

## CONSIDER THE FARMER

### Part I

Text: Isaiah 28:23-29

**Key Word:** Preparing

**Key Thought:** Farmers Begin by Preparing Their Fields for the Harvest

\*\*\* Living in this area means that we are surrounded by farmers. Many are dairy farmers which means that they have to plant fields of corn.

In the spring these farmers were on their fields getting everything ready for the seed to be sown. They labored well into the evening to get all the work done. The Church can learn a lot by simply following the principles of good farming. **It takes a lot of right decisions and hard work in the midst of many obstacles to become a successful farmer.**

They have learned to never leave anything to chance. Just notice how detailed they have become with preventive maintenance. Hoping is good but it must also be properly balanced with honest, practical labour and know how. \*\*\*

### Read Isaiah 28:23-29

The nation of Israel had reached a place where they had turned away from God. There was a price to be paid. The Assyrian Empire came to power and placed God's people under bondage. Israel allowed themselves to enter a state of spiritless submission to the Assyrian yoke by casually striving for liberty. They were willing to compromise with a heathen nation because they had lost all power to overcome their enemies.

Israel knew they had to break the bondage that the Assyrians had placed upon them. Instead of turning to God they put their trust in Egypt. The prophet spent five chapters dealing with the attitude of Israel.

*"Woe to you who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots, and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the LORD . . .  
3. But the Egyptians are men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit . . .  
6. Return to him you have so greatly revolted against, O Israelites."*

*Isaiah 31:1,3,6*

The changes that are required do not take place overnight. **There's plenty of work to be done to turn the tide that is similarly happening to the Church today.** Yet the tide must be redirected. It's time for each one of us to put our hands to the plow and not look back. We are at a season of time when things must be turned around. Let's consider the words of God through His prophet. I'm sure you'll agree that they are very appropriate for today.

**I. THERE IS A TIME FOR PREPARING (Isaiah 28:23,24)**

**II. THERE IS A TIME FOR PLANTING (Isaiah 28:25,26)**

**III. THERE IS A TIME FOR PRODUCING (Isaiah 28:27,29)**

### **I. THERE IS A TIME FOR PREPARING (Isaiah 28:23,24)**

**A. A Time for Plowing** - After fall and winter, the soil becomes hard and unmanageable for planting a tender seed. A farmer must go to the field and **plow** it. This causes great furrows to form. The soil is literally turned upside down.

In my teenage years I was brought into a whole new environment. I was a city boy until I was fifteen years old when my mother remarried. My stepfather was a farm machinery dealer in Avonmore. This meant that I had plenty of new things to learn.

It wasn't long until I saw my first three-furrow plow. Every part of it was made of iron. It needed to be rugged because it had to survive not only turning hard ground over but also turning over rocks. Even with its rugged design we often had farmers coming in to buy parts that had broken. The most common parts became the **plow shares**. These were solid steel so they took a great amount of torque to break them.

Yet they weren't always broken. It was common to replace them because they wore out. Hardened ground and stones take their toll even on such brazen parts. They eventually even produced replacement tips for the shares. Anyone who has worked on a farm knows that even well maintained fields have rocks that eventually make it to the surface. Many a fence has been built by pilling these rocks at the edge of the fields.

These plows are attached to a tractor with a **3-point hitch**. It was used to not only attach the plow but also to lift them up and down. This combination had to change as the furrows increased. These large plows are now hydraulically lifted to prevent the tractor from turning over.

We have to realize that God is using many "larger ways" of preparing the soil of hearts to get the seed of God's Word into the ever increasing "fields" around us. The largest church in the world today is the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea. It has a membership of 800,000. Myungsun Presbyterian Church in Seoul, South Korea with 100,000 members is the second largest. These are now in a realm that they call Mega Churches. There are 17 mega churches in this city alone. The ushers in the Full Gospel church bows as the worshippers leave the service. It's not surprising to hear of 30,000 converts now being baptized in countries.

## I. THERE IS A TIME FOR PREPARING (Isaiah 28:23,24) (Contd.)

### B. A Time for Discing

The second part of preparing the soil applies to the **discing** of the soil to break it up further and level off the deep ruts caused by the plow. Some fields require several passes of the discs because the soil is so hard and dry. Other fields get so saturated with water that they must wait to work the soil until the water evaporates.

There can be no time wasted when the fields are ready. Some farmers can even bypass the plowing of a field by using a disc harrow. These have cutting edges that consist of rows of concave metal discs. They are often sold in an oblique angle. These are inclined backwards to achieve the greatest depth. They are designed to be used in dry, hard soils as well as shrubby land and rocky soil. **In other words, these can be used instead of plowing and harrowing soil.** It is a **multitasking** piece of equipment. You can see why agriculturalists encourage their use in order to cut back on soil erosion.

