

Book of Isaiah



Chapter 29

Theme: Jerusalem -- prophecies of immediate future and reaching on into the Kingdom

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Chapter 29

The prophecies in this chapter are confined to Jerusalem but extend from the invasion of Sennacherib through the time when Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles until the last invader (see Zech. 14:1-7) shall have destroyed Jerusalem and, finally, to the establishment of the Kingdom when the Messiah shall come and His feet shall touch the Mount of Olives. It will prove profitable to compare this chapter with our Lord's discourse on Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37 -- Matthew 24:2 and with Luke 13:34-35; Luke 21:20-24.¹

In chapter 28, we saw how God was lamenting over the fact that although there was a small remnant of faithful Jews, the vast majority of them were living in sin and drunkenness - even the prophets and priests! They had made themselves blind and deaf to the Word of God. As a result, judgment was coming upon both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.

[Seven woes] Seven woes of Isa. 28:1 -- Isa. 33:1;

1. Woe to the drunkards of Ephraim (Isa. 28:1).
2. Woe to the drunkards of Judah (Isa. 28:7).
3. Woe to Jerusalem (Isa. 29:1).
4. Woe to deceivers and hypocrites (Isa. 29:15).
5. Woe to the rebellious children (Isa. 30:1).
6. Woe to them that trust in Egypt (Isa. 31:1).
7. Woe to treacherous dealers (Isa. 33:1).

¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city *where* David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.

Second of six woes (28:1; 29:1, 15; 30:4; 31:1; 33:1).

God's heavy judgment upon Jerusalem.

Ari-El = Lion of God. Used as idiom for Jerusalem.

"Dwelt" = tabernacled. John 1:14.

"Let them kill..." False worship?

[**Ariel**] Ariel, the lion of God -- another name for Jerusalem where David dwelled (Isa. 29:1-7). Ariel undoubtedly refers to Jerusalem as can be concluded by the parallel phrase the city where David settled (cf. 2 Sam. 5:7, 9, 13). Many interpreters say Ariel means "lion of God," in which case the city is seen as a strong, lionlike city. Ariel may also be translated "altar hearth," as in Isaiah 29:2; Ezekiel 43:15-16. Jerusalem is the place where the altar of burnt offering was located in the temple.²

When we consider the way Ariel is used in these verses, and the context as a whole, the idea behind calling Jerusalem Lion of God is probably sarcastic. The repetition of the name (four times in two verses), and the context of God's judgment against Jerusalem, suggest the idea that Jerusalem may have thought of herself as the Lion of God, but God didn't share that lofty opinion of the city. It may be that the people of Jerusalem had taken to calling themselves by the name Ariel, to both express and strengthen their confidence.³

[add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices] Let years go by and sacrifices be killed, yet this won't cancel the judgment that is determined upon Jerusalem.⁴

It is necessary to establish the fact that Jerusalem is the city designated under the title of Ariel. Ariel means "lionlike." The word occurs in 2Samuel 23:20 which says, "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab..." A lionlike man is an "Ariel" man. The word also carries the meaning of "the lion of God." In Ezekiel 43:16 the same word is translated "altar" and, under certain circumstances, could mean "the altar of God." Both designations are a fitting title for the city of Jerusalem. It is further identified here as "the city where David dwelt." The lion is the insignia of that family. Our Lord is called "...the Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Rev. 5:5). Likewise Jerusalem was the place where the temple of God was, and the altar, of course, was there. This is a remarkable prophecy concerning Jerusalem. The prophecy began to be fulfilled in Isaiah's day and has continued right down to today. If you walk down the streets of Jerusalem, you will see this prophecy being fulfilled, and it will continue to be fulfilled.⁵

1-4: In this second of five "woes" in chapters 28-33 Isaiah continues with the theme of the last part of the first woe (28:14-29). Judgment was coming on Jerusalem and on Judah, and its purpose was to get the nation to return to God. Unlike the judgment that would sweep away the

² The Bible Knowledge Commentary

³ <http://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

⁴ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁵ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Northern Kingdom, this judgment on Jerusalem, though very severe, would be averted by the Lord. Jerusalem would not fall into the hands of the Assyrians.⁶

Year after year, the Jews were plodding through the tradition of their forefathers. They diligently observed the feast schedule, and performed the actions that their tradition required of them. But God was not impressed. The Jews were bored with it, for it had no meaning to them. God was tired of it, because their hearts were far from Him (Isa. 1:11-15).⁷

²Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel.

Zech 14.

Jerusalem will yet be unto Me as Ariel, the lion of God.

Heaviness and sorrow may be rephrased as “grievous sorrow.”

The feeling in Isaiah 29:1 is that Jerusalem is proud (Ariel), resting on its spiritual heritage instead of its present reality (the city where David dwelt!), and living for present pleasures without concern for God (Add year to year; let feasts come around).

Yet I will distress Ariel: Jerusalem may have this high opinion of itself, but it is not out of the reach of God’s hand of judgment. Instead of the routine of year to year and the feasts, God will send heaviness and sorrow. If Jerusalem sees itself as a lion, then God will fight against them with the same fury a man would have against a lion (it shall be to Me as Ariel).

I will encamp against you all around: Using the images of warfare for that day, God promises to battle against Jerusalem, and to conquer her (You shall be brought down).

