

Isaiah 05 - Israel: The Vineyard of Jehovah

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Isaiah 5

(d) Vineyard (5:1-30)

(i) Parable (5:1-6)

1 Let me sing now for my beloved A song of my beloved about His vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

1 Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

1 I will sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: "The one I love had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

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 He dug it all around, cleared it of stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it, And also carved out a wine vat in it; Then He expected *it* to produce *good* grapes, But it produced *only* worthless ones.

2 He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it And also hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected *it* to

produce *good* grapes, But it produced *only* worthless ones.

2 He plowed its land and cleared it of stones. Then he planted it with the choicest vines, built a watchtower in the middle of it, and dug a wine vat in it; He expected it to produce good grapes, but it produced only wild ones."

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, you inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard.

3 "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard.

3 "So now, you inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, won't you please, between me and my vineyard.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

4 "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, *when* I expected *it* to produce *good* grapes did it produce worthless ones?

4 "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected *it* to produce *good* grapes did it produce worthless ones?

4 What more could I do in my vineyard, that I haven't already done? When I expected it to produce good grapes, why did it yield wild ones?

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?

5 "So now let Me tell you what I am going to do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge and it will be consumed; I will break down its wall and it will become trampled ground.

5 "So now let Me tell you what I am going to do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge and it will be consumed; I will break down its wall and it will become trampled ground.

5 "Now, let me tell you, won't you please, what I'm going to do to my vineyard. "I'm going to take away its protective hedge, and it will be devoured; I'll break down its wall, and it will be trampled.

5 And 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:

6 "I will lay it waste; It will not be pruned nor hoed, But briars and thorns will come up. I will also command the clouds not to rain on it."

6 "I will lay it waste; It will not be pruned or hoed, But briars and thorns will come up. I will also charge the clouds to rain no rain on it."

6 I'll make it a wasteland, and it won't be pruned or cultivated. Instead, briars and thorns will grow up. I'll also issue commands to the clouds, that they drop no rain upon it."

6 And 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.

(ii) Explanation (5:7)

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of armies is the house of Israel, And the people of Judah are His delightful plant. So He waited for justice, but behold, *there was* bloodshed; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel And the men of Judah His delightful plant. Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of the Heavenly Armies is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden in which he delights. He looked for justice, but saw only bloodshed; he searched for righteousness, but heard only an outcry!

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

- There is a word play in the Hebrew in this verse...different words with similar sounds used to make a point:

— "justice" (*mispāt*) but instead "blood shed" (*mispāch*)

— "righteousness" (*tsedhaqah*) but got "cry for help" (*tse'aqah*)

- Echoes of this parable appears in the NT (Matt 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19).

(iii) Woes (5:8-23)

(a) Greed (5:8-10)

8 Woe to those who attach house to house *and* join field to field, Until there is no more room, And you alone are a landowner in the midst of the land!

8 Woe to those who add house to house *and* join field to field, Until there is no more room, So that you have to live alone in the midst of the land!

8 "How terrible it will be for you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you have settled yourselves alone in the middle of the land!"

8 Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

9 In my ears the LORD of armies *has sworn*, "Many houses shall certainly become desolate, *Even* great and fine ones, without occupants.

9 In my ears the LORD of hosts *has sworn*, "Surely, many houses shall become desolate, *Even* great and fine ones, without occupants.

9 The LORD of the Heavenly Armies has declared this so I could hear it: "Surely many houses will become desolate, great and beautiful houses, without occupants.

9 In mine ears said the LORD of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant.

10 "For **ten acres** of vineyard will yield *only one bath* of wine, And a homer of seed will yield *only* an ephah of grain."

10 "For ten acres of vineyard will yield *only* one bath of wine, And a homer of seed will yield *but* an ephah of grain."

10 For ten acres of vineyard will produce only one bath, and one omer of seed will produce only one ephah."

10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.

- "...ten acres" - as much as a yoke of oxen could plow in ten days

- "...one bath" - a few gallons

— A yield of a tenth of what would be expected

(b) Hedonism (5:11-17)

11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning so that they may pursue intoxicating drink, Who stay up late in the evening so that wine may inflame them!

11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink, Who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them!

11 "How terrible it will be for those who rise at dawn in order to grab a stiff drink, for those who stay up late at night as wine inflames them!

11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!

12 Their banquets are *accompanied by* lyre and harp, *by* tambourine and flute, and *by* wine; But they do not pay attention to the deeds of the LORD, Nor do they consider the work of His hands.

12 Their banquets are *accompanied by* lyre and harp, *by* tambourine and flute, and *by* wine; But they do not pay attention to the deeds of the LORD, Nor do they consider the work of His hands.

12 They have the lyre and harp, the tambourine and flute, as well as wine at their festivals, but they don't respect what the LORD is doing, nor do they consider his actions.

12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

The First Therefore

13 Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; And their nobles are famished, And their multitude is parched with thirst.

13 Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; And their honorable men are famished, And their multitude is parched with thirst.

13 Therefore my people go into exile because they lack understanding; my honored men go hungry, and the crowd is parched with thirst.

13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

The Second Therefore

14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth beyond measure; And Jerusalem's splendor, her multitude, her noise *of revelry*, and the jubilant within her, descend *into it*.

14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth without measure; And Jerusalem's splendor, her multitude, her din *of revelry* and the jubilant within her, descend *into it*.

14 Therefore Sheol's appetite has grown; it has opened its mouth beyond limit. Jerusalem's nobility and her multitudes will go there, along with her brawlers and whoever is reveling within her.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15 So *the common* people will be humbled and *the person of importance* brought low, The eyes of the haughty also will be brought low.

