THE CONDUCT OF JUDAH

GOD’S STRONG WARNING

PART 2

 **DATE: 5/16/2018 Wed.**

**TEXT: Isaiah 28:14-22**

**INTRODUCTION**

Beginning with chapter 28 and going through chapter 33,

We see a new series of prophetic messages beginning …

Regarding Israel and its surrounding nations in the last days

These chapters feature six woes from God which reminds us of the six ***“woes”*** found in **Isaiah 5**

**Isaiah 28:1; 29:1,15; 30:1; 31:1; 33:1** (All begin w/ a Woe)

A ***“woe”*** in the Bible is *a Strong Warning*

The word ***“woe”*** is more than just an expression of a feeling

Woe is a judgment / It means *alas* or almost like *oh no!*

When the word *woe* is used, it is often signifying impending doom, condemnation and/or the wrath of God

So, it is never used to only emphasize something in the sentence in which it is used

As with many of the chapters in Isaiah, some of this section's messages involves prophecy of both the near-

… future (in regards to Isaiah's time) and far-future (regarding our time) …

… What was going to happen in the near-future was a precursor of a far-future and greater fulfillment

This section of Isaiah discusses a few of the sins that caused the LORD to issue **a Strong Warning**

A **“*woe”***if you would to His people

It was God’s Hope that some would turn away from their sin and turn back to Him in repentance

Both the Southern and Northern Kingdoms were committing sins that would destroy their nation

Although Isaiah ministry was primarily to Judah,

God wanted the warning to be heard by the Northern Kingdom as well (As well as you and I)

His hope was that His people in both kingdoms would repent

We first looked at **THE “CURSE” ON EPHRAIM – vs. 1-13**

Now let’s pray and look at –

**THE “CONDUCT” OF JUDAH**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. THE “CONTEMPT” – v. 14**

The prophet therefore shifts to the greater point of

this chapter

Using the northern kingdom as an example, God through the prophet now Warns Judah

They were not far behind the sin of Ephraim to the north

Judah did not learn from Ephraim's failure but did what Ephraim did

Therefore, bringing upon themselves the Judgement of God

Now we know that this is directed toward Judah because of the mention of Jerusalem (Their Capital)

Notice the **Contempt** they had for the Word of God

***“Wherefore hear the Word of the LORD, ye scornful men”***

The people of Judah *scorned* the ***“Word of the LORD”***

Such an attitude is not good … it will produce serious consequences

If that isn’t society today

**Contempt** – *is a total disregard for something that should be taken seriously*

Judah just did not take seriously the Word of God

**I Thessalonians 5:20 –** ***“Despise not prophesyings”***

The Bible often uses the word **Despise**

So, what does it mean, …

Let me describe it with some synonyms – *detest, hate, loathe, abhor, deplore, dislike*

When you and I use the word *despise* in our ordinary, everyday English, we might have a number of things in mind

I am afraid many of us use the word very lightly without realizing its full significance

Therefore when we read it in the Word of God we don’t take it as seriously as we should

**Proverbs 13:13 –** ***“Whoso despiseth the Word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the Commandment shall be rewarded”***

What is our attitude toward the Word of God?

You know …

-- it is not only unbelievers who make light of God's Word

-- it is not only unbelievers who scorn God's Word

-- it is not only unbelievers who reject God's Word

Believers are sometimes guilty of showing disrespect to the Word of God

When men despise the Word, …

They are also Despising the Author of the Word

**Romans 14:23 b – *“for whatsoever is not of faith is sin”***

**Proverbs 14:2 –** ***“He that walketh in His uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in His ways despiseth Him”***

**Proverbs 19:16 –** ***“He that keepeth the Commandment keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth His ways shall die”***

If a man has no respect for the Word of God, then he will have no respect for the Ways of God

Or for the plain Commandments that are laid out in the Word of God for us to follow

For the word ***“commandment”*** in **Proverbs 19:16**, and the word ***“ways”*** are used in conjunction with each other

Judah Despised God’s Word and was setting themselves up for Judgment

Let’s be careful not to do the same!

