

A Trek Through Isaiah 25 - 29:1-24

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Isaiah said Yahweh is Lord of history; true security is found in Him.
Is this true? Six woes introduce the greatest of Isaiah's interim fulfillments.
Today woes 2 & 3 give principles.

<u>The Lord of History (28:1 - 37:38)</u>					
1st Woe: The word of God and the purpose of God 28:1-29	2nd Woe: Is anything too hard for the LORD? 29:1-14	3rd Woe: Spiritual transformation 29:15-24	4th Woe: Faithlessness and faithfulness 30:1-33	5th Woe: All things new 31:1 - 32:20	6th Woe: Home at last 33:1 - 35:10
Historical Epilogue 36:1 - 37:38					

The second woe: Is anything too hard for Yahweh? 29:1-14

Jerusalem is Yahweh's ariel (altar-hearth), place of divine fire, where there is both holy wrath and deliverance. The people are blind because they choose not to see. But Yahweh will do wonderful things with them. Nothing is too hard for Yahweh, either physically or spiritually.

Structure: Two messages of hope

- V1-8 Eleventh-hour deliverance
- V9-14 Coming spiritual transformation

Eleventh-hour deliverance 29:1-8

Jerusalem humbled 29:1-4

Isaiah 29:1-4 (LSB)

1Woe, O Ariel, Ariel the city where David once camped! Add year to year, observe your feasts on schedule.

2I will bring distress to Ariel, And she will be a city of mourning and moaning; And she will be like an Ariel to me.

3And I will camp against you encircling you, And I will fortify siegeworks against you, And I will raise up fortifications against you.

4Then you will be brought low; From the earth you will speak, And from the dust where you are prostrate Your words will come. Your voice will also be like that of a spirit from the ground, And your speech will whisper from the dust.

- V1 The city of David
 - Ariel
 - Meaning is uncertain
 - In Ezekiel 43:15 (describing the temple) it is the altar-hearth.
 - The place of the ever-burning fire where the holy God dwells.
 - The place of holy wrath and divine preservation.
 - the city where David once camped!
 - The strange work of 28:21: Sin has brought them to the point where Yahweh is going to destroy David's city.
 - Add year to year, observe your feasts on schedule.
 - Sarcastic: Continue your rituals
 - They will not prevent the coming judgment.
- V2-3 Coming judgment
 - V2 distress
 - Coming destruction
 - V2 she shall be like an Ariel to me
 - Altar-hearth (place of divine fire)
 - Indicating the coming judgment. The divine fire will consume the nation itself. As Eze 43:8 And they have defiled My holy name by their abominations which they have done. So I have consumed them in My anger.
 - V3 I will camp against you...will fortify siege works...will raise up fortifications
 - Human actions but behind them a divine agency.
- V4 The city brought down
 - V4 brought low
 - Once proud now humbled in status
 - V4 from the earth...prostrate
 - Conquered and made a slave
 - V4 spirit from the ground
 - Dead

Jerusalem delivered 29:5-8

Isaiah 29:5–8 (LSB)

5But it will be that the multitude of your enemies will become like fine dust, And the multitude of the ruthless ones like the chaff which blows away; And it will happen instantly, suddenly.

6From Yahweh of hosts you will be punished with thunder and earthquake and loud noise, With whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire.

7And it will be that the multitude of all the nations who wage war against Ariel, Even all who wage war against her and her stronghold, and who distress her, Will be like a dream, a vision of the night.

8And it will be as when a hungry man dreams— And behold, he is eating; But he awakens, and his soul is empty, Or as when a thirsty man dreams— And behold, he is drinking, But he awakens, and behold, he is faint, And his soul is not quenched. Thus the multitude of all the nations will be Who wage war against Mount Zion.

- Looks forward to the deliverance from Assyria. Final fulfillment in the end times.
- V5 Enemies gone
 - multitude of your enemies
 - A large number of enemies
 - Fine dust, ... chaff which blows away.
 - Two pictures of insubstantial and passing away
 - 1) Very fine dust
 - 2) Chaff, of no value, easily blown away
 - instantly, suddenly
 - Sudden and unexpected
 - Here is the need for faith
- V6 Yahweh arises
 - Yahweh of hosts
 - Yahweh: The God of the exodus.
 - Sovereign over the nations
 - you will be punished. Better “will come punishment”
 - with thunder and earthquake and loud noise, With whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire.
 - Literally fulfilled in Rev 20:9 when Satan and his army are finally destroyed.
- V7-8 Like a dream
 - Ariel
 - The place of divine fire burning up the enemies.
 - Will be like a dream
 - Seemed real, now vanished
 - Two pictures (1) hungry, dreaming of eating (2) thirsty, dreaming of drinking.
 - Apparently partaking, suddenly unsatisfied.
 - The nations’ expected victory vanished like a dream.

