

THE CORNERSTONE

Isaiah 28-35

INTRODUCTION

Chapters 28 – 35 form one thematic unit in which Isaiah rebukes Israel for making an alliance with Egypt.

God's issue with this is not ONLY that Egypt is a wicked, pagan, nation. It's more so that Israel is trusting in their own schemes, plans, and might instead of God.

Chapter 30 will serve us nicely this morning as a the climax of these chapters, and also as a summary of God's beef with them.

MAKING A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

READ Isaiah 30

In chapter 30 we see what Israel has done. They have attempted to solve their own crisis by making a deal with Egypt.

They have done so with arrogance and pride saying, "Now nothing bad can happen to us. All the storms of life will now pass over us."

They even go so far as to mock God and His instruction to them in the process.

READ Isaiah 28:1-13

Now we know what Isaiah is talking about when he says they have made a deal with "Sheol".

They have made a deal with Egypt, a deal with the devil, in exchange for safety and security. They have forsaken God's help and instead reached out to Egypt who cannot, in the end, protect them.

It's foolish, and arrogant.

THE CORNERSTONE IN ZION

READ Isaiah 28:14-29

In response to Israel's betrayal to Egypt, Isaiah prophesies about a "cornerstone laid in Zion".

What does this mean?

To understand this metaphor, we have to go back in time to King David in Psalms 118:20.

READ Psalm 118:19-24

David comes up with the imagery in reference to himself as he worships God for delivering him, but this imagery was also prophetic about the Messiah.

In fact, Jesus referred to Himself as the cornerstone.

READ Matthew 21:33-45

Jesus borrows Isaiah's imagery of the vineyard, extends it to be about Himself, then refers to Himself as the cornerstone spoken of by David and Isaiah both. *He is calling Himself the Messiah here.*

NOTE how Jesus ends the statement. He says, "This stone that you have rejected will be your judgment".

This makes sense, right? To reject Christ, is to embrace judgment. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one gets to the Father but through Him. To reject Christ is to reject the way to the Father and to leave yourself outside of His blessing and under His righteous judgment.

Peter makes this even more clear when he uses it in his preaching.

READ I Peter 2:1-9

Peter reiterates what Jesus taught, but adds another piece. He extends the metaphor of the cornerstone of the temple. Now that Jesus has done His work, the temple is now the people of God.

We are "living stones", rejected by men but received by God.

The only physical representation of God's people, The Church, on the earth is people. The temple, the church buildings, the infrastructure does not (should not) represent the Body of Christ. It's the living stones, not the dead stones that form the walls of the Church.

We are lined up with Jesus, the cornerstone. We are lined up with Christ in regards to both justice and righteousness (as Isaiah put it). Only those that reject Jesus as the cornerstone will be out of alignment with His justice and righteousness. This is what Peter, and Jesus, and by extension Isaiah, meant by the cornerstone being both blessing and judgement. You either line up with it, or you reject it. There is not third option.

HOW DOES THIS EXPLAIN ISAIAH 28?

"...WILL NOT BE IN HASTE."

Isaiah says in verse 16 that if you believe in the cornerstone, you will not be in haste. You will not be impatient in waiting on God to fulfill His promises.

It is impatience that drove Israel to make an alliance with Egypt. Their impatience flowed from their unbelief.

Impatience (haste) then is a symptom, not a cause. We tend to try to fix our impatience by resisting impatience. Have you ever tried not to be impatient? It's impossible. You end up getting really impatient with your own impatience.

Instead Isaiah says the antidote for the impatience that causes us to make alliances with the world instead of depending on God is “belief” or “faith” in the cornerstone.

APPLICATION

So, if you want to stop trusting in the world and trust in God you don't get there by trying not to trust in the world. That is a symptom of another, deeper, problem.

You get there by coming to the stone that the builders rejected, the Cornerstone. You get there by throwing yourself on the Rock of your salvation, Jesus Christ.

WHERE ARE YOU IN RELATION TO THE CORNERSTONE?

This is not just about worship, it's also about following in His way. Jesus lived among us as a man and He did stuff that we are meant to imitate. Being aligned with the cornerstone is not only about who you worship but it is also EQUALLY about imitating Him in His life.

As we live this way – both worshipping Him as God, and endeavoring to live like Him, we will not haste.