

ISAIAH: GOD'S DIRECTIVES TO THOSE TROUBLED AT GOVERNMENTAL APOSTASY
Part XIX: God's Salvation From Alleged "Ineffective" Ministries Of His Word
(Isaiah 28:1-29)

I. Introduction

- A. In a given presentation of the Word, a hearer may think the message is too ineffective to "feed" himself!
- B. However, such a response is errant, for **all** ministrations of God's Word are relevant as follows:

II. God's Salvation From Alleged "Ineffective" Ministries Of His Word, Isaiah 28:1-29.

- A. God's prophet, Isaiah proclaimed God's message about Samaria's (Northern Kingdom) judgment, 28:1-8:
 - 1. God told Isaiah to predict the destruction of Samaria's beautiful valley, Isaiah 28:1-2.
 - 2. He told Isaiah to preach about the demise of Samaria's many alcoholic leaders, Isaiah 28:3-4.
 - 3. In this judgment, Isaiah was to announce God's cause would be vindicated, Isaiah 28:5-8.
- B. However, when Isaiah proclaimed God's message, Samaria's leaders **criticized** his words, saying they were *simple, childish* and thus *ineffective* for ministering unto them, Isaiah 28:9-10.
- C. In reply to these leaders, God had Isaiah reveal Isaiah's **simple**, seemingly ineffective words had been **DESIGNED** by **GOD** to draw out their rebellion so God could **punish** them, Isaiah 28:11-13:
 - 1. Since these leaders mocked Isaiah's simple words, God claimed through Isaiah He would judge the leaders of Samaria by having them listen to their Assyrian captors speak in their foreign tongue, 28:11. (Note: this prediction matches the Deut. 28:49 prediction of judgment under the Mosaic Covenant.)
 - 2. This prediction is a tragedy, for God had offered these men rest and repose by trusting in Him, a message of peace they had refused to accept, Isaiah 28:12.
 - 3. Hence, the **simple**, seemingly *ineffective* message God had given Isaiah to proclaim was **intentionally designed** by **God** to **draw out** these rebellious hearers so they could be *judged* by God, Isaiah 28:13!
- D. God had Isaiah then turn his attention to minister to the **equally rebellious** leaders of Jerusalem in the Southern Kingdom (as follows), Isaiah 28:14-22:
 - 1. Isaiah addressed the leaders of the Southern Kingdom who also likewise mocked the preaching of his prophet, Isaiah 28:14, cf. Edward J. Young, *Isaiah*, vol. II, p. 281.
 - 2. He critiqued their brazen contract with the false gods of the underworld [covenant with death in pagan Semitic mythology] to escape the Assyrians, Isa. 28:15, cf. *Bible Know. Com., O.T.*, p. 1078.
 - 3. However, only in God was their security from the Assyrians, for only He sets the "stone" and "foundation" so that all who believe in the Lord will not "make haste" (KJV), the **opposite** of *rest*, 16.
 - 4. Accordingly, in judgment on these unbelieving scoffers, God would provide them cause for terror and tragic destruction opposite the security they had sought in false idols, Isaiah 28:17-21.
 - 5. Hence, Isaiah's **scoffing listeners** in Judah were to **avoid scoffing** at Isaiah's prophetic ministry, for to retain that scoffing response to him could only bring stiffer divine judgment, Isaiah 28:22!
- E. In summary, God through Isaiah revealed by way of an illustration from farming how important it was for those who hear His prophetic messengers humbly to heed them, Isaiah 28:23-29:
 - 1. Isaiah as God's prophet called on his listeners in Samaria and Jerusalem to **listen** to him, Isaiah 28:23!
 - 2. By way of an illustration from farming, Isaiah shared how the farmer learns from God how to handle each different kind of grain he harvests so as not to crush it, but to winnow it from the straw, 28:24-28.
 - 3. The implication is this: just like God gives such insight to the farmer so he knows how to harvest his different grains with different threshing methods, God knows how to give the right words to his prophets and elicit the right amount of judgment to achieve what he wants from the hearers, Isa. 28:29!

Lesson: We who HEAR God's messengers must NOT take their WORDS too LIGHTLY for ANY reason, for GOD is at WORK through them to elicit a RESPONSE so as either to bless us with rest or punish us with corresponding discipline for refusing the TRUTH they teach us!

Application: (1) If the message of God's messenger seems ineffective to us, test it against Scripture: (a) if it is unscriptural, the problem is in the messenger, so we can overlook it; (b) yet, if it is Scriptural, the problem is in US and we must LISTEN and CORRECT our ways to avoid discipline and have God's rest. (2) If WE are called of God to minister His Word, we must never feel badly over our DELIVERY, for GOD is in the DELIVERY to accomplish His WILL in our HEARERS -- just GIVE God's WORD!