

Devotional from Pastor Ho
May 19, 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19日

彼得前書 5 章 6-7 節：“所以，你們要自卑，服在神大能的手下，到了時候他必叫你們升高。你們要將一切的憂慮卸給神，因為他顧念你們。”

這段經文的關鍵詞是『自卑』（自我謙卑）和『憂慮』。因此，我們將簡短地思考兩者，然後探討它們之間的關係。聖經多次提到謙卑，但我們這次只提兩點。首先，謙卑等同於敬畏神（箴言 22:4，“敬畏耶和華心存謙卑，就得富有、尊榮、生命為賞賜。”）。我們知道撒但是墮落的天使，驕傲地反抗神。因此，說那些偏離謙卑之路的人最容易受到撒但的欺騙不是誇大其詞。其次，當『謙卑』在聖經中被用作動詞時，就是我們謙卑自己（以斯拉記 8:21，“我…宣告禁食，為要在我們神面前克苦己心…”），或者我們因某件事或經歷而被神降為卑（但以理書 4:37，“…那行動驕傲的，他能降為卑。”）。

在聖經中，『憂慮』同樣是一個熱門的話題。在登山寶訓中（馬太福音 6:25-34），耶穌重複了三遍“不要憂慮，”因為沒有人“能用思慮使壽數多加一刻”（馬太福音 6:27）。聽起來很矛盾的是保羅早先說“我越發急速打發[以巴弗提去腓立比]…我也可以少些憂愁”（腓立比書 2:28），後來卻說，“應當一無罣慮…”（腓立比書 4:6）。如果保羅本身會感到憂慮，就算是稍微與偶爾的，他為什麼還勸我們不要憂慮，甚至還以“一無”作強調？

耶穌在馬太福音 6:27 中的修辭問題中，“你們那一個能用思慮使壽數多加一刻呢？”已經暗示了『謙卑』和『憂慮』之間的關係。耶穌在說沒有人能；如果有人認為自己能做到，那他就是過於自傲的，想設法控制一切。這並不是說謙卑的人永遠不會憂慮，而是當他們為任何事情罣慮時，他們會“藉著禱告、祈求，和感謝”（腓立比書 4:6）把所要的告訴神。在本質上，憂慮是不信的一種形式，這是罪。然而，當憂慮驅使我們更親近滿有恩典的神以求解救時，那是一種祝福。

禱告：滿有恩典的主啊，活在榮耀的這一邊，我們對許多事情感到罣慮。幫助我們在罣慮中親近你！阿們。

何牧师的灵修

2021年5月19日

彼得前书 5 章 6-7 节：“所以，你们要自卑，服在神大能的手下，到了时候他必叫你们升高。你们要将一切的忧虑卸给神，因为他顾念你们。”

这段经文的关键词是『自卑』（自我谦卑）和『忧虑』。因此，我们将简短地思考两者，然后探讨它们之间的关系。圣经多次提到谦卑，但我们这次只提两点。首先，谦卑等同于敬畏神（箴言 22:4，“敬畏耶和华心存谦卑，就得富有、尊荣、生命为赏赐。”）。我们知道撒但是堕落的天使，骄傲地反抗神。因此，说那些偏离谦卑之路的人最容易受到撒但的欺骗不是夸大其词。其次，当『谦卑』在圣经中被用作动词时，就是我们谦卑自己（以斯拉记 8:21，“我…宣告禁食，为要在我们神面前克苦己心…”），或者我们因某件事或经历而被神降为卑（但以理书 4:37，“…那行动骄傲的，他能降为卑。”）。

在圣经中，『忧虑』同样是一个热门的话题。在登山宝训中（马太福音 6:25-34），耶稣重复了三遍“不要忧虑，”因为没有人“能用思虑使寿数多加一刻”（马太福音 6:27）。听起来很矛盾的是保罗早先说“我越发急速打发[以巴弗提去腓立比]…我也可以少些忧愁”（腓立比书 2:28），后来却说，“应当一无罣虑…”（腓立比书 4:6）。如果保罗本身会感到忧虑，就算是稍微与偶尔的，他为什么还劝我们不要忧虑，甚至还以“一无”作强调？

耶稣在马太福音 6:27 中的修辞问题中，“你们那一个能用思虑使寿数多加一刻呢？”已经暗示了『谦卑』和『忧虑』之间的关系。耶稣在说没有人能；如果有人认为自己能做到，那他就是过于自傲的，想设法控制一切。这并不是说谦卑的人永远不会忧虑，而是当他们为任何事情罣虑时，他们会“借着祷告、祈求，和感谢”（腓立比书 4:6）把所要的告诉神。在本质上，忧虑是不信的一种形式，这是罪。然而，当忧虑驱使我们更亲近满有恩典的神以求解救时，那是一种祝福。

祷告：满有恩典的主啊，活在荣耀的这一边，我们对许多事情感到罣虑。帮助我们在罣虑中亲近你！阿们。