

Thursday Evening Bible Study  
**Series: The Book of Isaiah**

Teaching Summary for Week 27

Chapters 28-35 of Isaiah: The six “woe” passages and their message

**Judah’s rebellion** against the Lord in favor of trusting foreign nations  
cannot cancel the **promises of God** for the remnant of Israel.

**Chapter summaries**

**Chapter 28: 1-13** address **Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom)**. Isaiah decries the evil rulers and predicts the complete destruction that is about to come. But note verses 5 and 6.: in that day” which gives hope for their distant future.

**Chapter 28:14 through 29:24** teach the principles behind the Lord’s dealings with **Judah** and **Jerusalem**. The evil decisions of their rulers result in a destruction that is nearly complete. There is a veiled reference to their pact with Egypt. Yet the last section of chapter 29, verses 17-24, look forward to millennial blessing.

**Chapters 30 and 31** specify the names of Egypt and Assyria. Both chapters **begin with judgment and end with blessing.**

**Chapter 30:1-17** describes the **punishment of Judah** for her alliance with **Egypt.**

**Chapter 30:18-33** describe the **destruction of the Assyrian armies** and the glories of the **Millennium.**

**Chapter 31** repeats the pattern of chapter 30. Verses 1-3 predict the destruction of Egypt and the pro-Egypt faction in Judah. Verses 4-9 foretell the destruction of the Assyrian army and the deliverance of the remnant of Judah.

**Chapter 32** emphasizes **the Messiah** and His kingdom but also address the coming poverty and destruction at the hands of the invading **armies of Sennacherib (Assyria).**

**Chapter 33** predicts **the destruction of Assyria.**

**Chapter 34** prophesies the final battle of **Armageddon** and its judgments.

**Chapter 35** envisions **the redeemed of the Lord** as they travel to Zion, rejoicing to see **the glories of the Millennial Kingdom.**

## Chapters 28 & 29

### Chapter 28

**Verses 1-13** pronounce woe on Ephraim (Israel) and her capital city, Samaria. Let's read **Isa 28:1-13**.

Isaiah had denounced Ephraim and Samaria earlier, in **chapter 9:8-21**.

Verses 1-6 talk about **two crowns**.

*Verses 1-4:* The first crown is the **city of Samaria**, which was the crown of Ephraim. It stood atop a hill overlooking a fertile valley.

In Isaiah's day, it was the capital city of the Northern Kingdom.

It had been a showcase of beauty.

But now her beauty was fading away.

The city's leaders were arrogant drunkards who had ruined her.



So the Lord is about to unleash His agent Assyria to destroy the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

His agent will be as powerful as a hurricane raining down hail and bringing raging floodwaters.

The city will be swallowed up as quickly and completely as a rip fig in the hands of a man.

*Verses 5-6:* In the middle of describing this appalling scene, Isaiah receives a vision of **the second crown**. This crown will never be tarnished. He describes **the Messiah in Zion** at His second coming. The Lord of Hosts will be the beautiful crown in that day.

*Verses 7-8:* The leaders were the priests and prophets. They were continually intoxicated from wine and strong drink. They were not even able to stand up, and vomited all over the place. They were in no condition to do their jobs. They didn't proclaim the word of God, and they didn't make just rulings.

*Verses 9-13* continue the denunciation of the Northern Kingdom.

Isaiah plays back the scornful things that the leaders of Israel have said about Isaiah and his teaching.

He teaches them as one would a child. In their drunkenness, they were behaving like children. But they ridiculed him for this, and rejected the pure milk of the word of God that he had been feeding them in tiny portions ("order on order, line on line")

So the Lord will speak to them instead through the babbling of foreign nations with their unintelligible languages. These nations will conquer Israel and take her into captivity.

**Verses 14-29** Having finished with the drunken leaders in Samaria, it's now time for Isaiah to warn the rulers in Jerusalem. Let's read **Isa 28:14-29**.

