

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 66

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Jerusalem Temple Destroyed by David Roberts cir. 1850

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The Book of Isaiah

Message Sixty-Six

THE LORD PROPHECIES THE TEMPLE'S DESTRUCTION

May 24, 2020

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Isaiah 29:1-8

¹Ho Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped! add ye year to year; let the feasts come round: ²then will I distress Ariel, and there shall be mourning and lamentation; and she shall be unto me as Ariel. ³And I will encamp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with posted troops, and I will raise siege works against thee. 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.

⁵But the multitude of thy foes shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be in an instant suddenly. ⁶She shall be visited of Jehovah of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire. ⁷And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her stronghold, and that distress her, shall be as a dream, a vision of the night. ⁸And it shall be as when a 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 (ASV, 1901).

INTRODUCTION

Immediately after the Lord explained His methodologies of correction on His children, He now begins to give a prophecy of how He will take down the Second Temple which occurred in 70 AD and the final assault of Jerusalem in the Campaign of Armageddon. The moral of the parable given in chapter 28 is: God's admonitions are likened to plowing, and His punishments to sowing. Just as a farmer will not plow continuously without planting, so God will not warn endlessly until He is ready to carry out His threats. However, the purpose of His punishment is to prompt sinners to realize their sins, and repent. The degree of punishment varies according to the people's receptivity. From verse nine on He will explain why He is causing the Temple to be destroyed and what will quickly happen in the final assault of Jerusalem.

ARIEL

Isaiah 29:1–2

¹Ho Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped! add ye year to year; let the feasts come round: ²then will I distress Ariel, and there shall be mourning and lamentation; and she shall be unto me as Ariel (ASV, 1901).

The Lord now looks at a city that belongs to Him. He calls it Ariel, but its name is most commonly known as Jerusalem. He calls it Ariel, which is a symbolic name, which lends itself to a play on words referring to God and the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:9). The word Ariel is a compound word *aree* or *areeah* which is lion and *El* which means God in Hebrew. So, Ariel is a combination of, lion, and God, hence '*Lion of God.*' There are two different renderings of the word: first in II Samuel 23: 20: "*lions of God.*" This gives the simplest and most direct meaning of Ariel "the lion of God." It is also rendered "altar;" in Ezekiel 43: 16. There the first part of the compound word, "*aree*" is rendered "altar;" and the whole may also be translated, "*altar of God,*" as the place upon which the fire of God will be kindled. Since this fire was thought to be in the form of a lion, the altar upon which it settled was called Ariel. Fire in many instances in the Bible is one of the means God uses for judgment. The Mishnah interprets it as referring to the *Heichal*, the main structure of the Temple, in which the inner Altar, the Table, and the Menorah were situated. Its inner chamber was the Holy of Holies, which housed the Holy Ark and the Cherubim. This structure measured seventy cubits by seventy cubits. Before its entrance was the *ullam* which was the porch, and that measured one hundred cubits in the length, by sixteen cubits in the width. The length of the *ullam* was set against the width of the Heichal, extending fifteen cubits on each side, which gave it the appearance of a lion, wide in front and narrow in the rear. The declaration that it was the city where David dwelt, as well as the entire scope of the prophecy, supports this.

Woe to Ariel Ariel, the repetition is used for emphasis to note coming lamentation. The use of it doubled up is as the Lord Jesus used it Himself.

Matthew 23:37–39

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not? ³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. ³⁹ For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord (KJV).

Despite Jerusalem's sacred character as "Ariel" ("the lion of God"), and is associated with David, a type of Jerusalem's great Deliverer the Lord Jesus ("*the Lion of the tribe of Judah, The Root of David*" Revelation 5:5), the Lord Himself, through His means of chastening (Israel's foes, particularly her last-day enemies), will encamp against her, as David did against the Jebusites (II Samuel 5:7-9).

Zechariah 12:9

"⁹And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." (ASV, 1901)

God also said that He will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling or as the King James translates it a cup of trembling.

