

THE PRICE PAID FOR WILD GRAPES

DATE: 10/26/2016 Wed.

TEXT: Isaiah 5:1-7

INTRODUCTION

An Overview of **Isaiah 5**

Chapter 5 again turns back to the sin of Israel and the impending judgment of God against that people

In **chapter 4** we saw the prophet shifts his focus to the millennial reign of the Messiah

That short chapter gave us insights into the conditions which will arise when the Tribulation ends and the Millennium begins

3 major thoughts are found in **chapter 5** -

1. The Song of Jehovah's Vineyard in vs. 1-7

Our Lord clearly made application to this parable in the Synoptic Gospels applying it to Israel of His day

Matthew 21:33-44, Mark 12:1-11, Luke 20:9-19

Then we see the ...

2. The Six Woes against Israel in vs. 8-25

In this next section of the chapter,

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God, sets forth the transgressions of Judah

He does it by noting in Six Woes, the Sin of the Nation

Then lastly in the chapter we see ...

3. The Convergence of all Nations against Israel during the Tribulation in **vs. 26-30**

Tonight we will just be looking at the first 7 verses

So let me introduce them before we stand to read

One of the great heartaches of parents today is to watch their children grow up and waste or throw away their lives

How? By having lousy priorities, becoming lazy, being rebellious, selfish, immoral, living an ungodly lifestyle, or addicted to drugs and /or alcohol

Not all, but most parents do what they can to train their children to have character, integrity, and responsibility

Christian parents that love the Lord especially desire that their kids know Christ as their Saviour and make their lives count by serving Him and putting Him first

Christian parents that are committed to the Lord want their kids to have spiritual values and godly priorities because these are the things that really matter in life

Young people need to realize that their parents probably have dreams for them to become successful at whatever they do

The Price Paid for Wild Grapes – Isaiah 5:1-7

And for them to become an outstanding person that will bless the lives of others

They want them to grow up with a purpose in life, with love for others, with courage and conviction to stand up on their own and do what is right

But when our kids grow up without these attitudes (if we are like most parents) we are disappointed in the degenerate behavior, grieved over the goofing-off, perplexed about the poor priorities, and saddened by the stubbornness toward God and sinful lifestyle

When this happens in some families, the parents many times will ask themselves - *“What else could we have done?”*

Their plea is - *“I did my best, but it doesn't seem to have been good enough”*

They are extremely disappointed

This is where we find the Lord in **Isaiah chapter 5**

In the first 7 verses, we find a song about a Vineyard

Notice v. 1 - *“Now will I sing to My wellbeloved a song of My beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill”*

This song contained the sentiments of the Lord setting forth His disappointment in His people

The nation of Israel was considered to be God's Vineyard

The Price Paid for Wild Grapes – Isaiah 5:1-7

v. 7a - *“For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant: ...”*

As God's Vineyard, God had a purpose for His people

He had hopes and dreams for them to become a blessing to the world and to be spiritually fruitful,

But instead, our text says they became like Wild Grapes

He was sadly disappointed over the nation's sin

So what does this Vineyard have to do with us?

The principles that are revealed in this portion of Scripture can be applied to our lives as well

In that; if we waste our lives and do not fulfill God's purpose that He has for us, then we become like Wild Grapes

Believers today are God's Vineyard

Jesus said in **John 15:5** - *“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing”*

We are Branches of the Vine and will not be fruitful if we do not abide in the Lord and are not dependent upon Him

We will see in **Isaiah 5** that the Lord becomes disappointed with us when we do not fulfill His plan and will for our lives

The Price Paid for Wild Grapes – Isaiah 5:1-7

What happens when God's people waste their lives?

What happens when they become stubborn toward the Lord and disobey Him?

This portion will give us some answers and some biblical insights that we need to note

We will see that there is ...

“A Price Paid for Wild Grapes”

