

# Isaiah 19

Oracle about **Babylon**  
(13:1-14:27)

Oracle about **Babylon**  
(21:1-10)

Oracle about **Philistia**  
(14:28-32)

Oracle about **Dumah**  
(21:11-12)

Oracle about **Moab**  
(15-16)

**Isaiah's Sign Act**  
(20)

Oracle about **Qedar**  
(21:13-17)

Oracle about **Damascus**  
(17-18)

Oracle about **Valley of Vision**  
(22)

Oracle about **Egypt**  
(19)

Oracle about **Tyre**  
(23)

## Isaiah 19 — Overview

### 19:1-4: Don't Trust their Idols

- Judgment on Egypt's idols and civil war

### 19:5-10: Don't Trust their Nile

- Nile dries up, fishing and linen industries fail

### 19:11-15: Don't Trust their Wisdom

- Egypt's counselors are foolish

### 19:16-17: "In that Day" #1

- Egypt will fear Judah

### 19:18: "In that Day" #2

- Five cities speak Hebrew and swear to the LORD

### 19:19-22: "In that Day" #3

- Altar to the LORD in Egypt,  
they will worship

### 19:23: "In that Day" #4

- Highway between Egypt and Assyria

### 19:24-25: "In that Day" #5

- Israel, Egypt, and Assyria blessed together

## Isaiah 19:1-4 — Oracle Introduction

<sup>1a</sup> An oracle concerning **Egypt** .

**A** Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud  
and comes to **Egypt** ;

**B** <sup>1b</sup> and the **idols** of **Egypt** will tremble<sup>1</sup> at his presence,

**C** <sup>1c</sup> and the heart of the **Egyptians** will melt **within them** .

**D** <sup>2a</sup> And I will stir up **Egyptians** against **Egyptians** ,  
and they will fight, each against another

**D'** <sup>2b</sup> and each against his neighbor,  
city against city, kingdom against kingdom;

**C'** <sup>3a</sup> and the **spirit** of the **Egyptians** **within them** will be emptied out,  
and I will confound their **counsel** ;

**B'** <sup>3b</sup> and they will inquire of the **idols** and the sorcerers,  
and the mediums and the necromancers;

**A'** <sup>4</sup> and I will give over the **Egyptians**  
into the hand of a hard master,  
and a fierce king will rule over them,  
declares the **Lord GOD of hosts** .

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1. 'to quiver' — like the doorposts in ch 6 or King Ahaz of ch 7

## Riding on a Cloud (v. 1) — Yahweh's Authority Over Nature

"Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt." This imagery of God riding on clouds appears throughout Scripture as a declaration of Yahweh's sovereign authority over nature.

**Deuteronomy 33:26-29** — "There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty. The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, 'Destroy.' So Israel lived in safety, Jacob lived alone, in a land of grain and wine, whose heavens drop down dew. Happy are you, O Israel! Who

is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.”

**Psalm 68:4** — “Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts; his name is the LORD; exult before him!”

**Psalm 68:33** — “To him who rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens; behold, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.”

**Psalm 104:3** — “He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind.”

This imagery is especially significant for Egypt, whose civilization depended entirely on the Nile’s predictable cycles. When Yahweh rides on clouds and the Nile dries up (vv. 5-7), the message is clear: the God who rides the clouds controls the waters. Egypt’s trust in the Nile is misplaced.

The cloud-rider imagery also evokes Canaanite mythology, where Baal is called “the Rider of the Clouds.” As we’ve talked about before, these oracles are primarily written for Israel, who would likely be way more tempted to worship a Canaanite god than Egypt. Yahweh—not Baal, not any Egyptian deity—is the true sovereign over nature. He alone determines whether the Nile flows or dries up. Nature itself bows to the true cloud-rider.

### Who is the “hard master” in v. 4?

In verse 4, the LORD declares: “I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master, and a fierce king will rule over them.”

