

God's Cornerstone in Place of Drunken Pride

Isaiah 28:1-29

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Introduction

Today as we come to Isaiah 28,

- we begin a new portion of Isaiah's prophecy in which the prophet pronounces a series of woes upon various peoples and various behaviours.
- In this first section, you can see that the woe is pronounced against His covenant people who had become proud drunkards.
 - The prophecy seems to have been composed before the fall of Samaria in 722 BC.
 - Now Samaria was the capital of the ten tribes that had broken away from Judah in the days of Solomon's son, Rehoboam.
 - Just to remind you,
 - the ten tribes were often call either Israel, because they were made up of ten of the tribes of Israel...
 - or Ephraim, because Ephraim was the principle tribe among them.
 - And you should know that these ten tribes had forsaken the worship that God had appointed at Jerusalem because Jerusalem was in Judah...
 - They continued to worship Jehovah, but they worshipped Him idolatrously and often along with other gods.
 - This, and other sins, brought God's judgements upon them until eventually Samaria fell and was brought into captivity by Assyria—in 722 BC.
 - And this particular prophecy in Isaiah 28 seems to have been written not too long before that fall...
 - in the day when much of Israel had been destroyed, but Samaria still stood—
 - proudly stood—as if they were in no danger because of their well situated city!
 - They are charged with foolish drunken pride!
 - There were no grounds for such pride!
 - And in this prophecy of their coming destruction, Judah is also addressed—
 - When Samaria fell, instead of being humbled and learning to fear God,
 - Judah imitated their drunken pride and so is promised a similar destruction in the days to come!

Now as we move into this prophecy, I want you to consider that pride and drunkenness often go hand and hand.

- I have often explained to you that pride is simply supposing that you can live life without God...
 - that you can make a life for yourself and get along just fine even though you ignore the fact that you have sinned against Him and need to be reconciled to Him.
 - What a delusion to keep up!
 - Imagine, you are not right with your Creator, but you go on as if it is no matter!
 - Most people in our society are full of this pride!

- But whenever people avoid God like this, they often know that things are not really right with them...
 - and very often they turn to drink or to drugs for comfort...
 - They are filled with anxiety and depression and all sorts of other disorders...
 - and because they refuse to turn to the LORD, they turn to substances that can deaden their minds and somewhat relieve their anxiety.
 - It is a huge problem in our day when many with spiritual problems rely on even prescribed drugs to ease their pain...
 - They need Christ, but they turn to drugs instead and then they feel better.

- Pastor Spencer, a pastor from the 1800s who recorded many accounts of his ministry, tells the story of the farmer with the brown jug to whom he preached the gospel...
 - This farmer was an honest man and a hard worker who provided for his family.
 - His wife was a believer, and the farmer was interested in the things of the Lord and spoke of often being convicted by his sin,
 - but for some reason, he never came to faith.
 - Pastor Spencer wondered why until one day he spied the farmer's brown jug in his wagon.
 - Spencer inquired about this, and the farmer replied that he didn't drink much, but only to ease himself a little when he fell under conviction of sin.
 - Spencer pointed out that the brown jug was the very thing that was keeping him from turning to Christ.
 - The farmer realised the truth of it and smashed the jug on a stone in that very conversation...
 - Within three weeks, he came seeking church membership as one who was now trusting in Christ.
 - The farmer could only hang on to his God-avoiding pride as long as he hung on to his brown jug.

As we turn now to Isaiah's prophecy, I want you to see first of all,

I. The dreadful consequences of drunken pride.

- We will look at three such consequences.

A. First, that drunken pride goes before destruction...

1. You see in verse 1 that Isaiah says, “Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim.”

- This is a reference to Samaria, as I already pointed out in the introduction...
 - They are called the “crown of pride” because they were the crown city of the ten tribes of Israel,
 - and they were still proudly standing after the first invasions of Assyria had wiped out the rest of Ephraim.
 - Instead of being humbled and repenting when they saw God’s hand of judgement on the other cities of Israel,
 - I say—instead of turning to God in humility...
 - they had assumed an air of pride because they still stood...
 - and as this must have been a most uncomfortable position, they had comforted themselves with drunkenness!
 - And the LORD says, “Woe to them!”
 - The word woe is a pronouncement of impending disaster—a warning that trouble is coming!
 - Isaiah tells them that their glorious beauty is like a fading flower!
 - Flowers are very beautiful, but they do not last—
 - and Samaria was not going to last—they were fading!

