

Isaiah Lesson 28

Isaiah Chapter 28

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

E-mail: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Introduction: Last week we covered the last part of chapter 27 where Isaiah explained God's purpose in chastisement in the tribulation. Though the prophecy of Isaiah pertains primarily to Judah; in this chapter, Isaiah now warns the northern kingdom of the impending captivity by the Assyrians. The latter half of the chapter continues in warning Judah and Jerusalem.

I. Judgment on Ephraim and Jerusalem

Isa 28:1 Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

Isa 28:2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

The chapter commences with a sharp warning to the northern kingdom. Isaiah refers to the northern ten tribes as Ephraim. Historically, Ephraim was one of the sons of Joseph and one of the major tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel. The indictment against Ephraim was its pride and its drunkenness. Isaiah likens the glory of Ephraim as that of a faded flower. Implicit is that drunkenness had caused whatever glory they once possessed to have faded.

The head of the fat valleys of the northern kingdom (Ephraim) likely refers to Samaria the capital city. The indictment is how that the drunkenness of the leadership of Samaria caused them to be like faded flowers on a crown. It was a mockery of their former stature as a nation. Alcohol will destroy even those who are in places of high position. Further insight is provided into the sin of Israel. They had degenerated into the base sin of alcohol consumption.

After warning them, God gave them ample space to repent. They ignored the warning and continued in their way, so God began preparing for their just reward by way of judgment. God would use the Assyrians to humble and chastise the northern kingdom under the direction of Shalmaneser their king. He would cast the crown of pride of Israel to the ground with his hand. This took place in 722 B.C.

Isa 28:3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet:

Isa 28:4 And the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

Again the sin of Ephraim (i.e., the northern kingdom) was pride and drunkenness. When God chastised them by the Assyrians, they would be trodden under foot. Reiterating what was noted in verse 1, the beauty and bounty of Israel (i.e., the northern kingdom) would become as a faded flower. Their first fruits (i.e., “hasty fruit”) would be devoured by the Assyrians. God was about to judge the northern kingdom. They would be deported and never officially returned to their land.

Isa 28:5 In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

Isa 28:6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

When God took Israel out of their land, He would become a crown of glory and a beautiful diadem for what remained of His people. Those that remained undoubtedly refers to Judah under the leadership of Hezekiah. In chastening the northern kingdom, God would be exalted in Judah, the southern kingdom. For Judah, Jehovah would be “a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.”

Though chastening the northern kingdom, God would give wisdom (i.e., “a spirit of judgment”) to the king (i.e., Hezekiah). In short, God promised wisdom and strength to the remnant still in the land. That was Judah.

Isa 28:7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

Isa 28:8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

God's indictment of the northern kingdom continues. . The curse of alcohol is further addressed. See Leviticus 10:9-10; Habakkuk 2:5,9; Proverbs 20:1; and Proverbs 23:29.

Pro 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

In the northern kingdom, even the priests and prophets were drunks. Those claiming to be prophets in fact rather were false prophets. Accordingly, they erred in vision and stumbled in their judgment. The evidence of their abomination is noted, Even the tables of the priests on which were things considered holy were polluted with their own filth. The point is plain. The curse of drunkenness infested even the spiritual leaders of the north.

II. Knowledge Comes to Those In Meat of the Word

Isa 28:9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

Isa 28:10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

Isa 28:11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

The prophet asks rhetorically, Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? The question is piercing. To whom could God teach in the northern kingdom? Seemingly the only ones not corrupted by the wickedness of the land were those small infants still nursing their mother's breasts. The rest were consumed in their drunkenness and debauchery.

With resignation laced with irony, God through the prophet sighed, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little. " The idea is how that God could only deal with His backslidden people as small children who were taught rudiments of education by rote. As an elementary teacher goes over the basics of ABC's and 1,2,3's, so the northern kingdom was to God. They ignored everything He had to say even as a rebellious child resists his tutor.