While chapter 20 explicitly identifies Assyria as the immediate instrument of judgment against Egypt, the literary structure of this section begs the question: Who is truly the “hard master”?

Consider the evidence from the text itself:

- **Verse 1:** “Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt”—The LORD himself is coming to Egypt
- **Verse 4:** “I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master”—The LORD is speaking in first person, declaring his sovereign action
- **Verse 17:** The terror comes from “the purpose that the LORD of hosts has purposed”—The LORD is the architect of Egypt’s judgment

The “hard master” is Yahweh himself, working through Assyria. This reading aligns with Isaiah’s broader theology: earthly kings and empires are the visible instruments, but the invisible hand directing them is always the LORD of hosts.

## Isaiah 19:5-10 — Economic Collapse

- <sup>5</sup> And the waters of the sea will be dried up,  
and the river will be dry and parched,  
<sup>6</sup> and its canals will become foul,  
and the branches of Egypt's Nile will diminish and dry up,  
reeds and rushes will rot away.  
<sup>7</sup> There will be bare places by the Nile,  
on the brink of the Nile,  
and all that is sown by the Nile will be parched,  
will be driven away, and will be no more.  
<sup>8</sup> The fishermen will mourn and lament,  
all who cast a hook in the Nile;  
and they will languish  
who spread nets on the water.  
<sup>9</sup> The workers in combed flax will be in despair,  
and the weavers of white cotton.  
<sup>10</sup> Those who are the pillars of the land will be crushed,  
and all who work for pay will be grieved.

### Combed Flax (v. 9)

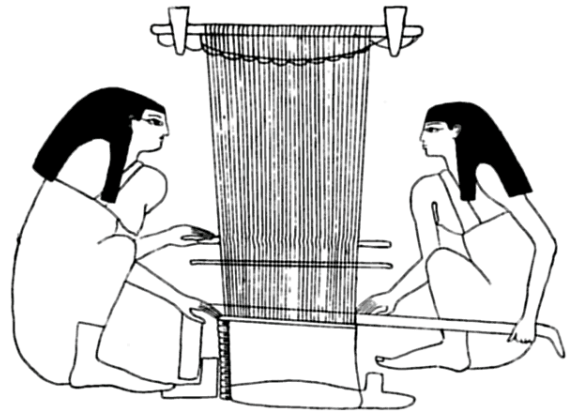
Verse 9 mentions "workers in combed flax" whose livelihood depends on the Nile: "The workers in combed flax will be in despair, and the weavers of white cotton."

The flax plant (*Linum usitatissimum*—literally "flax of greatest use") was a crucial crop in ancient Egypt, requiring the Nile's abundant water supply to thrive. The scientific name itself reflects how essential this plant was to Egyptian economy and daily life.

The process of working with flax was labor-intensive: after harvesting, the fibers had to be separated, combed, and then woven into linen. Egyptian linen was renowned throughout the ancient world for its quality, and the textile industry employed thousands of workers—from field laborers to skilled weavers.



Flax plant (*Linum usitatissimum*)



Egyptian wall painting of weavers

When Isaiah prophesies the drying up of the Nile (vv. 5-7), the collapse of the flax industry is a natural consequence. Without water, the flax cannot grow. Without flax, the weavers have no work. The entire economic chain—from agriculture to manufacturing—unravels.

## Isaiah 19:11-15 — Wisdom Fails

- <sup>11</sup> The **princes of Zoan** are utterly foolish;  
the wisest **counselors** of Pharaoh give stupid<sup>1</sup> **counsel**.  
How can you say to Pharaoh,  
"I am a son of the wise,  
a son of ancient kings"?
- <sup>12</sup> Where then are your wise men?  
Let them tell you  
that they might **know** what the **LORD of hosts** has **purposed** against  
**Egypt**.
- <sup>13</sup> The **princes of Zoan** have become fools,  
and the princes of Memphis are deluded;  
those who are the cornerstones of her tribes  
have made **Egypt** stagger.
- <sup>14</sup> The LORD has mingled **within her** a **spirit** of confusion,  
and they will make **Egypt** stagger in all its deeds,  
as a drunken man staggers in his vomit.
- <sup>15</sup> And there will be nothing for **Egypt**  
that head or tail, palm branch or reed, may do.