2. The sovereign Lord Himself is the One who is going to destroy them.

- That is what we are told in verse 2:
 - Isa 28:2: Behold, the Lord has a mighty and strong one, Like a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, Like a flood of mighty waters overflowing...
- The word **Lord** that is used here is *Adonay*—
 - *Adonay* is title that emphasises God’s sovereignty over all things...
 - It is used here to emphasise that He has nations at His disposal, to bring against His people to destroy them as He wills...
 - You see that it says that the *Adonay* **has** a mighty and strong one...
 - This refers to the nation of Assyria, which, in chapter 10, was referred to as His instrument that He was going to bring against His people to chasten them.

- And here in chapter 28, Isaiah says that this strong one will come against Samaria like a destroying storm that nothing can stop, like a flood that overflows...
 - Although many deny it in our day,
 - the teaching of the Bible is that the LORD is the one who raises up nations and destroys nations and who sends them either to reward or punish His people according to His wisdom and justice.
3. Look at the completeness of the destruction described...
- a. Mixed metaphors are used to describe it...
 - It is a tempest of hail, it is a flood that overflows, it is a hand that brings down, it is feet that trample...
 - The hand that brings them down is their fall,
 - and then the trampling of the feet is their complete destruction.
 - b. In verse 4, He compares proud Samaria to the first figs in summer...
 - Sometimes, a fig would appear in advance of the others...
 - Often, when these were seen, they were taken and eaten right on the spot.
 - This powerfully illustrates the swiftness, the easiness, and the completeness of Samaria's coming destruction!
 - The fruit was there, and then it is gone.
 - This reminds me of Ps 73:19 where it says of those who forget God:
 - Ps 73:19: Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.

TRANS> Destruction!

- That is the first dreadful consequence of drunken pride...
- B. Secondly, I want you to see that drunken pride destroys sound judgement...
- 1. It makes you insensible of the danger you are in...
 - Wine is used wrongly when it is used to try to escape problems...
 - Nothing is solved by it—it only deadens the pain and helps you forget, but it actually keeps you from doing anything to correct the problems.
 - I have already illustrated this with the farmer and his brown jug.
 - At the end of verse 1, it describes the proud Samaritans as being “*overcome by wine*”...
 - To what does this refer but that they had lost their judgement and were insensible of the danger they were in...

- for if they had been willing to face it, they might have repented and turned to the LORD!
- By wine, they were more easily able to keep up the delusion that they were secure when they were not at all secure!

TRANS> Wine is a gift from God to be used to rejoice in God's goodness...

- but see that you do not use it to escape the conviction of your sin and of His judgement!

- Not only does it make you insensible of the danger you are in...

2. It also makes you insensible of the mercy you are under...

a. In verse 5 and 6, the LORD speaks of His mercy to Judah at the time of Samaria's fall...

- He judged His covenant people Israel,
 - but He spared Judah as a remnant at Jerusalem, even as He had spared Samaria among the ten tribes.
- In the days of Assyria, God Himself became the crown of glory and the diadem of beauty of Jerusalem when He stopped Assyria.
- He had given their leaders the sense to look to Him when Assyria came, and He had given them the strength to turn back the battle at the gate.
 - In other words, He had graciously and miraculously spared Jerusalem as a remnant after Samaria fell.

TRANS> But look!

b. Despite His mercy, they also erred through wine!

- Look at verse 7:
 - Isa 28:7: But they also (even the remnant of Judah) have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way;
 - Instead of seeing with gratitude that God had spared them,
 - Jerusalem also forgot the LORD...
 - They apparently did not want to be obligated to Him as the one who had so graciously delivered them...
 - So instead of praising Him and giving thanks to Him, they filled themselves with wine to drown away the remembrance of His mercy!
 - There are a lot of people that are terrified of God's mercy!
 - They know about it, but they do not want to be obligated by it—so they run and avoid it in whatever they can...