In all of this, the LORD will bring down the lofty self-image Jerusalem has of itself. Instead of calling herself Ariel, and the city where David dwelt, their speech shall be brought low, out of the dust. Instead of loud boasts, their speech shall whisper out of the dust.⁸

I will distress and lay siege: This is an announcement of the coming of the siege of Jerusalem to be raised by Sennacherib. It has been previously noted that this chapter and the last are probably written at the same time. Thus the announcement of the coming siege of Jerusalem is at least 15 to 20 years prior to the event. The next chapters (30 to 33) give vivid detail of what will happen in the siege which is barely outlined here (verse 6 below) and these chapters are written when the raising of the siege was imminent and there was already much destruction in the land by the Assyrians. However this chapter is a warning that the siege is coming and was delivered before the fall of Samaria.⁹

⁶ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁷ <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah2901.php>

⁸ <http://www.study-light.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

⁹ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa28-29.htm>

³And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.

This refers to the siege of Jerusalem at Armageddon (Isa. 29:2-4; Zech. 14). A latter-day fulfillment is clear from the fact that the invaders would destroy by thunder, earthquake, great noise, storm, tempest, and devouring fire (Isa. 29:5-6). This did not happen with Assyria's siege (Isa. 36:1 -- Isa. 37:38), or when Babylon (2Ki. 25) and Rome destroyed the city (Lk. 21:20-24). It is definitely stated in Ezek. 38:17-23 that the Lord will destroy Antichrist's armies at Armageddon with a great earthquake, pestilence, blood, overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. In 2Th. 1:7-10 flaming fire is mentioned as destroying the wicked at this time; and Rev. 16:17-21 refers to a great earthquake destroying many at the same time. There is no time in history or in prophecy that Isa. 29:5-6 has been or will be fulfilled other than at Armageddon.¹⁰

[Isa. 29:3-5].

This prophecy was given before Nebuchadnezzar came up to the city of Jerusalem and destroyed it, which marked the beginning of the "...times of the Gentiles..." (Luke 21:24). Our Lord said that Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles until the Time of the Gentiles be fulfilled. The Gentiles have marched through her streets and still do today.

Jerusalem has been besieged and captured more often than any other city. I have in my files a list of twenty-seven sieges that have been leveled against this city throughout history. Almost every time it was taken, it was destroyed. That is why it is not quite accurate for people to say, "Go to Jerusalem and walk where Jesus walked." You are not going to walk where He walked, because Jerusalem is much higher today than it was in His day. For example, the pool of Bethesda was about fifty feet down from the level of the ground today. The Lord Jesus walked down there. It is quite evident that Solomon's temple was probably more than one hundred feet beneath where the Mosque of Omar stands today. The city has been destroyed many times, and each time it was leveled off and rebuilt on the wreckage. That is what Nehemiah did -- out of the debris and wreckage he rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Rocks did not have to be hauled in for repair work because there are more rocks over there than they could ever use. I heard a few years ago that stones were being shipped from Indiana to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. That report was proven false, but how foolish it would have been. There is no place on the topside of this earth that is as rocky as Jerusalem and the surrounding area. It is a rugged terrain. That is one reason Jerusalem was so difficult for the enemy to take.¹¹

Though the Assyrians under Sennacherib surrounded Jerusalem in 701 b.c. it was as if God had done so (I... I... I... My, vv. 2-3). Being humiliated (brought low), Jerusalem spoke softly rather than in loud tones. Though Jerusalem would be surrounded it would not be taken at this time. This assurance should have encouraged the people to trust God and to worship Him properly.¹²

¹⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

¹¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹² The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁴And thou shalt be brought down, *and* shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.

Cf. Necromancy (Lev 19:31; 20:6), et al.
“Whisper” = chirp (8:19); only in Isaiah.

[thou shalt be brought down] At Armageddon, and even 1,260 days before this, Jerusalem will be taken over by Antichrist, and Israel will be brought low in the dust of defeat as predicted here (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15-22; 2Th. 2:1-4; Rev. 12:13).¹³

Speaking Out of the Ground

Speaking "out of the ground" and "low out of the dust" is not a prediction of a new Bible, or a new revelation from God as is sometimes taught. It simply expresses Israel's complete defeat. "Out of the dust" is often used of utter defeat or humiliation (1Sam. 2:8; 1Ki. 16:2; Ps. 113:7). "Brought down to the dust" is an idiom for defeat and complete subjugation (Isa. 2:10; 25:12; 26:5; 49:23; 2Sam. 22:41-43; 2Ki. 13:7; Job 16:15; Ps. 44:25; 72:9; Nah. 3:18). Here it was Jerusalem and Judah that would be defeated and brought down to lick the dust in humility. In Isa. 29:5 it was predicted that the multitude of strangers would also be brought down to the dust after Israel's experience in the dust. Judah was to become so low and defeated that the people would be confused and act strangely, like a witch with a familiar spirit (notes, Isa. 8:19-20). In Isa. 52:2 Judah was commanded to "shake thyself" from the dust, which means that the Jews will be exalted after the defeat in the dust.¹⁴

Voice like a medium's refers to the forbidden, deceptive "voices" for which the medium supposedly served as a channel. The strong voice of the city of Jerusalem would become merely a whisper

you shall be brought down: The reason for God allowing the extremity which the city experienced is explained in the next few chapters. YHWH could have saved the city at the beginning of the siege but he allowed the unfaithful to show themselves when they abandoned hope and fled the city. The humiliation and fear of the faithful was real however and they are pictured as being in great fear and distress,-- so fearful that they could barely whisper.¹⁵

¹³ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

¹⁴ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

¹⁵ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa28-29.htm>

⁵Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones *shall be* as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

Five similes of Gentile defeat:

1. Like small dust.
2. As chaff that passes away (Isa. 29:5).
3. As a dream of the night vision (Isa. 29:7).
4. As when a hungry man dreams that he eats, but when he awakes he is empty (Isa. 29:8).
5. As when a thirsty man dreams that he drinks, but when he awakes he is still thirsty.¹⁶

(5-8) The LORD protects and delivers a humbled Jerusalem.