Zechariah 12:1-3

“¹ The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus saith Jehovah, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: ²behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about, and upon Judah also shall it be in the siege against Jerusalem. ³And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it.” (ASV, 1901)

A cup of “reeling” means a cup filled with an intoxicating drink that will cause anyone who drinks it to reel or stagger. This particular siege takes place in the future when all nations come against Jerusalem in battle. Further, He uses the term “burdensome stone” in His description of Jerusalem to give the reader the sense of lifting a very heavy stone. It will cause grievous injuries to those who try and lift it.

The divine penalty for the nations that try and lift this stone (Jerusalem) is that they will suffer sprains or dislocation and tear themselves to pieces. So even though God will protect and defend His city Ariel or Jerusalem He will nevertheless bring a siege against it to punish the nation Israel in 70 AD and in the Campaign of Armageddon to bring the nation Israel into belief of her Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

The use of David’s name, and of his conquering, living, and ruling there, is not only to point out what city is meant, and the greatness and glory of it, but also to shew that this would not keep it from ruin and destruction. The prophet Isaiah contrasts David’s sacrifices, which were acceptable to God, with those of his generation, which were not.

Then *add ye year to year*; which here is meant a large measure of time. The sense is, go on from year to year in your security and vain confidence; or keep your yearly feasts, and offer your yearly sacrifices; as follows: *let them kill sacrifices*; the daily and yearly sacrifices; let the people bring them, and the priests offer them, for the time is coming when an end will be put to them; *the feasts shall be cut off*; so the words may be rendered; the festivals shall cease, and be no more observed. This will happen when the Romans took down the Temple in the siege of Jerusalem, Cir. 66–70 AD and at the final assault of Jerusalem at the end of the Tribulation.

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

Isaiah 29:3–4

³And I will encamp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with posted troops, and I will raise siege works against thee. 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.

Jerusalem was the city of God’s altar-hearth, or sanctuary where year the feasts (Leviticus 23:1-44) were meticulously observed on schedule and will so be observed in the Messianic Kingdom (Ezekiel 43:19—46:24). This does not refer to any previous siege, because until the Romans there was not raised

a siege against the city, or an arrow shot into it until the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, as related by Josephus: *and I will raise siege works against thee*; from there they were enabled to batter the city. Because only the Romans had their battering-rams.

Now, on the next night, a most surprising disturbance fell upon the Romans; (292) for whereas Titus had given orders for the erection of three towers, of fifty cubits high, that by setting men upon them at every bank, he might from thence drive those away who were upon the wall, it so happened that one of these towers fell down about midnight; (293) and as its fall made a very great noise, fear fell upon the army, and they, supposing that the enemy was coming to attack them, ran all to their arms. (294) Whereupon a disturbance and a tumult arose among the legions, and as nobody could tell what had happened, they went on after a disconsolate manner; and seeing no enemy appear, they were afraid one of another, (295) and everyone demanded of his neighbor the watchword with great earnestness, as though the Jews had invaded their camp. And now they were like people under a panic fear, till Titus was informed of what had happened, and gave orders that all should be acquainted with it; and then, though with some difficulty, they got clear of the disturbance they had been under. Now, these towers were very troublesome to the Jews, who otherwise opposed the Romans very courageously; for they shot at them out of their lighter engines from those towers, as they did also by those that threw darts, and the archers, and those that slung stones. (297) For neither could the Jews reach those that were over them, by reason of their height; and it was not practicable to take them, nor to overturn them, they were so heavy, nor to set them on fire, because they were covered with plates of iron. (298) So they retired out of the reach of the darts, and did no longer endeavor to hinder the impression of their rams, which, by continually beating upon the wall, did gradually prevail against it;¹

And thou shalt be brought down to the ground, and laid level with it, which occurred to the city of Jerusalem, by the Romans, that was predicted by Christ it would, (Luke 19:44).

