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The Six Woes of Isaiah

5: 8-25



This section has been described as **Judah's Grapes of Wrath** because of its series of *six woes*, hurled against six groups of people who were responsible for producing *stinking fruit*, that was shameful in the eyes of **ADONAI**. Here, as elsewhere in the TaNaKh, a parable is used in preparation for a statement of judgment (see my commentary on [the Life of David, to see link click Ce - David Anointed King Over Y'hudah](#)). It was the nature of the prophets of the times to begin with a parable and then move on to their words of judgment. So, in **5:1-6** we have **the Parable of the Vineyard**, in **5:7** there is the interpretation, and in **5:8-25** we have the application of the **woes** and the judgments. **God**, through **Isaiah**, will pronounce six *woes* for the bad grapes that **Judah** produced. **He** will intersperse these *six woes* with *four therefore*s.

The Hebrew word *hoy*, translated **woe**, introduces a lament as much as a threat. **Isaiah** is not only angry and accusing, **he** is also grief-stricken over the sins of **his** people. On the other hand, it is interesting to realize how measured and reasoned **Isaiah** was in **his** ministry, as were all the prophets. Anyone who thinks that they were merely condemning demagogues, ranting and rebuking, fails to see how they ministered on the basis of great evidence, or *woes*. Then carefully written logical, inescapable conclusions, in a series of *therefores*. The **therefore** sections serve to subdivide **5:8-25** into two parts, **5:8-17** and **5:18-25**. Watch for the repeated connection of drunkenness and injustice in **5:11-12** and **5:22-23**.