

Devotional from Pastor Ho
May 12, 2021

Isaiah 5:7, *“For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry!”*

Isaiah 5 is one of the more well-known among the 66 chapters in the book of Isaiah. It seems that Isaiah, who was sent to deliver the message of God’s impending judgment to the people of Judah, had a hard time getting his message across. People would simply ignore his warnings as irrelevant. He then resorts to telling them a story of someone he loved and the vineyard of his beloved (verses 1-2 in the third person). Then the Lord takes over (verses 3-6 in the first person). Eventually in verse 7, Isaiah uncovers the veil to announce the verdict: you are the vineyard! This is followed by the punishments throughout the remainder of the chapter.

The function of Isaiah’s parable was to grab the attention of those among his audience who were still willing to listen, and thus repented of their sins. As for those who were hardened would continue to harden themselves. We sense the frustration of the Lord as he asked the men of Judah to judge between him and his vineyard, “What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it?” (5:4b). It was supposed to be a love song between the beloved and his vineyard, which turned out to be a one-sided love affair, with the vineyard became a waste.

Thankfully, the love story has a happy ending. Jesus is the answer to God’s “what more was there to do for my vineyard,” when he said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). The grapes that Israel failed to yield, Jesus yields much of them, through us the branches who abide in him, because he is the true vine and true Israel. But how do we abide in him? Through his words, he abides in us and we in him, and his words cleanse us as if the pruning of the branches in order to bear much fruit. Indeed, only branches that stick to the vine can bear fruit, yet branches that are pruned bear more fruit. The point Jesus is making here is that our fruit-bearing as his disciples glorifies the Father when we keep his commandment to love one another.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, we would not have known love if you had not poured your love on us. Help us to love another as you have inundated your love on us and as we are compelled by it. In your name, Amen.

何牧師的靈修

2021年5月12日

以賽亞書 5 章 7 節：“萬軍之耶和華的葡萄園就是以色列家；他所喜愛的樹就是猶大人。他指望的是公平，誰知倒有暴虐；指望的是公義，誰知倒有冤聲”。

以賽亞書 5 章是以賽亞書 66 章中比較著名的一章。以賽亞被派去向猶大人傳達上帝即將來臨的審判，但看起來這信息很難傳達。人們認為他的警告無關緊要而不加以理會。然後，他訴諸於向他們述說他所愛的人和他所愛的人的葡萄園的故事（第 1-2 節用第三人稱）。然後主接下去（第 3-6 節用第一人稱）。最後在第 7 節，以賽亞揭開面紗，宣布判決：你們是葡萄園！接下來在本章的餘下部分就是懲罰。

以賽亞的比喻所發揮的作用是吸引聽眾當中仍然願意聽的人的注意，從而為自己的罪悔改。至於那些剛硬的人會繼續剛硬自己。當他請猶大人在他和他的葡萄園之間斷定是非時，我們感受到主的沮喪，“我為我葡萄園所做之外，還有什麼可做的呢？”（5:4a）。這本來應該是以賽亞心愛的人和他的葡萄園之間的一首情歌，結果證明這是一廂情願的戀情，而葡萄園卻成了廢墟。

很感恩的是，愛情故事有美滿的結局。耶穌是神所說“我為我葡萄園所做之外，還有什麼可做的呢？”的答案，當他說：“我是葡萄樹，你們是枝子。常在我裡面的，我也常在他裡面，這人就多結果子；因為離了我，你們就不能作什麼。”（約翰福音 15:5）。以色列沒能結的葡萄，耶穌通過我們這些住在他裡面的枝子結了許多葡萄，因為他是真葡萄樹和真以色列。但是我們如何住在他裡面呢？藉著他的話，他住在我們裡面，我們也在他裡面，他的話也潔淨我們，就像樹枝被修剪以便結出許多果子。確實，只有粘在葡萄樹上的樹枝才能結出果子，而修剪過的樹枝會結出更多的果子。耶穌在這裡要說的是，當我們遵守他的誠命彼此相愛時，我們作門徒所結的果子將榮耀父。

禱告：親愛的主耶穌，如果你不把愛澆灌在我們身上，我們不會知道何為愛。求你幫助我們彼此相愛，因為您已經把愛淹沒在我們身上，並且這愛激勵我們。奉你的名，阿們。

何牧师的灵修

2021年5月12日

以赛亚书 5 章 7 节：“万军之耶和华的葡萄园就是以色列家；他所喜爱的树就是犹太人。他指望的是公平，谁知倒有暴虐；指望的是公义，谁知倒有冤声”。

以赛亚书 5 章是以赛亚书 66 章中比较著名的一章。以赛亚被派去向犹太人传达上帝即将来临的审判，但看起来这信息很难传达。人们认为他的警告无关紧要而不加以理会。然后，他诉诸于向他们述说他所爱的人和他所爱的人的葡萄园的故事（第 1-2 节用第三人称）。然后主接下去（第 3-6 节用第一人称）。最后在第 7 节，以赛亚揭开面纱，宣布判决：你们是葡萄园！接下来在本章的余下部分就是惩罚。

以赛亚的比喻所发挥的作用是吸引听众当中仍然愿意听的人的注意，从而为自己的罪悔改。至于那些刚硬的人会继续刚硬自己。当他请犹太人在他和他的葡萄园之间断定是非时，我们感受到主的沮丧，“我为我葡萄园所做之外，还有什么可做的呢？”（5:4a）。这本来应该是以赛亚心爱的人和他的葡萄园之间的一首情歌，结果证明这是一厢情愿的恋情，而葡萄园却成了废墟。

很感恩的是，爱情故事有美满的结局。耶稣是神所说“我为我葡萄园所做之外，还有什么可做的呢？”的答案，当他说：“我是葡萄树，你们是枝子。常在我里面的，我也常在他里面，这人就多结果子；因为离了我，你们就不能作什么。”（约翰福音 15:5）。以色列没能结的葡萄，耶稣通过我们这些住在他里面的枝子结了许多葡萄，因为他是真葡萄树和真以色列。但是我们如何住在他里面呢？借着他的话，他住在我们里面，我们也在他里面，他的话也洁净我们，就像树枝被修剪以便结出许多果子。确实，只有粘在葡萄树上的树枝才能结出果子，而修剪过的树枝会结出更多的果子。耶稣在这里要说的是，当我们遵守他的诫命彼此相爱时，我们作门徒所结的果子将荣耀父。

祷告：亲爱的主耶稣，如果你不把爱浇灌在我们身上，我们不会知道何为爱。求你帮助我们彼此相爱，因为您已经把爱淹没在我们身上，并且这爱激励我们。奉你的名，阿们。