**THE “CONTEMPT”**

**II. THE “COVENANT” – v. 15 a**

***“We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement”***

The Leaders of Judah make a Covenant / Agreement

But not a Covenant in a Good Sense

This is figurative language to indicate the Judah had made some bad covenants

Covenants with death and hell

Though Hezekiah was king over Judah, those under him were wicked

They *scoffed* at death and hell, claiming to have even made a contract with them, exempting themselves from both

They arrogantly claimed that when judgment came; (via the Assyrians) it would not bother them

Implied is a mockery of God, almost daring Him to try and judge them

Like Ephraim to the north, a crown of pride rested upon the head of many leaders in Judah – **v. 1**

These People were *Scoffing* at the Word of God

The word translated ***“scoffer"*** (**II Peter 3:3**) in English can mean *one who mocks, ridicules, or scorns the belief of another*

In Hebrew, the word translated ***“scoffer”*** or ***“mocker”*** can also mean *ambassador*

So, a *scoffer* is someone who not only disagrees with an idea, but he also considers himself an *advocate* for the opposing idea

And he cannot rest until he has demonstrated the foolishness of someone else’s idea

A *scoffer* voices his disagreement, ridicules all who stand against him, and actively recruits others to join his side

In the Bible, *scoffers* are those who choose to disbelieve God and His Word

They say in their hearts, ***“There is no God”*** (**Psalm 14; 53**)

And makes it his ambition to ridicule those who believe there is

The Bible has a lot to say about *scoffers* (Scorners)

**Proverbs 14:9 a - *“Fools make a mock at sin:”***

**Proverbs 19:29 –** ***“Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools”***

**Proverbs 29:8 –** ***“Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath”***

(Paul’s sermon in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia)

**Acts 13:41 –** ***“Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you”*** - (Quoted from **Habakkuk 1:5**)

**Proverbs 3:34** says that God – ***“… scorneth the scorners: but He giveth grace unto the lowly”***

The Bible tells us that God will mock when their …

… calamities come upon them

**Proverbs 1:26 –** ***“I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;”***

**Psalm 1:1** tells us how to deal with the *scoffers*

The progression of unbelief always begins with listening to ungodly counsel and ends with joining the scoffers

The Bible warns us Not to entertain the company of those who actively ridicule our faith, or we risk having that faith destroyed

**Proverbs 13:20 *– “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed”***

We cannot totally escape the presence of scoffers

**II Peter 3:3** warns us ***– “that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts”***

**Jude 18 –** ***“How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts”***

We know from Scripture that scoffing will only increase as we near the time for Jesus' return

**II Timothy 3:1-5 …**

We already see it happening with …

-- The blanket acceptance of evolutionary theory that excludes a Creator

-- The rapid expansion of false religions that deny the deity of Christ

-- The numeric explosion of those who identify themselves as agnostics and atheists

For now we will have to deal with the Scoffers

But there is coming a day when

**Philippians 2:10, 11 – *“… at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;” “And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”***

On that day there will no longer be any scoffers

They will at last accept the truth, (But too late) and their scoffing will be forever silenced

**III. THE “CONCEIT” – v. 15 b**

***“When the … scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves”***

The Prophet tells them that they are only lying to themselves

They had some how talked themselves into believing they were good enough

That God doesn’t send Judgment on good people

The people had been inventing lies that said they would not suffer judgment

People are still doing that

Unsaved people really believe they are all going to heaven

Just listen to what they say to each other

They suppose they will escaped judgment, because of …

(Just fill in the blanks)

But they only lie to themselves and ignored God's Word

**THE “CONCEIT”**

**THE “CONTEMPT”**

**THE “COVENANT”**

**IV. THE “CORNERSTONE” – v. 16**

***“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste”***

Again we find God interjecting Hope

The Prophet now puts forth a wonderful metaphor

The metaphor is in regards to a Stone (But not just any)

Though there was pride and arrogance in Judah,

God foretold that the day was coming when He would

lay a perfect Cornerstone in Zion (Jerusalem)

The picture without question is that of the Messiah

**Romans 9:33 –** ***“As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed”***

**I Peter 2:6 –** ***“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded”***

**Romans 9:33** & **I Peter 2:6 are** specifically referencing **Isaiah 28:16**

Moreover, Peter clearly interprets the final phrase of the verse

The idea is that when men will believe on Christ,

they will no longer be ***“confounded”***

Synonyms – *amaze, astonished, dumbfounded, stagger, surprise, startle, shake, bewilder, baffle, mystify, perplex, puzzle, confuse*

The thought is that they will not be afraid, embarrassed, or let down

They will not be confounded!

