



# ShalomAZ Ministries

*In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption*

## “Right-Side-Upping the Upside-Downness”

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

### Devotion and Discussion Questions

#### **Key Texts (TLV): Isaiah 29:15-24; Jer. 17:9-10; Heb. 4:12-13**

We come to the end of Isaiah 29 with this strong word from the Lord about things being upside down—and about His determination to turn them right-side up again. The people of Jerusalem were religious, active, and confident in their history, their festivals, and their traditions. Yet behind the scenes, in the dark closets of their hearts and councils, they were plotting their own way of salvation, convinced that God either didn't see or didn't quite "get it." They nodded politely in public to the ways of the Lord, but privately trusted themselves more than Him.

And that's where this passage gets painfully close to home. Because while we may not be making secret alliances with Egypt, we know what it is to say the right words, check the right boxes, and still lean on our own understanding. Isaiah calls it what it is: upside-down living. We flip the order. We treat ourselves like the potter and God like the clay. But the good news in this text is that God doesn't leave things upside down. He steps in to right-side up what we've turned around.

#### **1. YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM THE POTTER (Isa. 29:15-16)**

The Lord begins with a sharp "woe" to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from Him: "*Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from Adonai, whose deeds are in darkness, and who say, 'Who sees us? Who knows us?'*" (Isa. 29:15). It's not just about secret actions—it's about a mindset that says, "I know better. I'll do it my way. God doesn't need to be in on this." It's the arrogance of self-rule dressed up in religious language.

Then the Lord exposes just how backward that thinking is: "*You turn things upside down! Should the potter be regarded as the clay? Should what is made say of its Maker, 'He did not make me,' or what is formed say of Him who formed it, 'He has no understanding'?*" (Isa. 29:16). That's the heart of our problem—we reverse roles. We question His wisdom. We doubt His understanding. We live as if we are in charge. And the Lord says, "This is upside down." The clay doesn't get to critique the potter. The created doesn't get to overrule the Creator.

#### **2. GOD WILL REVERSE WHAT WE'VE TWISTED (Isa. 29:17-21)**

But God doesn't just confront our upside-downness—He promises a reversal. "*Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon will turn into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field will be considered a forest?*" (Isa. 29:17). The mighty will be brought low, and the lowly will be lifted up. Everything we thought was solid and impressive will be humbled, and what seemed small and overlooked will flourish. God is about to flip things back the right way.

And when He does, it won't just be structural—it will be deeply personal. "*In that day the deaf will hear the words of a scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see. The meek also will increase their joy in Adonai, and the poor among men will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel*" (Isa. 29:18-19). Those who couldn't hear will hear. Those who couldn't see will see. The humble and afflicted will overflow with joy. Why? Because "the

*ruthless will vanish, the scoffer will be gone, and all who watch for evil will be cut off*" (Isa. 29:20). God will deal with the powers that twist justice and feed on pride. He'll clean house.

### **3. THE REDEEMER WILL RESTORE THE ASHAMED (Isa. 29:22-24)**

Then comes this tender turn: "*Therefore thus says Adonai, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob will no longer be ashamed, nor will his face grow pale*" (Isa. 29:22). It's as if the Lord reaches back to the beginning—to Abraham, to the promises—and says, "I haven't forgotten. I'm still faithful." The shame, the fear, the pale faces of humiliation and dread—those will be lifted. God's redemption is about restoring dignity as much as delivering from danger.

And the result? Hearts change. Minds open. "*Those who err in spirit will come to understanding, and those who grumble will accept instruction*" (Isa. 29:24). The ones who were stubborn, cynical, resistant—God will soften them. He will teach them. This is what right-side up looks like: not just circumstances changed, but hearts transformed, finally willing to trust the Potter's hands.

### **CONCLUSION**

So here's the question Isaiah leaves us with: What's upside down in your life that God wants to right-side up? Where have you been nodding in agreement with God on the outside, but quietly insisting on your own way in the hidden places of your heart? Maybe you've been saying, "Who sees? Who knows?" But today, the Lord lovingly reminds you—He sees, He knows, and He still invites you to trust Him.

This is the moment to come out of the shadows. To stop pretending. To stop treating God like He's clay and you're the potter. If you've been leaning on your own understanding, plotting your own rescue, excusing your compromise, today is the day to repent and return. The Redeemer of Abraham is still redeeming the house of Jacob. And He's still redeeming us. If that's you, come—lay it down. Let Him right-side up what's been upside down.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What does it look like today to "hide our plans from Adonai" while still appearing religious?
2. In what ways do we sometimes treat ourselves like the potter and God like the clay?
3. Where do you most need God to "right-side up" something in your life right now?
4. How do the promises of hearing, seeing, and rejoicing speak to your current spiritual condition?
5. What would it mean for you personally to trust the Redeemer rather than your own understanding?

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Adonai, we confess that so often our hearts are upside down. We say the right words, but still cling to our own plans. We question Your wisdom and trust our own understanding. Forgive us. Today we choose to step out of the darkness and into Your light. You are the Potter; we are the clay. Shape us, correct us, restore us. Right-side up everything in us that has been turned around. Open our ears to hear, our eyes to see, and fill the humble places of our hearts with joy in You. We trust You, Redeemer of Abraham, and we give ourselves again into Your faithful hands. B'shem Yeshua. Amen.