This is it is expressing some of the results of the great famine in Jerusalem, at the time of its siege by the Romans. The inhabitants were so paralyzed by it, they were hardly able to speak and could not stand up erect, but fell to the ground, and lay in the dust, muttering in a faint and feeble voice: *and thy voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust*; To emphasize how completely the people will fall, the prophet states that when the city's people speak their voice will be like that of a demonic spirit and its words as mutterings that come from the depths earth. The demonic spirit is really one that does not belong to this earth, for it does not speak with a clear voice, but only with mutterings. Such will be the voice of Judah. Once Judah was filled with the voice of scorn and mocking the Lord. But, now it's voice will be like the whispering of shades (Isaiah 8:19). A spirit without flesh or bones cannot speak with a loud voice, nor will Judah when she is fallen. Gone will be the voice of arrogance; in its place, the voice of the one in humiliation. The only sound they will make are the peep and chirp, as little birds. Which is what those spoke that had familiar spirits. This will be just like the wicked oracles are spoken, as if they came out of the bellies of those that spoke, or out of caves and hollow places in the earth; and this was in just retaliation to these people, who imitated such practices, and made use of such spirits (Isaiah 8:19).

THE FINAL BATTLE

¹ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). [*The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*](#) (p. 712). Peabody: Hendrickson.

Isaiah 29:5–8

⁵But the multitude of thy foes shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be in an instant suddenly. ⁶She shall be visited of Jehovah of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire. ⁷And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her stronghold, and that distress her, shall be as a dream, a vision of the night ⁸And it shall be as when a 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 (ASV, 1901).

The word *foes* should be read in the general sense of enemies, but understand the simile as just describing their numbers and strength of attack. It is apparent that the verse describes their sudden and complete dispersion.

Isaiah expresses the suddenness with which the enemy will be dispersed. In this discourse, directed against Ariel the terms are in themselves appropriate to any case of sudden and complete dispersion. But the basis for the last part of the chapter, contains a strong metaphorical description of the evils which Jerusalem will suffer at the hands of enemies, but seemingly without exclusive reference to any one siege. However, it is most appropriate to refer this to the final siege of Jerusalem when all armies of the world come again the city and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus disperses them *quickly*.

Near the end of the last battle, the Campaign of Armageddon, the victory of Jerusalem will be the battle between Messiah and the Antichrist will first begin at Bozrah, it will continue all the way back to the eastern walls of Jerusalem, which overlook a section of the Kidron Valley, also known in ancient times as the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

Joel 3:12–13

¹²Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. ¹³Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great (ASV, 1901).

Among the very first casualties will be the Antichrist himself. Having ruled the world with great power and having spoken against the true Son of God, the counterfeit son will be powerless before the True Son. He also will be dealt with quickly in keeping with the passages in Isaiah 29:5–8.

The quickness with which Jesus will slay the Antichrist is described in II Thessalonians.

II Thessalonians 2:89

⁸And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; ⁹even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders (KJV).

After the death of the Antichrist, the slaughter of his army will continue. The Messiah will march through the land in indignation and tread the nations with His feet, causing blood to be sprinkled on His garments. Zechariah describes the manner in which these massive hordes of Antichrist's armies will be destroyed.

Zechariah 14:12–15

¹²And this shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. ¹³And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. ¹⁴And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. ¹⁵And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as that plague (ASV, 1901).

In this manner, the fight continues all the way back to Jerusalem, coming to an end in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:12–13). The nations that have gathered against the Jews (Joel 3:9–11) will now find themselves being trodden by the King of the Jews. It is of this treading in the Valley of Jehoshaphat that Revelation 14 refers.

Revelation 14:19–20

¹⁹ And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs (KJV).

The city spoken of in these verses is Jerusalem, and the winepress is just outside the city, meaning it is in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. From here the armies of the Antichrist will leave for Bozrah, and they will return here as the conflict comes to an end. The blood of the remnants of the battle stretches for 1,600 furlongs, which is approximately two hundred miles. The two hundred miles refers to the entire area from the Valley of Armageddon to Bozrah, which is about two hundred miles. The fighting will begin at Jerusalem and move to Bozrah (100 miles), and with the Second Coming, will return back from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (another 100 miles). This all happens quickly as the Lord Jesus reclaims His earth.

NEXT MESSAGE: REASONS FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

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