Let's stand to Read vs. 1-7 ...

~~~Prayer~~~

First, let's look at ...

#### **I. THE “PREPARING OF” THE VINEYARD - v. 2 a**

The Husbandman / Owner did a tremendous amount of work to get the Vineyard ready

He put a lot of Time and energy into it

##### **A. The ‘Preliminaries’**

*“He ... gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine... and also made a winepress therein”*

Isaiah described the typical way someone would prepare the ground to plant a vineyard

Removing stones is no easy task

Stones in the soil were a hindrance to the plow, so they would have to be removed first

The winepress was constructed because of the expectation of a harvest

The Husbandman had high expectations of an abundant harvest

### **B. The ‘Protection’**

*“And He fenced it ... and built a tower in the midst of it,*

The farmer would then build a fence or wall, usually from those rocks pulled from the ground and with thorny bushes,

He did this in order to protect the vines from being ravaged by the wild animals

A tower was constructed to guard the vineyard and to be a lookout for thieves, whether person or critter

The Husbandman went to great lengths to make sure that everything was done just right in Preparing the Vineyard

### **C. The ‘Application’**

God uses the Preparation of the Vineyard to describe His work in the lives of those He loves

#### 1. God did all these things for Israel

He protected them, removed their hindrances so they could flourish, and planted them in the Promised Land

He provided them with the tower of His Word that they might be on guard against sin and have the ability to be spiritually fruitful

The Tower also represents Israel being the Source of the Understanding of God to the rest of the World

### 2. God has done the same for Believers

God has removed the hindrances to our salvation through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus has done everything that is required for us to be saved

He is God's choice Vine - **John 15:5** - ***"I am the vine"***

In fact, it is interesting that the words ***"choicest vine"*** in **Isaiah 5:2** means the best of the best

This was a superior vine and was of a deep red color

What a reminder and picture of the sinless, superior Christ who shed His blood to pay the price for our sins

Salvation is in Him and Him alone

**Acts 4:12** - ***"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"***

God went to great lengths to produce in Israel a superior product

## THE “PROVISION FOR” THE VINEYARD

But instead...

## II. THE “PRODUCT OF” THE VINEYARD – v. 2 b

... was very disappointing!

### A. The ‘Anticipated’ Product

After all the hard work and investment of this husbandman, he looked forward to a harvest of excellent / good grapes

*“and He looked that it should bring forth grapes”*

No one expects their hard work to fail

**Philippians 1:20 – “According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death”**

Expectations – Everyone has them

It seems everyone has to meet certain expectations as they go through life

-- Parents have expectations of their children

-- Spouses have expectations of one another

## *The Price Paid for Wild Grapes – Isaiah 5:1-7*

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- Employers and employees come to the job situation with certain expectations
- You have expectations of your Pastor and I have certain expectations of the members of this church

However, when you get right down to it, the expectations we hold over one another are really nothing more than us holding people to our standards!

But what about God's Expectation?

God expects His people to live like Jesus while they are in this world

Now, it may not be fair for me to impose my expectations upon your life,

But God has all the right to expect anything He asks from believers

After all, He has made a tremendous investment in our lives!

**I Corinthians 6:19, 20 - *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”***  
***“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's”***

***“He looked that it should bring forth (good) grapes”***

But then there was ...

### **B. The ‘Actual’ Product**

*“and it brought forth wild grapes”*

And what a disappointment it was to the owner of the vineyard

The vineyard produced **“wild”** / bad / sour grapes

We are dealing here with something worse than just unfruitfulness

The wild vines bore beautiful berries

But, where Poisonous ... not merely useless, unprofitable grapes, such as wild grapes

Grapes offensive to the smell, noxious, poisonous

In the Book of **II Kings 4:38-41** we have something similar happening (Poison in the Pot)

These **“wild”** grapes were bitter, foul-smelling and poisonous in nature

This is a precise description of the self-willed and false religion of the unfaithful people of God

**Wild grapes** means that the vineyard produced just what you would expect it to produce *if nothing had been done to it*

All the love, care, time, work, and investment had no result

And that is exactly how a pastor feels sometimes after putting all the time into his pulpit ministry

... Only to see it produce *“wild grapes”*

God Expected / Expects Greater things than *“wild grapes”*

**THE “PROVISION FOR” THE VINEYARD**

**THE “PRODUCT OF” THE VINEYARD**

Now we see ...

### **III. THE “PLEA TO” THE VINEYARD – vs. 3, 4**

The prophet now begins to draw the application

The Plea involves the failure of the Vineyard

#### **A. The Plea to ‘the People’ – v.3**

*“And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah”,*

Lest there’s any question, the prophet makes it clear that the object of the song is none other than Jerusalem and the men of Judah

*“judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and my vineyard”*

He directs them to discern the difference between themselves and the vineyard / there isn’t any!

They’re asked what should be done to correct the problem

God calls men to examine themselves

**I Corinthians 11:28 – “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup”**

**II Corinthians 13:5 – “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”**

Maybe you think you do examine yourself

The problem is that we often don’t examine ourselves correctly

Using the Mirror of the Word of God

**James 1:22-25 – “But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” “For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:” “For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was” “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed”**

What most people do is use their own feelings, intellect and will as a gage