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1. lit. 'of an animal'

## Egypt's Wise Men — A Pattern of Failed Wisdom

Isaiah's mockery of Egypt's counselors in verses 11-15 recalls two pivotal stories in Genesis and Exodus where Egypt's "wise men" were revealed as utterly foolish in the presence of Israel's God in favor of another, unlikely, truly wise one.

### Joseph and the Interpretation of Dreams

In Genesis 41, Pharaoh has troubling dreams but none of his wise men can interpret them:

**Genesis 41:8** — "So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh."

It is Joseph—a Hebrew slave, empowered by God—who provides the interpretation and the counsel that saves Egypt from famine. Egypt's entire class of wise men fail, while one Hebrew servant succeeds through divine revelation.

### **Moses and the Staff-Turned-Serpent**

In Exodus 7, when Moses confronts Pharaoh, Egypt's wise men attempt to replicate God's signs:

**Exodus 7:10-12** — "So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs."

The wise men can imitate the sign superficially, but ultimately their power is consumed. As the plagues intensify, their impotence becomes increasingly obvious until they finally confess: "This is the finger of God" (Exodus 8:19).

### **The Contrast: Israel's Anointed Counselor**

Isaiah's account of Egypt's failed counselors highlights what Egypt lacks and what Israel possesses—not human wisdom, but divine wisdom embodied in the coming king. This contrast doesn't appear explicitly until much later in Isaiah's prophecy:

**Isaiah 9:6** — "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

**Isaiah 11:2-4** — "And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked."

Where Egypt's wise men give "stupid counsel" (19:11) and are filled with "a spirit of confusion" (19:14), Israel's coming king will possess "the Spirit of wisdom" and "the Spirit of counsel." Where Egypt's counselors cannot discern "what the LORD of hosts has purposed" (19:12), Israel's king will act in perfect alignment with God's purposes.

This coming servant-king is ultimately revealed in full in Isaiah 52:

**Isaiah 52:13** — "Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted."

Egypt's wise men—despite their ancient learning and lineage (19:11)—lack this true divine wisdom, which resides only in the Servant of the LORD.

### **Head or Tail, Palm Branch or Reed (v. 15)**

Verse 15 concludes the judgment section with, "And there will be nothing for Egypt that head or tail, palm branch or reed, may do."

This phrase echoes Isaiah 9:13-17, where Isaiah described the LORD's judgment on Israel:



**Isaiah 9:13-17** — “The people did not turn to him who struck them, nor inquire of the LORD of hosts. So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed in one day—the elder and honored man is the head, and the prophet who teaches lies is the tail; for those who guide this people have been leading them astray, and those who are guided by them are swallowed up. Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over their young men, and has no compassion on their fatherless and widows; for everyone is godless and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly. For all this his anger has not turned away, and his hand is stretched out still.”

In Isaiah 9, the interpretation is provided directly: the “head” and “palm branch” represent the leaders and elders (those of high status), while the “tail” and “reed” represent the false prophets and those of lower status. The judgment encompasses *everyone*—from the highest to the lowest.

In Isaiah 19, this same comprehensive judgment falls on Egypt:

- **Head/Palm Branch:** The princes of Zoan and their wisdom (vv. 11-13)—the political and intellectual elite whose counsel has become foolishness
- **Tail/Reed:** The “blue-collar” workers in verses 5-10—fishermen, flax workers, weavers, and day laborers whose livelihoods collapse with the Nile

The connection to “reed” is also interesting. In verses 6-7, the literal reeds and rushes rot away when the Nile dries up. Now in verse 15, the people themselves—represented by the “reed”—can do nothing. Both the reed (plant/crop) and the reed (people) come to nothing.