The rulers of Judah won't listen to Isaiah either. Really, they are rejecting the Lord and His word.

The Lord predicted that this would happen when He commissioned Isaiah in **Isa 6:9-13**.

Several times in this section, Isaiah commands the leaders in Jerusalem to **hear the word of the LORD**:

Here in **verse 14**, and also in **verses 16, 22, 23, and 26**.

*Verses 14-15:* But these leaders scoff at him. In fact, they boast that the Lord's hand is too small to destroy them.

They knowingly signed a contract with death and Sheol. They actually thought that they could cheat death. That they can lie their way out of punishment. So they can rest easy. They actually believe that the Lord and His agent will be fooled by their lies and deception.

See also **Isa 29:15 and 30:9-11**.

However, the same storm that is about to destroy Ephraim will not spare Judah either. Verse 17 b.

*Verses 16-19:* Once again, Isaiah pauses in the middle of his diatribe to speak on behalf of the Lord. The LORD God is laying in Zion a tested and costly cornerstone, which represents the LORD's salvation through the Messiah's rule in Zion . He is the only true sanctuary.

See also **Deut 32:1-4** and **Psa 118:19-23** and **Isa 30:29-30**

The New Testament identifies the cornerstone as the Lord Jesus Christ. **Acts 4:10-12.**

The LORD will restore justice and righteousness as the standard against which every word and deed will be measured.

Thus, the scoffers and their schemes will not stand.

*Verses 19c-22:* We get the prophet's reflection on the Lords words and works in verses 14-19b.

Their security arrangements with Egypt will be inadequate to protect them from the Assyrian onslaught.

They've made their bed, but they will get no rest.

The Lord is about to rise up and perform his strange work.

In Israel's past, the Lord rose up to defeat Israel's enemies.

In David's day, the Lord wiped out the Philistines like a flood at Mount Perazim. ( 2Sa 5:20).

In Joshua's day, the Lord destroyed the Amorites at Gibeon with large stones from heaven. (Jos 10:11)

But soon the Lord will act in an unusual, extraordinary way. He will rise up to destroy His own people using foreign armies - Israel's enemies.

There will be a complete destruction of the lands of Israel and Judah. Only the remnant of Jerusalem will be spared.

*Verses 23-29* are a parable about farmers, who plow, plant, and thresh in the proper seasons according to the methods that God has established for them.

Each crop receives its own prepared soil. The threshing methods differ for each kind of crop.

This is a metaphor for the Lord's dealings with Israel, Judah, and the remnant in Jerusalem. These are His three kinds of crop. He plowed and planted, and patiently waited for the fruit and the wheat. But the land has produced mostly weeds and very little wheat or fruit.

The time has come for Him to thresh (judge and discipline) His people. He will separate the wheat from the chaff. But He will not wipe them out completely. The remnant of wheat will be preserved.

The Lord will do precisely what is required to produce the crop He desires.

Judgment is not final. After that comes the fruitful harvest of the Lord's blessings for His people.

## Chapter 29

Chapter 29 continues the sequence of judgment followed by hope. The chapter consists of two such sequences:

Present judgment		Future blessing
Verses 1-4		Verses 5-8
Verses 9-16		Verses 17-24

The chapter begins with the second woe, this time directed not at Ephraim but at **Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah**. but at the city of Jerusalem. Let's read **Isa 29:1-8**.

**Verses 1-4** pronounce the judgment on Jerusalem.

**Ariel** is another name for Jerusalem, the city of David. Ariel in Hebrew has two meanings: "the lion of God" and "altar-hearth", the place of burning fire. Isaiah uses it in the second sense.

The fire on the altar in the temple was always burning. Let's read **Lev 6:12-13**

The fire consumed the burnt offering and purified the sinner. Fire represents both destruction and salvation.

Please read chapters 28-35 between now and next Thursday. You can use the chapter summaries on pages 4-5 above as a guide.