The prophet utters an ominous warning of impending judgment. The day was not far off when Israel would hear the language of a foreign invader—the Assyrians. Looking further in time, there very well may be long-term prophetic hints fulfilled in I Corinthians 14:21-22.

1Co 14:21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and

other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

1Co 14:22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

Beginning in Deuteronomy 28:49, God had warned that impending judgment against His people would be preceded by warning in other languages. See also Isaiah 33:19. The culmination was in the phenomena of 'tongues' in the New Testament where everyone heard God in their own language.

Prior to the destruction of Israel and Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70, God warned the Jews by tongues in the early church. Here in Isaiah 28:11, the same principle is at hand. However, these tongues would reveal Gods warning as truth in the aftermath of the chastisement.

Isa 28:12 To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

Isa 28:13 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

God had graciously offered peace to His people, however, they ignored His graciousness. God's Word was tedious and boring to the inhabitants of northern kingdom. As a result, God was about to allow them to be broken, trapped, and captured by the Assyrians.

III. A Cornerstone in Zion

Isa 28:14 Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.

Isa 28:15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

The focus of the first portion of the chapter clearly had been the northern kingdom (Ephraim), it now turns to Judah and Jerusalem. Using the northern kingdom as an example, God through the prophet now warns Judah. They were

not far behind the sin of Ephraim to the north. The focal point is now the scornful rulers of Jerusalem. Sadly, many of the rulers of Judah were not much different than their brethren in the north. They scoffed and mocked at the word of God as Israel had in the preceding verse.

Specifically, God charged, "Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us." Though Hezekiah was king over Judah and recognized God's will for the nation, his lieutenants were wicked and exempted themselves from serving God.

They scoffed at death and hell (i.e., the grave), claiming to have even made a contract with them, exempting themselves from both. They arrogantly claimed that when judgment did come, even by way of the Assyrians, it would not bother them. They were making a mockery of God, almost daring Him to try and judge them.

Like Ephraim to the north, a crown of pride rested upon the head of many leaders in Judah. The leadership of Judah seemed aware of the impending Assyrian invasion. Yet, they took false assurance that it would pass over them because of the false hope they had in their covenant with death and hell. They thought such foolishness would protect them. Many in our day hold on to the same type of foolishness.

III. God Lays Tried Corner Stone in Zion

Isa 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Isa 28:17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

Isa 28:18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

A wonderful metaphor of masonry construction is begun. Though there was all manner of pride and arrogance in Judah, God foretold that the day was coming when He would lay a perfect cornerstone in Jerusalem (i.e., Zion). This cornerstone is without question refers to the Messiah. See Romans 9:33 and I Peter 2:6.

Rom 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

1Pe 2:6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Other Old Testament prophecies of Christ refer to Him as a Rock or Stone. See Genesis 49:24; Psalm 118:22; Daniel 2:45; and Zechariah 3:9. I Peter 2:6 specifically quotes this verse in direct application to Christ. Moreover, Peter clearly interprets the final phrase of the verse (“shall not be confounded”). The idea is that when men believe on Christ, they will not be confounded. The thought is that they will not make haste to be afraid, embarrassed, or let down. They will not be confounded.

What a wonderful promise. As we trust Him, we will not be confounded. The greater thought is though there was instability and sin in Judah, the day is coming when God’s Messiah would bring a solid foundation of stability and strength to God’s people. The metaphor of masonry construction continues in verse 17. Two lines are stretched when brick or stone walls are laid. One ensures that each course of blocks is level. Here it is called “the line.” A plummet or plumb line establishes the vertical plane.

The analogy is of a right angle or a wall which is completely plumb. Ninety degrees from level is plumb—not one degree more or less. In the day when Christ establishes His kingdom, judgment will be level (i.e., just) and righteousness will prevail. The greater thought is that when the Messiah sets up His kingdom, absolute righteousness and justice will prevail. Implied is that neither was the case of Judah of that day.

