

Isaiah 19:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

Analysis

'And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.' The altar and pillar serve as 'sign and witness'—testimony to God's presence and character. Future oppressed Egyptians will cry to Yahweh, and He will send 'a saviour'—deliverer and defender. This parallels Israel's Egyptian experience—they cried out in slavery, God sent Moses as deliverer (Exodus 3:7-10). Now Egyptians will experience similar salvation. The 'great one' (rav) likely refers to a significant leader God raises to deliver Egypt. Reformed theology sees this as typologically fulfilled in Christ, the ultimate Savior who delivers all who call upon Him (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13), including Egyptians. The prophecy demonstrates God's consistent character—He hears cries and sends deliverance to all who turn to Him.

Historical Context

Historically, this pattern occurred multiple times: oppressed Egyptian Jews cried to God and found deliverance, Egyptian Christians under persecution experienced divine sustaining, Coptic Church survived various oppressions through centuries. No single historical 'great savior' clearly fulfills this, suggesting either cumulative fulfillment through multiple deliverers or awaiting eschatological fulfillment.

Theologically, Christ is the ultimate Savior for all nations including Egypt—His death and resurrection provide deliverance not from political oppression primarily but from sin, death, and God's wrath. All who cry to Him, including Egyptians, receive salvation (Romans 10:12-13). This transforms the prophecy from political deliverance to spiritual salvation—the greater reality.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does God hearing Egyptian cries and sending a savior teach about His universal compassion?
2. How does this parallel Israel's exodus experience, now extended to Egypt?
3. In what ways is Christ the ultimate fulfillment as Savior of all who call upon Him?

Interlinear Text

וְיַהְיֵה	לֹא	וְתִלְעַד	יְהֹוָה	אֶבְרָא	וְתִהְבְּשֶׂת
H1961	And it shall be for a sign	and for a witness	unto the LORD	of hosts	
	H226		H5707		H6635
מִבְּנֵי	מִצְרַיִם	אֶל	יְהֹוָה	מִפְּנֵי	מִצְרַיִם
in the land	of Egypt	for they shall cry	unto the LORD	because	
H776	H4714	H6817	H413	H3068	H6440
לְחִצְצָם	לְיִשְׁלַׁחַ	לְהִמְשַׁעַם	מֹשֶׁעַ	בְּ	אֶל
of the oppressors	and he shall send	H0	them a saviour	and a great one	
H3905	H7971	H3467	H7227		
וְהַצְילֵם:					
and he shall deliver					
H5337					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 50:15 (Parallel theme): And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Titus 2:13 (Salvation): Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Luke 2:11 (Salvation): For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

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