



Sermon Notes 9/17/23

“Awestruck!”

How can we stand in awe of God?

1. Let's _____ come near to God.

Isaiah 29:13
Matthew 15:7-9

2. Let's _____ what God has done.

Isaiah 29:14
1 Corinthians 1:18-19

3. Let's be _____ before God.

Isaiah 29:15-16
Romans 9:20-21

4. Let's honor the _____ of God.

Isaiah 29:23
1 Peter 1:14-17



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 26: September 17-24

Isaiah 29

What gives you a sense of awe and reverence for God? Some people are looking for signs and miracles thinking those experiences will satisfy their spiritual needs. They want to be awestruck by something amazing and spectacular. But Jesus said, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign” (Matt. 12:39; 16:4). God doesn’t want us to seek signs and miracles. He wants us to seek Him. In the Bible, God often performed miracles to wake people up spiritually and turn hard-hearted people back to Him. When we truly seek God with all our heart, we will find Him. And we will be awestruck! This is the message of Isaiah 29.

Read Isaiah 29

1. What did God tell His people to continue to do year after year? Why? (29:1)
2. What name did God call Jerusalem in this passage? Why? (29:1-2)

Terry Briley observes,

The double reference to Ariel in verse 1 (and once again at the beginning of verse 2) makes a proper name of the term for an “altar hearth” (אַרְיֵל, ’āri’ēl), as it is translated at the end of verse 2. This is the place where the portion of the sacrificial offering given to God is consumed. Too often Israel, and the residents of Jerusalem (the city where David settled) in particular, presume that they are secure solely because of the presence of this sacred site. In language reminiscent of 1:10-14, God sarcastically exhorts them to continue their annual cycle of festivals which condemn rather than sustain them in light of their hypocrisy.¹

3. What was God planning to do to Jerusalem in verse 3?
4. What would happen to the voice of God’s people? (29:4)
5. What was God planning to do to the enemies of His people? (29:5-8)

¹ Terry R. Briley, *Isaiah: Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2004), 25.

James Smith writes,

From this distress God miraculously would rescue Jerusalem. Suddenly the Lord would disperse those ruthless enemies as wind scatters the chaff of the threshing floor. He would unleash against the Assyrians the full force of his omnipotent power, symbolized here by the devastating forces of nature. Those who assault Ariel would disappear as suddenly as a nightmare when one awakes.²

6. Why didn't the people understand the meaning of Isaiah's vision? (29:9-12)

7. Why did Isaiah condemn the worship of the people of his day? (29:13)
Where is this verse quoted in the New Testament?

8. What was God planning to do to revive the spiritual hearts of His people? (29:13-14)

Briley notes,

How can God restore the people's confidence in his ability to deliver them? He will astound them with wonder upon wonder. The words once more highlight the graciousness of God's actions. He has multiplied wonders before his people time and again, but they repeatedly forget. As a result of their forgetfulness, they are in no position to return to him until he again reveals himself powerfully.³

9. How did Paul use Isaiah 29:14 to describe the message of the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 1:19?

10. Who did Isaiah pronounce "woe" upon in verse 15? Why?

11. How were the people turning things "upside down" when they were talking about God's limitations? (29:16)

12. What would happen "in a very short time" that would help God's people see and understand Isaiah's vision? (29:17-18)

13. Why would the humble and the needy once again rejoice? (29:19-21)

² James E. Smith, *The Major Prophets* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), 93.

³ Briley, *Isaiah*, 30.

John Oswalt writes,

Verses 19-21 deal with the social results of this restored sensitivity to God's leading and will. Those who are usually oppressed (the "humble" and the "needy") will be rejoicing in "the Holy One of Israel" (the sovereign Redeemer) because all the oppressors (the "ruthless," the "mockers," and those looking for a chance to do "evil") will be "cut down." Verse 21 identifies the oppression as judicial oppression, where the machinery that should be used specifically to protect the helpless is turned around to crush them.⁴

14. How did God describe Himself in verse 22? Why?

15. What changes did God predict as He worked on the hearts of His people? (29:23-24)

Smith observes,

Jacob is depicted looking over his "house" in the messianic age. He would have no reason to be ashamed. He would observe his children "the work of my hands in his midst." By the divine adoptive process Gentiles would become part of the family of God, the house of Jacob. All the true members of the house of Jacob would stand in awe of "the Holy one of Jacob" as they witnessed this marvelous expansion of the family of redeemed (29:22f.). Finally, in that day errant Jews would be converted. They would come to know the truth (29:24).⁵

16. What does it mean to have hearts that are close to God?

17. How can we know the difference between rules taught by men and the commandments of God?

18. What can we do to make sure our acts of worship do not turn into empty rituals?

19. What causes you to rejoice in God?

20. How will you acknowledge the holiness of God this week?

⁴ John N. Oswalt, *Isaiah: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 335.

⁵ Smith, *The Major Prophets*, 95.