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Woe to Those who Call Evil Good and Good Evil 5: 20

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil DIG: How would you describe the sin of those deserving the fourth woe? And the fifth woe? How do they relate? What effect would these woeful people have on others who tried to follow after God's ways?

REFLECT: What are some examples in our society today of calling evil good and good evil? On a personal level, what can you do to counteract this landslide?

Here **Isaiah** continues **his** condemnation of **those** who mocked the ways of **the LORD**. In order to justify **their** own behavior, **they** needed to show that their **evil** actions were **good**, their **darkness** was **light**, and **their** bitterness sweet.



Therefore, **Isaiah** prophesied **the fourth woe**, saying: **Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter (5:20)**. The fourth woe concerns **willful confusion of the standards of right and wrong**. **They** had no real code of ethics. What **they** did have is a false code; **they** call **evil good and good evil**. **They** confuse **darkness for light and light for darkness; they** mistake **bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter**. The morale code had been

rewritten. People no longer felt guilty when **they** acted in ways that once were considered immoral. One person's **sweet** was another person's **bitter**. Personal tastes ruled the day. It was reminiscent of the days of the judges where **Isra'el had no king and everyone did as they saw fit (Judges 21:25b)**.

This attitude was the end result of refusal to admit the absolute authority of **God because they had rejected the Torah of ADONAI-Tzva'ot, they had despised the Word of the Holy One of Isra'el (5:24b CJB)**. For sin is not content to live alongside righteousness any more than disease will coexist with health. Sin can only be satisfied when righteousness is destroyed. If doing the right thing is dependent upon human reason alone, that reason is no match for self-interest that is out of control. In fact, self-interest will try to justify its own behavior every time. Only a commitment to the revealed wisdom of **God (Proverbs 1:7; 3:7 and 9:10)** and a commitment to **good**, despite the reasonings of the wise of this world, can make possible genuine long-lasting righteousness, both in individuals and society. The path of those who do **their** own thing inevitably leads from getting what **they** want to doing the wrong thing.¹⁵

We know **the Word** says: **Woe to those who call evil good**, but that's exactly what the world is doing right now. It has lost its spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values. Actions that people used to be ashamed of, they now boast in. It has ridiculed the absolute truth of **God's Word** and called it pluralism. It has worshiped other gods and called it multi-culturalism. It has endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle. It has exploited the poor and called it the lottery. It has neglected the needy and called it self-preservation. It has rewarded laziness and called it welfare. It has killed the unborn and called it a choice. It has neglected the discipline of **their** children and called it building self-esteem. It has abused power and called it political savvy. It has coveted **their** neighbor's possessions and called it ambition. It has polluted the airwaves with profanity and called it freedom of expression. It has ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment. But **the Word of God** says this to the wicked of any age: **Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked**. People reap what **they** sow (see the commentary on **Galatians, to see link click Cg - The One Who Sows to the Flesh Will Reap Corruption**).