

Scandals

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The financial world has been rocked in the last few weeks by the indictments of billionaire thieves in high places. Three young teen-age boys claim to be the father of a child conceived by a 15 year old girl. The rush is on now to justify drinking and gambling if kept to moderate levels (Remember, a fool is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give an answer.)

As we read Isaiah chapter 5, we are painfully aware of parallels between ancient Israel's decline and our own cultural decline. Isaiah cries out "woe" to the wicked and describes their typical behavior patterns. 1. The ambitious were joining house to house and field to field until they were lords of lonely estates large and beautiful houses but God turned their productive enterprises into low producing failures. 2. Those who lived for their hobbies and pleasures were rising early to pursue their wines, women, and song but still had no time to consider the great works of the Lord. They had the moral compass of toad frogs and in their ignorance they were destined to humiliation before their righteous Creator who humbles all who are haughty and profane. Only the Lord will be exalted in that day. 3. All profane men and those given to pleasure need their philosophers who can answer the cries of their conscience when they behave like the filthy men and women they have become. Through clever falsehoods, the apologists draw their carts of iniquity: they taunt the Lord to quickly make His case that they might see it. They are more righteous in their evil than the righteous are in their good. They are more enlightened in their darkness than God is in his righteous truth. They are wiser in their foolishness. They are heroes at the beer keg parties and valiant at "drinking lesser men under the table." What need is there for justice when nearly any judge can be bought for a price and those honest fools who hope to prosper honestly are going to lose their shirts?

Isaiah wrote about his own times 2700 years ago but men have changed very little. 1. Americans born out of a heritage of reverence toward God and the freedom to profit by hard work and be generous to their neighbors, now join house to house, field to field and are lords of lonely estates. 2. Our generation shamelessly lives for shallow pleasures, rising early to pursue their dreams of wine, women, and song with no conscience or understanding. 3 Evil is good and good is evil today as it was then. tp