Coming spiritual transformation 29:9-14

Present blindness 29:9-12

Isaiah 29:9–12 (LSB)

9Astonish yourselves and be astonished, Blind yourselves and be blind; They become drunk, but not with wine; They stagger, but not with strong drink.

10For Yahweh has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep; He has shut your eyes, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, the seers.

11The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, "Please read this," he will say, "I cannot, for it is sealed."

12Then the book will be given to the one who does not know how to read a book, saying, "Please read this." And he will say, "I do not know how to read a book."

- V9 Blindness and bondage self-inflicted
 - Parallel to 28:7-8: The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink...
 - Astonish. Amazed, frozen in fear
 - Blind. Unable to see
 - Drunk. Loss of self-control.
 - Stagger. Unable to walk straight
 - from (1) willful blindness (2) God's judgment.
- V10 Blindness and sleep from Yahweh
 - A spirit of deep sleep
 - Prophets...seers. Those who could have spoken the truth. Now cut off from God's word.
- V11-12 Two pictures of blindness
 - Picture of a scribe who the illiterate depended upon to carry out business. He was not allowed to open a sealed book.
 - Illiterate people could not read even if the book was opened.
 - Includes all parts of the nation.

V13-14 Coming wonder

Isaiah 29:13–14 (LSB)

13Then the Lord said, “Because this people draw near with their mouth And honor Me with their lips,
But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their fear of Me is in the command of men learned by rote,

14Therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; And the wisdom of their wise men will perish, And the discernment of their discerning men will be hidden.”

- V13 Yahweh’s diagnosis
 - draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, But they remove their hearts far from Me
 - External religion with no internal reality
 - Re Hezekiah cleansing the land in 2 Ch 31:1 Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the Asherim and broke down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all.
 - Physical idols destroyed but idols remained in the hearts of the people.
 - His son Manassah reverted to paganism
 - their fear of Me is in the command of men learned by rote
 - Not scripture-based preaching and teaching
 - Worship by conformity to the rules of men

- V14 Yahweh's response
 - Behold.
 - Calling attention
 - deal marvelously.
 - Acts that only God can do
 - Not described
 - And the wisdom of their wise men will perish, And the discernment of their discerning men will be hidden.
 - Refers to human wisdom and discernment. As Ahaz had believed that wisdom was dependence on Assyria; now wisdom was thought to be in alliance with Egypt.
 - But Yahweh will negate all such human wisdom and replace it with the gospel.
 - As 1 Cor 1:22-24 For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
 - We preach Christ crucified: the gospel
 - The power of God and the wisdom of God

Principles

- Yahweh's people dwell in the place of divine fire. Because they have turned away from Him, that fire will consume them.
- Yahweh will bring a nation against them to carry out His judgment. But at the last minute, they will be saved.
- They are depending on human wisdom. Yahweh will bring that wisdom to naught.

The third woe: Spiritual transformation 29:15-24

Judah's leaders with their politics and self-reliance are hiding from God and denying His presence. But one day the land and its people will be transformed.

Structure

- Present situation 29:15-16
- Transformation 29:17-21
- Application to Israel 29:22-24

Present situation 29:15-16

Isaiah 29:15–16 (LSB)

15Woe to those who deeply hide their counsel from Yahweh, And whose deeds are done in a dark place, And they say, "Who sees us?" or "Who knows us?"

16You turn things around! Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, That what is made would say to its maker, "He did not make me" Or what is formed say to him who formed it, "He has no understanding"?

- Context is the Egyptian alliance.
- V15. Behavior of the leaders
 - who deeply hide their counsel from Yahweh
 - Plans hidden from Yahweh
 - whose deeds are done in a dark place
 - Actions hidden from Yahweh
 - And they say, "Who sees us?" or "Who knows us?"
 - Denying His presence.
- V16 Heart attitude
 - You turn things upside down!
 - An exclamation.
 - Reversing the proper order.
 - Shall the potter be regarded as equal with the clay,
 - Thinking that God is just like them
 - That what is made would say to its maker
 - Being as God
 - He did not make me
 - Denying God as Creator
 - He has no understanding
 - Denying God as omniscient.

Transformation 29:17-21

Isaiah 29:17–21 (LSB)

17Is it not yet just a little while Before Lebanon will be turned into a fruitful orchard, And the fruitful orchard will be counted as a forest?

18On that day the deaf will hear words of a book, And out of darkness and thick darkness the eyes of the blind will see.

19The afflicted also will increase their gladness in Yahweh, And the needy of mankind will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

20For the ruthless will come to an end and the scoffer will be finished, Indeed all who are watching out to do evil will be cut off;

21Who cause a person to sin by a word, And ensnare him who reproves at the gate, And defraud the one in the right with meaningless arguments.

