

Isaiah 20:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

Analysis

'And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.' The alliance-seekers will experience fear and shame when their hoped-for help fails. 'Ethiopia their expectation' (mibtagam—what they looked to hopefully) and 'Egypt their glory' (tiphariam—what they boasted in) both proved empty. This demonstrates that misplaced trust inevitably disappoints. Those who looked to human alliances rather than divine protection will experience both fear (when threats materialize) and shame (when help fails). This pattern repeats throughout Scripture—those trusting idols or human power rather than God eventually face disappointment and disgrace. Conversely, those trusting God are never ultimately shamed (Romans 10:11; Psalm 25:3). The prophecy warns against putting confidence in anything besides God.

Historical Context

This was precisely fulfilled: Judean politicians advocating Egyptian alliance were shamed when Egypt failed to effectively support them against Assyria. The 701 BCE crisis saw Egyptian forces defeated at Eltekeh, unable to prevent Assyrian conquest of Judah's fortified cities. Only Jerusalem survived—through divine intervention, not Egyptian help. Those who advocated trusting Egypt rather than Isaiah's counsel to trust God experienced shame when proven wrong. Conversely, Hezekiah and those who trusted God's promise of deliverance experienced vindication. Church history repeatedly shows this pattern: those building on human wisdom, political power, or military might eventually face shame, while

those trusting God's Word are vindicated despite initial mockery. The lesson remains: trust God alone.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does misplaced trust inevitably disappointing teach about where security truly lies?
2. How was this prophecy fulfilled when Egyptian help failed during 701 BCE crisis?
3. What modern examples show people experiencing shame when human securities fail?

Interlinear Text

וְיִחַתּוּ	וְיִבֹּשׁוּ	מִכּוֹשׁ	מִבְּטָחָם	וּמִן
And they shall be afraid	and ashamed	of Ethiopia	their expectation	
H2865	H954	H3568	H4007	H4480
וּמִן	תְּפִאֲרָתָם	מִצֵּרְיִם		
and of Egypt	their glory			
H4714	H8597			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 30:3 (References Egypt): Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

Isaiah 30:5 (Parallel theme): They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

Jeremiah 17:5 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

1 Corinthians 3:21 (Glory): Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's;

2 Kings 18:21 (References Egypt): Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

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