

multitude; their common people. All are perishing for want of the supports of life.

V. 14. *Therefore hell hath enlarged herself.* Sheol, or the place of the dead, hath made large preparation for the reception of the great multitudes who perish through intemperance. The representation is most vivid and striking. *Their glory . . . their multitude.* All that is honorable in the land goes down, and the ruin cannot be arrested by numbers.

Vs. 15, 16. *The mean man . . . the mighty . . . the lofty.* There is no exemption. All classes are involved in one common overthrow. *The Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment.* By punishing wicked revellers, God manifests His justice. In the execution of righteous judgment the requirement of His holiness is seen.

V. 17. *Then shall the lambs feed after their manner.* The lands of these ungodly people will become public grazing grounds for the flocks of wandering shepherds. Such ruin do greed and revelry induce.

Vs. 18, 19. *Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity.* The third woe is pronounced against presumptuous sinners, those who heap up acts of wickedness as if drawing them together by a strong cart rope, so eager and energetic are they in transgression. *That say, Let him make speed.* In unbelief, they have made bold to scoff at God. *Let Him hasten to punish,* they say. Thus sin becomes its own punishment by hardening the heart in unbelief.

Vs. 20, 21. *Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil.* This fourth woe is pronounced against those who have become dead to all moral distinctions between right and wrong, so deep is their degradation. *Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes.* The self-

conceited are the object of the fifth woe. "As humility is in a certain sense the crowning virtue, so self-conceit is a sort of finishing touch put on vice." (Rawlinson.)

Vs. 22, 23. *Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine.* The sixth woe is pronounced upon the drunkard as is the second. But in v. 11 they are ordinary citizens overcome by strong drink; here they are judges who pervert justice through wine, and have become so corrupt as to justify the wicked for a reward.

V. 24. *As the fire devoureth stubble.* So rapid and irresistible will be God's judgment upon the sins of the people. *Because they have cast away the law of the Lord;* the common feature of all the sins of Israel. *The Holy One;* hence the heinousness of the offence.

V. 25. The figures of this verse are dim and obscure to show the awful nature of the punishment when the corpses would be like street sweepings. Former judgments unheeded, more awful follow.

Vs. 26-28. *An ensign to the nations from afar.* By a strong figure God is represented as raising the signal to foreign nations to invade the land of Israel. *None shall be weary nor stumble.* The enemy is to be prompt, vigorous, unwearied, unhampered by preparation. *Whose arrows are sharp and all their bows bent.* Their weapons are terrible for destruction, and their means of conveyance irresistible.

Vs. 29, 30. *Their roaring shall be like a lion.* By a sudden change of figure the enemy are represented as lions seizing their prey. The roar is followed by a low growl as the lion springs upon his prey. *None shall deliver it.* Escape for Israel will be impossible. *Like the roaring of the sea.* The invaders will engulf them as the resistless ocean waves.

APPLICATION

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, v. 8. Better than such greedy hoarding is the way of the Ephesians, who used to deposit their treasures with "the great goddess Diana," whose temple was both a sanctuary and a bank. By being "rich in good works" (1 Tim 6: 18), we may deposit our treasures with God, and when He shall call us to Himself we shall

receive our own with usury and "lay hold on the life that is life indeed," 1 Tim. 6: 19 (Rev. Ver.).

In mine ears said the Lord of hosts, v. 9. Wicked men may imagine that God takes no notice of their evil deeds, but in this they are greatly mistaken. He fastened the "eyes of his glory" (ch. 3: 8) upon the sinners of Isaiah's day, and whispered their