

Title: **LEARNING FROM THE REPROBATE**

Text: Isaiah 29:1-24

Subject: *Learning from God's Judgments*

Date: Tuesday Evening — July 2, 2019

Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Rex Bartley*

Introduction:

As God the Holy Ghost will enable me, I want to preach to you tonight about — **LEARNING FROM THE REPROBATE**. — That's my subject. — **LEARNING FROM THE REPROBATE**. Our text will be the 29th chapter of the Gospel of Isaiah — (Isaiah 29:1-24).

A REPROBATE AGE

Without question, we are living in a reprobate age. Ours is a generation under the judgment of God. The spirit of antichrist is so thick in this generation of will-worship religion that you can cut it with a knife! Read the first chapter of Romans and tell me that I am mistaken! The marks of divine judgment are evident throughout our society.

- Spiritual Blindness (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12)

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- Moral Decadence — Adultery, Fornication, Sodomy (Romans 1:27-28)
- Self-Serving Chaos and Rebellion (Romans 1:29-32).

These things are the results of what the Spirit of God calls “will-worship,” putting man in the place of God, freewill, works religion, religion that debases the character of God and exalts the dignity of man (Colossians 2:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:4). The more thoroughly convinced men are that salvation depends upon them the more vile they become!

If we could outlaw abortion, shut down the peddlers of pornography and smut, close every brothel, banish all drugs from our culture, and eradicate sodomites from the world, it would not move our generation one step closer to God. Our problem is much deeper than these things. They are only the branches. The root is in the wicked heart of man. Nothing can deliver us from the judgment of God but the grace of God.

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BIBLE DOCTRINE

Most religious people have never heard the word “reprobation,” let alone heard a sermon on the subject. But reprobation is clearly taught in Holy Scripture. I hope you will see, before I am done, that it is a doctrine which should fill our hearts with praise to God our Savior, the Triune Jehovah.

- **Election** is God’s choice of some to eternal salvation in Christ. — **Reprobation** is God’s passing by, not choosing others.
- **Predestination** is God’s sovereign, eternal purpose of grace toward and for his elect. — **Reprobation** is God leaving all others to themselves.
- **Salvation** is God’s mighty, wondrous work and operation of grace for, in, and upon his chosen. — **Reprobation** is God abandoning others to themselves.
- **Election** is God loving Jacob and all the sons and daughters of Jacob. — **Reprobation** is God hating Esau and all the children of Esau.

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- **Eternal life** is God refusing to leave you alone. — **Reprobation** is God leaving you alone.
- **Salvation** is God not leaving you to your will, your choice, and your way. — **Reprobation** is God leaving you to your will, your choice, and your way.
- **Grace** is God preparing “*vessels of mercy*” for heaven by giving us eternal life and creating in us faith in Christ. — **Reprobation** is God’s judgment upon “*vessels of wrath*” who fit themselves for destruction by their willful rebellion and unbelief.

ARIEL JUDGED

Isaiah 29 is Isaiah’s prophecy against Ariel. Ariel is Jerusalem, the city of God, “*the city where David dwelt!*” Ariel (Jerusalem) was the place of divine worship. The temple of God was there. The ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the holy place were there. There the priests of God offered sacrifices according to the law of God at the appointed times. Ariel (Jerusalem) was the mountain of the Lord’s house.

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Ariel (Jerusalem) was the place of blessing. This was “*the city where David dwelt!*”

But now Isaiah has a message of judgment from God to deliver to Ariel. It is a message not of mercy, but of wrath — “*Woe to Ariel, to Ariel!*”

The prophet himself seems to have been astonished by the message of woe he had to deliver. It is a message of wrath, not upon barbarians, but upon his own brethren; not to pagans, but to the people of God; not to Egypt, but to Israel; not to the Chaldeans, but to the church of God! — “*Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt!*”

1. **In this chapter the prophet of God warned Jerusalem of God’s wrath against the city** (vv. 1-6).

The Assyrians were about to come upon them to destroy them. And this army of godless pagans was but an instrument in the hands of God, used by him to accomplish his own purpose against Jerusalem.

