

God's Overwhelming Goodness toward His People

Texts: Isaiah 4:2-5:71

Date: 6-21-20 Outdoor Service at Brink's home 10:30 pm

I. God faithfully provided for His people only to have them become unfaithful lovers (Isa. 5:1-7).

Parable of the vineyard: What starts as Isaiah's song ends up in a lament. The song consists then of 3 stanzas.

The Israelites knew well the vineyards and the lush grapes that grew in them. The work that went into caring, growing, and gleaning the grapes was no doubt arduous, careful, and loving. Imagine for a moment that you put all that hard work and loving care into the vineyard and it ended up in thorns and briars.

Stanza 1 (vs. 1-2) – God's care for the vineyard and the condition of the vineyard:

God had granted wonderful provision and protection for His people. He had favored them above all other nations. Meanwhile the nation had sown the seeds of reckless extravagance and reaped the evil fruit of their wicked deeds. God, the loving farmer, had affectionately prepared and cared for the vineyard on a very fertile hillside.

God did everything to shower His goodness on the people. He gave them the law and the prophets. He showed them His ways and plans. He worked in their lives throughout their history. This was God's choosing and God's work.

Stanza 2 (vs. 3-6): In the second stanza of the song, God describes the vineyard's condition.

God's heart must have been torn as His own people forsook His ways. Instead of a people that followed God, they despised God. Instead of grapes of freedom and justice, they were wild grapes of slaves, lack of leadership, pride, and bloodshed.

Stanza 3 (vs. 7): In the third stanza we find the figure of the vineyard as the nation.

The people could not say, "God had not been good." They could not say: "God you are being unfair." Rather, judgment lay at their doorstep and judgment was a direct result of their wrongful actions against a loving, kind, caring God. Judgment was not without good reason.

Nothing else could be done but for Jehovah to tear down the fences of the vineyard, to allow the briars and thorns to grow up, and to allow the land to be trampled on and destroyed. Then God's judgment and punishment would come on His own beloved people. Even in this God's goodness was bestowed on the people. Had God overlooked their sinful actions, He would have gone against His character and His goodness. God cannot overlook sin.

“Planted and cared for by Jehovah, the people enjoyed a special place in His purpose and providence; but because they had utterly failed in the mission to which they had been called, they would lose His place of favor” (Hailey 64). So, too it is with us. Job 1:21.

Transition: But there is hope: In spite of all the judgment that was coming to Judah, a small number of people would survive. Perhaps in Isaiah’s day, the people thought of some who would come back from the dispersion. We know now according to Matthew 24-25 that this refers to those Jews who survive the 70th week of Daniel just before the Lord Jesus comes back to set up His earthly kingdom. Hope will turn into restoration.

II. **God graciously provides the promise of restoration through Jesus Christ (Isa. 4:2-6).**

Truth: Isaiah envisions something marvelous beyond the impending judgment that was to fall on the nation. Isaiah sees Jerusalem as redeemed, purified, and cleansed. We again see a beautiful picture of God’s rule with Jerusalem at its center, a place that the Gentile nations will flow to.

In Jer. 23:5-6 we find an obvious reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. Another one is found in Jer. 33:15-16. Zech. 3:8-9. The word *branch* means *sprout or growth* and certainly is an apt word to describe Jesus’ line coming from David (See Isa 11:1).

As the Branch comes forth, it will be beautiful (excellent) and glorious (comely). The contrast is so vivid between chapter three where false beauty and worldly glory of the unbelieving people take center stage, and the true beauty and divine glory of the Messiah depicted here. The remnant will delight in the Messiah when He comes.

- The future of Israel will find its pride and glory not in something temporal like ornaments and money but in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. “Her true beauty and glory as the people of God will found in God Himself” (Young 178).
- Isaiah clearly delineates the purpose of the judging hand of the Lord. For this will be a period of cleansing and judgment of those who have lived unholy.
- All our wealth, materialism, pride, idolatry, activities done apart from God is *filth*. But our gracious God is more than willing to wash them away and use the positives for His glory. For us the fountain was opened when Christ gloriously went to the cross, died for our sins, and shed his precious blood on the cross of Calvary. He washed away the guilt and the power of sin for those whom He died (Zech. 13:1).

How does Isaiah 4-5 apply to me?

1. Everything belongs to God. He sets the rules and based on His rules He will bless those who love Him and judge those who despise Him.
2. A person cannot point their finger at God and say, "You have been unkind."
3. The goodness of God can be seen even in the judging hand of God.

What does this passage reveal about the character and nature of God?

1. God's love and compassion are demonstrated in the complete watch care over His people.
2. God's goodness is displayed even in judgment.
3. God's sovereignty exhibited in controlling the events of His people.
4. God's divine revealed will and promises are sure to come to pass.

Action Points

1. We must recognize and thank God for His goodness in our lives. This should be a daily occurrence.
2. We must develop an overwhelming sense of God's goodness on our daily lives even as the world around us crumbles over its own depraved natures.
3. As part of the believing remnant, we must challenge ourselves to find the true hope of God's promises to carry us through the ever changing world of which we live in.