

# Isaiah 29:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.

## Analysis

**Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt!** The name אָרִיאָל (Ariel) carries layered meaning: 'lion of God' or 'altar hearth.' Isaiah employs this cryptic designation for Jerusalem, the city David established as Israel's capital. The repetition intensifies the lament—God Himself pronounces woe upon His own sanctuary city. The phrase **add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices** (סְפּוּ שָׁנָה שָׁנָה, siphu shanah al-shanah) drips with irony: continue your empty religious calendar, pile up your meaningless sacrifices.

This oracle dates to Hezekiah's reign (circa 701 BC) when Judah maintained religious observances while trusting political alliances over Yahweh. The sacrifices continued at the Temple, but spiritual complacency pervaded. God's woe announces that ritual without righteousness provokes judgment, not blessing. The city hosting His altar would become like an altar itself—a place of burning and slaughter.

## Historical Context

Isaiah prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (740-686 BC). Jerusalem had become synonymous with the Temple and sacrificial worship, yet the nation's heart had drifted. Within fifteen years of this prophecy, Sennacherib's Assyrian army would besiege Jerusalem (701 BC), fulfilling Isaiah's warning of divine distress upon Ariel.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How might our religious activities become empty rituals that provoke God's woe rather than His favor?
2. What does it mean that God pronounces judgment on the very city He chose for His dwelling place?
3. In what ways do we 'add year to year' in religious observance while neglecting the heart transformation God desires?

## Interlinear Text

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שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ
Woe	to Ariel	to Ariel	the city	dwelt	where David	add	to year	
H1945	H740	H740	H7151	H2583	H1732	H5595	H8141	

  

עַל	עַל	שָׁנֶת הַ	שָׁנֶת הַ	יְתַלְּפֵל:				
H5921	to year	sacrifices	let them kill					

  

H8141	H2282	H5362
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## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Samuel 5:9** (References David): So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

**Isaiah 66:3** (Sacrifice): He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

**Hosea 8:13** (Sacrifice): They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

**Hosea 5:6** (Parallel theme): They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them.

**Hosea 9:4** (Sacrifice): They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

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