

## Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—Book of Woes: Israel's Leaders (c. 704–702 BC)

## Isaiah 28

**Woe to the Fading Wreath of Ephraim**

- 1 Ah! The garland of the pride of the drunkards of Ephraim  
and *the* withering flower of the glory of his beauty,  
which *is* at *the* head of the rich valley,  
ones overcome with wine!
- 2 Look! The Lord has *a* mighty and strong *one*,  
like a rainstorm of hail, a wind storm of destruction,  
like a rainstorm of mighty overflowing waters,  
he will put *them* to the earth with *his* hand.
- 3 The garland of the pride of the drunkards of Ephraim  
will be trampled by feet,
- 4 and *the* withering flower of the glory of its beauty  
which *is* at *the* head of the rich valley  
will be like its early fig before summer,  
which the one who sees it swallows while it *is* still in his hand.
- 5 In that day, Yahweh of hosts will become a garland of glory  
and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of his people,
- 6 and a spirit of justice to the one who sits over judgment,  
and strength *to* those who turn back *the* battle *at the* gate.

**Failure of Judah's Priests and Prophets**

- 7 And these also stagger because of wine  
and stagger because of strong drink;  
priest and prophet stagger because of strong drink;  
they are confused because of wine.  
They stagger because of strong drink;  
they err in vision.  
They stagger *in the* rendering of a decision,
- 8 for all *the* tables are full *of* disgusting vomit, with no place left.
- 9 *To* whom will he teach knowledge,  
and *to* whom will he explain *the* message?  
Those who are weaned from milk,  
*those* taken from *the* breast?
- 10 For *it is* blah-blah upon blah-blah,  
blah-blah upon blah-blah,  
gah-gah upon gah-gah,  
gah-gah upon gah-gah,  
a little here, a little there.
- 11 For he will speak with stammering and another tongue to this people, [[1 Cor 14:21](#)]
- 12 to whom he has said,

“This *is* rest; give rest to the weary;  
and this *is* repose”; yet they were not willing to hear.

- 13 And to them the word of Yahweh will be

blah-blah upon blah-blah  
blah-blah upon blah-blah  
gah-gah upon gah-gah  
gah-gah upon gah-gah,  
a little here, a little there,  
so that they may go and stumble backward  
and be broken and ensnared and captured.

**Leaders of Judah Reject God's Cornerstone—The Messiah**

14 Therefore hear the word of Yahweh, men of mockery,  
rulers of these people in Jerusalem:

15 Because you have said,

“We have made a covenant with death,  
and we have made an agreement with Sheol.

*The* overwhelming flood, when it passes through, will not come to us,

for we have made lies our refuge,  
and we have hidden ourselves in falsehood.”

16 Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this:

“Look! I *am* laying a stone in Zion,  
a tested stone,  
a precious cornerstone,  
a founded foundation:

‘The one who trusts will not panic.’ (LXX “be put to shame”). [[Rom 9:33](#); [10:11](#); [1 Pet 2:6](#)]

17 And I will make justice *the* measuring line,  
and righteousness *the* plumb line;  
and hail will sweep away *the* refuge of lies,  
and waters will flood over *the* hiding place.

18 And your covenant with death will be annulled,  
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;  
you will become a trampling place for the overwhelming flood when it passes through.

19 As often as it passes through, it will take you,  
for morning by morning it will pass through,  
in the day and in the night,

and understanding *the* message will be only terror.”

20 For the bed is too short to stretch out on,  
and the covering is *too* narrow when wrapping oneself.

21 For Yahweh will rise up as *at* Mount Perazim;  
he will rave as *in the* valley at Gibeon  
to do his deed—his deed *is* strange—  
and to work his work—his work *is* alien!

22 And now you must not scoff,  
or your bonds will be strong,

for I have heard from the Lord, Yahweh of hosts:

complete destruction  
decreed upon all the land.

**A Parable of the Farmer: Accept God's Wisdom**

23 Listen, and hear my voice!

Listen attentively, and hear my word!

24 Is it all day *that* the plowman plows,  
opens to sow seed, harrows his ground?

25 When he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter dill,  
and sow cumin seed,  
and plant wheat *in* planted rows,  
and barley *in* an appointed place,  
and spelt grain *as* its border?

26 And his God instructs him about the prescription;

he teaches him.

27 For dill is not threshed with *a* threshing sledge,  
nor is a wheel of a utility cart rolled over cumin,  
but dill is beaten out with *a* stick,  
and cumin with *a* rod.

