

JEHOVAH'S SONG OF LAMENTATION

Isaiah 5

Intro: In chapter 5 we have a chapter which is different from anything that we have seen so far in Isaiah's prophecy.
It is a chapter without a promise of blessing!

It explains more in detail what the Lord saw which was wrong in the hearts and lives of His people. It is a lamentation to begin with, and we never get out of the shadows of concern all through the chapter.

Isaiah begins as a musician. This is a new role for him. His song has been described as follows:

"The song of the beloved is really a song concerning the vineyard of the beloved; and this song is a song of the beloved himself, not a song written about him, or attributed to him, but such a song as he himself had sung, and still had to sing" (Delitzsch, I, 160, italics mine).

It tells us two things to begin with:

- 1) We see how much Isaiah loved the Lord.
- 2) We see how the Lord loved Israel and Judah.

The chapter has the following divisions:

- I. The song (vv. 1, 2).
- II. Judah's opportunity to object (vv. 3, 4).
- III. The judgment announced (vv. 5, 6).
- IV. The song and the judgment explained (v. 7).
- V. The six specific charges (vv. 8-23).
- VI. The execution of the judgment (vv. 24-30).
 - A. By the hand of the Lord (vv. 24, 25).
 - B. By the nations (although from the Lord--vv. 26-30).

I. THE SONG (vv. 1, 2).

Note the meaning: Israel is the vineyard, but Judah is the choicest vine.

The emphasis is upon God's sovereign choice of His people,
 His work for them,
 His protection of them--the tower,
 and His expectation from His work.

A SPECIAL PICTURE
 OF SALVATION!

It is all a picture of the goodness of God in doing everything necessary to meet the needs of His people so that they would bear fruit for Him.

Cf. the fig tree in Mark 11:12-14.

But the Lord is always righteous in His judgments and so we see next . . .

II. JUDAH'S OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT (vv. 3, 4).

God asks, "What . . . ?", and, "Why . . . ?"

Did God leave anything undone? Is He to blame for what has happened to Judah?

There was fruit, but why was it worthless?

Should there not be a space in our Bibles after v. 4--to indicate the dreadful silence which would follow these questions?

These are questions that will sober up any child of God, question which we need to ask ourselves when we find ourselves inclined to murmur against the Lord. Is it ever because HE has failed.

The silence which follows is all in God's favor.

III. THE JUDGMENT ANNOUNCED (vv. 5, 6).

The Lord might use Assyria, and he might use Babylon, but the judgment was from HIM! How important it is for us to see beyond the secondary causes.

We have four (one understood) I will's of the Lord.

IV. THE SONG AND THE JUDGMENT EXPLAINED (v. 7).

"His pleasant plant," or, the plant of His delight (Delitzsch in I, p. 164). The Lord delights Himself in His people more than He does in all of the rest of the people of the earth.

Note: "He looked for."

Instead of fruit that would glorify God He found what always accompanies man's departure from the Lord and from His Word: trouble among the people themselves.

What specifically had they done? This is pointed out in . . .

V. THE SIX SPECIFIC CHARGES (vv. 8-23).

Before we notice what these six woes are, do not fail to see two other very significant statements in this chapter which show why the people have done what they have done. They are found in:

- 1) V. 12b.
- 2) V. 24b.

Link these with Isa. 1:4b.

THE FIRST ONE
IS IN 1:4, TRANSLATED,
"AH." IT IS A
WORD POINTING
AN IMPENDING
JUDGMENT.

A DIFF. WORD,
BUT THE SAME
IDEA IN 3:9, 11;
6:5.

- A. The first woe (vv. 8-10): unsatisfied covetousness and greed.

When the desire to have overrules the need to be, serious trouble is ahead.

But the Lord had done something to try to waken them up. Their crops were only producing about 1/10 of what had been sown!

But they apparently paid no attention to this. Is there some way in which the Lord is seeking to get our attention?

- B. The second woe (vv. 11-17): carnal pleasure and revelry.

Perhaps the reason for the statement at the end of v. 12 is because pleasure-seekers are trying to cover the emptiness of their hearts.

This will be true right up to the end of this age because men are still lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Cf. 2 Tim. 3:4b.

- C. The third woe (vv. 18, 19): presumptuous sin.

Normally it is sin which enslaves men; these were men who had enslaved sin. Usually sin will not let men go; here men would not let their sin go.

Is it any wonder that they are called Sodom and Gomorraah?

Paul wrote to the Philippian church about those "whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:19).

God is a God of grace, and He is a God of forgiveness, BUT WE MUST BEWARE OF PRESUMING UPON HIS GRACE!

- D. The fourth woe (v. 20): overturning God's moral standards.

Here we have the new morality. The new morality is not new; it is the old immorality.

This is what the serpent did in the Garden of Eden, and man has been doing it ever since. The difference today is that we are more blatant about it, and it has become a way of life.

God says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but we say it's OK if you want to. You set your own standards.

- M. The fifth woe (v. 21): human pride.

Man's pride deceives him into thinking that he knows it all. You cannot tell him about God, or make him believe that he needs God.

— All of these things are bad enough when they are seen in unregenerate men, but what a tragedy when you find the very same things in the hearts and lives of those who profess to be the people of God!

- F. The sixth woe (vv. 22, 23): the glorification and overlooking of sin in others.

VI. THE EXECUTION OF THE JUDGMENT (vv. 24-30).

This elaborates on vv. 5, 6.

It is presented in a twofold way:

- A. The primary source of the judgment: the Lord (vv. 24, 25).

All judgment comes from Him, and this is the emphasis here.

— But in spite of all that the Lord has done, Judah has persisted in her sin. And so . . .

"For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still" (v. 25b).

Cf. 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4. This always speaks of judgment.

- B. The secondary source of the judgment: the nations (vv. 26-30).

Assyria is not mentioned here, but she is in 7:17. And she is evidently the one the Lord is referring to here.

Assyria will not just come; THE LORD WILL CALL HER.

She will not fight with just her normal strength (which was terrible enough), BUT THE LORD WILL GIVE HER SUPER-NATURAL STRENGTH SO THAT SHE WILL NOT FAIL IN HER MISSION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DIVINE JUDGMENT.

Concl: And so the chapter closes without one word of hope.
Fortunately we have had hope in chs. 1-4--BUT NOT HERE!

— Why? Because the Lord wanted them to see their sin as it was, and to know that the future would only and always be nothing but black and depressing as long as the present was filled with sin.