

# THE WOES TO THE WICKED

## PART 2

**DATE: 11/16/2016 Wed.**

**TEXT: Isaiah 5:20-25**

### INTRODUCTION

We continue tonight to look at the second section of **Isaiah 5** and **the 6 Woes**

I'll be preaching again on the thought ...

### **“THE WOES TO THE WICKED” – Part 2**

The Word **Woe** is a very interesting word found in the Bible

The declaration of a Woe on someone can be found throughout the Scriptures

I found it used 107 times

So what exactly is being communicated when its used?

The word Woe indicates the coming of Grief; Sorrow; Misery; or a Heavy Calamity

In essences it's a Warning

We find it used here on the Privileged of Israel

The Privileged had become an Ungodly lot,

Their Privilege caused them to have no regard for God

## *The Woes to the Wicked – Isaiah 5:8-25*

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**Privilege** – is the opportunities and advantages enjoyed by a relatively small group of people, usually as a result of wealth or social status and because of Blessing

But with all Privilege comes responsibility

-- In the Books of the Prophets there are many Woes against Israel and Judah,

Also against the other nations which went after Israel

-- Jesus pronounced Woes upon those who should have been the leaders of God's people

But because of Privilege felt instead, they were Elite

We'd say that the blessings went to their heads not their hearts

-- The Book of Revelation shows that God's Woes will fall one day on those who today disregard God

**Revelation 8:13** – *“And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”*

We are taken through these Woes, that God might be seen as Just

Just; in dealing out the Judgements that came with His Pronouncement found in **Isaiah 5:7**

## *The Woes to the Wicked – Isaiah 5:8-25*

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***“... He looked for judgment (justice), but behold oppression; for righteousness, (right attitudes) but behold a cry”***

The Bible is very clear as to what God is looking for in one's attitude and action