15 So the *common* man will be humbled and the man of *importance* abased, The eyes of the proud also will be abased.

15 Humanity is brought low, and each one is humbled, while the eyes of the self-exalting are brought low.

15 And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

16 But the LORD of armies will be exalted in judgment, And the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.

16 But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in judgment, And the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.

16 But the LORD of the Heavenly Armies is exalted in justice, and the Holy God proves himself to be righteously holy.

16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

17 Then the lambs will graze as in their pasture, And strangers will eat in the ruins of the wealthy.

17 Then the lambs will graze as in their pasture, And strangers will eat in the waste places of the wealthy.

17 Then the lambs will graze in their pasture; fatlings and foreigners will eat among the waste places of the rich."

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

(c) Blasphemy (5:18-19)

18 Woe to those who drag wrongdoing with the cords of deceit, And sin as if with cart ropes;

18 Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, And sin as if with cart ropes;

18 "How terrible it will be for those who parade iniquity with cords of falsehood, who draw sin along as with a cart rope;

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:

19 Who say, "Let Him hurry, let Him do His work quickly, so that we may see *it*; And let the plan of the Holy One of Israel approach And come to pass, so that we may know *it*!"

19 Who say, "Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see *it*; And let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near And come to pass, that we may know *it*!"

19 who say: 'Let God be quick, let him speed up his work so we may see it! Let it happen! let the plan of the Holy One of Israel draw near, so we may recognize it!'"

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 nigh and come, that we may know it!

(d) Perversion (5:20)

20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

20 "How terrible it will be for those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, who substitute what is bitter for what is sweet and what is sweet for what is bitter!"

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

(e) Arrogance (5:21)

21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes And clever in their own sight!

21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes And clever in their own sight!

21 "How terrible it will be for those who are wise in their own opinion, and clever in their own reckoning!

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

(f) Injustice (5:22-23)

22 Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine, And valiant men in mixing intoxicating drink,

22 Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine And valiant men in mixing strong drink,

22 "How terrible it will be for those who are heroes at drinking wine, and champions in mixing strong drink,

22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23 Who declare the wicked innocent for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

23 Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of justice!"

23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

- It would seem to be permissible to supply an implied "woe" before v23 (which the sentence structure in the original allows for, and which would make the list total seven)

- v24: Corrupt judges are under consideration: they allow themselves to be bribed, a sin most strongly condemned under Mosaic Law (Cf. Ex 23:6-8; Deut 16:19)

(iv) Concluding condemnation for covenant rebellion (5:24-30)

24 Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble, And dry grass collapses in the flame, So their **root** will become like rot, and their **blossom** blow away like dust; For they have rejected the Law of the LORD of armies, And discarded the word of the Holy One of Israel.

24 Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble And dry grass collapses into the flame, So their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; For they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

24 Therefore, as flames of fire devour straw, as dry grass collapses in flames, so their root will be rotten, and their blossom will blow away like dust, because they have rejected the instruction of the LORD of the Heavenly Armies, and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

24 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

- "...root...blossom" - typical Hebrew rhetorical devices to connote the extremes of the rottenness of the entirety

25 For this reason the anger of the LORD has burned against His people, And He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them. And the mountains quaked, and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of the streets. Despite all this, His anger is not spent, But His hand is still stretched out.

25 On this account the anger of the LORD has burned against His people, And He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them down. And the mountains quaked, and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of the streets. For all this His anger is not spent, But His hand is still stretched out.

25 Therefore the anger of the LORD burned against his people, so he stretched out his hands against them and afflicted them. The mountains quaked, and their corpses were like refuse in the middle of the streets. Throughout all of this, his anger has not turned away, and his hands are still stretched out to attack.

25 Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

The Judgment of Invasion

26 He will also lift up a flag to the distant nation, And whistle for it from the ends of the earth; And behold, it will come with speed swiftly.

26 He will also lift up a standard to the distant nation, And will whistle for it from the ends of the earth; And behold, it will come with speed swiftly.

26 The LORD will signal for nations far away, whistling for them to come from the ends of the earth. Look how quickly and how swiftly they come!

26 And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:

27 No one in it is tired or stumbles, No one slumbers or sleeps; Nor is the undergarment at his waist loosened, Nor his sandal strap broken.

27 No one in it is weary or stumbles, None slumbers or sleeps; Nor is the belt at its waist undone, Nor its sandal strap broken.

27 No one is weary, no one stumbles, and no one slumbers or sleeps. No belt around their waists will come undone, nor will their sandal straps be broken.

27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:

28 Its arrows are sharp and all its bows are bent; The hoofs of its horses seem like flint, and its *chariot* wheels like a storm wind.

28 Its arrows are sharp and all its bows are bent; The hoofs of its horses seem like flint and its *chariot* wheels like a whirlwind.

28 Their arrows are sharp, all their bows ready for action. Their horses' hooves seem like flint, and their chariot wheels spin like a whirlwind.

28 Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind:

29 Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; It growls as it seizes the prey And carries *it* off with no one to save *it*.

29 Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; It growls as it seizes the prey And carries *it* off with no one to deliver *it*.

29 With a roar like a lion, they snarl, and like young lions, they growl; they seize their prey and then carry it off, with no one to rescue.

29 Their roaring shall be like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it.

30 And it will roar against it on that day like the roaring of the sea. If one looks across to the land, behold, there is darkness *and* distress; Even the light is darkened by its clouds.

30 And it will growl over it in that day like the roaring of the sea. If one looks to the land, behold, there is darkness *and* distress; Even the light is darkened by its clouds.

30 They will roar over it at that time, like the sea waves roar. If one surveys the land, watch out! There's darkness and distress; even the daylight is darkened by its clouds.

30 And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.