**Jeremiah 17:9 – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”**

**The Plea to ‘the People’**

**B. The Plea for ‘a Performance’ – v. 4a**

*“What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?”*

The question is what could have been done more to get the vineyard to produce good grapes

The implied answer is *“nothing”*

In this story, there was nothing left undone by the owner of the vineyard / He did all he could do

The answer is a severe indictment upon Israel for their failure / refusal

They have no excuse

God did everything possible to help them live holy lives, but they turned out unholy

God cannot be blamed for all the **wild grapes** Israel brought forth

God did all He could do, apart from making men robots, acting apart from or against their wills

The fault lies with man, not God

**Quote:** F. B. Meyer wrote - *“It will be seen then . . . that every soul of man had the chance of becoming a fruitful vineyard; and if it became the reverse, it was due to no failure in either the wisdom or grace of God.”*

**Quote:** Spurgeon writes - *“O you that profess to be his people, what more could Christ have done for you? ...*

## *The Price Paid for Wild Grapes – Isaiah 5:1-7*

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... What more could the Holy Spirit have done? What richer promises, what wiser precepts, what kinder providences, what more gracious patience?"

It is possible, for God to do a work in His people,

But at the same time for those same people to receive that work ***"in vain"***

***Uselessly*** - most people never intend to ever do anything with what they hear in church / dull of hearing

Paul warned in **II Corinthians 6:1** - ***"We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain"***

Of course, a literal vineyard doesn't ***"do"*** anything

But we, as God's vineyard, are called to work with the grace of God, so that grace is not received in vain

Grace isn't given because of any works, past, present or promised

Yet it is given to *encourage* work, not to say work is unnecessary

God doesn't want us to receive His grace and become passive

Paul knew that when God gives His grace, we work hard, and the work of God is done

Jesus used this same image in His parable of the wicked tenants and the vineyard in **Matthew 21:33-46**

**Quote:** Spurgeon again wrote - *“Has it been so with us? Have we rewarded God ungratefully for all His pains? Have we given Him hardness of heart, instead of repentance; unbelief, instead of faith; indifference, instead of love; idleness, instead of holy industry; impurity, instead of holiness?”*

### THE “PROVISION FOR” THE VINEYARD

### THE “PRODUCT OF” THE VINEYARD

### THE “PLEA TO” THE VINEYARD

## IV. THE “PUNISHMENT DUE” THE VINEYARD – vs. 5, 6

God's response is that He will bring Judgment upon the vineyard and what it represents

### A. The ‘Destruction’ in the Punishment – v.5

*“Take away the hedge... break down the wall... trodden down... lay it waste... come up briars and thorns”*

All the Owner of the vineyard must do is stop providing special protection to the vineyard

Just take His hands off / walk away

God has not obligated Himself to do anything for those who will not obey His Word

All God has to do is remove the hedge

**Job 1:10 – *“Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?”***

*... Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land”*

Remove the Hedge of Divine Protection and a person’s life falls like a *House of Cards*

In a limited sense, God has given the responsibility of *“taking away hedges”* to the church

When a Christian is stubbornly unrepentant of sin,

It may be the job of the church to *“deliver them unto Satan”*

**I Timothy 1:20 – *“Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme”***

**I Corinthians 5:4, 5 – *“In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and My spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,” “To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”***

The church does this by removing someone from the membership of the Church

Putting them outside the spiritual protection found among God’s people

I don’t think people really realize how much Protection this Church Brings to your life

**The ‘Destruction’ in Punishment**

**B. The ‘Drought’ in the Punishment – v.6**

There are 2 thoughts here

Drought brings a loss of Rain

But other things can be lost when the Lord stops working in someone’s life

**1. The Loss of Discipline**

***“And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns:”***

The vineyard would receive nothing from the Lord

The vineyard resisted and protested the ***“pruning”*** and ***“digging”*** and ***“watering”*** the owner did

So now, the owner says - *“Fine. No more pruning or digging or watering. You will see for yourself if that is better”*

Many discouraged children of God wish the Lord would stop pruning, stop digging, stop watering

Those things may be hard, but it is even worse when the Lord stops doing them!

**2. The Loss of the Water of the Word**

***“I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it”***

The loss of Rain

**Deuteronomy 11:16, 17 - “Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;” “And then the LORD’S wrath be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you”**

This is what came to Samaria when Ahab was king and was duly announced by the prophet Elijah

**I Kings 17:1 - “And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word”**

God often took away the rain as a form of punishment

The Word of God is often associated with water

**Ephesians 5:26 – “That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,”**

**Amos 8:11 – “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the LORD:”**

Being out of God’s will and away from God’s Church will lead to a loss of Hearing the Word of God

And results in a lot more loss in a person’s life

CONCLUSION – v. 7b

*“... and He looked for judgment, but behold oppression;  
for righteousness, but behold a cry”*

Israel was the vineyard planted by God in the land He has given to them

Specifically, Judah was the choice vine He had planted therein

(For out Judah would arise the Messiah)

The analogy now suddenly turns to the spiritual sins of Judah

Even as in the song the husbandman had sought good grapes and got Wild

God had sought for justice and righteousness in the land

What He found however was bloodshed and the cry of those unjustly mistreated

In short, God had sought for righteousness in His chosen people, yet all He got was sin

**THE “PROVISION FOR” THE VINEYARD**

**THE “PRODUCT OF” THE VINEYARD**

**THE “PLEA TO” THE VINEYARD**

**THE “PUNISHMENT DUE” THE VINEYARD**

*The Price Paid for Wild Grapes – Isaiah 5:1-7*

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