**Can’t Read**

Isaiah who taught for almost 60 years was used to hearing excuses. So he pointed out the consequences of giving excuses. Jesus not only endorsed what Isaiah said, but quotes him (Mat.15:7-10). For Jesus too, heard many excuses. So this is true of Isaiah’s day, Jesus’ day, and today. See if you also are able to see the excuses Isaiah’ dealt with and where this leads. That is the important part. Where excuses lead us.

“The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, “Please read this,” he will say, “I cannot, for it is sealed.” Then the book will be given to the one who is illiterate, saying, “Please read this.” And he will say, “I cannot read.”

Then the Lord said,

“Because this people draw near with their words

And honor Me with their lip service,

But they remove their hearts far from Me,

And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote” (Isaiah 29:11-13).

FIRST EXCUSE: “I cannot, for it is sealed”. They think the Bible has some kind of “seal” on it which would prohibit them to read it for themselves. They feel, (excuse), that this book is for other people who have authority to break the seal. The priest, preachers, professors, and professionals, they are the only ones who can read and truly understand. So you are telling me, God can create mankind that he can read and write to communicate to other people, but God is not smart enough to do that? So God needs a spell check, right? (Really? is that what you believe?) God creates mankind to do something he himself is unable to do? What a little God!

SECOND EXCUSE: “I can’t read” the Bible. But you can read the newspaper, internet, text messages…. but not the Bible?

CONSEQUENCE 1: “honor Me with their lip service” -only.

CONSEQUENCE 2: “their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote”, or as Jesus quotes this in the gospel of Mark, “in vain do they worship me” (Mark. 7:7). So putting Matthew and Mark together, they worship by human tradition, a “vain worship”. This is the natural consequence of not picking up a Bible to read it for yourself. You will be doing what everyone else does, you’re following people. You prize people’s opinions not God’s. For hundreds of years, human tradition upon human tradition, all in vain. God pleads with you to open up the Bible, open up the heart of God, and be open to it. Dan Peters