Can you imagine what the soil looks like after being disced by one of these heavy duty machines designed to break up the fallow ground? Yet nothing compares to what God is doing worldwide which the ungodly news companies refuse to publish.

*“Ephraim is a well-trained heifer that loves to thresh; but I will place a yoke on her fair neck. I will harness Ephraim, Judah will plow, and Jacob will break the hard ground.*

*12. Sow for yourselves righteousness and reap the fruit of loving devotion; **break up your unplowed (untilled) ground.** For it is time to seek the LORD until He comes and sends righteousness upon you like rain.*

*13. You have plowed wickedness and reaped injustice; you have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your own way and in the multitude of your mighty men . . . ”*

*Hosea 10:11-13  
Berean Study Bible*

*“This is what the LORD says to the people of Judah and to Jerusalem: **“Break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns.”***

*Jeremiah 4:3*

## I. THERE IS A TIME FOR PREPARING (Isaiah 28:23,24) (Contd.)

**C. A Time for Harrowing** - After several passes with the disc a farmer often harrows these fields. A **harrow** is a farm implement that is set with spikes for leveling the ground and breaking up the remaining clods. Coarser harrowing can be used to remove weeds and to cover the seed after sowing. We need a **“harrowing experience”** in more ways than one.

Harrowing is not used for deeper cultivation. It is used to smooth out the soil that has been drastically up heaved. Once again the teeth of the harrow are made of steel yet they are designed to bring **a finishing of the cultivating system**. It is the final process of tilling the soil - digging it up - mixing it - overturning it. It also incorporates the remainder of the plant residue from the previous year back into the soil to reduce the amount of fertilizer required. **What kinds of good “residue” is God tilling back into your life? What we sometimes believe was used for evil can be turned upside down and bring further growth into our lives.**

*“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, **the saving of many lives.**”*

*Genesis 50:20*

Can you see how these illustrations can be applied to God's people? Some of you have had your lives or those around you turned upside down recently by God. What He is doing is exposing the good part of your heart and placing the weeds of your life on the bottom where they will be choked out and die. **The hardness of our hearts has had to be broken so God can move into our lives and produce something of value.**

Others have felt that God has been running over them with His spiritual discs that are cutting away at your heart. **It's caused a number of deep emotional scars to surface that you cannot find any reason for.** You feel so helpless in directing your own life. It's like God has taken your hands off the steering wheel of your life.

Still others are experiencing the refining process of the harrow that God uses. This is still, though, a time of trial. The Fund & Wagnal's Dictionary uses the adjective form of the word, **“harrowing”** to mean **“lacerating or tormenting to the feelings.”** I couldn't think of a better way of explaining what some people are recently going through.

Don't lose heart. **It is God's time of Preparing His Church at this time for the greatest harvest the world has ever seen.** He is allowing these things to take place because He recognizes the value in them. **It is very necessary. But keep in mind that it is also temporary.**

The goal is the harvest NOT the time of preparation.

## I. THERE IS A TIME FOR PREPARING (Isaiah 28:23,24) (Contd.)

*"Does he keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil?"*

*Isaiah 28:24*

*"A time to plant and a time to uproot"*

*Ecclesiastes 3:2*

### 6841 Two Cables Between Father-Son

\*\*\* Lord Cardadon, a former British envoy to the United Nations knew how to put Christianity to work in times of trouble. Speaking at a luncheon held by the American Bible Society in May 1969, he recalled the time when he served as governor of Cyprus in the midst of a very troubled political situation.

Knowing of his devout father's concern, the young governor was not surprised when he received a cable from England containing the words, "**Two Corinthians: Eight, Nine.**" He knew the passage: "*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: we are perplexed, not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*"

It was a message of encouragement and assurance. Back to the anxious father went this cable, "**Romans Five: Three, Four.**" The reply cable was a testimony of faith and hope. "*And not only so; but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worked patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.*" \*\*\*

There is not only a time for preparing but also a time for planting which I preach about next week.

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Date: Oct 13/19

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Draw Me Near - Bb

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**A. A Time for Plowing -**

**B. A Time for Discing - *Hosea 10:11-13; Jeremiah 4:3***

**C. A Time for Harrowing - *Genesis 50:20***

The goal is the harvest NOT the time of preparation.

*Isaiah 28:24; Ecclesiastes 3:2*