

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part XXIV. Trusting In God Versus Yielding To The Temptation To Politic For Our Welfare (Isaiah 14:28-32)

I. Introduction

- A. Every generation of believers has its own battles of faith to fight, battles where God calls them simply to trust and obey Him versus trying to manipulate circumstances or relationships in their own efforts for their benefit.
- B. Politicking versus trusting in the Lord is always a sin, a lesson we see in Isaiah 14:28-32 (as follows):

II. Trusting In God Versus Yielding To The Temptation To Politic For Our Welfare, Isaiah 14:28-32.

- A. Isaiah's prophecy at Isaiah 14:28-32 presents a new set of circumstances that has an old temptation of unbelief:
 - 1. Judah's king Ahaz had refused to trust the Lord concerning the threat of the Syria-Israel alliance, but he instead had called on Assyria to defeat that alliance, Isaiah 7:1-2 with 2 Kings 16:5-7.
 - 2. Circumstances had since then changed for Judah, but there still existed the temptation for unbelief in God:
 - a. Judah's king Ahaz had just died (Isaiah 14:28) and Assyria was facing hardship, waning in might (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Isaiah 14:28-32), so the Philistines had sent messengers to Judah proposing that King Hezekiah, Ahaz's son, join them to revolt against Assyrian dominance, Isaiah 14:32; Ibid.
 - b. Thus, there existed the lure to adjust to the new order by way of politicking instead of trusting the Lord.
 - c. However, the Law forbade God's people from making national treaties with pagan nations (Deut. 7:1-2), so this lure for Judah to enter into political union with Philistia to enhance her national security was a new temptation to an old sin of relying on human manipulation in violation of the Law and in unbelief in God!
- B. Accordingly, the Lord directed Isaiah to prophesy against Philistia for Judah's benefit that Judah not fall for this lure from Philistia, but instead choose to trust the Lord for her national security, Isaiah 14:29-32:
 - 1. God called the Philistines not to rejoice because the rod of him that had struck her was broken, a reference to the difficulties Assyria was facing after it had leveled some affliction upon Philistia, Isaiah 14:29a.
 - 2. From the (figurative) root of the serpent of Assyria would still come an adder, and its offspring would be a worse threat, a flying fiery serpent, Isaiah 14:29b ESV. Assyria's setback was thus a temporary one, so for Judah to rebel against Assyria in an alliance with Philistia was sure to be severely countered by Assyria.
 - 3. Nevertheless, the people of Philistia had felt secure, likened to the firstborn of the poor that grazed peacefully and the needy lying down in safety, but God would still use the Assyrians to invade the land and destroy, leading to Philistia's suffering famine and the destruction of even their remnant, Isaiah 14:30.
 - 4. For this reason, God called all of Philistia to wail, to cry out and to melt with fear, for Assyria was coming like a cloud of smoke, and there was no straggler in his ranks, meaning the Assyrian army would inflict significant harm, destroying many Philistines, Isaiah 14:31.
 - 5. God thus had an answer for king Hezekiah to give to the Philistine messengers who were calling him to join them in rebelling against Assyria: he was to say: "The Lord has founded Zion, and in her the afflicted of his people find refuge" as they trust in the Lord, not alliances with foreign nations, Isaiah 14:32 ESV.
- C. For the record, this prophecy proved to be very timely as it was fulfilled within four years of its delivery:
 - 1. King Ahaz of Judah died in 715 B. C., but "in 711 B. C., only four years after this oracle, Assyria defeated Ashdod and made Philistia an Assyrian province," Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1062.
 - 2. Conversely, "Zion," a reference to Jerusalem, did not fall until 586 B. C. to Babylon, Ibid.
- D. However, king Hezekiah did not heed this prophecy, and he joined the city of Ashdod in Philistia to rebel against submission to Assyria (Ibid.), so the Assyrians invaded the land to defeat Philistia and threaten Judah before God supernaturally delivered Judah and Jerusalem! The Lord did rescue Hezekiah, but he would have enjoyed far more peace and security had he initially trusted in the Lord versus getting into union with Ashdod!

Lesson: (1) *Though a new era arose under Judah's king Hezekiah, with a temporarily waning threat of Assyria and the lure of the Philistines to join in rebelling against Assyria, God still called Judah to trust Him and not join the Philistines in politicking as had Ahaz, for the Philistines were going to be overcome by the Assyrians anyway.* (2) *Sadly, king Hezekiah failed to trust the Lord the first time around, so he had to learn the hard way to do so!*

Application: (1) *May we immediately trust God versus politicking for our welfare, for trusting Him is always the basis for spiritual victory and self-help manipulation always a recipe for disaster and discipline!* (2) *May we trust the Lord in the FIRST round of a trial versus turning to manipulation lest we have to learn to do so the hard way!*