- by wine, by drugs, by entertainment—whatever it takes to get away and forget
- Are you afraid to thank God and to confess the great things He has done?
 - Are you afraid to come to Christ and receive His salvation?
 - Or perhaps you have done that, but you are hesitant to thank Him...
 - Be not so! You should rather fear the avoidance of Him!
 - If you come to Him,
 - He will not harm you,
 - He will not make you sad,
 - He will bless you and fill you with the fullness of life!

TRANS> But because Judah did not acknowledge the mercy of God

- It caused their leaders to be completely incompetent...

3. Drunken pride makes you incompetent as a leader!

- a. Even the prophets, who were supposed to speak for God; and the priests, who were supposed to offer sacrifices for the people,
 - were caused to err through intoxicating drink.
 - They swallowed lot of wine, but Isaiah says that they were, in fact, swallowed up by wine!
- b. My friends, sinful indulgence in wine will take away the edge from authoritative leadership...
 - You become dull to both the judgement and mercy of God and you are no longer able to provide spiritual care to anyone...
 - Elders, it destroys your ministry to the members of the congregation...
 - Fathers, it destroys your ministry to your children...
 - Christian, it destroys your ministry to the lost—and to one another...
 - And it destroys you ability to minister to yourself—to see what God says with conviction and to see what you are called to do...
 - You lose all sense of urgency about the things of God...
 - You become one who just goes through the motions...
 - You stumble in judgement because you no longer see things from God's perspective.
 - Isaiah says,
 - “They err in vision, they stumble in judgement.”
- c. And in verse 8, we see what drunken leaders have to offer!
 - It is a disgusting picture—a revolting display...
 - Isa 28:8: For all tables are full of vomit and filth; No place is clean.

TRANS> So we have seen then,

- First how drunken pride leads to destruction,
- And second, how drunken pride destroys sound judgement,
- And now third, I want you to see that:

C. Drunken pride excludes faith.

1. Drunken pride excludes faith because it causes you to mock at God's word.

a. You don't take the word seriously anymore...

- In verse 9, the drunken mockers are quoted...
- They are scoffing at Isaiah's ministry:
 - Isa 28:9: "Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts?"
- These drunken leaders are too sophisticated for Isaiah's teaching!
 - They are saying, in effect,
 - "Who is this guy trying to teach, little kids?"
 - All he does is spout off a bunch of annoying rules and tell us to trust in the Lord when we are facing real problems.
 - We don't need such childish teaching as this.
 - We know what we are doing."
- In verse 10, they mock him with these words...
 - Isaiah 28:9: For precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little."

b. You can see how this kind of attitude makes faith impossible...

- If we would inherit the kingdom of God, we must become as little children.
 - The word is indeed very clear and very plain and very straightforward...
 - but in their pride, men resent its simplicity.
- Now that Jesus is revealed as crucified, offence is taken at the simple gospel!
 - Perhaps you remember what Paul says about this in 1 Corinthians 1:17 and following:
 - 1 Cor 1:17-26: For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish

the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

- Nothing has changed—
 - Proud men mocked in Isaiah's day, they mocked in Paul's day, and they continue to mock in our day...
 - They cannot believe because they are too proud to receive the word.

TRANS> But drunken pride not only causes men to mock at God's word rather than to believe it,

2. It also causes God to take His word away from them that they may be judged.
 - This is a terrible judgement...
 - Those who refuse the clear teaching of God's word and refuse to yield to it will soon find that the word is taken away from them!
 - They would not understand it when it was plain, now it will cease to be plain.
 - In verse 11, Isaiah says of the LORD,
 - Isa 28:11: For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people,
 - This happened to the Jews of Isaiah's day when the Assyrians came to run their country...
 - They had men with foreign tongues ruling them.
 - And it happened again in a different way in the time of the apostles when the gospel began to go forth to other nations and was preached in various languages that the Jews could not understand.
 - It happens in our time when the gospel is taken away from a nation, as is being done in our nation,
 - until is scarcely heard in the language of the people.
 - This is also done when those who minister God's word stop preaching the clear gospel...
 - when they become too sophisticated to stick the word...

