

WITH MOUTH AND HEART  
Isa. 29:13

Scripture Reading: Isa. 29:1-14.

— Intro: This is the second of six woes to be found from chapter 28 to 33. Five of them have to do with Judah; one, with Assyria.

God is declaring judgment in each one — in the first, because of Judah's great pride. Their pride was not what is usually expressed by men, but it was excessive, much greater than is commonly seen. They were a "crown of pride."

We will best understand this second woe if we see the way our Lord used Isa. 29:13 during His ministry here on earth.

It is quoted in two Gospels: in Matt. 15:1-20, and in Mark 7:1-23. Please turn to the second one.

God has made man's mouth, and God has made man's heart — and He made the two of them to work together. He wants to be praised by men's mouths, and He wants their praise to come from the heart. The crucial member is the heart. If the heart is wrong, the mouth cannot possibly be right. But, since the mouth can be heard by others, men will often conceal what is in the heart (which cannot be seen or heard) by making their mouths say the right things.

When this is going on, the person involved is a hypocrite, according to our Lord Jesus Christ!

To avoid such hypocrisy, David prayed in Psa. 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth . . ."

But just listen to one passage each on the mouth and the heart:  
1) The mouth: Psa. 89:1 — "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generation."  
2) The heart: Deut. 6:4, 5 — the greatest commandment in the Law: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."

Judah's mouth was right, but her heart was wrong. And this was the reason for Isaiah's sermon at this point.

— But the same condition prevailed in our Lord's day.

And the same has been true in every generation. At some time all of us have been guilty. We say things to express our devotion to the Lord, or we sing hymns to join in worship, but the

Lord knows, and we know, even if no one else knows, that our mouths are not really expressing what is in our hearts. How much of what we say about the Lord would have to be blocked out if all such hypocrisy were eliminated?

This is a very prevalent problem among the Lord's people. In Isaiah's prophecy we ran into it in chapter 1!

Taking what Isaiah said, and then taking what the Lord Jesus said, let us examine this problem of hypocrisy among the people of God. Let us ask and answer some questions.

#### I. HOW CAN HYPOCRISY BE DETECTED?

There are several answers in our text. But first let it be said that people will recognize it in their own hearts if they stop to give it any thought at all. Our consciences witness against us.

But there are other ways in which it can be detected.

- A. Talk becomes very important — and the guilty person will spend a lot of time talking.
- B. Ritual and ceremony and form seems to be more important than anything else, even than the doctrines of the Bible.
- C. The Word of God is set aside as being sufficient and as the final authority.

The above can never be done but what the following will be close behind:

- D. The doctrines and opinions of men are accepted equally or even above the Word of God.
- E. There will be little or no concern about daily obedience to the Word of God.

#### II. WHAT DOES THE LORD THINK ABOUT SUCH THINGS?

We have the ministry of Isaiah as well as the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, to show that God is very displeased when those who claim to be His people have mouths and hearts that are not working together.

#### III. WHAT WILL THE LORD DO ABOUT IT?

Stating it as briefly as possible, He will judge it! But how?

Isaiah mentioned three ways. Note them in Isa. 29.

- A. First, He will move against them Himself. Cf. Isa. 29:1-4.
- B. Second, He will close their minds and hearts to the truth of His Word. Cf. Isa. 29:9-12.

Our Lord said, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6:23).

- C. Third, the Lord will confound the teachers that they turn to. Cf. Isa. 29:14.

One other point from the words of the Lord Jesus.

- D. If the heart is wrong, then the life will become increasingly corrupt. Cf. Mark 7:17-23.

Finally,

#### IV. IS THERE HOPE?

There are two kinds of hypocrites in the world:

- 1) There are religious people who claim to be Christian, but who have never been transformed in their hearts. Usually you will see that the Lord does not pay too much attention to them. He did to the hypocrites in Israel because He had been sent to minister especially to that nation. But generally speaking that is not the case. When a person is able to persist in his hypocrisy and get away with it, that is a condition to be alarmed about. It may be that the Lord will never do anything for them.
- 2) The other kind is made up of believers who for a time lapse into hypocrisy.

As in the preaching of the Word in any situation, all hear the Word, and all are being warned. But Isaiah was raised up to expose the sins of Israel not only to reach the people of God, but to restore those who are already His people.

Cf. Heb. 12:5-13.

Concl: Hypocrisy is offensive any place it is found, but it is especially to be abhorred when it involves a man's relationship with God. How deplorable when it is in Ariel, the very hearth of God, the city where David dwelt, who wrote those wonderful words found in Psa. 51:6-15.

For those who need to know the Lord, cf. Rom. 10:9, 10.