What a wonderful promise

As we trust Him, we begin to understand

The greater thought is though there was instability and sin in Judah,

The day was coming when God’s Messiah would bring a solid foundation of stability and strength to God’s people

**Psalm 118:22 –** ***“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner”***

Many Old Testament prophecies of Christ refer to

Him as a Rock or Stone

**Genesis 49:24 –** ***“But His bow abode in strength, and the arms of His hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)”***

**Daniel 2:45 –** ***“Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure”***

**Zechariah 3:9 –** ***“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day”***

***Matthew 21:42, 44 – “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”
 “And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder”***

**THE “CONTEMPT”**

**THE “COVENANT”**

**THE “CONCEIT”**

**THE “CORNERSTONE”**

**V. THE “CHASTISEMENT” – vs. 17-20**

Judah's Conduct is Condemned by God, and this brings Judgment from God

People think they can do whatever they please and they don’t have to answer for it

That couldn’t be farther from the truth

Let’s note some significant features about this Chastisement

**A.** **The ‘Description’ – vs. 17,18**

God's Chastisement is described in its Character

**1.** It’s Righteous – **v. 17 a -** ***“judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet”***

God is Just / Fair

Two lines were stretched when stone walls were laid

One ensures that each course of blocks is level

Here it is call ***“the line”***

A *plummet* or plumb line establishes the vertical plane (Up and down)

In the day when Christ establishes His kingdom,

Judgment will be level (just) and righteousness

will prevail

(The analogy is of a right angle or a wall which is

completely plumb. 90 degrees from level is plumb not one degree more or less)

The greater thought is that when the Messiah sets up His kingdom, absolute righteousness and justice

will prevail

Implied is that … neither was the case of Judah in that day

**2.** It will be Rigorous – **v. 17 b** - **“*Hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies … waters shall overflow the hiding place … scourge shall pass through … trodden down”***

God's judgement upon Judah's sin will be severe as the language indicates

**B. The ‘Disannulment’ – v. 18 a**

***“Your covenant with death shall be disannulled”***

God says – *“I’m cancelling your so-called agreement with Death and Hell”*

Foolishly thinking you would be able to cheat Death

**C. The ‘Duration’ – v. 19 a**

***“Morning by morning... day and by night”***

Every day they would be confronted by the news of the impending Judgment

Eternity is a long time to face one’s failure to trust Christ

**D. The ‘Dismay’ – v. 19 b**

***“and it shall be vexation only to understand”***

People will wish they had done things differently

**E.** **The ‘Deficiencies’ – v. 20**

The Prophet recites two familiar proverbs of the day

***“For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that***

***he can wrap himself in it****”*

A bed too short for a man is utter Frustration

Moreover, sheets and blankets which are too small

also leave one cold and Uncomfortable

The thought is that when God’s hand of Judgment falls

The situation would be Frustrating and Uncomfortable

Hard times lay ahead for Judah

It’s all about the Comfort!

**Amos 6:1 –** ***“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria,”!***

**CONCLUSION – vs. 21- 23**

**v. 21 - *“For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act”***

Mount Perazim is where God gave David a great victory over the Philistines in **II Samuel 5:20**

God gave Israel several great victories at Gibeon

The first was under Joshua in **Joshua 10:10-13** and then under David as noted in **I Chronicles 14:16**

The point is that the impending Judgment against Judah by the Assyrians would actually be God’s hand of judgment against His own people

The reference to it being a ***“strange work”*** and a ***“strange act”*** very well may imply how the impending judgment would be a surprise

After all, they haven’t believed a word of what the Prophet has said!

Though it may come as a surprise to some, God does Chastise His people

That judgment was about to fall upon Judah

God thus warned His people …

**v. 22 – *“Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth”***

Some in Judah had mocked and scorned the Word of God

But the Lord warned them

Isaiah interjects his own personal warning in **v. 23**

The prophet therefore on behalf of God warned …

***“Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech”***

**THE “CONTEMPT”**

**THE “COVENANT”**

**THE “CONCEIT”**

**THE “CORNERSTONE”**

**THE “CHASTISEMENT”**