In addition, God through the prophet foretold, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. The thought likely is that Judah had hidden themselves in the deception in which they were trusting, as described in verse 15. They evidently thought their ‘covenant with death and hell’ would spare them.

God’s chastisement would fall upon them like a hailstorm or flood. Both arise suddenly and without warning. So would come the judgment of God against Judah. God warned them that their covenant with death shall be disannulled, and their agreement with hell (death) shall not save them. While foolishly thinking that an agreement with death and hell could protect them, they would be swept away when God chastened them.

The impending judgment undoubtedly was the Assyrian army which would invade but not completely capture Judah. Like a scouring flood would the Assyrian army trample the land of Judah.

Isa 28:19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it

shall be a vexation only to understand the report.

Isa 28:20 For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.

Isa 28:21 For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

Further warning of the Assyrian invasion is at hand. The news of the Assyrian invasion would spread across the region. The enemy would conquer unstopably, day by day. The news of their advance would be known morning by morning. Understanding the very news reports of their advance would cause vexation and fear, for the news would only be bad.

A proverb is presented about a short bed with narrow sheets. A bed too short for a man is utter frustration. Moreover, sheets and blankets which are too small also leave one cold and uncomfortable. The thought is that when the Assyrians invaded Judah, the situation would be frustrating and uncomfortable. Hard times lay ahead for Judah.

Mount Perazim is where God gave David a great victory over the Philistines. See II Samuel 5:20.

2Sa 5:20 And David came to Baalperazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baalperazim.

God gave Israel several great victories at Gibeon. The first was under Joshua as noted in Joshua 10:10-13 and then under David as noted in I Chronicles 14:16. The greater point is that the impending judgment against Judah by the hand of the Assyrians would be God's hand of judgment against His own people.

The reference to it being a "strange work" and a "strange act" very well may imply how the impending judgment would be surprising and unusual. Though it may come as a surprise to some, God does judge His own people. That judgment was about to fall upon Judah.

IV. God commands them to give Ear and Hear

Isa 28:22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

Isa 28:23 Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.

Some in Judah had mocked and scorned the Word of God. The Lord warned them to cease from such lest He send strong bondage (slavery) upon them. Isaiah interjects his own personal warning that he had heard from God of the impending, consuming judgment determined upon the land.

Isa 28:24 Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground?

Isa 28:25 When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?

Isa 28:26 For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.

Another proverb is presented. There are 2 questions at hand. Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? The answers to these questions are apparent. Indeed, a plowman plows all day to sow his seed. He further breaks up the clods of earth in his field as he prepares his field for a crop.

Fitches and cummin, though used as spices, were never the main crop. A farmer did not plow and harrow the field to plant such seeds. Rather, fields are worked up for principal crops such as wheat, barley, and rye. God has so imparted such common sense.

Isa 28:27 For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.

Isa 28:28 Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen.

Isa 28:29 This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

The analogy of a farmer's crop is continued. The idea likely is that fitches and cummin are not threshed the same way that wheat is. A wise farmer threshes his crop differently for each kind of harvest. Though insignificant crops such as fitches and cummin are not thoroughly threshed, grain for making bread is. Such crops are threshed carefully and not destroyed.

The greater idea here likely is that God was about to thresh Judah like a farmer would thresh his wheat. It was not to destroy them, but to make them profitable. God would use only the force necessary to accomplish his task. "Whom the Lord

loveth, He chasteneth.” Judah was about to be chastened by God. Yet, it was not to destroy them. God’s purpose was to prepare them for the Master’s use.

This parable concludes by noting, “This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.” The lesson presented was from God. It was wondrous and excellent in its operation. Or in other words, it was wise and practical. The lesson was for Judah to take heed.

KJV Bible Studies are prepared and distributed free of charge. The lessons may not be sold without consent. If you have questions or wish to discuss the lessons, or possibly need help in finding Jesus Christ as your Personal Lord and Savior, contact us at the email below

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

E-mail: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.