



CAUSES OF INJUSTICE

CAUSES OF POVERTY

- Ruth--Natural disasters
- Proverbs
 - 6:6-11 Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer or ruler, she prepares her food in summer, and gathers her sustenance in harvest. How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a vagabond, and want like an armed man,
 - 23:20-21 Be not among winebibbers, or among gluttonous eaters of meat; for the drunkard & the glutton will come to poverty, & drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.
 - 12:11 He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits has no sense.
 - 14:23 In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to want.
 - 20:13 Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty; open your eyes, and you will have plenty of bread.
 - 13:23 The fallow ground of the poor yields much food, but it is swept away through injustice.

OUTLINE OF ISA 1-5

1:1-31—Way Jerusalem is:

2:1-4—Way Jerusalem could be

- 2:5—Theme Verse: *O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.*

2:6-8—Way Jerusalem is: 4 reasons for rejection: pagan worldview, dependence on money, militarism, idol worship

2:9-22—Judgment: prideful will be brought low; The LORD will be exalted (11, 17)

3:1-7—Judgment: the LORD will remove the bad community leaders

- 3:8—Theme Verse: *For Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen; because their speech and their deeds are against the LORD, defying his glorious presence.*

3:9-4:1—Way Jerusalem is: Causes of Injustice and the resulting judgment

- 3:14-15—Oppression: *The LORD enters into judgment with the elders and princes of his people: "It is you who have devoured the vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing my people, by grinding the face of the poor?" says the Lord GOD of hosts.*

4:2-6—Way Jerusalem could be

5:1-7—Way Jerusalem could be & is: Parable of the vineyard

- 5:7—Theme Verse: *For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, & the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; & he looked for justice [mishpat], but behold, bloodshed [mispach]; for righteousness [tsedaqah], but behold, a cry [tseaqah]!*

5:8-23; 10:1-4—Way Jerusalem is: 7 woes & the causes of injustice

SEVEN WOES

1—5:8-10: Woe to those who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land. The LORD of hosts has sworn in my hearing: "Surely many houses shall be desolate, large and beautiful houses, without inhabitant. For ten acres of vineyard shall yield but one bath, and a homer of seed shall yield but an ephah."

- Injustice caused when God is excluded in the pursuit of wealth

2—5:11-17: Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening till wine inflames them! They have lyre and harp, timbrel and flute and wine at their feasts; but they do not regard the deeds of the LORD, or see the work of his hands. Therefore, my people go into exile for want of knowledge; their honored men are dying of hunger, and their multitude is parched with thirst. Therefore, Sheol has enlarged its appetite and opened its mouth beyond measure, and the nobility of Jerusalem and her multitude go down, her throng and he who *exults* in her. Man is *bowed down*, and men are *brought low*, and the eyes of the haughty are *humbled*. But the LORD of hosts *is exalted* in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness. Then shall the lambs graze as in their pasture, fatlings and kids shall feed among the ruins.

- Injustice caused when God is excluded in the pursuit of pleasure

3—5:18-19: Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of falsehood, who draw sin as with cart ropes, who say: "Let him make haste, let him speed his work that we may see it; let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near, and let it come, that we may know it!"

- Injustice caused when God excluded by cynicism

4—5:20: 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!

- Injustice caused when God excluded by the arrogant use of freedom

5—5:21: Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!

- Injustice caused when God is excluded by pride and self-sufficiency

6—5:22-23: Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink, who acquit [tsadeq] the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent [tsedaqah] of his right [tsaddiq]!

- **Injustice caused when God is excluded by numbing and self-medication**

- 5:25; 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4: For all this his anger is not turned away and his hand is stretched out still.

7—10:1-4: Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees, and the writers who keep writing oppression, to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be their spoil, and that they may make the fatherless their prey! What will you do on the day of punishment, in the storm which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth? Nothing remains but to crouch among the prisoners or fall among the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away and his hand is stretched out still.

- **Injustice made legal**

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Injustice has both individual and structural aspects

- Isaiah 58:6-7 *"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"*

2. Injustice occurs when good people do not challenge it. Beware of being more influenced by culture than by God.

- Isa 1:17 *...learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.*

3. Injustice has many economic and cultural benefits

- Isaiah 3:18-23 *In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents; the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarfs; the headdresses, the armlets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets; the signet rings and nose rings; the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags; 23 the garments of gauze, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils.*

4. Injustice results from a failure to exalt the Lord

- Isaiah 5:16 *But the LORD of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness.*