt and Assyria worshiping with Israel (19:25), the key of David held by Christ (22:22; Revelation 3:7), even the wealth of Tyre dedicated to the Lord (23:18), all point forward to the day when God would draw people from every nation into the one church of His Son. The question these chapters leave with every one of us is searching and personal: where is my security really resting? May the answer, more and more, be Christ alone, the sure foundation and the cornerstone, on whom whoever believes will never be put to shame (Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The unifying theme of chapters 18–23 is that every human source of security (alliances, wealth, competence, worldly power) is a broken reed; only the LORD is a sure foundation.
- Judah's, and our, recurring temptation is to trust Egypt-like alliances, Tyre-like wealth, or our own preparations rather than God (Psalm 20:7).
- Beneath the judgment runs a current of gospel hope: God aimed not merely to destroy the nations but to gather a people from them.
- The hope of 19:25, the key of David in Christ's hand (22:22; Revelation 3:7), and Tyre's dedicated wealth (23:18) all point to the church drawn from every nation.
- The searching personal question of the whole section: where is my security really resting? The answer must be Christ alone, the sure cornerstone (Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6).
- Resist treating these chapters as ancient history; press the timeless call to trust God rather than human security onto the class's own hearts.

Discussion Prompts

- Looking across all these oracles, what are the main false refuges people trust instead of God?
- How does the gospel hope running under these chapters (19:25; 22:22; 23:18) lift the whole section toward Christ?
- Honestly, where is your security really resting right now, and what would it look like to rest it in Christ alone?