The multitude of your foes shall be like fine dust: The closing image in the previous verses was Jerusalem groveling in the dust. Now, the LORD uses another image, spun off of the idea of dust - Jerusalem's enemies will be scattered as fine dust. God will humble Jerusalem in the dust, and then scatter her enemies like fine dust, like chaff that passes away.

You will be punished: This seems to be directed against the nations that come against Jerusalem. God will allow them to come against the city, and to humble it, but God will punish the nations that have come against His city.

It shall even be as when a hungry man dreams: Because the LORD will protect Jerusalem, the nations that come against her will ultimately be frustrated. They will be like a man who dreams of food, but wakes up hungry. They will dream of fulfillment, but be unfulfilled.¹⁷

God would powerfully blow away the enemy, who would be as numerous and insignificant as dust and chaff, even though the enemy built great ramparts and siege towers to storm Jerusalem. His deliverance, like that of a storm, would be very quick (cf. 37:36). God would judge those whom He had sent to judge His people. God will do a similar thing at the end of the Tribulation (cf. Zech. 14:1-3).¹⁸

Zech. 12:3 ...all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

The book of Zechariah tells us about the day that all the nations will be gathered against Jerusalem, and what the Lord's response will be:

Zech. 14:2-3 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

When the Lord fights against them, they will be blown away. It will happen so fast, that they will disappear like a bad dream does when you wake up.

Unfortunately, in spite of the promise of deliverance, the Jews in Isaiah's day were still hardened against their God...¹⁹

¹⁶ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

¹⁷ <http://www.study-light.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

¹⁸ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah2901.php>

⁶Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.

Six things will destroy Gentiles: thunder; earthquake; great noise; storm; tempest; and flame of devouring fire.

[Isa. 29:6-8].

The final siege of Jerusalem will be the worst of all (see Zech. 14), but God will intervene at the last moment and deliver His people from extermination. All the dreams of the enemies of God to bring in their own kingdom will be frustrated, and God will put them down. He will build His own Kingdom and establish it Himself, just as He said He would do.²⁰

Punished is literally “visited,” a word sometimes used for bringing salvation. thunder and earthquake and great noise storm and tempest fire: The Lord’s coming to His people is described using the imagery of the elements that accompanied Him at Sinai (Ex. 19:16–19) and when He fought for Israel (19:1; 30:27; Judg. 5:4, 5; Ps. 18:7–15; Hab. 3:3–7).

Thunder earthquake etc.: The natural phenomena that was to happen during the siege (and particularly at the end when YHWH visited the Assyrians with a plague that would kill 185,000) are enlarged on in the next 3 chapters. Beside the storm, thunder, earthquake and devouring flame amid great noise there would also be hail (mentioned in chapters 30 and 32) as well as undulating and pulsating lights with audible eerie music like sounds and much more. Here the catastrophe to come is only outlined. In the following chapters the phenomena are described in detail. The frightening visitation was visible and audible and filled those experiencing it with terror,-- even those who were delivered by it.²¹

The Lord Himself would be directing Jerusalem's judgment. He would use the audible, the visible, and the invisible, to shake, remove, and consume the city. These are probably not the instruments that He would use as much as expressions of His sovereign power. This is the classic language of theophany in which images express God's powerful intervention in the world (cf. Exod. 19:16-19; 1 Kings 19:11-13; Ezek. 20:47-48).²²

⁷And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision.

The insatiableness of her enemies. Many nations (Zech 12).

Multitude of nations: There are other prophecies in which the gathering of nations to fight against Jerusalem is mentioned. For instance Ezek 38 and 39. These do not speak of the same event as mentioned here. The context is the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib circa 700 BC.

²⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²¹ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa28-29.htm>

²² <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

Many nations being led by the Assyrians against Jerusalem is consistent with the history and methods of the Assyrians. Beside relocating captive nations in new areas to keep them under control and lessen the possibility of revolt, it was also their policy to absorb the captive nations fighting forces into their army. These potential world conquerors used these methods as did those who followed. It might be valuable for the reader to read the portions of Herodotus where he describes the international make up of the armies of Cyrus, Darius I, and of Xerxes the Great. From the multitude of nations that were in the armies of these conquerors it would be easy to extrapolate a list of nations in the armies of Sennacherib that he brought against Jerusalem. We add the description of Xerxes land forces at the bottom of this section for your comparison. Then you might read the rest of the national make up of the armies of Cyrus and Darius which are similar.²³

⁸It shall even be as when an hungry *man* dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, *he is faint*, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

All armies of the nations that come against Jerusalem will be destroyed when Christ comes to take over the kingdoms of this world, except a sixth part of them (Isa. 63:1-5; Ezek. 39:2; Joel 3; Zech. 14; 2Th. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14-15; Rev. 11:15; 19:11-21).

it shall even be as: Frustration and confusion is the lot of the nation or individual who sets himself against God. But as the following verses show, the faithful, are hardly better off through indifference and lack of knowledge.²⁴

⁹Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.

God's reasons for discipline (Cf. Ezek 36:22ff).

