

# The Language of Ashdod

**TEXT: Neh. 13:24**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

- A. OUR SPEECH IS IMPORTANT!
  - 1. With it we are given the ability to communicate.
  - 2. Words are bridges over which we convey ideas!
- B. ONE REVEALS A LOT ABOUT HIMSELF BY HIS SPEECH.
  - 1. Illustrated in Peter( **Matthew 26:73** ).
  - 2. About our education level, environment, understanding, spirituality.
  - 3. **Matt. 12:34** Our language can be an indicator of what is in the heart.
- C. CHRISTIAN'S SPEECH IS REGULATED ( **Eph. 4:29** ).
  - 1. Our language can express thoughts which are not scriptural, not edifying.
  - 2. Possibility of being corrupted, displeasing to God and injurious to others!

## **I. OUR TEXT AND ITS BACKGROUND( Neh. 13:23-30 )**

- A. THE PROBLEM OF **vs 24**. CHILDREN OF JUDAH SPOKE THE LANGUAGE OF ASHDOD. COULDN'T SPEAK THEIR OWN LANGUAGE CORRECTLY!
  - 1. **Ashdod, stronghold, fortress.**
  - 2. Philistine city( **Josh. 15:47**) midway between Gaza and Joppa, 3 miles from the Mediterranean. One of the chief seats of the worship of Dagon ( **1 Sam. 5:5**) Belonged to the tribe of Judah ( **Josh. 15:47**), never came into their actual possession. An important city, it stood on the highroad from Egypt to Palestine, hence was strongly fortified ( **2 Chron. 26:6; Isa 20:1**). Uzziah took it, but 50 years after his death it was taken by the Assyrians ( **B.C. 758**). Sargon's record says it was captured by him in **B.C. 711**. The only reference to it in the New Testament, where it is called Azotus, is in the account of Philip's return from Gaza ( **Acts 8:40**) It is now called Eshdud.
- B. THE SINS OF RESTORED JUDAH:
  - 1. They had taken foreign wives.
    - a. Legislated against( **Deut. 7:3-4; Ex. 34:12-16** ).
    - b. Warned against( **Josh. 23:12-13** ).
    - c. Past failures( **Judges 3:5-7; 1 Kings 11:1-4** ).
    - d. History repeats( **Ezra 9; Neh. 13:23-24** ).
  - 2. Idolatry.
    - a. Solomon's wife problem( **Neh. 13:26; 1 Kings 11:4-8** ).
    - b. They are reminded of even Solomon, as great as he was!
    - c. What does that say about lesser characters, like you and me?
- C. THE EFFECT ON FUTURE GENERATIONS.
  - 1. God's warning( **Num. 14:18** ).
  - 2. Lot's daughters( **Gen. 19:30-32** ).
  - 3. The language of Ashdod - Speech of the idolatrous Philistines dominated.

## **II. THE PROBLEM WITH THE LANGUAGE OF ASHDOD.**

- A. BETTER SUITED TO CULTURE OF ASHDOD - IDOLATROUS.
- B. REFLECTS INVOLVEMENT WITH IDOLATRY.
- C. LEANS AWAY FROM TRUE SERVICE( **1 Sam. 8:5-7** ). IDENTIFIES WITH IDOLATORS.

## **III. EXAMPLES OF THE LANGUAGE OF ASHDOD TODAY.**

- A. WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE OF ASHDOD TODAY?
  - 1. Unscriptural terminology.
  - 2. Scriptural terminology used unscripturally to mean something else.
- B. AMONG THE DENOMINATIONS:
  - 1. **PASTOR** -- *poimen*, a shepherd
    - a. This is another term ELDER, BISHOP ( **Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2** ).
    - b. Reflects a "pastor system" where the preacher does the pastor's work.!
  - 2. **REVEREND** -- **awesome** in some translations!( **Psa. 111.9** ).
    - a. 1) to fear, revere, be afraid; 2) to stand in awe of, be awed; 3) to fear, reverence, honour, respect
    - b. **Reverend Paul? Reverend Peter?** ( **Matt. 23:8-10** )
  - 3. The **CHRISTIAN SABBATH** - Sunday, or the Lord's day.
    - a. It was the 7th day( **Ex. 20:10; 31:15** ).
    - b. Given to the Jews( **Ex. 31** ), nailed to the cross( **Col. 2:12-17** ).
    - c. Do we have a Sabbath rest?( **Heb. 4:8-11** ).
  - 4. **JOIN THE CHURCH**( **Acts 2:47** ). As opposed to a congregation( **9:26** ).
  - 5. **MY CHURCH**( **Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28** ).
  - 6. **CHURCH - SANTUARY**; confused with the building( **1 Pet.2:5; John 4:20-24** ).

C. IN THE CHURCH:

1. **CHRISTIAN AS AN ADJECTIVE**( Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16 ).
  - a. Always a noun --a person, a disciple, one who belongs to Christ.
  - b. Today often attached to many things! Christian schools & colleges, homes, institutions, etc.
2. **DISCIPLE** misused.
  - a. "Discipling Christians." A superior level of spirituality. Special understanding( 2 Tim 3:7 ).
  - b. Disciple = Christian, Christian = Disciple( Acts 11:26; John 8:31 ).
  - c. Different levels of growth.
3. **LIBERTY**.
  - a. Freedom from restraint?( Gal. 5:13; 2 Pet. 2:17-19 ).
  - b. Freedom from sin!( John 8:32-36 ) and its curse( Heb. 2:14-15 ).
  - c. Free to do right( Rom. 6:6, 17-18 ).
4. **UNITY IN DIVERSITY**.
  - a. Connected with other misused words - **GRACE, FAITH, FELLOWSHIP**.
  - b. Language of compromise( Prov. 23:23; Jude 3 ).
  - c. The pattern is there( 2 Tim. 1:13-14 ).
  - d. Other words associated - **legalist, orthodox, patternist, anti, old fogie**.
5. These are words used not only by heretics like Fudge and Ketcherside. They are being used by old friends in the non-institutional camp and among conservatives in the marriage question. **Romans 14** abused.

**VI. WHY IS THIS A PRESENT DANGER?**

- A. INTRODUCES AND FAMILIARIZES UNSCRIPTURAL CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES. WE BECOME **COMFORTABLE** WITH ERROR?
- B. "CALL BIBLE THINGS BY BIBLE NAMES" ( 1 Pet. 4:11 ).
- C. GOD IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE LANGUAGE WE USE IN WORSHIP AND SERVICE, AND THAT WE USE TO EXPRESS OUR FAITH..
  1. Words in the Scriptures chosen by the Spirit( 1 Cor. 2:13 ).
  2. Why the nit-picking? Some of us have been on this ground before.
- D. TODAY SOUND WORDS ARE NEEDED AND DEMANDED.
  1. **1 Timothy 6:3-6. Wholesome**, 1) to be sound, to be well, to be in good health. 2) metaph. 2a) of Christians whose opinions are free from any mixture of error 2b) of one who keeps the graces and is strong.
  2. **2 Timothy 1:13. Pattern**, 1) an outline, sketch, brief and summary exposition, 2) an example, pattern.

**That which correctly communicates the truth.**
  3. **1 Pet. 4:11.**

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. SOME HAVE DIFFICULTY GRASPING SCRIPTURAL CONCEPTS, MAKING DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN TRUTH AND DENOMINATIONAL ERROR.
- B. COULD IT BE THAT WE ARE SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE OF ASHDOD?
- C. LET US BE CAREFUL.