

Isaiah Chapter 5 Continued

The prophet Isaiah pronounces a six fold “woe” on the sins of Judah. Join house to house means they are greedy land grabbers. By foreclosing mortgages, the wealthy landowners acquired all the adjoining land to form huge estates.

A bath was a liquid measure equivalent to an ephah of dry measure (about 8 gallons). A homer was about 83 gallons. Strong drink (shekar), refers to fermented drink.

Draw iniquity with cords refers to pulling a load of sin with a rope on a cart. Thus, the people of Judah are condemned for parading their sin before God.

Isaiah 5:8 "Woe unto them that join house to house, [that] lay field to field, till [there be] no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!"

This first woe was against real estate owners because of their greedy materialism.

“House to house ... field to field”: God gave the land to the Israelites with the intention that the original allocation remain with each family (Lev. 25:23-25). By Isaiah’s time, land speculators had begun putting together huge estates (Mica 2:2 and 9), and the powerful rich used legal processes to deprive the poor of what was rightfully theirs (Amos 2:6-7).

This is speaking of someone who has no regard for his neighbors. He tries to buy up all the acreage around him and just builds a bigger house for his own use. This land owner has moved all of his neighbors out to build himself a bigger estate.

Pretty soon, the whole town will belong to him alone.

Isaiah 5:9 "In mine ears [said] the LORD of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, [even] great and fair, without inhabitant."

This is speaking of a time when the houses will be empty. This is speaking of beautiful buildings without inhabitants. It appears to me, that the Lord of Host has said this in the ears of Isaiah.

Isaiah 5:10 "Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah."

God judged the greedy rich by reducing the productivity of their land to a small fraction of what it would have been normally. About one half bushel would be produced from about six bushels of planted seed. Such amounts indicate famine conditions.

A bath is approximately 7-1/2 gallons. That would be a very small amount for ten acres to produce. The homer was the same as ten ephahs. The homer was thought to be the amount a donkey could carry.

We see from this, that they planted more seed than they yielded. We can see the futility of farming or raising a vineyard with these results. It seems that God had cursed these crops.

Isaiah 5:11 "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, [that] they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, [till] wine inflame them!"

The second woe addressed the drunkards for their neglect of the Lord's work of judgment and redemption, and their devotion to pleasure.

In our day, we would call this person an alcoholic. Someone, who drinks in the morning, is addicted to alcohol. It would be especially so of someone who drank all day. The Lord speaks a woe on people addicted to alcohol.

We know from our society today, the destruction of lives that this type of drinking brings.

Isaiah 5:12 "And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands."

The instruments, mentioned above, had been used in worship services in the past. It seems, in this case, they were used in drunken parties.

It seems this message is saying, they have turned away from the tried and true methods of worship of the past, and have gone to new methods. This has become a place to meet and socialize, instead of a place of worship.

Isaiah 5:13 "Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because [they have] no knowledge: and their honorable men [are] famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst."

The people have gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge of the Lord. Their concerns have been on worldly things and not that of God. Now they are in punishment because of their evil deeds.

We find in this the punishment for such behavior is swift and exacting. Isaiah speaks of it as if it had already happened. The outcome of drinking in excess and revelry has been slavery. This slavery can be literal, as in this case, or it could be the slavery of alcoholism.

Again, the thirst could be literal, or it could be thirst for the truth in God; either way, it is terrible.

Isaiah 5:14 "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it."

The term Sheol in this context pictures death as a great monster with wide open jaws, ready to receive its victims. Such was to be the fate of those who perish in the captivity God will send to punish the people's sinfulness.

A sinful way of life leads to total destruction and to hell. I personally believe to be a Christian in name only brings about the same thing. God does not want luke-warm followers, He wants 100% of you, or none of you at all.

Notice the word "multitude" in the verse above. Christianity is not a religion of the masses. It is a walk through life in personal relationship with Him. He does not save the masses, but individuals in those masses. "Pomp" indicates someone who is conceited.

Some-one not humble, but pompous, finds it very difficult to be humble before God. The accepting of the Lord with our head is not what He wants. He wants our heart.