[Stay yourselves, and wonder ...] Verses 9-16 give the causes for the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem described in Isa. 29:1-8. The picture here is one of hysteria, bewilderment, and extreme distress over the calamity about to befall them for their sins. This portion has to do with their more immediate troubles through sin that would eventually lead to final judgment which would bring them to repentance under their Messiah in the last days. Even in Isaiah's day a state of stupefaction was upon the people and they were destined for chastening soon, without destruction, by Assyria (Isa. 36:1 -- Isa. 37:38), and to destruction later by Babylon (2Ki. 25) and Rome (Lk. 21:20-24).²⁵

[Isa. 29:9-10].

²³ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa28-29.htm>

²⁴ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa28-29.htm>

²⁵ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

I have said that Isaiah is the prophet of the commonplace, and what he says fits into our contemporary culture. Did God actually make them sleepy? How did He do it? He kept giving Israel light; and, as He gave them light, they kept rejecting it. They would not accept the truth that He gave them. They could not see it, which revealed that they were blind. That is the way God puts people to sleep and the way He reveals that they are blind. Even the prophets and princes did not anticipate this deliverance from God. They were as blinded to the future as the enemies of God. They were as men who were dead drunk.²⁶

(9-10) The spiritual stupor of Jerusalem.

Pause and wonder! Blind yourselves and be blind! They are drunk, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with intoxicating drink. For the LORD has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets; and He has covered your heads, namely, the seers.

Pause and wonder! Blind yourselves and be blind! Jerusalem's pride (as expressed in Isaiah 29:1) has made them spiritually blind, and spiritually drunk. The LORD tells Jerusalem to pause and wonder at this, because though they do it to themselves, they lack the self-awareness to see their condition.

They stagger, but not with intoxicating drink: This is not seen as a "blessing from the Spirit of the LORD." This is a curse, both self induced and sent from the LORD. This speaks powerfully to those today who promote the idea of God "blessing" His people with being "drunk in the Spirit."

Because Jerusalem chose blindness, and chose spiritual drunkenness, God sent something: the LORD poured out on them the spirit of deep sleep. As drunks will "sleep it off," so the LORD will send blind, proud, drunk Jerusalem into the lethargy and vulnerability of spiritual sleep. But a drunk can become sober after sleep; for those who are spiritually drunk, sleep worsens their condition.

When we are asleep, we are doing nothing productive. When we are asleep, we are vulnerable. When we are asleep, we are insensitive. God sent these things to a blind, proud, drunk Jerusalem.

The problem of spiritual sleep didn't end with Jerusalem of Isaiah's day. Romans 13:11 was written to Christians: And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Christians need to be awake, especially knowing the time!

Because Jerusalem chose blindness, and chose spiritual drunkenness, God took away something: He has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets. As a drunk has blurred vision and poor perception, so God closed the spiritual eyes of the nation - namely, the prophets.

The prophets were silent, and the word of God was neglected because the people wanted it that way. In silencing the prophets and the seers, God simply gave Jerusalem what she wanted.

The prophet Amos spoke of the same idea: "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, but shall not find it." (Amos 8:11-12)²⁷

²⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²⁷ <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

Stay yourselves and wonder: The Bible might as well be a sealed book, it is read and not understood as if the reader was illiterate. The faithful are also among the sleepers.²⁸

Blind, drunk, unstable, and asleep. Not a good combination for people to be able to hear the Word of God. The vision God gives to Isaiah is closed to the Jews' understanding. Not only will it be unintelligible to those who can't normally read the Word of God, but it will be sealed even to those who can. Both groups are equally blinded to the vision. They chose sinfulness and spiritual blindness, deafness, and drunkenness. Their hearts were insensitive (Isa. 6:9-10), and they refused to understand the vision.²⁹

¹⁰For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

“Deep sleep”: Cf. Adam, Abram (Gen 2:21; 15:12, et al.).

Three Acts of God Concerning Judah

1. He has poured out the spirit of deep sleep upon Judah.
2. He has closed their eyes.
3. He has covered the rulers and seers of Judah so they cannot see.

This could only mean that God allowed the Jews to become blind to spiritual things and hard in heart toward Him, not that God deliberately blinded them. They closed their own minds and hardened their own hearts without God's interference; and their hearts became gross, their ears dull of hearing, their eyes blind, and their other faculties arrested in development according to their rejection of His program. This is the way Paul interprets this passage in Rom. 11:8. Isaiah himself confirms this conclusion in Isa. 6:9-12 as quoted by Christ in Mt. 13:13-16. See notes there.³⁰

[deep sleep] Hebrew: tardemah (HSN-<H8639>). Translated "deep sleep" all 7 times it's used (Isa. 29:10; Gen. 2:21; 15:12; 1Sam. 26:12; Job 4:13; 33:15; Prov. 19:15).

[prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered] At this time Judah was so overcome with spiritual lethargy and stupidity regarding truth, that even their prophets, rulers, and wise men were blind -- so much so that God's Word was a sealed book to them (Isa. 29:11). They were as ignorant as the most unlearned (Isa. 29:12). The cause of their blindness was hypocrisy, lip service, willful sins, and hardness of heart (Isa. 29:13; 6:9-12; Mt. 13:13-15; Rom. 11:8).³¹

Pause Blind: Whereas the religious leaders of Israel were physically drunk (28:7), those of Jerusalem stagger not from intoxicating drinks, but from ignorance of the Lord and His ways. Deep sleep is from a word used also of Adam's sleep (Gen. 2:21), a supernatural stupor. prophets seers: The visions that God had given were not appreciated or obeyed.

²⁸ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa28-29.htm>

²⁹ <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah2901.php>

³⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

³¹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

¹¹And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

Rev 1:3; 22:7 (Cf. Chapter 5; 2 Cor 3:15,16).