- Heaven and Hell is too childish for them...
- "You shall not commit adultery" is too simplistic...
- "Believe on the LORD Jesus and you shall be saved" is puerile.
- The LORD speaks of His well meant offer in verse 12...
 - It was a message designed to give true peace and comfort to these ones who run to their wine and their mockery for comfort...
 - Isa 28:12: To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "This is the refreshing";
 - If only they had received the word, they could have this rest and refreshment...
 - Do you have it?
 - Have you come to Christ as one weary and heavy laden?
 - or do you continue as the people in Isaiah's day as described at the end of verse 12...
 - "Yet they would not hear."
 - What a message to reject!
 - That beautiful, life-giving message that could have brought an end to all their anxiety and aimlessness was to them...
 - Isa 28:13: "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little,"
 - And the reason?
 - Still v 13: That they might go and fall backward, and be broken And snared and caught.
 - God brings His judgement to those who refuse His words.
 - See that you do not go the way of the proud drunkard who makes God's word as childish...
 - The day may come when it will be completely taken from you.
 - Oh brothers and sisters, see that you welcome His word with joyful reverence!

TRANS> Drunken pride keeps you from faith because it keeps you from the word until God takes His Word away...

- and then you turn to foolish things

3. Drunken pride destroys faith because it causes you to believe in foolish things...

- as we already saw, you lose all sense of judgement...

- and now we see the foolish things you come to believe when you reject the truth!
- Look at verse 14-15:
 - Isa 28:14-15: Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scornful men, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, It will not come to us, For we have made lies our refuge, And under falsehood we have hidden ourselves."
 - Isaiah does not mean that they actually professed to have made a covenant with death and hell so that they would not harm them...
 - or that they actually *said* that they had made lies their refuge...
 - but this is rather the effect of what they had done!
 - They were looking to lies and things that could not save them...
 - Things they could only find security in because of their drunken pride.
 - You see this today...
 - People actually go so far that they will take refuge in the notion that the world created itself by natural processes—
 - It is absolutely absurd!
 - They call the word of God a childish fairytale, and this is what they come to believe instead?
 - Of course many don't go that far...
 - They only deny certain parts of God's truth—such as that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...
 - or that the wrath of God abides on all who do not believe in Christ.
 - They forsake the very things that could give them true peace and take refuge in their lies.
 - It is very sad.
 - They act as if death and Sheol will not hurt them, but they have no basis for such confidence.

TRANS> But now I want to show you something very wonderful...

- Something that Isaiah speaks about for the rest of this chapter...
- He shows us that

II. The LORD knows how to deliver His people from drunken pride.

A. Isaiah tells us that the LORD establishes a stone in Zion for a foundation!

1. This stone is for those who are being ruined by drunken pride!

- You see that the LORD sets it up in response to their vain attempts to find security.
 - It is a foundation in the sea of pride that is about to swallow them up!
 - All through the ages, God has had this stone for His elect...
 - He shows them that they are sinking into destruction and that they may come and be established upon this sure foundation!
 - He makes His salvation plain to them!
 - Here is something substantive to build upon!
 - It is the stone which God Himself lays!
 - It is not some human remedy that will fail...
 - It is God's remedy.
 - It is called a sure foundation because it is laid by Him for us.
 - You can build your life upon it and you will never sink!
 - You see that it is called a cornerstone...
 - In ancient building methods, the cornerstone was not simply one of four corners that were all alike...
 - It was **the** corner upon which all the other stones leaned for support... it was a large stone that kept the whole building from teetering or twisting sideways.
 - You know that if you have a rectangle, you only have to brace one corner to make the whole thing stable.
2. This stone, of course, is Jesus Christ Himself.
- This is clear, for it is a stone laid by the LORD that the people of God themselves are to trust in...
 - And the LORD never instructs them to trust in themselves or in one another.
 - What mere man could possibly support the entire people of God as a sure foundation?
 - Only the man Christ Jesus whom Isaiah has already declared to be divine...
 - calling Him: *wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace!*
 - Jarchi is a witness that many of the ancient Jews understood the cornerstone to refer to the Messiah...
 - The whole theocracy existed with a view to His coming...
 - The seed of Abraham that would bless Israel and all the nations.
 - The Son of David whose throne would be established forever!