***Micah 6:8 - “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”***

Let's pickup tonight in v. 20

We'll be looking at the last 3 Woes

Will you stand with me as we read vs. 20-25 together

~~~Prayer~~~

First we see the ...

### **I. THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONFUSION” - v. 20**

In vs. 1-7 we saw Israel's Predicament

(A difficult situation that they brought on themselves)

Now we see their Peril in vs. 8-25

Let's look at the 4<sup>th</sup> Woe, and the Confusion that brought it

***“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”***

## *The Woes to the Wicked – Isaiah 5:8-25*

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This Woe is directed at the “*moral relativists*” of that day

Those who perverted Godly moral standards

First, let me ask, what are Morals?

Morals relate to what is right and wrong and how people should behave

So then, what is “*Moral relativism*”?

*Moral relativism is the view that ethical standards, morality, and positions of right or wrong are culturally based and not divinely originated and therefore subject to a person's individual choice*

The Relativist says we can all decide what is right for ourselves

You decide what's right for you, and I'll decide what's right for me

Moral relativism says, “*If I believe it, it is true for me*”

There are No Absolutes

Let's look at the 3 reversals of Right and Wrong found here

### **A. They Called Evil Good and Good Evil**

Reversing God's standards of right and wrong is a characteristic of a Nation that has gone into apostasy

And will precede a time of divine judgment

## *The Woes to the Wicked – Isaiah 5:8-25*

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This phenomenon is increasingly characteristic of America today

This verse paints a perfect picture of the modern morality mindset that is glossing over what's wrong

And is re-dressing wickedness to give it the appearance of righteousness

A Nation's insensitivity to moral decay is a sign of its deepest corruption

***Proverbs 17:15 – “He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD”***

***Malachi 2:17 – “Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?”***

***Malachi 3:15 – “And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered”***

Sin was called good

Decency and right were called wrong

Little has changed in 2,750 years

Homosexuality is called a civil right and preaching against such sin is called hate-speech

The publishing or production of lewd material is called freedom of speech and any opposition is described as censorship

Godly Morality is sneered at as Puritanism

Anything godly is banished from the public sector in the name of separation of church and state

This is exactly what was going on in Judah during Isaiah's ministry

## **B. They Called Darkness Light and Light Dark**

Without God's Standard (Which is the only measure of Right and Wrong) ... a good thing will be reinterpreted as something evil

While an immoral act (euthanasia) can be twisted into something that actually appears to be good (mercy killing)

Without an absolute standard of divine justice,

False human reasoning and uncontrolled passion can rationalize and justify almost any act

Particularly if the primary criteria is - "*Will it benefit me?*"

When sweet and bitter, light and darkness, and good and evil are relative values based on wishes, whims, and selfish ends ...

... Righteousness and justice do not exist

Much of the crime and immorality that afflicts modern society goes right back to similar personal and societal redefinitions of right and wrong

***Matthew 6:23 – “But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”***

### **C. They Called Bitter Sweet and Sweet Bitter**

God’s Moral standards were destroyed by new definitions of sin

***Amos 5:7 – “Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth,”***

People using God’s vocabulary but not His dictionary

Like today’s “doublespeak,” this kind of language made it easy to deceive people and avoid a guilty conscience

***Psalms 12:2 – “They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak”***

### **THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONFUSION”**

## **II. THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONCEIT” – v. 21**

In v. 21 we see the Fifth Woe

***“Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight”***

*Conceit is defined as excessive self-pride*

Self-Righteousness and Pride of Intellect prevailed in Isaiah's day

God has warned against such

**Proverbs 3:7 – “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil”**

Intellectual elitism arrogantly thinks it has all the answers

But the day as come when **Romans 1:22** has been fulfilled

**“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”**

Wisdom and Prudence are good traits when applied from a Godly prospective

But when they are used strictly from a human philosophy

... It is nothing but Foolishness

#### **A. Wise in their Own Eyes**

Woe # 5 is directed at the Conceited man and at his insistence for his rights rather than God's rights!

**Proverbs 1:7 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge ...but fools despise wisdom and instruction”**

Self-flattering fools! Exaggerated egos! Excessive personal pride!

## *The Woes to the Wicked – Isaiah 5:8-25*

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They have a lofty appreciation of their own wisdom and cleverness

They think they are wise enough to handle any situation

They reject a humble dependence on the wisdom of God

They want to be in control of their behavior

**Proverbs 1:29, 30 – *“For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:” “They would none of My counsel: they despised all My reproof”***

**Romans 1:28 – *“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”***

### **B. Prudent (Clever) in their Own Sight**

**Prudent** – *having good sense, carefully considering consequences, using good judgment to consider likely consequences and act accordingly*

The worldly mind is better called Clever, not Prudent

These folks, instead of having Godly Sense, think they are witty

They think, that somehow they can outwit others / God

They make the rules, they call the shots

But for some reason it never seems to work out for them

**THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONCEIT”**

**THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONFUSION”**

Then lastly, let’s look at ...

**III. THE WOE FOR THEIR “CRIMES” – vs. 22-25 ...**

*“Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine ... which justify the wicked ... Therefore”*

This last “*woe*” is almost a summary of the evils which God has previously condemned

**A. The ‘Promoter’ – v. 22**

*“Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink”*

As the context of this text indicates, excess is the great promoter of evil

Many crimes are caused and inspired by over indulgence of all kind, yet our land does nothing about it

Where booze and drugs prevail, crime results

Take imbibing out of society and crime would drop overnight

Instead of Following God, they were living excessively

Losing any kind of sensibleness, reason

**B. The ‘Practice’ – v. 23**

***“Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!”***

One of the crimes that resulted was injustice

They were letting the wicked go for payment / bribes

While taking away the rights of the innocent

Implied here is the corruption of justice completed by the bribe

God warned of impending judgment because of it

***Proverbs 31:4, 5 – “It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:” “Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted”***

Israel was perverting the justice due the afflicted

That is going on right now in the highest positions of our gov’t in Washington

We see people getting off Scott free because of their money, connections, position, or privilege

**C. The ‘Penalty’ – v. 24**

Lest there’s any question as to God’s reaction to the prevailing sin of Judah, God announced ...

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***“Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the Law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel”***

The fire of God’s judgment was pending

Just as fire consumes the stubble and chaff of harvest,

God’s judgment against Judah would be as rottenness and the bloom of the nation would turn to dust

Destruction was coming and it was because Judah had

***“cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel”***

They had ignored and despised God’s Word

***Nehemiah 9:26 – “Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against Thee, and cast Thy law behind their backs, and slew Thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to Thee, and they wrought great provocations”***

One of the penalties for crime is the destruction of society

If folks do not want to abide by the Law of the Lord,

They then become lawless

That is the character of crime, namely, lawlessness

Crime does not want laws against the evil it commits

**CONCLUSION – v. 25**

God closes this section of **Isaiah 5** with this thought

***“Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against His people, and He hath stretched forth His hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still”***

The wrath of God against His own people was pending because of their sin

The very hills of Judea would tremble at the coming judgment of God

The bodies of the inhabitants of Judah would lie dead in the streets

And with terrible foreboding, the announcement was made that there was yet more than this

***“For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still”***

As will be seen in the last section of **Isaiah 5**

The ultimate wrath of God against Judah would come at a later time

**We need to pray that God will bring Repentance and Revival to America before it's too late!**

**THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONFUSION”**

**THE WOE FOR THEIR “CONCEIT”**

**THE WOE FOR THEIR “CRIMES”**