Isa. 29:11-12].

The attitude of the people, including God's people, before their final deliverance by God was that prophecy was too obscure to be understood, that it was a sealed subject about which they could know nothing. This is the present-day attitude of many church leaders and preachers. I have heard seminary professors and ministers say, "Well, you know, the Book of Revelation is a sealed book. Nobody can understand it." Those who insist that Revelation is a sealed book and that we are not supposed to understand it are saying exactly what the people in Isaiah's day were saying about prophecy. Or, people today will say that they are too busy, that they don't have time to study the Word of God. All kinds of excuses are offered by Christians for their own ignorance of the Scriptures.

The word revelation is from the Greek word apocalypse, which means "unveiled." God took the seal from the Book of Revelation so that it can be understood. In one sense Revelation is the simplest book in the Bible, but you must have an understanding of the sixty-five books that precede it. It is the last book of the Bible, and certainly it is not the place you should begin reading. No book is so organized, and I found it to be the easiest book in the Bible to outline. It is nonsense to say that it is symbolic, a sealed book that we are not supposed to understand. That is what they were saying in Isaiah's day. God will judge you for that kind of thinking because when He gives light and you will not open your eyes, you become blind to the light. Listen to what God says of Revelation in Revelation 1:3, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 22:10 says, "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." It is not a sealed book.³²

The literate represent the religious leaders who found Isaiah's prophecies sealed due to their own spiritual blindness (Rev. 5:1). The illiterate represent the common people.

(11-12) The spiritual illiteracy of Jerusalem.

The whole vision has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one who is literate, saying, "Read this, please." And he says, "I cannot, for it is sealed." Then the book is delivered to one who is illiterate, saying, "Read this, please." And he says, "I am not literate."

Isaiah likened Jerusalem to the blind and to the drunk. Now, he likens them to the illiterate. But this isn't a literal literacy, because the literate man receives the vision of God, but to him it is like a sealed book. When the book of the vision is brought to the illiterate man, he does no better (I am not literate).

Many today "read" or "receive" God's word like an illiterate man "reads" the newspaper. They can pick out a few words here and there, and they can certainly look at the pictures. They

³² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

can sit with an open newspaper, enjoy themselves to some degree, and appear to be reading. But the true content really escapes them.³³

¹²And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

¹³Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Quoted in Mt. 15:7-9; Mk. 7:6.

And deep hypocrisy of the Jews (Cf. 2 Thess 2:11).

Four causes of spiritual blindness:

1. Drawing near to God with the mouth alone.
2. Honoring Him with the lips only.
3. Removing the heart far from Him.
4. Fearing Him only after the precept of men.

If you had lived in Isaiah's day, you would have wondered what Isaiah really meant, because the people were going to the temple. It was crowded -- anytime a sacrifice was offered you would find people there. There was a place for the men, a court for the women, and a court for the Gentiles. Why was God finding fault with these people? They were all coming to church, but they went through all of the ritual with their mouths. It was as if they could say the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, but it did not mean anything to them. They did not believe what they were saying; they did not accept God's Word. God said that their hearts were far from Him. That is the reason He judged them, and that is the reason He is going to judge us today.

The curse of the world today is religion. God would like you to get rid of religion and come to Christ. Religion is the greatest barrier for many people today. I made that statement to a man not long ago. Immediately he countered by saying, "I want you to know, Dr. McGee, that I am a religious man. I am religious by nature." He had a fallen nature, but he had a religious nature. I think I shocked him when I told him that he ought to get rid of his religion and that I was not a religious man. He said, "I cannot believe that there is a preacher who is not religious. If you are not religious, what are you then?" I told him that I am a sinner who came to Christ and that I have a personal relationship with Him today. It is not a religion but a relationship. Do you have Christ, or don't you? That is the important thing.³⁴

The people claimed to be close to God, but they were disobedient and merely went through the motions; therefore, God would bring judgment upon them. Religion had become routine instead of real. Jesus quoted Isaiah's condemnation of Israel's hypocrisy when he spoke to the Pharisees, the religious leaders of his day (Matthew 15:7-9; Mark 7:6, 7). We are all capable of hypocrisy. Often we slip into routine patterns when we worship, and we neglect to give God our love and

³³ <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

³⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

devotion. If we want to be called God's people, we must be obedient and worship him honestly and sincerely.³⁵

(13-16) Why the LORD sends spiritual blindness upon Jerusalem.

These people draw near to Me with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me: Jerusalem knew how to talk the spiritual talk, but their hearts were far from God. You can't always tell a person's heart by what they say. You can't always tell a person's heart by what they do. Though only God can really know the heart, the closest we can come is by looking at the whole of their life - not just what they say or do, and especially not only at how they act at church or among Christians.

Jesus said, For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34). This is a true - but not absolute - principle, because people can draw near to God with their mouths and honor the LORD with their lips, and their hearts can still be far from God. Of course, their speech will betray them at one time or another - but just maybe never at church!

This manner of talking the talk, but not having the heart, didn't end in Isaiah's day. Jesus quoted this passage from Isaiah when He rebuked the religious leaders of His day for their hypocrisy (Matthew 15:7-9, Mark 7:6-7). It didn't end in Jesus' day either!

How did their hearts get far from God? They have removed their hearts far from Me. God doesn't move away from His people; they remove their hearts from Him.

And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men: The people of Jerusalem had no fear of God in themselves; it had to be commanded by others. Their hearts did not respond to God, but only to men.