28 Grain is crushed fine,  
but certainly one does not thresh it forever;  
and one drives the wheel of his cart,  
but his horses do not crush it.

29 This also comes forth from Yahweh of hosts.

He is wonderful *in* advice;  
he makes great wisdom.

## Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—Book of Woes: Religious Hypocrisy (c. 704–702 BC)

Isaiah 29:1–14

### Jerusalem Besieged, But Its Enemies Disappear

1 Ah! Ariel, Ariel, *the* city *where* David encamped!

Add year to year,  
let festivals recur.

2 Yet I will inflict Ariel,  
and there shall be mourning and lamentation,  
and it shall be to me like an altar hearth.

3 And I will encamp in a circle against you,  
and I will lay siege to you *with* towers  
and I will raise up siegeworks against you.

4 Then you shall be low;  
you shall speak from *the* earth,  
and your words will be low, from dust.  
And your voice will be from *the* earth, like a ghost,  
and your word will whisper from *the* dust.

5 But the multitude of your strangers shall be like fine dust,  
and *the* multitude of tyrants like chaff that passes by.

And it will happen *in* an instant, suddenly.

6 You will be punished by Yahweh of hosts.

with thunder and earthquake and great sound,  
storm wind and tempest and *the* flame of a devouring fire.

7 And the multitude of all the nations who fight against Ariel,  
all those who fight *against* her and her stronghold,  
and those who inflict her shall be like *a* dream, a vision of *the* night.

8 And it shall be as when the hungry person dreams—look, *he is* eating!  
And he wakes up and his inner self *is* empty.  
Or as when the thirsty person dreams—look, *he is* drinking!  
And he wakes up and look, *he is* faint,  
and his inner self *is* longing for water.  
So shall be the multitude of all the nations who fight against Mount Zion.

### The Blindness of Prophets and People

9 Be astonished and be amazed!  
Blind yourselves and be blinded!  
They are drunk but not *from* wine;  
they stagger but not *from* strong drink.

10 For Yahweh has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep,  
and he has shut your eyes, the prophets,

and he has covered your heads, the seers. [[Rom 11:8](#)]

11 And the vision of all this has become for you like *the* words of *a* sealed document. When they give it to one who knows the document, saying, “Read this now!” He says, “I am not able, for it *is* sealed.”

12 And *if* the document is given to *one* who does not know how to read, saying, “Read this now!” he says, “I do not know how to read.”

13 And the Lord said,

“Because this people draw near with its mouth,  
and with its lips it honors me,  
and its heart is far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men that has been taught, [[Matt 15:8–9](#); [Mark 7:6–7](#)]

14 therefore look, I am again doing something spectacular

and a spectacle with this spectacular people.  
And the wisdom of its wise men shall perish,  
and the discernment of its discerning ones shall keep itself hidden.” [[1 Cor 1:19](#)]

### Isaiah’s Prophecy to Judah—Book of Woes: Rebellion and Pride (c. 704–702 BC)

Isaiah 29:15–24

15 Ah! Those who make a plan deep, to hide *it* from Yahweh,  
and their deeds are in a dark place.  
And they say, “Who sees us?  
And who knows us?”

16 Your perversity!  
As if a potter shall be regarded as *the* clay!  
That *the* product of its maker *says*,  
“He did not make me,”  
and *the* thing made into shape *says* of its potter,  
“He has no understanding.” [[Rom 9:20](#)]

17 In a very little while shall not Lebanon change into *a* fruitful land,  
and the fruitful land be regarded as *a* forest?

18 And on that day, the deaf shall hear *the* words of a scroll,  
and *the* eyes of *the* blind shall see out of gloom and darkness. [[Matt 11:5](#); [Luke 7:22](#)]

19 And *the* meek have joy after joy in Yahweh,  
and *the* needy of *the* people shall rejoice in the holy one of Israel.

20 For *the* tyrant shall be no more,  
and *the* scoffer shall come to an end. And all those lying in wait for evil shall be cut off;

21 those who mislead a person into sin with a word  
and set a trap for the arbitrator in the gate  
and guide away *the* righteous by emptiness.

22 Therefore Yahweh, who redeemed Abraham, says this to the house of Jacob:

“Jacob will no longer be ashamed,  
and his face will no longer grow pale.

23 For when he sees his children,  
the work of my hands, in his midst,  
they will treat my name as holy,  
and they will treat the holy one of Jacob as holy,  
and they will stand in awe *of* the God of Israel.

24 And those who err *in* spirit will acquire understanding,  
and those who grumble will learn instruction.