

SRM14022

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“A Love Song”

Isaiah 5

Attention: Next week is Valentine’s Day. Have you told anyone that you love them today yet?

Some of you are saying, "I'm waiting for the other person to say it first."

Maybe you feel sometimes like no one cares about you.

Maybe you feel that the bad things happening to you are evidence that God doesn't love you.

III. A farmer printed on his weather vane the words "God is love." Someone asked him if he meant to imply that the love of God was as fickle as the wind. The farmer answered: "No, I mean that whichever way the wind blows, God is love. If it blows cold from the North, or biting from the East, God is still love just as much as when the warm South or gentle West winds refresh our fields and flocks. God is always love." [TOPIC: Love INDEX: 2206 SUBTOPIC: Of God TITLE: Fickle Love]

Sometimes we feel as if it doesn't matter how we act because no one, including God, cares.

The Bible tells us that God loves us, even when we are not "lovable".

But there are many ways to express love.

This is especially true of parents and children.

Sometimes a parent's love is expressed in words of admonition or warning.

In Isaiah 5, God expresses His love for You and I in what He wishes from us, what disappoints Him, and He warns us of the consequences of disappointing Him.

I. Sometimes the God we love is disappointed. v. 1-7

This chapter opens w/ a story, described as a love song. When we read it, however, it seems to be a different kind of love song than we are used to.

It says that God wishes for a people who are good and who do good.

Isa 5:1-7 "Now let me sing to my Well-beloved
 A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard:
 My Well-beloved has a vineyard
 On a very fruitful hill.
 2 He dug it up and cleared out its stones,
 And planted it with the choicest vine.
 He built a tower in its midst,

And also made a winepress in it;
So He expected it to bring forth good grapes,..."

[Now here's where the love song takes an unexpected turn] "But it brought forth wild grapes."

The Hebrew means "stinking things."

III. I don't know much about gardening, but I know enough that when you work, you expect a result!

In a love song, we expect only good things to be said about the loved one.

This is what we have come to expect of God these days: "God is love and never requires anything much of us."

But Isaiah challenges the listener to make a righteous judgment of the situation:

{3} "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. 4 What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes?"

Jesus probably had this story in mind when he told the parable of the tenants. You find it in Matt. 21:33-44.

He tells of a landowner who plants a vineyard and sends servants to collect the fruit, but they beat them, kill them and execute them instead.

Finally he sends his son, the heir, and they seize him and kill him!

Then he asks the listeners to judge the situation: v. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" or "What do you think is right?"

In Isaiah's story, we are told how God's justice will respond: v. 5-6 "And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it."

Then, in case we didn't understand the point, he says in v. 7 "For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help"

Notice 2 things:

(1) Does He still love them? Yes, they are " His pleasant plant", NIV "the garden of his delight".

(2) But His love does not cancel His righteousness.

The words, "justice... oppression" and "righteousness... cry for help" sound alike in Hebrew, and are a strong rebuke.

They would sound something like, "I looked for a Fit Man and found a Hit Man ... for Mercy & found Malice."

In some cases, those who thought of themselves as God's people had become so in name only!

The Point: God has taken steps to create a people that will produce good thoughts and deeds, and when they are not present, He will remove Himself and withhold His blessings.

trans: These are grave charges. How serious about it is God?

2. God tells us what disappoints Him. (v. 8-23)

In John 15, Jesus speaks of the vine and branches, and the importance of "Good Fruit" v. 2: "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

In Is. 5:8-23 God gives six examples of the kind of "wild grapes" He gets from His people when they fail to "remain" in His love.

As we look at them, compare w/ the fruits of the Spirit in Gal 5:22-23

1. Wild fruit #1: Greed: Isa 5:8 "Woe to those who join house to house; They add field to field, Till there is no place Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!"

The wealthy are buying up the land until there is none available for the poor.

cf. Gal 5:22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love", which gives, rather than takes.

The judgment: V. 9-10 "In my hearing the LORD of hosts said, "Truly, many houses shall be desolate, Great and beautiful ones, without inhabitant. For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, And a homer of seed shall yield one ephah."

HCSB "For a ten-acre vineyard will yield only six gallons, and 10 bushels of seed will yield only [one] bushel"

Wild fruit #2. Overindulgence: v. 11-12 "Woe to those who rise early in the morning, That they may follow intoxicating drink; Who continue until night, till wine inflames them! The harp and the strings, The tambourine and flute, And wine are in their feasts; But they do not regard the work of the LORD, Nor consider the operation of His hands."