"Hell enlarging herself" indicates that it must be enlarged to hold, not only the professing non-believer, but also those who are Christians in name only.

Isaiah 5:15 "And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:"

The "mean man" refers to the lower class of society where the "mighty man" refers to the upper class.

There will come a time when all the proud, lofty, arrogant, and all unbelievers will be brought down, and will know Him for who He is. In some cases, it will be too late.

The Bible says every eye shall see Him. This will be the time when many, who did not believe, will believe, because they see Him in all His majesty. (Faith in the Lord Jesus purchases our salvation, not fact). If we see Him with our eyes, it takes no faith to believe.

John 20:29 "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed [are] they that have not seen, and [yet] have believed."

Isaiah 5:16 "But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness."

Jesus Christ is Judge of all the earth. The very ones who denied Him will exalt Him, when they realize He is the Judge of all the earth. Only God has His own righteousness and holiness.

Our righteousness, as Christians, is a gift from Jesus. It is His righteousness that makes us holy in the sight of the LORD.

Isaiah 5:17 "Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat."

Lambs are baby sheep. These "fat ones" could mean those who had all of the food of life, and yet perished because of being alien to God. This land and its food are left for those young Christians who are willing to follow the Shepherd.

Isaiah 5:18 "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:"

To me, this would be saying that they draw sin unto themselves and embrace it. They have so many sins they cannot carry all of them, so they must pull them along with them tied to them by this rope. The sin is never very far away from them. It is within the distance of the rope. They can embrace this sin, just by pulling the rope to them.

This third woe was against those who defied the Lord and ridiculed His prophet.

Isaiah 5:19 "That say, Let him make speed, [and] hasten his work, that we may see [it]: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know [it]!"

“Let him make speed” is what the taunting unbelievers said, “Where is the judgment of which you have spoken, Isaiah? Bring it on. We will believe it when we see it.”

This challenge for God to hasten His judgment represented their disbelief that the Holy One of Israel would judge the people. See Isaiah’s response in the naming of his son: “Swift is the booty, speedy is the prey” (8:1; 5:26).

They are expressing a desire for the judgment to come, thinking they will be spared. They think there will be no judgment. Speaking literally, these Jews cannot and will not believe, God will judge them harshly. They have been spared so many times, because of His great love for them. They believe this will be no different, and they will be spared. They are arrogantly saying "come on and do what you will". They have no idea what lies ahead for them.

Christians today, are doing the same thing as many are saying; I have been baptized, it does not make any difference how I am living. God will save me, I am a Christian. Those who are a Christian in word only, will be surprised when He says "Get away from me, I never knew you".

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Christians, do not play church. If you profess Christianity, live the Christian life every day and bare fruit fit for the kingdom.

Isaiah Chapter 5 Continued Questions

1. Woe unto them that join _____ to _____.
2. What is wrong with building that close?

3. What time is verse 9 telling us of?
4. How many gallons are in a "bath"?
5. How many ephahs is a homer?
6. What has apparently happened to these crops?
7. What was the next woe, spoken of in verse 11?
8. In our day, what would the person who did this be called?
9. Verse 12 lists some things that had been used for worship services previously, what were they?
10. What were they used for, in this prophecy?
11. These people had fallen so far, that they did not regard the work of the _____.
12. The place of worship had become what?
13. Why had the people gone into captivity?
14. How had the punishment come?
15. What is the outcome of drinking in excess and revelry?
16. What two thirsts could be mentioned in verse 13?
17. What does a sinful way of life lead to?
18. What does the author believe, being a Christian in name only leads to?
19. God wants _____% of you.
20. God saves _____ in the masses.
21. What does the word, "pomp" tell us?
22. What is meant by "hell enlarged herself"?
23. What happens to the mean man in verse 15?
24. Who will see Jesus and know Him for who He is?
25. Verse 16 says "God that is holy shall be sanctified in _____".
26. Who is the only one to have His own righteousness and holiness?
27. Who are the lambs?

28. Who leads the lambs?
29. The land and its food are left for whom?
30. What does the Scripture mean?
31. They are expressing a desire for what to come?
32. How are many Christians today like these prophesied in verse 19?