

**Study 66: Isaiah, Part 22 Isaiah 29**

**Isaiah 29**

Woe to you, Ariel, Ariel,  
**the city where David settled!**

Add year to year  
and let your cycle of festivals go on.

2 Yet I will besiege [Hebrew: *distress*] Ariel;

[the name *Ariel* means *lion of God* and is a symbolic name for *Jerusalem*. The name also sounds like אֵלֶּאֶר (“ar-El”), *city of God*.]

she will mourn and lament, [the Hebrew says *there shall be heaviness and sorrow not she*, etc.. The KJV got it right. Ariel is a *man’s* name, see Ezra 8:16. In 2 Sam 23:20, it means *lion-like men*.]

she will be to me like an altar hearth [It shall be... not she. *Altar hearth*, i.e., the altar of burnt offerings in the temple. The Hebrew for *altar hearth* sounds like the Hebrew for *Ariel*. See: Ezek 43:15-16 (אֲרִיאֵל and הָרְאֵל).]

3 I will encamp against you on all sides;

I will encircle you with towers  
and set up my siege works against you.

4 Brought low, you will speak from the ground;

your speech will mumble out of the dust.

Your voice will come ghostlike from the earth;

out of the dust your speech will whisper.

[The Assyrians came against Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah and surrounded the city. 2 Kings 18:17 ff.]

5 But your many enemies will become like fine dust,  
the ruthless hordes like blown chaff.

Suddenly, in an instant,

6 the Lord Almighty will come

with thunder and earthquake and great noise,

with windstorm and tempest and flames of a devouring fire.

7 Then the hordes of all the nations that fight against **Ariel**, [cp. v. 8b below]

that attack her and her fortress and besiege her,

will be as it is with a dream,

with a vision in the night—

8 as when a hungry person dreams of eating,

but awakens hungry still;

as when a thirsty person dreams of drinking,

but awakens faint and thirsty still.

So will it be with the hordes of all the nations

that fight against **Mount Zion**.

[See 2 Kings 19:35 ff.]

9 Be stunned and amazed,

blind yourselves and be sightless;

be drunk, but not from wine,

stagger, but not from beer.

10 The Lord has brought over you a deep sleep:

He has sealed your eyes (the prophets);

he has covered your heads (the seers).

11 For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say, “Read this, please,” they will answer, “I can’t; it is sealed.” 12 Or if you give the scroll to someone who cannot read, and say, “Read this, please,” they will answer, “I don’t know how to read.”

[The people of Judah are unable to receive what the Lord is saying to them, i.e. they are spiritually blind. Their hearts are hard, and they have no desire to know or understand the truth – no “eyes to see or ears to hear.”]

13 The Lord says:

“These people come near to me with their mouth  
and honor me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me. [See: Matt 5:18; Mark 7:6]

Their worship of me

is based on merely human rules they have been taught [LXX: *They worship me in vain; / their teachings are merely human rules*].

14 Therefore once more I will astound these people  
with wonder upon wonder;

the wisdom of the wise will perish,  
the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish.”

15 Woe to those who go to great depths  
to hide their plans from the Lord,  
who do their work in darkness and think,  
“Who sees us? Who will know?”

16 You turn things upside down,  
as if the potter were thought to be like the clay!  
Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it,  
“You did not make me”?

Can the pot say to the potter,  
“You know nothing”? (Cp. Rom 9:21)

17 In a very short time, will not Lebanon be turned into a fertile field  
and the fertile field seem like a forest?

18 **In that day** the deaf will hear the words of the scroll,  
and out of gloom and darkness  
the eyes of the blind will see.

19 Once more the humble will rejoice in the Lord;  
the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

20 The ruthless will vanish,  
the mockers will disappear,  
and all who have an eye for evil will be cut down—

21 those who with a word make someone out to be guilty,  
who ensnare the defender in court  
and with false testimony deprive the innocent of justice.

22 Therefore this is what the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, says to the descendants of Jacob:

“No longer will Jacob be ashamed;  
no longer will their faces grow pale.

23 When they see among them their children,  
the work of my hands,  
they will keep my name holy;  
they will acknowledge the holiness of **the Holy One of Jacob**,  
and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.

24 Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding;  
those who complain will accept instruction.”