

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part XLIII: God's Judgment On Judah's Leaders For Rejecting The Message Of God's Prophet (Isaiah 28:14-29)

I. Introduction

A. Not only were Israel's leaders guilty of sin for rejecting the message of God's prophet, but Judah's leaders were guilty the same sin, and God would judge them as well.

B. Isaiah 28:14-29 presents God's message of judgment on these rulers in Judah, and we view it for our insight:

II. God's Judgment On Judah's Leaders For Rejecting The Message Of God's Prophet, Isaiah 28:14-29.

A. After his Isaiah 28:1-13 message of judgment on the rulers in the Northern Kingdom who mocked God's prophet, Isaiah addressed the rulers of Judah who scoffed God's messenger, Isaiah 28:14.

B. Instead of trusting in Israel's God as Isaiah had taught, these rulers claimed to have made a covenant with death and Sheol, the place of the departed dead, Isaiah 28:15a. To explain, Isaiah was using "imagery rich in the symbolism of Semitic mythology . . . In the Ugaritic pantheon, death was personified as the god of the underworld," Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1078. In other words, Judah's leaders boasted that instead of trusting in Israel's God as Isaiah directed them to do, they were trusting in pagan gods for safety, *Ibid.*

C. Thus, when the overflowing scourge of the Assyrian invasion would pass through the land, these leaders believed it would not touch them, Isaiah 28:15b. The men of Judah were also trusting in their use of deceptive, devious forms of politics with Egypt coupled with their pagan idolatry, what Isaiah openly called actual lies and falsehoods, Isaiah 28:15c; Edward J. Young, The Book Of Isaiah, 1974, vo. II, p. 284.

D. In sharp contrast to this false set of securities, Isaiah presented the Messiah in Isaiah 28:16, describing Him as a vast Security to those who would trust in Him opposite the false gods and false works of Judah's leaders:

1. In place of the dreadful insecurity of false gods and deceptive politics, God announced that He was laying a stone in Zion as opposed to Egypt where the men of Judah were making political overtures to protect themselves from Assyrian advance, Isaiah 28:16a.

2. God was laying a stone of testing, a stone approved for its reliability versus the futile efforts of Judah's leaders to gain a secure safety from the invading Assyrians, Isaiah 28:16b; *Ibid.*, Young, p. 287.

3. It was a "precious cornerstone" (ESV), a large one that supports the entire building structure, so God's Stone would be the All-Sufficient Security for His people, Isaiah 28:16c; *Ibid.*

4. It was a stone of a fixed foundation (*Ibid.*), an immovable one opposite the shifting lies of devious politics that were being practiced by Judah's leaders, Isaiah 28:16d; *Ibid.*

5. Consequently, he who believed in God in reference to this Stone, the Messiah, would "not be in haste," that is, he would not end up lacking "repose and rest" typical of Judah's rulers whose way "involved . . . an agitated, excited, wearisome way" when the Assyrian invasion actually occurred, Isa. 28:16e; *Ibid.*, p. 288.

E. Isaiah then relayed how God would deal with each specific false effort by Judah's rulers, Isaiah 28:17-22:

1. God would administer judgment, and like a hailstorm, sweep away the refuge of political lies, their covenant with death would be annulled, their agreement with Sheol would not stand and the overwhelming scourge of Assyria would pass through, beating them down to their sheer terror, Isaiah 28:17-19.

2. Thus, seeking refuge by false gods would be as inadequate as lying in a bed that is too short or trying to cover oneself with a blanket that is too short, Isaiah 28:20.

3. God's judgment would sweep down into Judah (Isaiah 28:21), so Judah's leaders were to stop mocking God's message through His messenger, Isaiah, Isaiah 28:22.

F. In Isaiah 28:23-29, God offered a word of comfort amid all the woe of judgment: His discipline would last for a limited time, and just as a farmer uses different methods of crushing in harvesting to obtain the desired seeds from different kinds of plants, so God will judge, but not forever, and He will use just the right amount of punishment pressure to accomplish His desired production in His people.

Lesson: *Judah's leaders who relied on false gods and lying methods to acquire protection from invading Assyria would badly fail under God's terrifying, purging judgment, but those who relied on Him would find an All-Sufficient, Secure Rock. Graciously, however, even in severe judgment, God would be exacting and productive.*

Application: *May we not mock God's message in His messengers, but turn to Him versus our false efforts that we might know stable security in the time of divine discipline opposite the sheer terror of those facing judgment.*