- But of course, now that Jesus has come, there can be no doubt that He is the stone...
 - For the New Testament repeatedly refers to Christ as the cornerstone on which the church is built!
 - Peter refers to Him in Acts 4:10 when He says:
 - Acts 4:10-12: let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.
 - And Paul refers to this image in Romans 9:32-33 against the Jews of His day who were trying to establish their own righteousness
 - And in Ephesians 2:19 he refers to Christ as the chief stone on which the house of God made up of both Jew and Gentile is founded:
 - Eph 2:19-21: Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,
 - And Peter quotes this verse in his first epistle in chapter 2
3. Now look at the result of believing that God has established this stone.
- Isaiah says, “Whoever believes will not act hastily.”
 - The words “act hastily” speaks of those who are anxious and who run around in their anxiety and distress.
 - Those who come to Christ and rest upon Him are given that rest and refreshment that the Lord spoke of in verse 12.
 - My bothers and sisters,
 - once you come to rest upon Christ, there is no more cause for anxiety ever again!
 - You do not have to grasp for some elusive security...
 - You have found the true source salvation.
4. Verse 17 shows that everything is measured with reference to this stone...
- Justice is the measuring line—to horizontally align the walls...
 - And righteousness is the plummet—to vertically align them with the cornerstone.
 - Whatever is not aligned with Christ—whatever is not established on His righteousness and justice—will be exposed and cut off.

- All through the ages, Christ has been the only true source of righteousness.
- In the Old Testament, He was Christ-promised and now for us in the New Testament, He is Christ-given...
 - but always He has been the only way of salvation upon whom we must be established by faith.
 - If you are not built on this foundation, you cannot be saved.

TRANS> So you see then, that the LORD provides us with a firm foundation so to that we do not need gad about looking for security in drunken pride.

- But the LORD not only provides us with a true foundation...

B. He also takes away the things that we have trusted in in our drunken pride.

1. You see that He brings upon them the very things they dreamed of escaping...

- They thought to be secure in a refuge of lies, but hail breaks through that refuge and batters them...
 - They thought to be secure in a hiding place, but a flood comes into the holes and the caves where they are hidden and overtakes them.
 - Their covenant with death and their agreement with Sheol do not stand, but comes upon them to destroy them.
- And the scourge that they thought would pass by them without harming them instead tramples them underfoot each time it comes by...
 - such that they are terrified just to hear the report which, in their drunken pride had not terrified them at all! (verse 19)
- This is such a wonderful change!
 - Not the suffering and the destruction itself per se,
 - but the effect of it to make these hardened sinners who ignored God's threats and tried to deny them are now terrified by them.
 - "It will be a terror just to understand the report..."
 - that is, the report that Isaiah gave that no one believed!

2. By God's grace, they discover the inadequacy of the things they had trusted in...

- Verse 20 shows that the bed on which they reposed gives them no comfort, for it is too short...
 - and the blankets with which they sought to cover themselves are too narrow to do the job.
 - What a blessed thing when a papist comes to see that there is no rest in a human priest or a pope...
 - What a blessed thing when a liberal comes to see that there is no security in his moralism...

- And the neo-orthodox in his universalism and vain philosophy...
 - And the emergent in his denial of the substitutionary atonement...
 - All these beds are too short—
 - Only Christ as He is revealed in the gospel is sufficient.
 - But how good it is when this is finally seen!
- a. Every refuge of lies fails because the LORD Himself rises up against those who hold to them to show them how inadequate they are.
- He rises up against them as He rose up at Mount Perazim and He pours out His anger as He did in the valley of Gibeon...
 - only this time His power and His anger will be unleashed against His own people!
 - It will be an extraordinary work such as it was at Mount Perazim and in the valley of Gibeon,
 - Mount Perazim is the place where the Lord broke through like water against the Philistines so that David defeated them soundly...
 - And the Valley of Gibeon is the place where God sent hail upon the Canaanite kings in the days of Joshua...
 - He worked wonders to bring destruction to His people's enemies.
 - But now by that same awesome power He is going to humble His own people...
 - He will bring certain ruin upon them and show how inadequate their hiding places are.
- b. Isaiah warns them not to continue their mockery!
- The destruction the LORD is bringing has been determined and it will come just as the Adonai (the sovereign one) has planned...
 - It will sweep be a destruction that comes upon the whole earth—all the nations surrounding Israel will be shaken.
 - The more Israel mocks, the greater their bondage and their oppression will be...
 - like a fox in a snare who only tightens the snare more by struggling to get loose.
 - It is a dreadful thing to hear proud men mocking the LORD when you consider that they are only making for themselves a greater destruction.