The parallel between Isaiah 9 (judgment on Israel) and Isaiah 19 (judgment on Egypt) reveals a theological consistency: God’s judgment follows the same pattern whether it falls on his covenant people or on pagan nations. No one escapes—neither the wise nor the simple, neither the powerful nor the powerless. When God acts in judgment, the entire social order, from top to bottom, is brought to nothing.

### Isaiah 19:16-17 — “In that Day” #1

<sup>16</sup> In that day the Egyptians will be like women, and tremble with fear before the hand that the LORD of hosts shakes over them. <sup>17</sup> And the land of Judah will become a terror to the Egyptians. Everyone to whom it is mentioned will fear because of the purpose that the LORD of hosts has purposed against them.

## Isaiah 19:18 — “In that Day” #2

<sup>18</sup> In that day there will be five<sup>1</sup> cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD of hosts. One of these will be called the City of Destruction<sup>2</sup>.

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1. could be a way to refer to 'several' cf. Lev 26:8, Gen 43:34, etc
  2. could also be "City of the Sun" ('he.res' vs 'khe.res')

## Of One Lip — Reversing the Tower of Babel

The phrase "speak the language of Canaan" is literally "speak the lip of Canaan" in Hebrew, echoing the Tower of Babel narrative in Genesis 11:

**Genesis 11:1, 6-7** — "Now the whole earth had one language and the same words... And the LORD said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.'"

The Hebrew word translated "language" is literally *saphah*—"lip." At Babel, humanity's unity was rooted in proud self-sufficiency (Genesis 11:4). The confusion of languages was God's judgment on this arrogant attempt at unity apart from him.

### From Babel to Egypt: A Different Kind of Unity

Isaiah 19:18 envisions a future unity in stark contrast to Babel:

- **At Babel:** One language used to make a name for *themselves*
- **In Isaiah 19:** One language (Hebrew—"the lip of Canaan") used to swear allegiance to the *LORD's* name
- **At Babel:** Unity in rebellion against God
- **In Isaiah 19:** Unity in worship of God
- **At Babel:** God scatters the nations and confuses their speech as judgment
- **In Isaiah 19:** God brings the nations together and gives them a common "lip" as redemption

### The Language of Covenant

That this restored "lip" is specifically Hebrew is significant. Egypt will speak the *covenant language*, the language through which Yahweh has revealed himself. To "speak the lip of Canaan"

is to enter into Israel's covenant with God—a shared identity, shared worship, and full inclusion in the covenant community.

### **Pentecost: The Full Reversal**

The ultimate reversal of Babel comes at Pentecost, where the Holy Spirit enables the disciples to speak in various languages:

**Acts 2:5-11** — "And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language... we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

At Babel, God confused languages as judgment. At Pentecost, God enables languages as grace—not by forcing everyone to speak one language, but by enabling the gospel to be proclaimed in every language. Isaiah 19:18 stands as a prophetic middle point between Babel and Pentecost: the promise that what was broken at Babel will be restored through humble, Spirit-enabled unity in worship of the LORD.

### **Isaiah 19:19-22 — “In that Day” #3**

<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the LORD because of oppressors<sup>1</sup>, he will send them a savior and defender, and deliver them. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the LORD<sup>2</sup> in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform<sup>3</sup> them. <sup>22</sup> And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them.

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1. c.f. Judges 3:9 (or the whole book of Judges)

2. note: not a conversion to a religion, but knowing Yahweh or not

3. 'sha.lem' - like 'sha.lom'/peace. Completing the payment that was vowed which leads to completion/peace

### **Building an Altar — The Pattern of Worship at Sacred Boundaries**

Verse 19 prophesies that "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."

The placement of the pillar "at the border" is particularly significant. John Oswalt notes that by placing the pillar on the border, it would be a way of declaring that the journey to Egypt would no longer mean leaving the holy land and entering a profane one. The pillar would proclaim that Egypt was God's land too.