The wisdom of their wise men shall perish: Because Jerusalem's pride had led them into spiritual blindness, sleep, drunkenness, illiteracy, and hypocrisy, God will destroy the wisdom of their wise men. Their wise men promoted the pride that led to all these evils!

Isaiah calls this a marvelous work and a wonder, for God to reject the wisdom of man and to display His wisdom. Paul was also amazed at the "wisdom" of man, and how it compared to the "foolishness" of God: For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (1 Corinthians 1:21-25)

Who sees us? In their false wisdom, the proud people of Jerusalem thought they could hide their thoughts (hide their counsel) and their deeds (their works are in the dark) from the LORD. Surely you have things turned around! They thought they could hide from the LORD, and that they had Him all figured out. The truth is turned around! The LORD has them all figured out, and they really don't know God at all.

Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay: The people of Jerusalem made the terrible mistake of raising themselves up, and lowering God at the same time. So, for them, the clay was just as worthy, just as intelligent, just as powerful, as the potter was!

For shall the thing made say of him who made it, "He did not make me"? Indeed, man says exactly this today. Man looks at God our Creator, and says, "He did not make me." For the LORD and His prophet, this was absolutely absurd, but today it passes for high science!

³⁵ Life Application Study Bible.

Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, "He has no understanding"? Indeed, man says exactly this today. Instead of seeing the absolute need for an intelligent designer who created all things, many believe that chance - absolute blind, random, purposeless chance, having no understanding at all - brought all things into being.

People who are otherwise intelligent often fall into this delusion. Jacques Monod, a biochemist, wrote: "Chance alone is at the source of every innovation, of all creation in the biosphere. Pure chance, absolutely free but blind, at the very root of the stupendous edifice of evolution."

But assigning such power to "chance" is crazy. Chance has no power. For example, when a coin is flipped, the chance it will land "heads" is 50%; however, "chance" does not make it land heads. Whether or not it lands heads or tails is due to the strength with which the coin is flipped, the strength of air currents and air pressure as it flies through the air, where it is caught, and if it is flipped over once it is caught. Chance doesn't "do" anything but describe a probability.

When Carl Sagan petitioned the federal government for a grant to search for intelligent life in outer space, how did he hope to find it? By using a super sensitive instrument to pick up radio signals from distant space. When he received those radio signals, he looked for order and pattern, which would demonstrate the signals were transmitted by intelligent life. In the same way, the order and pattern of the whole universe demonstrates that it was fashioned by intelligent life, not by "chance." Scientists detect "chance" in the radio signals constantly (in the form of unpatterned static), but it tells them nothing.

Therefore, when someone says the universe or anything else came about by chance, they are extremely ignorant, superstitious, or just repeating a line they have heard before and have unthinkingly accepted.

We need to remember the context of the whole chapter - the pride and blindness of Jerusalem. It is perhaps the height of man's pride and blindness to reject the LORD as our creator.³⁶

The Jews said all the right things. They would speak honoring words to God like "hallelujah" and "praise the Lord." But in reality, it was all just lip service. In their hearts, they did not honor God. They were distant from Him.

This is a perfect description of empty religion. Of many people who even this week will go to church. They will stand when they're supposed to, read the responsive reading, sing the songs, and maybe even put money in the offering plate. But it's all lip service. They are drawing near to God in word only.

They have no concept of the reality of God, and certainly don't have reverence for Him. They are just practicing tradition they've learned by repetition.

Certainly it is easy for us to sit back and say, "What a terrible thing. I know Catholics like this. I know Lutherans in this kind of practice. They don't understand what they're doing, and don't have any kind of emotion involved. They only do this because it's what they're supposed to do, and they certainly don't have a personal relationship with Christ."

But we don't have to turn to the ancient practices of the liturgical church to see this demonstrated to us. We can see it even in our own midst. How many who will be here next Sunday will sing the words to the worship songs while not worshipping God? How many will listen to the Bible study, yet have absolutely no intention of applying to their own lives what is taught? How many will say "praise the Lord," but won't?

³⁶ <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

Religious tradition and repetition of any sort can be dangerous. Oh, there's nothing wrong with the words to a beautifully written prayer, but if it becomes mindless repetition, it becomes empty. Jesus said,

Matt. 6:7 "...when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words."

And there's nothing wrong with the hymns and praise choruses that exalt God, at least until we begin to simply sing them like we sing along with the radio in the car. At that point, they become just as empty as if we were singing "Louie Louie."

God's warning to the Jews to avoid this state included a preventative measure:

Deut. 6:17-25 "You should diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you. You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore to give your fathers, by driving out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken. When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the LORD our God commanded you?' then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand. Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household; He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.' So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today. It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us."

We need to continually be asking ourselves, "Why do we do this? What purpose does it serve? Am I simply going through the motions, or is this genuine before the Lord?" Are you connected to God tonight? Do you have a heart for Him? Do you love Him? Do you love the opportunity to hear from Him and be with Him? Or do you just sing and read and come to church out of traditional habit?

The Jews had lost that. And in order to get them back to the place of being near to Him, God was going to make things terribly difficult for them. They would no longer be led by priests going through the motions, or teachers giving them the traditional, canned sermons. They would be in desperation, crying out to Him in prayer for deliverance. They would truly seek Him for the first time in a long time.³⁷

¹⁴Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, *even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.*

Quoted in 1Cor. 1:19.

