

**ISAIAH: GOD'S DIRECTIVES TO THOSE TROUBLED AT GOVERNMENTAL APOSTASY**  
**Part XX: God's Salvation By Trials From Legalistic Insensitivity To His Truth**  
**(Isaiah 29:1-24)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. At times, even well-intentioned believers can lose the proper **heart** for God's ways, a problem that, if unchecked, leads to **legalism, hypocrisy** and **insubordination** to God's Word and to His messengers.
- B. God has a way of overcoming this problem -- the path of fiery trials that salvage those affected from such an errant state of mind, and Isaiah 29:1-24 shows us how this ministry works (as follows):

**II. God's Salvation By Trials From Legalistic Insensitivity To His Truth, Isaiah 29:1-24.**

- A. God gave Isaiah the following cryptic prophetic message to deliver to the people of Jerusalem (29:1-8):
  - 1. God predicted through Isaiah He would send armies against Jerusalem (fig. named "Ariel," cf. Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, fn. To Isa. 29:1) to lay siege to it as though **He Himself** were the Attacker, Isa. 29:1-4.
  - 2. Then, after Jerusalem's people had thus been humbled and made contrite in heart before God out of the stress of this siege, God would overcome the opposing power suddenly and completely, Isaiah 29:5.
  - 3. Such a siege would picture distantly future Great Tribulation sieges that would be used by God to refine His people, 29:6-8; Bib. Know. Com., O.T., p. 1079. [This prophecy was fulfilled in Isaiah 37. When the Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem, Hezekiah knelt before God for help, and God struck the Assyrians with death. Sennacherib returned home to die suddenly. This event is confirmed by secular records, Merril F. Unger, Archaeology and the O. T., p. 268f: (1) the Taylor Prism records Sennacherib not claiming he defeated Jerusalem, but writing: "I shut up Jerusalem like a bird in a cage." (2) Greek historian, Herodotus claimed mice raised havoc in the Assyrian camp so the Assyrians had to withdraw (mice symbolized disease with the Greeks). (3) Two inscriptions from Assyria, one by Esarhaddon and one by Ashurbanipal, son of Esarhaddon, both of whom succeeded Sennacherib, claims his sons killed Sennacherib while he worshiped in his pagan temple in accord with Isaiah 37:38; *Ibid.*, p. 270.]
- B. However, this cryptic prophecy was not understood by the people in Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:9) for **GOD had intentionally made Isaiah's message SO CRYPTIC they COULD NOT understand it**, Isa. 29:10-12!
- C. God explained **why** He gave Isaiah such a cryptic message as follows: He claimed He **intended** it to be so cryptic to prepare Jerusalem for **discipline due to** its self-inflicted **blindness** of **LEGALISM**, 29:13-16:
  - 1. Isaiah shared God was opposed to the **false LEGALISM** of Jerusalem's inhabitants, Isaiah 29:13:
    - a. The people of Jerusalem **practiced** their worship of God with an **artificial respect** for Him, 29:13a.
    - b. Their **false respect** for God led them to **REPLACE God's SCRIPTURAL laws** with **HUMAN rules**, or what we call **LEGALISM**, 29:13b. [See Christ's comments on this sin in Matt. 15:1-9.]
  - 2. God was angered at the **hypocrisy** that was associated with such legalism, Isaiah 29:14-15.
  - 3. He was also upset at the **insubordination** to Him that came along with such legalism, Isaiah 29:16.
- D. Even so, God predicted through Isaiah the people of Jerusalem would one day be righteous, 29:17-24:
  - 1. Due to God's discipline of His people, nature would blossom under God's blessing, Isaiah 29:17.
  - 2. When this happened, there would be a spiritual renewal in the people of Jerusalem, Isaiah 29:18-24:
    - a. The deaf and blind would hear and understand God's teachings (29:18), the humble and needy would rejoice (v. 19) where the ruthless, mocking, unjust leaders would be removed, 29:20-21.
    - b. The family as an institution would be established and blessed by God, Isaiah 29:22-23a.
    - c. There would be true heart worship (in true respect for God in the temple at Jerusalem, Isa. 29:23b.
    - d. In place of being sinful complainers, Jerusalem would thrive on God's teachings, Isaiah 29:24.

***Lesson:*** (1) *The people of God worshipped Him without truly respecting Him, (2) so they (a) traded His Scriptural laws for their own rules, and became (b) hypocrites, (c) insubordinate, (d) mockers, (e) ruthless toward the weak and (f) spiritually blind. (2) God planned to overcome this sin through allowing Jerusalem to face fiery trials that would drive her to SEEK God's help in HUMILITY!*

***Application:*** (1) *May we rely on the Holy Spirit to RESPECT God that we not blindly fall into legalism with its associated vices of hypocrisy, insubordination, mockery, the ruthless oppression of the weak and spiritual blindness. (2) If we face severe TRIALS, we must humbly seek God's help for blessing!*