This pattern of altar-building at sacred boundaries and entrances appears throughout Scripture, beginning with some of the earliest narratives.

### **Jacob at Bethel — The Gate of Heaven**

When Jacob flees from Esau and has his vision of the ladder connecting heaven and earth, he builds both a pillar and (later) an altar at the site:

**Genesis 28:17-19, 22** — "And he was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel... And this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house."

Jacob identifies this location as "the gate of heaven"—a threshold between the earthly and the divine. The pillar and altar mark this sacred boundary where heaven and earth meet. He later returns to build an altar at this same location (Genesis 35:1, 6-7, 14-15).

### **Sacrifices at the Entrance to Eden**

A long-standing interpretive tradition holds that the sacrifices of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:3-4) were offered at the entrance to the Garden of Eden, the place where Adam and Eve were expelled and where the cherubim were stationed to guard "the way to the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24).

While the text doesn't explicitly state this location, the pattern of offering sacrifices at sacred thresholds—at the entrance to holy space—appears repeatedly in Scripture:

- **The Tabernacle:** Sacrifices were offered at the entrance to the tent of meeting (Leviticus 1:3, 4:4, 17:4-6)
- **The Temple:** The altar of burnt offering stood in the courtyard, at the threshold before entering the temple proper (1 Kings 8:64, 2 Chronicles 4:1)
- **Mount Sinai:** Moses built an altar "at the foot of the mountain" when the covenant was ratified (Exodus 24:4-5)

**Exodus 24:4-5** — "And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD."

In each case, the altar is positioned at a boundary—at the threshold between the common and the holy, between the human realm and the divine presence.

### **The Pillar at Egypt's Border — Expanding the Sacred Space**

The altar in the "midst" of Egypt (v. 19a) signifies that Egypt itself will become a place of worship. But the pillar "at its border" (v. 19b) declares that Egypt is no longer outside the realm of God's presence. The border itself becomes a sacred marker—not a line of exclusion, but a sign of inclusion.

Just as Jacob's pillar at Bethel marked the "gate of heaven," and just as Moses's altar at the base of Sinai marked the threshold of covenant, the pillar at Egypt's border declares that Egypt has been brought into the sacred geography of God's people. The boundary is no longer a barrier but a monument to God's redemptive work.

### The LORD will strike Egypt (v. 22)

נָגַף	na-gaph	to strike, smite, plague
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The word used here for "strike" is *na-gaph*, which can also be translated as "plague." This word is significant in the Exodus narrative, particularly in the context of God's judgment on Egypt:

**Exodus 12:23-27** — "For the LORD will pass through to **strike** the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to **strike** you. You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he **struck** the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

This word appears only once in Isaiah, in this passage (19:22), creating a deliberate connection between God's historical judgment on Egypt in the Exodus and his future dealings with them—both in judgment and in healing.

### Isaiah 19:23 — "In that Day" #4

<sup>23</sup> In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

## Isaiah 19:24-25 — “In that Day” #5

<sup>24</sup> In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, <sup>25</sup> whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, “Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.”

### From Fear to Blessing — What Changed?

In verse 17, Judah is “a terror to the Egyptians”—everyone who hears of it will fear because of the LORD’s purpose against them. Yet by verse 25, we see Egypt, Assyria, and Israel standing together as a threefold blessing: “Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.”

How do we go from terror and fear to blessing and unity? What transformation occurs between these verses that makes such a dramatic reversal possible?

### Egypt — My People: Covenant Language Applied to the Nations

The three terms—“my people,” “work of my hands,” and “my inheritance”—are covenant language reserved exclusively for Israel throughout the Old Testament. Yet here, Isaiah prophesies that Egypt and Assyria will share in these titles alongside Israel.

#### “My People” — Israel’s Covenant Identity

The phrase “my people” appears throughout Scripture as Yahweh’s distinctive designation for Israel:

**Exodus 3:7** — “Then the LORD said, ‘I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings.’”

**Exodus 6:7** — “I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”

Most ironically, this language appears in the confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh:

**Exodus 5:1** — “Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, “Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.”’”

