

## The Six Woes and Judgments of Isra'el ~ Part 3 Yesha'yahu 5:22-30

In my last post, we continued to unpack the next three woes of **Isra'el** in **Yesha'yahu 5:18-21**. We covered the next three of the six woes **Yesha'yahu** declares to **Isra'el**. In this post, will conclude our examination of the last of **The Six Woes and Judgments of Isra'el ~ Part 3** in **Yesha'yahu 5:22-30**.

The sixth and final woe returns to the earlier issue of alcoholism and twisting justice for money.

***"<sup>22</sup> Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, men whose power goes to mixing strong drinks, <sup>23</sup> who acquit the guilty for bribes but deny justice to the righteous!***

The Bible Background Commentary has this to offer regarding the issue of **strong drinks** in this period.

*A wide variety of alcoholic beverages was available in the ancient world. Wine (from honey, dates or grapes) and beer were the most common. What is classed today as "hard liquor" (requiring a distillation process) was not yet known. The two terms used in this verse may refer respectively to grape wine and date wine, but it is difficult to be certain. The mixing that is mentioned here involves mixing in herbs, spices or oils. <sup>1</sup>*

Because people have given themselves over to wine and strong drink, people no longer think clearly. Woe to a society which has come under the bondage of **strong drink**.

True justice (see Leviticus 19:15) is expected of kings, officials and local magistrates. In fact, in the book of Judges and prophetic literature (Yesha'yahu 1:23) describes a society in which *"laws are enacted but ignored."* At that time and true today, an efficiently administered state depends on the reliability of the law and its enforcement. The temptation for judges and government officials to accept bribes is found in every time and place (see Proverbs 6:35; Micah 7:3). Taking bribes becomes almost institutionally accepted in bureaucratic situations as competing parties attempt to outmaneuver each other (see Ezra 4:4-5; Micah 3:11). However, at least on the ideal level, arguments and penalties are imposed to eliminate or at least lessen this problem. Exodus 23:8 forbids the taking of bribes and the perversion of justice as an offense against God, the weak and innocent, and the entire community (see Amos 5:12).

Two judgment speeches (verses 24 and 25) follow the woes.

***<sup>24</sup> Therefore, as fire licks up the stubble, and the chaff is consumed in the flame; so, their root will rot, and their flowers scatter like dust; because they have rejected the Torah of Adonai-Tzva'ot, they have despised the word of the Holy One of Isra'el. <sup>25</sup> This is why Adonai's anger blazed up against His people, why He stretched out His hand against them and struck them [so hard that] the hills shook, and corpses lay like trash in the streets. Even after all this, His anger remains, His upraised hand still threatens.***

*"You brought judgment and destruction upon yourself,"* God says, *"but My hand is outstretched still."* Look at that hand. It's not stretched out to strike you down. As I look at that hand, I see the scars where a nail pierced and penetrated the palm (or wrist as some people believe) and I realize that His hand is stretched out not to come down on me but to reach out and save me.

God's hand is stretched out. The mistakes we've made personally, as a church family, as a community, and as a country have been forgiven and covered by the blood of Yeshua if we'll simply respond and say, *"Thank You,*

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<sup>1</sup> The IVP Bible Background Commentary – Old Testament.

*Lord, for reaching out, for stretching out Your hand on the Cross, for absorbing My sins. I repent. I change direction. I'm turning away from my old paths to walk in Your way."*

God comes to the vineyard of our nation and looks for the fruit of thanksgiving, rightness, holiness, love, mercy, and compassion, but all He finds is sour grapes and wild fruit. What is the solution? Repentance. Nations don't repent. People repent. Therefore, it's time for us to accept our part in the corrupt state of our society. It's time for us to change our activity and pray on behalf of our country.

***<sup>26</sup> He will give a signal to faraway nations, he will whistle for them to come from the ends of the earth; and here they come, so fast! - <sup>27</sup> none of them tired or stumbling, none of them sleeping or drowsy, none with a loose belt, none with a broken sandal-strap.***

The **signal** or banner was used as a means of calling out an army of a territory or indicating the place where a muster was taking place, or a camp was located. It often featured an insignia of the tribe or division. The word translated whistle can also refer to a hiss.

***<sup>28</sup> Their arrows are sharp; all their bows are strung, their horses' hoofs are like flint, and their [chariot] wheels like a whirlwind.***

The Assyrians did not shoe horses, so horses with hard hooves were the more desirable, especially for the rocky terrain of **Isra'el**. The bow was the main offensive weapon of the Assyrian army. Arrowheads were made of various materials including bone, horn, and various metals. Chariots could accommodate four people and had heavy six or eight spoke wheels.

***<sup>29</sup> They will roar like lions - yes, roaring like young lions, they growl and seize the prey and carry it off, with no one to rescue. <sup>30</sup> On that day they will growl at them, like the sea when it growls - and when one looks toward land, one sees darkness closing in; the light is dissipated in the obscuring overcast."* ~ Yesha'yahu 5:22-30 (CJB)**

The lion would typically roar as a warning in a territorial confrontation. The growl is appropriate to the seizing of prey. Both images are reflected here. Because of the Lord's allowance, the Assyrian army would descend on **Isra'el** in a flawless military maneuver.

In my next blog, we will move on to **Yesha'yahu 6** covering his visit to **The Throne of God and Yesha'yahu's Commissioning**.