

# Isaiah 5:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

## Analysis

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The fifth woe targets intellectual pride—those 'wise in their own eyes' and 'prudent in their own sight.' The doubled phrases emphasize self-referential wisdom that rejects divine revelation. This describes autonomous human reason exalted above God's revealed truth. Proverbs warns repeatedly against such self-conceit (Proverbs 3:7, 26:12). Paul identifies this as characteristic of human fallenness (Romans 1:22).

## Historical Context

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In Isaiah's era, political advisors advocated human alliances over trust in God. Their 'wisdom' led Judah to rely on Egypt and Assyria rather than covenant faithfulness, proving folly disguised as prudence.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How do you balance use of human reason with submission to biblical revelation?

2. In what areas might you be trusting your own understanding rather than acknowledging God?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאֵלֶּה

חֲכָמִים

בְּעֵינֵיכֶם

אֵלֶּה גָּדְלָה

פְּנֵיכֶם

Woe

unto them that are wise

in their own eyes

H5048

in their own sight

H1945

H2450

H5869

H6440

בְּרִיתִים:

and prudent

H995

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 3:7** (Parallel theme): Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

**Romans 12:16** (Parallel theme): Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

**Proverbs 26:12** (Parallel theme): Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

**Proverbs 26:16** (Parallel theme): The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

**Romans 1:22** (Parallel theme): Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

**John 9:41** (Parallel theme): Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

**Job 11:12** (Parallel theme): For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.

**Romans 11:25** (Parallel theme): For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

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