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(Isaiah 29:1-6) Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city *where* David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices. (2) Yet **I will distress Ariel**, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. (3) And **I will camp against thee round about**, and will **lay siege against thee** with a mount, and I will **raise forts against** thee. (4) And 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. (5) Moreover 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. (6) **Thou 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.**

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The Lord God says to Jerusalem, “*I will distress Ariel...I will camp against thee...I will raise forts against thee...Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts!*”

“He that hath ears to hear, let them hear what the Spirit saith!” — God almighty is absolutely sovereign, reigning even over the thoughts, intents, and actions of ungodly men. — “*Shall there be evil in the city and the LORD hath not done it?*” (Amos 3:6)

Illustration: *Shimei* (2 Samuel 16:5-14)

Whatever comes to pass in our lives is by the hand of God.

2. **Though his judgment would be severe, the Lord Jehovah would not allow the Assyrians to totally destroy Jerusalem for his elect’s sake** (vv. 7-8).

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(Isaiah 29:7-8) And 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. (8) It 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.

In wrath God always remembers mercy! He will not destroy the righteous with the wicked. Because there was an elect remnant among the people of Jerusalem God spared the city. The raging monster of Assyria could go no further than God allowed. He was turned away hungry, thirsty and faint.

“So shall the multitude of all nations be that fight against Zion.” — God often uses wicked men and evil things to purge his church, to separate the precious from the vile. But he will allow none to

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harm his church. — “*He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye*” (Zechariah 2:8).

Illustration: *Strife, Division, Heresy*
(1 Corinthians 11:19).

It is the purpose of God to save his elect, the “*remnant according to the election of grace.*” And for the elects’ sake he does not utterly destroy the rest of the world immediately (2 Peter 3:9).

3. **It was because they would not hear his Word, repent of their sins, and return to him, that the Lord God sent spiritual blindness upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem** (vv. 9-16). — **Divine judgment is always a matter of just and righteous retribution.**

(Isaiah 29:9-16) Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. (10) For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your

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eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. (11) And 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: (12) And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. (13) Wherefore 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:** (14) **Therefore, 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.** (15) Woe 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? (16) Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the

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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?

The darkness increased as the years rolled by, so that when God's own Son came into the world, preached in the streets of Jerusalem, and performed miracles before their eyes, they could not see. — And this blindness remains upon them to this day — (John 12:37-41; Romans 11:7-10).

(John 12:37-41) Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: (38) That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? (39) Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, (40) He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. (41)

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These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

(Romans 11:7-11) What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; **but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded** (8) (According as it is written, **God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;**) **unto this day.** (9) And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: (10) Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

The blindness of the reprobate is the work of God against men and women who refuse to walk in the light he has given them.

4. **Yet, the Lord promises that he will preserve, save, keep, and instruct his covenant people** (vv. 17-24).

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(Isaiah 29:17-24) *Is 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? (18) And 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. (19) The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. (20) For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: (21) That 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.*

(22) Therefore 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. (23) But 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,

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and shall fear the God of Israel. (24) They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

There is more here than a hint of this Gospel Age and the gathering of God's elect from among the Gentiles. Lebanon, the Gentile world, had been a forest and Jerusalem a fruitful field. But God made Jerusalem a dark forest and the Gentile world a fruitful field, a field "*white unto harvest.*"

LESSONS FOR US

What are we to learn from this prophecy concerning Ariel? What are the spiritual lessons contained in this chapter for us? — **4 THINGS.**

RELIGIOUS RITUALISM

1st — **When religion degenerates into ritualism, it provokes God to wrath** (vv. 1-6). Religion is the worship of God. But when religion degenerates into

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ritualism, a mere form of godliness, without the power of godliness (the gospel) or the Spirit of God, it is an abomination to God, which he will not tolerate. — **God hates self-righteous, Christless, works religion!**

The name here given to Jerusalem, “Ariel,” means “the lion of God.” That is what Jerusalem once was, a place of power, dominion, fearlessness, and triumph. But now it only had the form of a lion, at which everyone laughed!

Jerusalem had been the city of David, rich, prosperous, powerful. How she was blessed of God! But now she only had David’s name!

