

When God Gets Hungry

Isaiah 5:1-4 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: ² And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. ³ And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. ⁴ What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

Throughout the Bible it seems God is always supplying our hunger:

- **Matthew 5:6** Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
- **Luke 6:21** Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.
- **John 6:35** And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.
- **Revelation 7:16-17** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Many of our sermons, songs and prayers are filled with references to this human hunger for the things of God. This is good, but it is not the whole picture given in Scripture.

Isaiah's song tells of Jehovah's vineyard, which is obviously Israel (verse 7 – "for the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel"). This song reviews symbolically five things God had done for the "vineyard" of Israel.

1. HE FENCED IT

- A vineyard is a plot of ground separated from common field and pasture, in order to be improved with cultivation so that its grapes may yield a generous amount of wine.
- Israel was chosen out of the rest of the world so they could worship God according to the laws and rules He revealed and live a purer lifestyle than other nations, distinguished by peculiar laws, statutes, observances, diet and conversation.

- If they had not thrown down the fence God made them, no inroad could have been made upon them by their enemies.
- God's "miraculous protection" of Israel was supplied in a major part by this fence! It was impossible for them to remain Jews and company freely with the rest of the world.

2. HE GATHERED OUT THE STONES THEREOF

- God cast out the ancient inhabitants of Canaan to make room for the children of Israel.
- He cast out their idols and destroyed their temples so that Israel would have no stumbling blocks left in their way, and would wholly turn to God.

3. HE PLANTED IT WITH THE CHOICEST VINE

- God planted in Israel the choicest vine of true religion, and a form of government that He had revealed to them from Heaven.
- He made excellent provision for instruction of His people concerning how to please Him.

4. HE BUILT A TOWER IN THE MIDST THEREOF

- The tower of a vineyard was used to guard and defend against thieves and beasts, and it was a place where the owner could dwell.
- For Israel, this was the temple where God's presence dwelt. Their sincere observance of God's commands kept them from being corrupted by those around them.

5. HE ALSO MADE A WINEPRESS THEREIN

- Grapes were brought to the winepress and squeezed in a top trough so that their juice ran down to the lower trough.
- For Israel, this was the altar where sacrifices were to be offered and blood shed.

After all of His efforts God looks for grapes to eat – He is "hungry" for some return on His investment – but all Israel produces is wild grapes, something that does not satisfy God's appetite!

The Hebrew expressed a fruit that is offensive or putrid. The Arabs would translate this "wolf grapes" and we would say "stink berries." It was an often poisonous, inedible fruit!

In other words, the uncultivated natural state could produce as good a product as this!

As a result, God removed His hand from Israel and allowed them to retreat into the twin evils of RITUALISM and WORLDLINESS (v. 5-6).

Isaiah 5:5-6 ⁵And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; *and* break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: ⁶And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

THIS IS A WARNING TO US AS WELL!

- 1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.
- Romans 11:19-21 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

THE CHURCH IS ALSO GOD'S VINEYARD, AND HE HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US!

1. HE FENCED IT - HIS WORD

- The fence was not built to keep the vine in, but to keep danger out!
- Psalm 40:8 *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, **thy law is within my heart.***
- God's law is in our hearts, but it is not concealed there!
- Psalm 40:10 ***I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart;** I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.*

2. HE GATHERED OUT THE STONES THEREOF - HIS BLOOD

- God has rolled away the huge boulders of sin that we could not move!
- Genesis 29:3 - stone rolled away from well
Joshua 5:9 - reproach of Egypt rolled away
- Psalm 37:5 **Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. - same word used here!**
- Hebrew word GALAL ("roll" - ie: camel), later derivatives: Galilee & Golgotha
- A Galilean died on Golgotha and my sins were rolled away!

3. HE PLANTED IT WITH THE CHOICEST VINE - HIS LOVE

- John 15:1-2 *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh*

away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

- God purges good branches; His love doesn't mean it will always be pleasant!
- Some people have no "problems," but don't realize they have already been "taken away"

4. HE BUILT A TOWER IN THE MIDST OF IT - HIS NAME

- Proverbs 18:10 *The name of the LORD [is] a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*
- All the Old Testament covenant names of God are wrapped up in Jesus!

Jehovah-Tsidkenu	Jehovah our righteousness
Jehovah-Rophe	Jehovah heals
Jehovah-M'Kaddesh	Jehovah who sanctifies
Jehovah-Jireh	Jehovah the provider
Jehovah-Shalom	Jehovah is peace
Jehovah-Rohi	Jehovah my shepherd
Jehovah-Shammah	Jehovah is there
Jehovah-Nissi	Jehovah my banner ("miracle")

5. HE ALSO MADE A WINEPRESS THEREIN - HIS SPIRIT

- Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*
- Romans 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
- Pressure is put on the grape to produce the wine - what are we when the "squeeze" is on?

GOD LOOKS FOR HIS CHURCH TO BRING FORTH FRUIT, BUT WE CAN BE GUILTY OF BRINGING FORTH ONLY WILD GRAPES:

- Fruit of a corrupt nature that can be produced by man without God.
- Fruit which looks like regular grapes, but does not taste like them!

GOD IS HUNGRY FOR SOME FRUIT FROM HIS VINEYARD!

- Isaiah 5:4 *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?*
- **God is saying "I've given you everything you need. What more could I do for you?"**
- **When God gets hungry, He looks for a SACRIFICE from His people (just as He did with the Old Testament offerings):**

- **Sacrifice of Thanksgiving**

Psalm 116:17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

- **Sacrifice of Joy**

Psalm 27:6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

- **Sacrifice of Praise**

Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

- **Sacrifice of Righteousness**

Psalm 4:5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

- **Sacrifice of Obedience**

1 Samuel 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

- **Sacrifice of a Broken Spirit**

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

- **Sacrifice of Lifted Hands**

Psalm 141:2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.