TRANS> It is a terrible thing that God must do to bring His people out of the drunken pride—

- but it is a marvellous thing because it breaks their pride that they may return to the true foundation that He has laid...

- even to Christ, the true cornerstone by whom we must be saved, for there is no other salvation in all the earth.

C. Isaiah concludes with a parable designed to teach us that the LORD will act with perfect wisdom to make His proud drunken people to become a fruitful people!

1. In verse 23, he calls for our attention...

- He says,
 - Isaiah 28:23: Give ear and hear my voice, listen to my speech.
 - This is something very important,
 - for He explains that the LORD both ploughs and threshes His people with perfect wisdom and with good purpose.

a. Ploughing and threshing are both violent, but necessary works—

- the ploughing that tears up the ground
- and the threshing that separates the grain from the chaff so that it can be used.

b. These works are always done with wisdom...

- The farmer does not plough just for sport...
 - He does not keep on harrowing forever...
 - He does it only in the proper season to prepare the ground for sowing the seed which He carefully plants in the place where it can grow.
 - The farmer knows just what to do because God has given him wisdom in His work, as it says in verse 26.

- And then when it is time to thresh...

- Once again, the farmer knows just what to do with each crop so as to get the best results.
 - He does not thresh cumin with a threshing sledge, or roll upon it with a cartwheel—for that would destroy it...
 - He rather beats it out with a stick.
 - Nor does he thresh forever, but only as long as it takes to get the job done—lest he destroy the crop.

- He is neither too severe, nor too long

2. Take heart, God knows what He is doing among His people when He afflicts them!

- Verse 29 explains that God's plan is truly wise...
 - Isaiah 28:29: This also comes from the LORD of hosts, who is wonderful in

counsel and excellent in guidance.

- a. Here we run into that word pelee, that is translated wonderful...
 - It reminds us that the LORD governs us with wisdom that is truly divine—that far surpasses human wisdom.
 - He has a great plan before Him and He will operate according to that plan without missing a beat until He has accomplished His purpose in establishing a kingdom of perfect righteousness...
 - There will be times of ploughing, times of sowing, and times of threshing...
 - and all of these will be done in their proper season and according to their proper intensity to bring forth fruit.
- b. Calvin has this to say of God’s wisdom in doing this work...
 - “Does he not see the time for executing His judgement; when he ought to cut down the people, and, as we may say, to harrow them; when he ought to thrash; what strokes and what kind of chastisements He ought to inflict; in short, what is most suitable to each time and to each person? Will He not who appointed the universal order of nature regulate these things also by a just proportion?”
 - And then he asks...
 - “Are men so headstrong that they will venture to remonstrate with Him, or to impugn His wisdom?”
 - How foolish it is to question God about these things lest you be like an ignorant man who mocks when he watches a farmer—ploughing and harrowing and making furrows in the ground...
 - And then burying seeds!
 - “What a foolish thing to do” says the ignorant man!
 - But then a crop comes up and the farmer is suddenly esteemed to be wise man!
 - Learn not to be rash in questioning the things you do not understand lest you be made a fool.
 - Calvin says:
 - “When we consider therefore, the various calamities with which the Church is afflicted, let us not complain that loose reins are given to the wicked, and that consequently she is abandoned to her fate, or that all is over with her; but let us believe firmly, that the LORD will apply remedies at the proper time, and let us embrace with our whole heart His righteous judgements.”

- c. Do you see my brothers and sisters,
- God knows how to deal with drunken pride that darkens men's judgement and makes them insensible to their danger and so rash that they make light of God's word...
 - He will plough and He will thresh and many will be broken and destroyed...
 - but His elect will come forth as gold...
 - They will be found joined to the cornerstone that God has set up in the sea of human pride...
 - They will be found not having their own righteousness, but the righteousness that comes by faith in Jesus Christ...
 - And God will be pleased with them, for they will be the work of His own wisdom and grace.
 - Forsake your drunken pride and live!
 - Come to Christ and find in him that perfect rest and refreshment promised by your Lord.
 - There is no other name by which we must be saved.