The inhabitants of Jerusalem meticulously kept the ordinances of divine worship. Sabbaths, sacrifices, and ceremonies were strictly maintained. But there was no heart worship. — No faith in Christ — Only hypocrisy and the traditions of men (v. 13; Matthew 15:8-9).

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(Isaiah 29:13) Wherefore 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.

(Matthew 15:8-9) This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. (9) But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

Nothing is more obnoxious and revolting to the thrice holy God than empty, vain religious ritualism and self-righteousness (Isaiah 1:10-15; 66:1-4). Religion without the Spirit of God is deadly! **I pray with David**, “*Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me*” (Psalm 51:11).

GREAT DANGER

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Let me speak plainly to you. We have the truth of God — The Gospel of Christ. And we have the ordinances of God — Baptism, the Lord's Supper. We even have our lineage from the saints of God — Despised Anabaptists, the Reformers, the Puritans, Bunyan, Gill, Toplady, Hawker, etc. But...

- We are in danger of losing the Spirit of God, we are in danger of our religion degenerating into empty ritualism **when we begin to experience no blessing or benefit from the reading or preaching of the Word of God.**

When the Word of God ceases to convict, rebuke, burn in my heart, and cause me to rejoice in Christ, then God is not speaking to me and I am in serious trouble.

- We are in danger of losing the Spirit of God, we are in danger of our religion degenerating into empty ritualism **when we begin to feel satisfied with our spiritual progress and growth in the grace and knowledge of God.**

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- We are in danger of losing the Spirit of God, we are in danger of our religion degenerating into empty ritualism **when we can absent ourselves from the fellowship of believers and the worship of God without feeling a great loss and an empty heart.** — A man who can be warmed by his own fire is either dead or dying spiritually.
- We are in danger of losing the Spirit of God, we are in danger of our religion degenerating into empty ritualism **when we begin to be critics, finding fault with others, setting ourselves up as judges of others.**

The Spirit of God teaches men to think of themselves as “*less than the least of all saints*” and “*the chief of sinners.*” When the Spirit of God is not present, we become self-righteous judges and faultfinders.

- We are in danger of losing the Spirit of God, we are in danger of our religion degenerating into

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empty ritualism **when our souls are not vexed with sin — our own sin!**

When the sin within us does not make us shudder and the sin around us does not make us weep, when we become comfortable in the company of those who never knew our God, when we conform to the ways of unregenerate men, living for gain, then the light of God is either dim or extinguished in us.

- We are in danger of losing the Spirit of God, we are in danger of our religion degenerating into empty ritualism **when we become self-centered and the welfare, well-being, and joy of others is of no great concern to us.**

Selfishness is not of God! Self-centeredness is not of God! The heart filled with God's mercy, love, and grace dwells on others, finding happiness in their happiness.

When religion degenerates into ritualism and self-righteousness it provokes God to wrath. Religion

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without Christ provokes God to wrath. — That is the first lesson we learn for reprobate Ariel. Remember our Lord's warnings to the churches (Revelation 2-3).

ZION SECURE

2nd — Satan, the world, and hell may disturb and even destroy religious people, churches, and denominations, but nothing can harm the church of God (vv. 7-8). The Assyrians destroyed Jerusalem, but not Zion (Isaiah 54:17). — Nothing shall harm God's elect. Nothing will injure God's church. Nothing will overthrow God's purpose and God's kingdom.

(Isaiah 54:17) No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

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You will be wise not to fight against —

- God's Truth.
- God's Church.
- God's Messenger.

To do so is to fight against God!

Illustration: *Gamaliel* (Acts 5:38-39)

(Acts 5:38-39) And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: (39) But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

GIVEN OVER

3rd — Men and women forsaken by God are utterly without hope, lost in the vain delusions of religious darkness (vv. 9-16). This is an astonishing thing in the eyes of men, but it is a fact. — God gives men and women up to a reprobate mind who refuse to hear and obey the gospel (Proverbs 1:23-

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33; 29:1). — **When God gives men over to themselves in reprobation, they are damned while they live and shall be damned forever.**

Illustration: *Ephraim* (Hosea 4:17).

Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37-38).