HCSB: "Woe to those who rise early in the morning in pursuit of beer, who linger into the evening, inflamed by wine."

The picture is making life a continual pursuit of self-indulgence; a non-stop party.

But Gal. 6 says, "the fruit of the Spirit is ... joy,"

3. Wild fruit #3 Skepticism: Isa 5:18-19 "Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, And sin as if with a cart rope; 19 That say, "Let Him make speed and hasten His work, That we may see it; And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, That we may know it."

Gal. 5: "But the fruit of the Spirit is ... peace, patience", trusting in the promises of God.

4. Wild fruit #4 Moral Corruption: Isa 5:20 " Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

People can be so blinded in their moral judgment that their evaluations of good and evil are the exact opposite of God's.

Gal. 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is ... kindness, goodness", which seeks righteousness of others.

5. Wild fruit # 5 Conceit & pride: Isa 5:21 "Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!"

Gal. 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is ... faithfulness, {23} gentleness", not promoting itself.

6. Wild fruit # 6 Perverted Values: Isa 5:22-23 "Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, 23 Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away justice from the righteous man!"

"But the fruit of the Spirit is ... and self-control."

These all are the fruits God is seeking from those He so dearly loves.

trans: Sometimes God is disappointed in His people, and He tells us what disappoints Him, & finally ...

3. God's Love is a Love that warns. v. 13, 14, 24-30

Four "therefores" anticipate the inescapable consequences of failing to love our Lord, resulting in sour, worthless, wild grapes.

Consequence #1 Spiritual Bondage:
v. 13 (NKJV) "Therefore my people have gone into captivity, Because they have no knowledge;

Their honorable men are famished, And their multitude dried up with thirst.”

Of course Israel went into literal exile, but the picture here is that the overindulgence of verses 11-12 leads to a spiritual drought and famine. When people are so occupied with pleasures, they “do not regard the work of the LORD, Nor consider the operation of His hands.” (v. 12)

When God's people go after the pleasures of the world, they fall into spiritual bondage, and lose touch with the Word of God, the means of deliverance.

Consequence #2 Death:

v. 14 (NKJV) “Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself And opened its mouth beyond measure; Their glory and their multitude and their pomp, And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it.”

The wages of sin is death. Its essence is separation from the Giver of life and all good things.

Consequence #3 Loss of Roots and Fruits:

v. 24 "Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, And the flame consumes the chaff, So their root will be as rottenness, And their blossom will ascend like dust; Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.”

A warning that God will chasten those who reject His Words.

Consequence #4 The anger of God.

v. 25 “Therefore the anger of the LORD is aroused against His people; He has stretched out His hand against them And stricken them, And the hills trembled. Their carcasses were as refuse in the midst of the streets. For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still. 26

He will lift up a banner to the nations from afar, And will whistle to them from the end of the earth **[Assyria]**; Surely they shall come with speed, swiftly. 27 No one will be weary or stumble among them, No one will slumber or sleep; Nor will the belt on their loins be loosed, Nor the strap of their sandals be broken; 28 Whose arrows are sharp, And all their bows bent; Their horses’ hooves will seem like flint, And their wheels like a whirlwind. 29 Their roaring will be like a lion, They will roar like young lions; Yes, they will roar And lay hold of the prey; They will carry it away safely, And no one will deliver. 30 In that day they will roar against them Like the roaring of the sea. And if one looks to the land, Behold, darkness and sorrow; And the light is darkened by the clouds.”

This all, of course, had its first application in the invasion of the Assyrians, but it has an application for us in seeing the kinds of things that may lead to God separating Himself from a people.

Is this love? Yes because it is a warning to the church that can be obeyed! They are still called "my people".

Conc: What should I do about it?

The first fruit God looks for is what Jesus called the "first commandment".

- This does not come naturally, so He speaks of a "conversion" a "change". Mat 18:3 "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Repentance & Faith

- Other fruits flow from the first one.

If they don't, reexamine whether there is true Repentance & Faith. Acts 26:20 "but [I] declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance."

1 John 3:10 "In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother."

What does the Loving Father see when He looks for your "good fruit"?

Action: Name things in your life that are disappointing God.

Take those "wild grapes" to Jesus Christ, and ask Him to put them to death by His sacrifice on the cross.

Ask God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, to produce the good fruit He is seeking from you.