

Isaiah 28-29 Notes

Precept study on Isaiah Part 1, Lesson 11

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1 Review

- Isaiah 1-5: God judges His people. Call to repentance. Promise of future restoration.
- Isaiah 6: Isaiah before God's throne
- Isaiah 7-9: Fear God, not man.
- Isaiah 9-10: Judgement on Israel and Assyria. Promise of restoration.
- Isaiah 11-12: The Branch, His anger turns away.
- Isaiah 13-23: Oracles concerning Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Cush, Egypt, Wilderness of the Sea, Edom, Arabia, Valley of Vision, Tyre and Sidon.
- Isaiah 24: the destruction of the whole earth, yet the people glorify the LORD
- Isaiah 25: Praise to the LORD; He swallows up death for all time!
- Isaiah 26: The righteous contrasted with the wicked
 - You (the LORD) have also performed all our works (v12)
 - **the LORD:** keeps us in peace judges, rules, destroys wicked, chastens the righteous, brings life, comes!
 - **the righteous:** way is smooth, trusts Him, waits for Him, confesses, prays, dead will live, shouts for joy
 - **the wicked:** trampled, doesn't learn - even when shown favor or punished, dead will not live, LORD wipes out remembrance of them
- Isaiah 27: Let him make peace with Me
 - the LORD: waters/guards His vine, no wrath against it. destroys enemies or makes peace. strikes Jacob, so that they destroy their own idols; heals them. no compassion on those without discernment gathers the exiles and brings them to Jerusalem

2 Isaiah 28: the Scoffers Stagger

2.1 Isaiah 28:1-8: WOE the drunken priests and prophets

- compare/contrast the end of Isaiah 27 with 28:1-8:
 - Is 27: the LORD will restore His vine, water and guard it
 - Is 28:1-4, 7-8: contrast: those drunk on wine stagger.
 - Is 28:5-6: compare: the LORD is the glory of His remnant.
- to whom, and why is the woe stated (28:1)?
 - to the drunkards of Ephraim, priest and prophet
 - they give poor judgment
 - they see false visions

2.2 Isaiah 28:9-13: nonsense for nonsense

- Note: the *He says* in the NASB is implied. It's not in the text.
- Who is being addressed in this section? Who is the “they” of verse 12?
 - this people (v11)
 - those who would not listen (v 12)
 - those that stumble, be broken, taken captive (v13)
 - conclusion: to the same as those addressed in 28:1-8: the staggering priests and prophets
- verse 9: compare with Isaiah 5:13

Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; And their honorable men are famished, And their multitude is parched with thirst.

- the priest and prophet reel and stagger (v7), they are confused
- verse 9: the scoffers reject knowledge, and are taken captive (v13; see Is 5:13)
- verse 10: in Hebrew, consists of childish mono-syllables:

Tsav lasav,
Tsav lasav.
Kav lakav,
Kav lakav.
Ze'eyr sham,
Ze'eyr sham.

- a mockery of a prophet/priest
- turning the truth into meaningless prattle (v9). look ahead to 30:9-11.

- See also Hosea 5:11, the only other use of Tsav:

Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, Because he was determined to follow man's **command.**

- the teaching and traditions of men, not of the LORD
- verse 11: the LORD will speak to them through stammering lips, foreign tongue.
From <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=barbarian>. “Bar bar” is a Greek mimic of unintelligible foreign speech.

barbarian, mid-14c., from M.L. barbarinus (cf. O.Fr. barbarin “Berber, pagan, Saracen, barbarian”), from L. barbaria “foreign country,” from Gk. barbaros “foreign, strange, ignorant,” from PIE base *barbar- echoic of unintelligible speech of foreigners (cf. Skt. barbara- “stammering,” also “non-Aryan”). Greek barbaroi (n.) meant “all that are not Greek,” but especially the Medes and Persians. Originally not entirely pejorative, its sense darkened after the Persian wars. The Romans (technically themselves barbaroi) took up the word and applied it to tribes or nations which had no Greek or Roman accomplishments.

- verse 12: but they would not listen
- So (*Therefore*): the word of the LORD *to them*: will be the same nonsense (verse 13).
- For example:



Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

- verses 28:10 and 28:13 are nonsense poetry, mocking the drunken prophets/priests, and giving them what they deserve, so that they stumble and are taken captive, because they mock knowledge.

- Consider what comes out of the mouth of the LORD:

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.' " (Matthew 4:4; Jesus quotes Deut 8:3)

Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. (Matthew 24:35)

How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (Psalm 119:103)

- Stark contrast with Revelation 16:12-16. What comes out of the mouth of the dragon?

And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs;

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

2.3 Isaiah 28:14-22: death for death

- the scoffers : who are they?
 - the rulers (v14)
 - drunken prophets/priests of Ephraim (v1)
 - those addressed in v9-13
- what do they try?
 - make a covenant with death (v15)
 - take refuge in lies (v 15,17)
 - conceal themselves in deception (v15). Look ahead to 29:15
- why?
 - to avoid the overwhelming scourge (v15). Assyria, probably.
- so, does it work?
 - the LORD establishes a cornerstone (v16); he who believes in it will not be disturbed
 - the LORD cancels their pact with death (v18)
 - so that they are in terror of the scourge (v19)
- v21: what is the LORD's unusual task?

- to take away knowledge from the scoffers (v13)
- to sweep them away
- decisive destruction (28:22, compare with Isaiah 24)
- compare with Isaiah 29:14
- in 28:21 *unusual*: means *strange, foreign*
- and *extraordinary*: means *foreign, alien*
- compare with the foreign nonsense in Isaiah 28:11: the scoffers scorn knowledge, and are thus fallen.

Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge;
And their honorable men are famished,
And their multitude is parched with thirst.
(Isaiah 5:13)

3 Isaiah 29: WOE to Ariel; WOE to those who hide their plans

3.1 WOE to Ariel: what do we learn about it in Isaiah 29?

- city where David once camped
- the LORD brings distress, siege, brings it low
- Ariel's words come from the dust
- but so too her enemies will be dust
- the LORD punishes Ariel with storm and fire
- those who wage war against Ariel will disappear like a dream
- the LORD silences the drunken leaders, blinds the prophets; they cannot understand
- the people give lip service, but their heart is far away
- yet the needy will rejoice, the deaf hear, the blind see

3.2 Isaiah 29:1-14: Ariel brought low

- the LORD brings battle against Ariel
- what is Ariel? Jerusalem
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3.3 Isaiah 29:15-24: WOE to those who hide in a dark place

- compare 29:15 with 28:15: concealing themselves in deception (28:15); deeply hiding their plans from the LORD (29:15)
- yet ...
 - the needy will rejoice
 - the deaf hear
 - the blind see, through the darkness
 - Jacob not ashamed, will see his children, the work of the LORD
 - stand in awe of the God of Israel (v23)
- ruthless will come to an end
- evil cut off