(Proverbs 1:23-33) Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. (24) **Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;** (25) **But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:** (26) I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; (27) When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. (28) **Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:** (29) **For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:** (30) **They would none of**

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my counsel: they despised all my reproof. (31)
Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.
(32) For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. (33) But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

(Proverbs 29:1) He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

You and I are living in the midst of an apostate, reprobate generation (2 Timothy 3:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

(2 Timothy 3:1-13) This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. (2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, (3) Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers,

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incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, (4) Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; (5) **Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof**: from such turn away. (6) For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, (7) **Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.** (8) Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. (9) But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was. (10) But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, (11) Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. (12) Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (13) But evil men and seducers shall

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wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

(2 Thessalonians 2:1-12) Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, (2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (5) Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. (8) And then shall that Wicked be revealed,

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whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (9) *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.** (11) And **for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:** (12) **That they all might be damned who believed not the truth,** but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

But God has been gracious to us (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:9).

(2 Thessalonians 2:13-17) But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to

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the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (15) Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. (16) Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, (17) Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

(1 Thessalonians 5:9) For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

If God has crossed your path, you will be wise to bow to him while you have the opportunity. — *“Today is the day of salvation.”* **Enter into the Ark before God shuts the door in your face.** He says, *“My Spirit shall not always strive with man.”*

Illustration: In Noah’s day, not a drop of rain had fallen when God shut the door of the ark (Matthew 25:1-10; Luke 13:24-25).

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(Matthew 25:1-10) Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. (2) And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. (3) **They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:** (4) But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. (5) While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. (6) And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. (7) Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. (9) But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. (10) And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and **the door was shut.**

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(Luke 13:24-25) Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. (25) When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are.

There is one thing that always characterizes reprobate men and women. — They never imagine that they are reprobate!

PREVAILING GRACE

4th — **God's purpose of grace shall not be defeated by man's unbelief** (vv. 17-24). What sweet and blessed promises God makes to his elect, even as he asserts the certainty of his wrath upon the reprobate! In the day of his grace “*the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped*” (Isaiah 35:5; Matthew 11:5).

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(Isaiah 29:18-19) And 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. (19) The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

(Isaiah 29:20-24) For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: (21) That 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.

(22) Therefore 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. (23) But 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. (24) They also that erred in spirit shall come to

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understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

Some believe and some believe not. But God's purpose is unaffected. *"The foundation of God standeth sure. The Lord knoweth them that are his"* (2 Timothy 2:19; Romans 3:3-4). And he will save them everyone.

(Romans 3:3-4) For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? (4) God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

Who are God's elect?

- The Deaf who Hear.
- The Blind who See.
- The Meek who Rejoice.
- The Redeemed!
- The Children of Abraham — Children of Covenant Mercy!

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- The Work of God's Hands (Ephesians 2:10).
- Those who Sanctify God and Fear Him.
- Erring Ones who Come to Understanding.
- Ignorant, Murmuring Ones who are Taught of God.

APPLICATION

Oh, Spirit of God, give us grace to learn from the reprobate!

1. God hates self-righteous, Christless, works religion!
2. Nothing shall harm God's elect. Nothing will injure God's church. Nothing will overthrow God's purpose and God's kingdom.
3. When God gives men over to themselves in reprobation, they are damned while they live and shall be damned forever.
4. God's purpose of grace shall not be defeated by man's unbelief.

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(Romans 6:23) For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

If you go to hell, it will be your own fault alone. If you are saved, if you enter into heaven with Christ, it will be by God's almighty, irresistible grace alone. The only difference between God's elect and all other people, the only difference between saved sinners and reprobate sinners is the difference made by the grace of God.

- Election
- Redemption
- Regeneration

All the blessings of grace, redemption, salvation, and eternal life are in Christ. They all flow down to needy sinners through Christ, according to God's eternal election. — If you trust Christ, they are all yours, freely! — If you refuse to trust the Lord Jesus, when he sends you to hell, you will forever eat the fruit of your own way. You will forever be filled with your own devices.

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Oh, may God be pleased to stop you in your mad rush to hell and graciously cause you to trust his Son!

If you are saved, if I am saved, there is only one reason. — “*God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*” (1 Thessalonians 5:9). — “*Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift*” (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Amen.