The demand "Let my people go" echoes throughout the Exodus narrative (Exodus 7:16, 8:1, 8:20, 9:1, 9:13, 10:3). Israel is "my people" and Egypt is the oppressor holding them captive. Now, in Isaiah 19:25, Egypt itself becomes "my people."

### **"Work of My Hands" — The Object of Divine Creation**

The phrase "work of my hands" emphasizes God's creative and formative work:

**Isaiah 60:21** — "Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified."

**Isaiah 64:8** — "But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand."

This language depicts Israel as Yahweh's special creation, formed by his hands. Yet in 19:25, Assyria—Israel's great enemy and instrument of judgment—receives this title.

### **"My Inheritance" — The Treasured Possession**

The term "inheritance" (Hebrew: *nachalah*) designates Israel as Yahweh's treasured possession:

**Deuteronomy 4:20** — "But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day."

**Deuteronomy 9:26, 29** — "And I prayed to the LORD, 'O Lord GOD, do not destroy your people and your heritage, whom you have redeemed through your greatness, whom you have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand... Yet they are your people and your heritage, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.'"

### **Theological Significance**

What makes Isaiah 19:25 revolutionary is that Egypt and Assyria receive *Israel's covenant titles*—the very language of covenant relationship that defined Israel's unique status. This is the ultimate reversal: from "Let my people go" (Exodus 5:1) to "Egypt my people" (Isaiah 19:25).

### **Like the Exodus — Parallels Between Isaiah 19 and the Exodus Narrative**

Isaiah 19's prophecy against Egypt is saturated with echoes of the Exodus story. The pattern of judgment, the specific motifs, and even the vocabulary deliberately recall Israel's foundational narrative of deliverance from Egypt.

<b>The Exodus</b>	<b>Isaiah 19</b>
<b>Gods/Idols Subject to Yahweh</b> Exodus 12:12 — "...on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD."	<b>Idols Tremble Before Yahweh</b> Isaiah 19:1 — "...the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them."
<b>Confounding the Wise Men</b> Exodus 7:11-12 — "...the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts... But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs." Exodus 8:18-19 — "The magicians tried... but they could not... 'This is the finger of God.'"	<b>Wisdom Becomes Foolishness</b> Isaiah 19:11-14 — "The princes of Zoan are utterly foolish... The LORD has mingled within her a spirit of confusion..."
<b>Israel Under a Hard Master</b> Exodus 1:13-14 — "...they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves..." Exodus 3:7 — "...I have surely seen the affliction of my people... and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters.'"	<b>Egypt Given to a Hard Master</b> Isaiah 19:4 — "And I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master, and a fierce king will rule over them..."
<b>Power Over the Nile/Waters</b> Exodus 7:17-21 — "...By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold... I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood. The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink..."	<b>Drying Up the Nile</b> Isaiah 19:5-8 — "And the waters of the sea will be dried up, and the river will be dry and parched... The fishermen will mourn and lament..."
<b>The LORD Striking/Plaguing Egypt</b> Exodus 12:23, 27 — "For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians... when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses."	<b>The LORD Striking and Healing</b> Isaiah 19:22 — "And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing..."
<b>Egypt as Oppressor, Israel as "My People"</b> Exodus 5:1 — "...Let my people go..." Exodus 6:7 — "I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God."	<b>Egypt Becomes "My People"</b> Isaiah 19:25 — "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance."

### **The Ultimate Reversal**

The nation that once enslaved God's people will itself be redeemed. The land where the plagues fell will become a place where an altar to the LORD stands (19:19). The Pharaoh who asked "Who is the LORD?" (Exodus 5:2) will be replaced by Egyptians who know the LORD and worship him (19:21).

Egypt's story becomes our story: From judgment to redemption.