God's Marvelous Work

Since men serve and honor Me just with their lips and not from their heart, I will proceed with a marvelous work and a wonder that will either wake them up or cause them to perish (Isa. 29:14). This marvelous work and a wonder was none other than the gospel work of the N.T. -- teaching, preaching, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people; the creation of new

³⁷ <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah2901.php>

lives; and the full program as demonstrated and recorded of Christ and His followers (Isa. 29:14; Hab. 1:5; Acts 13:40-41). This work of wonder is referred to many times in the N.T. (Mt. 15:31; Mk. 6:51; Lk. 4:22; 8:25; 9:43; 11:14; Acts 8:13; 13:40-41). Not only did the miracles and signs of the gospel make men wonder, but they caused some to resist to the point of seeming madness and their own destruction; and the new doctrines taught caused the wise of the world to stumble, harden their hearts, and be lost (1Cor. 1:18-31). Such a program was a savor of life unto life in those who conformed to the gospel, as well as a savor of death unto death in those who rejected it (2Cor. 2:15-17).³⁸

¹⁵Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

Woe # 3 of 6 (28:1; 29:1, 15; 30:4; 31:1; 33:1).

The third woe oracle, directed against Israel's unbelieving counselors, consists of an accusation that the counselors had turned the religious world upside down by seeking to manipulate God rather than submitting to Him (vv. 15, 16), and the promise that God would turn the counselor's social world upside down by deflating the pretentious and elevating the lowly (vv. 17-24).³⁹

Woe to those who seek to hide their plans from God and carry on wickedness in the dark, thinking that they won't be seen or known. This defines a hypocrite as one who attempts to deceive God and man (cp. Mt. 23).⁴⁰

Things are so serious for His people that He puts in another "Woe" here. This chapter contains two woes because (1) the people act as if God does not see or know, and (2) they act as if they are getting by with it.⁴¹

Thinking God couldn't see them and didn't know what was happening, the people of Jerusalem tried to hide their plans from him. How strange that so many people think they can hide from God. In Psalm 139 we learn that God has examined us and knows everything about us. Would you be embarrassed if your best friends knew your personal thoughts? Remember that God knows all of them.⁴²

¹⁶Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

Cf. Rom 9:19-22; Job 33:13; 1 Cor 1:26.

³⁸ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

³⁹ The Nelson Study Bible

⁴⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁴¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁴² Life Application Study Bible.

Your perversion of things makes it appear that the potter is the clay, or no more qualified than the clay to form anything. You seem to think that God knows nothing of your deceptions, but He does (Heb. 4:12-13).⁴³

17Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?

A promise of sanctification to the godly.

Six blessings of the Millennium:

1. Lebanon (which was then perhaps uncultivated) shall be turned into a fruitful field (Isa. 29:17; 35:1-2).
2. The fruitful (cultivated) field shall become more fruitful and as a forest (Isa. 29:17; 35:1-3).
3. The deaf shall hear the words of the book (Isa. 29:18; 35:5; cp. Isa. 29:10-12).
4. The blind shall see (Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:16).
5. The meek shall have their joy increased in the Lord (Isa. 29:19; Ps. 37:11; Mt. 5:5).
6. The poor shall rejoice in the Lord (Isa. 29:19) and be prosperous (Mic. 4:4).⁴⁴

Now we see into the future. The time will come when there will be honor and glory in Jerusalem and in the land. God is not through with that city. Today it looks like a layer cake with one city built on top of the other. God has judged them, and He will judge them again. But Jerusalem will be rebuilt once again, and then it will be the city of God.⁴⁵

17-21) Sight for the spiritually blind, justice for the wicked.

Is it not yet a very little while: God's restoration will come, and all things considered, it is in a very little while. It may not seem so to us when we are in the midst of a trial, but it is true.

Till Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest? Lebanon was know for its mighty forests, which would be brought low and turned into a fruitful field. On the other hand, the fruitful field would become as a forest. God would cut one down and raise another up.

A "proverbial saying, expressing any great revolution of things; and, when respecting two subjects, and entire reciprocal change." (Clarke)

The deaf shall hear . . . the eyes of the blind shall see: When God's people are restored, pride no longer prevents them from hearing God's word or seeing God's work. Just as much as these are miracles in the natural realm, they are miracles in the spiritual realm also. We need to humbly seek God for ears to hear and eyes to see.

The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD: Joy is the proper reward for the humble. When we are humble - having an accurate estimation of ourselves, and a proper perspective of ourselves in relation to God and others - our lives are filled with the most joy.

The humble and the poor have their joy in the LORD. He is a constant source of joy that can never be taken away!

⁴³ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁴⁴ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁴⁵ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Pride is the enemy of joy. We can be proud and have fun, we can be proud and have success, we can be proud and experience excitement, and we can be proud and be happy because of happy circumstances. But we cannot be proud and have joy in the LORD, or to whatever degree we are proud, we are missing joy in the LORD. The proud can never have joy in the LORD if they are in humble or poor circumstances.

The terrible one is brought to nothing: The work of the LORD does not stop at restoring His corrected people. It extends to bringing justice upon the wicked. Singled out for judgment by the prophet are those who have no sense of proportion or justice: Who make a man an offender by a word . . . turn aside the just for a thing of naught.⁴⁶

¹⁸And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

And in that day -- the Millennium -- all will be healed (Isa. 33:24; 35:3-6).

¹⁹The meek also shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

You have heard the old bromide, "No one is so blind as those who will not see." Today, as in Isaiah's day, there is a willful blindness. In that day, in the Millennium, they are going to see.⁴⁷

²⁰For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off:

Three classes judged:

1. The terrible one (the Antichrist, that wicked one; 2Th. 2:8)
2. The scorner is consumed.
3. The wicked are all cut off (2Th. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14-15).⁴⁸

²¹That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

Three things the wicked do to others:

1. They make people offend in word, or give false evidence.
2. They lay snares for the righteous and pervert judges.
3. They turn the just aside for reward, and defraud men for a thing of nought.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ <http://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

⁴⁷ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁴⁸ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁴⁹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

22Therefore thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

Abraham was redeemed by faith, the same as all other redeemed ones (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4).

