

# Six Woes of Isaiah

**Text:** *Isaiah 5:8-23*

## Introduction:

1. Similarities between Israel and Judah in the eighth century B.C. and our nation today.
  - a. In their material prosperity Israel and Judah forgot God and fell into corruption and decay. They eventually credited their prosperity to their many false gods.
  - b. Resulted in rampant political corruption, social decay, and moral depravity.
2. The above state of affairs eventually brought about God's judgment upon the nation.

*Isaiah 5:8-23* contains six woes, or warnings.

### I. Covetous – *5:8-10*.

- a. Sin of greedy land owners.
  - i. Their sin was not that of ambition, but of selfish ambition.
    - ii. Wealthy landowners would buy up or otherwise acquire land that belonged to those who were less fortunate. Original landowners were eventually crowded out.
    - iii. Isaiah revealed what was to come. Houses would be desolate, vacant. Land would be unproductive. *Leviticus 26:20*, *Deuteronomy 28:16-19*.
- b. We have been warned of the sin of covetousness.
  - i. Consider Jesus' response when he was asked to become involved in a dispute between a man and his brother over their inheritance – *Luke 12:15*.
  - ii. As Christians, we should not ever possess a desire for worldly goods cause us to take advantage of others – *Proverbs 22:16*.
  - iii. No covetous person (idolater) has any inheritance in the kingdom of God – *Ephesians 5:5*.

### II. Carnal – *5:11-17*.

- a. Alcohol mentioned as specific example.
  - i. Alcohol promises pleasure to those who partake, but delivers anything but pleasure – *Proverbs 23:29-32*.
  - ii. “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink...” – *Habakkuk 2:15*.
  - iii. But there can be hope for those involved – *1 Corinthians 6:9-11* (notice the past tense).
- b. Lessons taught by Isaiah can be applied to all those today who possess an overwhelming desire to satisfy their lusts.
  - i. Our bodies, being the temple of God, are not to be defiled but rather are to bring glory to God – *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*.
  - ii. Those persons who are guilty of the works of the flesh shall not inherit the kingdom of God – *Galatians 5:19-21*.

### III. Captive to sin – *5:18-19*.

- a. Isaiah wrote concerning those whose sins were so numerous that their sins had to be placed in a cart and pulled by a rope. These people would eventually be bound by the very rope they used to pull the cart.

- i. Solomon wrote concerning those who become entangled in their sin – *Proverbs 5:22-23*.
        - ii. Persons who are indifferent to their sin eventually fall under the power of their sin – *Romans 6:12, 16*.
      - b. People in Isaiah’s time made a mockery of God’s judgment.
        - i. Their rebellious attitude toward God was even worse than the entanglement of their sin.
        - ii. When Isaiah warned them of God’s judgment they responded, “*Let him make speed and hasten his work.*” – *5:19*
- IV. Confuse morals – 5:20.**
- a. People called good evil and evil good, meaning they said of evil, “*it is good.*” Same condition exists in our own society. *Proverbs 17:15*.
    - i. Society calls abortion a woman’s choice, the Bible calls it murder.
    - ii. Society calls homosexuality an alternate lifestyle, but the Bible calls it an abomination – *Leviticus 20:13*.
    - iii. Atheism is called a part of “*modern science,*” Bible calls it foolish – *Psalms 14:1*
  - b. It is possible the reasons for their failure to recognize sin for what it is may have been many of the same reasons people today fail to recognize sin for what it is.
    - i. Fear of offending others.
    - ii. Justify ourselves.
    - iii. Ignorance.
    - iv. To make others feel good rather than guilty.
    - v. Make ourselves feel comfortable about those whom we care about.
- V. Conceive their own standards – 5:21.**
- a. First sin was brought about by desire for own standard of right and wrong.
    - i. Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil when Satan told her that if she ate she would be as gods, knowing good and evil – *Genesis 3:5*.
    - ii. Her sin, along with Adam’s, had fatal consequences – *Genesis 3:1-5, 22-24*.
  - b. Many today deny the word of God and attempt to develop their own standards.
    - i. God expects men to discern between good and evil – *Hebrews 5:14*.
    - ii. God expects us to hate evil and choose that which is good – *Romans 12:9*.
- VI. Corrupt justice – 5:22-23.**
- a. Officials who were unable to execute justice fairly.
    - i. Justified the actions of the wicked
    - ii. Dishonored those who were righteous before God.
  - b. They were unable to execute justice because they had taken bribes.
    - i. They placed a greater value on money than they placed on the truth.

ii. We ought to buy the truth and sell it not –

*Proverbs 23:23.*

**Conclusion:**

1. Woe to: covetous, carnal, captive to sin, confuse morals, conceive their own standards, corrupt justice.