

Isaiah 28-29 – 14 December 2023

“Avoiding Reality”

Introduction

- *Isa Section 1 (Chap 1-12), God spoke of the coming judgement but also the coming of Messiah for them!
 - *Isa Section 2 (Chap 13-23), God addressed mostly foreign nations reminding Israel of justice & salvation
 - *Isa Section 3 (Chap 24-27), Isaiah’s Apocalypse
 - *Isa Section 4 of 8 (Chap 28-35) is a ‘Series of Woes & Blessings’
 - *Chap 28-29 speaks to Israel & Judah about their attempt at avoiding reality
 - *Movie character can get stuck in alternate timelines, always fighting to get back to ‘their’ reality
 - *Many in God’s reality, the Prime Timeline, are fighting to create their own reality apart from the true parameters that God has established
- Today, let’s look at 3 consequences of living in our own make-believe universe**

#1: In bigotry, we can't properly understand God & His Word (Chap 28:1-13)

Read Chap 28:1-4

1. The warning is to those that seek to avoid reality with a strong substance
 - a. What's the Lord call them? – prideful
 - b. It's selfish to not accept the reality that God has given us
2. The teaching is, “oh you think that's strong, well the Lord will come & wash in like a flood”
3. As in vs 4, chemically altered states of consciousness will rob you of your beauty & glory
4. Need to fix this?
 - a. It's not about stopping a habit but about starting a new believe
 - b. Believe that God's plan for you is right!

Read Vs 5-6

1. The believing remnant of His people look to the Lord for their strength & sustainment

2. But the unbelievers look at the same God & see only judgment upon them
3. Read Luke 20:17-18 & I Pet 2:6-7

Read Vs 7-8

1. The 'they' of verse 7 is the Jewish leaders
2. Leaders are to set the vision & path of justice
 - a. These leaders are not for their pride
 - b. Where there's no vision the people perish
 - c. Christians don't live a life of escapism
 - i. We're here for more than to gain a little money & comfort
 - ii. We're here to glorify Jesus making Him known

Read Vs 9

1. The drunken leaders aren't ready to fulfill their duty to teach the nation
2. They couldn't even teach the kindergarteners

Read Vs 10-13

1. Isaiah was to these drunk leaders as one that stammers and is speaking a foreign language

- a. This also speaks of the foreign invader's foreign language
 - b. God speaks to Israel thru judgement
 - c. Paul quoted vs 11 in I Cor 14:21 of the day of Pentecost when foreigners in Jerusalem spoke in tongues
2. Problem is (see vs 12), God's Word thru Isaiah is offering them rest, but they're not receiving it & instead will receive judgement of foreign invasion
 3. Notice end of vs 13, when the Word is simply taught to those that won't believe it, then their end state is worse than the beginning.
 4. A people that does not know God, need chapter by chapter, verse by verse teaching of God's Word

#2: In boastfulness, we can't properly understand death (Chap 28:14-29:8)

Read Chap 28:14-15

1. These drunken leaders think they're settled in their beliefs & ready to die – but they're deceived

Read Vs 16-17

1. Jesus the cornerstone to come will be the standard by which all standards are measured
 - a. As recorded in 3 Gospels, Jesus said this speaks of Himself
 - b. Read Psm 118:22 – Jesus will be refused as Peter proclaimed on Pentecost in Acts 4:11

Read Vs 18-20

1. Judgement will come and you'll be face to face with the lies you've told yourself
2. In vs 19, even just accepting reality is torturous
3. Lying down to rest in death won't be satisfying

Read Vs 21-22

1. The Lord will rise and judge His own people of Israel – this is His, not natural, but strange work
2. His natural disposition is to love & grace His people
3. His strange work is to judge and correct them

Read Vs 23-29

1. God knows how to rightly harvest each type of soul
2. God knows the right timing for the harvest also

Read Chap 29:1-4

1. Ariel means 'lion of God', God's nickname for Jerusalem
2. Crime seems to be living in pride (lion) on past glories (city of David) & present pleasures (sacrifices)
3. Their boasting, as a lion, will be brought down to a whisper, as a bird

Read Vs 5-8

1. The strangers & nations that are foes fighting against Israel are brought to destruction suddenly
 - a. Jewish historians interpret this as the defeat of Sennacherib's army by the angel suddenly
 - b. Could very well be referring to 2nd Coming

#3: In blindness, we miss out on God's great plan (Chap 29:9-24)

Read Chap 29:9-12

1. The more the Lord tries getting Israel's repentance, the more they resist
 - a. This resisting leads to a blindness from God
 - i. Read Luke 8:9-10, 18
 - b. But this is ultimately used for good of God
2. Read Rom 11:11, 25b-26a
 - a. God uses Israel's rebellion to bring in the Gentiles and THEN all Israel will be saved

Read Vs 13-17

1. Jesus applied vs 13 to the Jews of His day that there's a disconnect between their words/deeds & their heart motive & heart beliefs
2. So vs 14 says God will destroy the wisdom of the wise men by sending the grace of Jesus' works and not our own as Paul preached in I Cor 1:19
3. Vs 15-16 says, just as a pot can't argue w/ its potter, Israel can't argue w/ the Lord's doings

- a. He has the right to harden or soften a heart for His glory
- b. Same sun hardens clay & softens wax

Read Vs 18-21

- 1. Lowest of men can hear, see & rejoice in God
 - a. Just as the shepherds were invited to visit the stable of baby Jesus
 - b. Good tidings of great joy!
- 2. The work of the Lord brings help to the humble man, but also brought evil to an end
 - a. Specifically, evil ones that pervert justice

Read Vs 22-24

- 1. When called Abraham to begin the nation of Israel, He did it with a good end in mind
- 2. The picture is that Jacob in his life had many reasons to look at his 12 boys and be ashamed
 - a. Yet Jacob, in picture looks again at his kids (all Israel) & sees a people redeemed by God
- 3. After many generations, all Israel shall be saved

Conclusion

So, let's stop avoiding reality. We need to accept we're a part of GOD'S reality & can't make our own

1. Let's drop the bigotry that prevents us from properly accepting God & His Word

a. Black is black & white is white, and hell is hot & sin ain't right – God is holy & Christ is coming, and righteousness will prevail

b. How many parts of God's Word do you choose to ignore or just side-step away from?

2. Let's drop the boasting that prevents us from properly understanding death

a. We can't escape death on our own terms

b. God knows those that trust in Him for salvation & those that are self-deceived

3. Let's prevent the blindness from seizing us that keeps us out of God's great plan

a. God will use our circumstances to hasten our arrival at the place of our choosing: good or bad