- V17 Transformed land
 - Is it not yet just a little while
 - In Yahweh's time
 - Creation turned upside-down
 - Lebanon will be turned into a fruitful orchard. Wild areas become like gardens.
 - And the fruitful orchard will be counted as a forest. Cultivated areas become wilderness.
- V18-19 Transformed people
 - V18 deaf will hear... eyes will see
 - Renewed spiritual perception.
 - Contrast 29:11: For Yahweh has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep...
 - V18 words of a book
 - Scriptures open.
 - V19 afflicted...needy.
 - Believing remnant
 - V19 will increase their gladness in Yahweh...will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.
 - True worship
- V20-21 The end of the wicked
 - V20 Their end
 - ruthless. Violence.
 - Scoffer. Contempt of the truth.
 - All who are watching out to do evil. Deceitful scheming.
 - Come to an end...be finished...be cut off. Their end
 - V21 What they do
 - Who cause a person to sin by a word. To sin: be declared a sinner. Condemn with legalism
 - And ensnare him who reproves at the gate. Trap justice-seekers
 - And defraud the one in the right with meaningless arguments. Steal what belongs to another by confusing the issues.

Application to Israel 29:22-24

Isaiah 29:22–24 (LSB)

22Therefore thus says Yahweh, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: “Jacob shall not now be ashamed, and now his face shall not turn pale;

23But when he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst, They will sanctify My name; Indeed, they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob And will stand trembling before the God of Israel.

24“Those who err in spirit will know discernment, And those who criticize will gain learning.

- V22 God’s people redeemed
 - Therefore thus says Yahweh,
 - The Sovereign speaks
 - Saying to the scoffers that they will not prevail
 - Saying to the remnant that they will prevail
 - who redeemed Abraham
 - As Yahweh chose Abraham, brought him to trust in Him, brought him out of the land of Ur to the land He was giving to him..
 - concerning the house of Jacob
 - All descendents.
 - Jacob shall not now be ashamed
 - He will finally put his trust in Yahweh and not be ashamed or fearful as before.
- V23 True worship
 - his children, the work of My hands
 - Jacob fruitful
 - Foreknown, predestined, called, justified, glorified by Yahweh. (Ro 8:29-30)
 - They will sanctify My name
 - Acknowledge Yahweh as God.
 - Acknowledge Yahweh as holy.
 - And will stand trembling before the God of Israel.
 - True fear of the Lord
- V24 Transformed people
 - From err in spirit (go astray to lies)
 - To know discernment (follow the path of truth)
 - From criticize (refuse to accept truth)
 - To gain learning (take truth into their heart)

Principles

- Judah’s present leaders have denied Yahweh and are depending on human wisdom.
- Yahweh is going to transform the land and His people.
- Wicked men will come to an end.
- The true Israel will flourish. They will truly sanctify Yahweh and tremble before Him.

Application: Divine fire on our altar

Is 29:1-2 Woe, O Ariel, Ariel the city where David once camped! Add year to year, observe your feasts on schedule. I will bring distress to Ariel, And she will be a city of mourning and moaning; And she will be like an Ariel to me.

- Isaiah calls Jerusalem "Ariel", the altar hearth in Yahweh's temple; the holy place of the divine fire.
- Acceptable sacrifices on the altar hearth brought blessing.
 - Lev 16:24-25 (sin offering) <the priest> shall offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people.
- With their meaningless rituals, Yahweh's people had brought wickedness into the holy place. The result would be judgment (destruction of the city and exile to Babylon).
 - As Lev 10:1-3 Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire on the altar and were burned by the holy fire.
- Lev 10:3 says what God requires: By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be glorified."
 - By those who come near Him (His priests), Yahweh insists on
 - Being treated as holy by them
 - Being glorified by them before all the people.

In the OT

- The altar hearth was the place of divine fire where Yahweh's priests brought sacrifices.
- Acceptable sacrifices brought blessing. Unacceptable sacrifices brought judgment.
- Yahweh insisted on being treated as holy by His priests and being glorified by them before the people.

In the NT

1 Peter 2:5 (LSB)

you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- Yahweh's house is the church. All believers are His priests to offer sacrifices.
- We can offer up acceptable sacrifices or unacceptable sacrifices.

Hebrews 13:15–16 (LSB)

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

- Acceptable sacrifices: praise, confessing His name, doing good, sharing
- With such sacrifices God is pleased

1 Cor 3:16-17

Do you not know that you are a sanctuary of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the sanctuary of God, God will destroy him, for the sanctuary of God is holy, and that is what you are.

- Treating God's sanctuary as unholy brings destruction.
- One of the elect will not be totally destroyed, but their discipline may be severe.

Isaiah 6:6–7 (LSB)

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. And he touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is atoned for."

- By the burning coal from the altar, Isaiah's sin was taken away.
- Likewise, if we are offering acceptable sacrifices and have holy fire on our altar, we can bring the gospel effectively to others.

Acceptable sacrifices please God and enable the gospel. Strange fire brings destruction, both in this life and in the next. Every day we are offering sacrifices on God's altar. Let's make them good ones.

References

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