

“The Bitter Vineyard” *Isaiah 4:2- Ch.5*

The Branch of the Lord V. 4:2-6

“The Branch of the Lord” – A restored nation of Israel or Messiah.

Three results of judgment and the establishment of “the branch of the Lord”:

1. They will be cleansed
2. The people will be holy
3. They will experience the blessed presence of God *Exodus 40:34-38*

The Vineyard V. 5:1-6

Prophetic Stories – these were used to breach a difficult, unacceptable issue in a way that the people will hear and then realize at the end that God is talking about them.

2 Samuel 12:1-6

Grapes were a common crop in Judah. It would take a year to clear the land another to gather and plant the vines and another to build walls and guard towers to keep out animals and thieves. If the ground did not produce good grapes the only recourse is to destroy and abandon the field allowing it to be overgrown trampled and consumed.

Explaining the Story V. 7-24

The Vineyard is the house of Israel. For justice (*mispah*) only bloodshed (*mispah*) and for righteousness (*sedaqah*) only cries (*secaqah*).

Five woes outline the decline socially and spiritually:

1. Greed V.8 – More land, more stuff. *Proverbs 15:27* result - dispossessed
2. Self-indulgence V.11-17 – Pleasing self rather than God. *Psalms 88:3-7*
result – death and humiliation
3. Cynicism V.18-19 – An attitude of doing what they want and daring God to stop them. *2 Peter 3:3-6* result – judgment!
4. Moral perversion V.20-21 – No such thing as sin. Right is wrong and wrong is right. *2 Thessalonians 2:9-12* result – delusion and darkness
5. Social Injustice V.22-24 – Serving one’s own appetites and perverting justice to preserve it. *Proverbs 17:15* result – justice executed on them

Moral / Social / spiritual decay:

More for me less for you – egocentric – No God – No right – What’s in it for me!

Calling the Nations V. 25 - 30

God calls and uses the natural consequences in life to bring about judgment and repentance. It is not the strength of the consequences but the righteous hand of God.

Romans 13:1-7

Discussion Questions

How do we experience the presence of God?

How can you reverse the decay process in your life?

How should we view natural consequences in life?

Homework

Read *Isaiah 6*

Answer the following questions:

1. What does God's Word say? List the facts.
2. What does God's Word mean? Learn the lessons.
3. What does God's Word mean to me? Listen to His voice.
4. How will I respond to God's Word today? Live it out.

Identify one thing in your life that draws you away from God. Repent of it, replace it with righteousness and look for God's presence.