[Jacob] The prophecy here was from the God of Abraham to Jacob, predicting that in the Millennium he would enjoy six blessings:

1. He will not be ashamed.
2. His face will not wax pale.
3. His descendants will sanctify God and His name, that is, set them apart in reverence (Isa. 29:23).
4. They will fear the God of Israel.
5. They will come to understanding (Isa. 29:24).
6. The murmurers among them will learn doctrine.

This has never been literally fulfilled with Israel as a nation, so it must refer to the time of the Messiah.⁵⁰

[now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale] Here Jacob is referred to as the ancestor of the Jews, looking down on them and noting their lives. Their conduct wouldn't make a father proud. Their history had been one of shame; but now it was predicted that Jacob would be ashamed no more. He would look upon his vast household with pride; he would see God's redeeming work in their lives; and they, in the Millennium, would sanctify God and His holy name, fear Him, and come to understand sound doctrine (Isa. 29:22-24).⁵¹

What are they going to do with the name of God? They are going to make it holy -- they are going to set it apart as something wonderful. Today, God's people, by their lives, should sanctify the name of God. It is a holy name -- but do we treat it that way?⁵²

(22-24) The restoration of God's people.

Jacob shall not now be ashamed: Significantly, God addresses His people as Jacob in this promise of restoration. The name Jacob, given to the father of the 12 tribes, is not complimentary. It has the idea of a "con-man" or a "trickster." Anyone who is really a Jacob, has good reason to be ashamed, but when God restores His people, even the "Jacobs" shall not now be ashamed.

When he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst, they will hallow My name: The picture is of the patriarch Jacob looking over his descendants, and no longer being ashamed of them, because they now hallow the name of the LORD, and respect the holiness of the LORD.

These also who erred in spirit will come to understanding, and those who murmured will learn doctrine: Finally, in God's day of restoration, the truth is taught and known and exalted.

⁵⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁵¹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁵² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Those who erred in spirit now have understanding, and those who murmured know better because they know the truth.⁵³

23But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

The true meaning of sanctify is "set apart." It is not the removal of "the old man," for there is no "old man" in God or His name.

My hands: God Himself will bring about the redemption of His people. Holy One of Jacob refers to the One whom Jacob regarded as holy; it is a variant of the expression "Holy One of Israel."

The Lord would halt the downward course of the history of Jacob's family, and transform them. The Israelites would at last confess their God as holy and acknowledge His holiness as central in their lives. They would be fruitful rather than barren. The text gives no basis for interpreting the people in view as the spiritual seed of Jacob, the church. "It is awe inspired by wondering gratitude that will bring about this profound sense of 'the godhood of God.' It is this deep awareness of God's goodness to them as a nation that will produce a penitent and receptive spirit in those formerly wayward and complaining."⁵⁴

24They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

Those who are the work of God's hands, the Israelites, will demonstrate steadfastness in their lives. Their formerly incorrect understanding will be straightened out. Those who have been critical, feeling superior, will accept instruction. Deliverance leads to praise, which results in understanding, just as lack of understanding leads to pride resulting in judgment.

"Just as Abraham was separated from the human race that was sunk in heathenism, to become the ancestor of a nation of Jehovah, so would a remnant be separated from the great mass of Israel that was sunk in apostasy from Jehovah; and this remnant would be the foundation of a holy community well pleasing to God."

When will all this happen? It will happen in "just a little while" (v. 17), "on that day" (v. 18), a day yet future but not specifically identified in the context. Since it has not happened yet, and since similar changes accompany Jesus Christ's millennial reign, that seems to be the day in view.

"The Redeemer will surely bring to pass his perfect plan for Israel, and forge them into a godly and reverent people, after they have repented and opened their hearts to the truth of Christ." (Archer p.630)⁵⁵

⁵³ <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-29.html>

⁵⁴ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁵⁵ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

This chapter says a great deal about spiritual blindness:

- Spiritual blindness is caused by pride.
- Spiritual blindness will bring us low.
- Spiritual blindness leads to spiritual drunkenness.
- Spiritual blindness leads to spiritual sleep.
- Spiritual blindness leads to spiritual illiteracy.
- Spiritual blindness causes hypocrisy.
- Spiritual blindness makes men believe God cannot know what they think or see what they do.
- Spiritual blindness makes men deny God as Creator.
- Spiritual blindness is cured through humility.
- Spiritual blindness can only be healed through the LORD's restoration.

The conclusion: The coming siege of Jerusalem will result in a revival of knowledge of God and in the faith in the purpose of God. The same thing happens in all God's dealings with men. They are not able to hide their unbelief. In spite of them there are days of blessings coming in the future that God has promised. Evil men just as Sennacherib will disappear and their hopes will have been frustrated. The innocent who now suffer will have their faith in God justified and just as God led and blessed Abraham so will he now deliver the house of Israel from the hands of the Assyrians. When those who have endured this siege see the next generation they will remember God's goodness and even the doubters will come to faith and study to know more about God.

In the next three "woes" (chs. 30—33) Isaiah became more specific. In the first three (chs. 28—29) he stressed principles of God's dealings with His people, but in these last three (chs. 30—33) he applied the principles to the historical situation they faced. However, there is a blending of historical and eschatological emphases in these "woes."