



Isaiah 56:9-12

(9) Come, all you beasts of the field,
come and devour, all you beasts of the forest! (10) Israel's watchmen are blind,
they all lack knowledge;
they are all mute dogs,
they cannot bark;
they lie around and dream,
they love to sleep. (11) They are dogs with mighty appetites;
they never have enough.
They are shepherds who lack understanding;
they all turn to their own way,
each seeks his own gain. (12) "Come," each one cries, "let me get wine!
Let us drink our fill of beer!
And tomorrow will be like today,
or even far better."

Jeremiah 6:9-13

(9) This is what the LORD Almighty says:
"Let them glean the remnant of Israel
as thoroughly as a vine;
pass your hand over the branches again,
like one gathering grapes." (10) To whom can I speak and give warning?
Who will listen to me?
Their ears are closed
so they cannot hear.
The word of the LORD is offensive to them;
they find no pleasure in it. (11) But I am full of the wrath of the LORD,
and I cannot hold it in.
"Pour it out on the children in the street
and on the young men gathered together;

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both husband and wife will be caught in it,
and the old, those weighed down with years. (12) Their houses will be turned over
to others,
together with their fields and their wives,
when I stretch out my hand
against those who live in the land,"
declares the LORD. (13) "From the least to the greatest,
all are greedy for gain;
prophets and priests alike,
all practice deceit.

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Do these two prophecies describe America? "Everyone is given to covetousness," "greedy dogs which never have enough." A Protestant saying is that "the chief end of man is to glorify [God](#) and enjoy Him forever." An anonymous wit paralleled this, saying the U.S. motto should be, "The chief end of man is to glorify prosperity and enjoy it forever." A European observer wrote that "desire is enthroned in the mind of the American consumer." We are immersed in a constant barrage of advertisement. Our whole economy works to stimulate our desire for food, clothing, automobiles, furniture, jewelry, and travel, filling our minds with the "gimmies." It is difficult to resist unless our focus is disciplined toward going in the right direction.

Because of these sins, God calls upon the nations to devour His people. The leaders are just as blind to the nation's real needs because, instead of speaking out and acting upon moral issues, they are embroiled in their own lusts. While America sinks into the quicksand of that way of life, they proclaim an even better and brighter tomorrow!

Another reason why [coveting](#) has the power to destroy the coveter is revealed in the credit purchasing system that dominates the American economy. Buying on credit is based upon the idea of possessing something before one can afford it. Advertising usually accompanies credit, and the two of them together seductively lure the unwary and weak. Yet because of the charges collected by the lender, credit actually makes things even more expensive, causing greater debt!

But, God asks in [Jeremiah 6:9-13](#), who will listen? People will not listen to such simple [wisdom](#) as delaying a purchase to pay in cash to save money. They will not listen even when told they will be able to make more purchases because they will have more money to spend. They do not listen because their minds are on their [sin](#). The cycle of sin continues onto other sins their covetousness motivates.

This is why [tithing](#) comes as such a shock to many new brethren. As a nation, we are

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living way over our heads. When we learn of tithing, the penalty for our prior stealing from God really hurts. We then have to learn to pay in adversity. Covetousness has boomeranged and caught us in a way we never dreamed.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Tenth Commandment \(1998\)](#)

Related Topics:

[Covetousness](#)

[Debt](#)

[Lust](#)

[Self Control](#)

[Tithing](#)

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