

## Me and My Vineyard

Isaiah 4:1 – 5:11

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~ Our Spiritual Safari rolls on with the prophet Isaiah in this report; and, if you are traveling with us on this expedition through the entire Word of God, I am confident that few of you have experienced Isaiah presented in this manner. Well, as we have already learned in previous reports, chapters two through five comprise a synopsis of the entire Book of Isaiah. All of the subjects that will be more carefully considered in the remainder of his prophecy are touched on in these four chapters. The conditions that are set before us in this section of Scripture are those which were prevalent in the nation Israel immediately prior to and during the Babylonian captivity. These are the same conditions that will be present during the Great Tribulation period, too, by the way; immediately prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth. That's the spiritual application we are to make in these chapters....

## IV

***1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.***

~ Verse one depicts a situation that will be common during the Great Tribulation period; and was happening in Jewish culture during the Babylonian captivity. Most of the Jewish men were killed by the Babylonians rather than taken away as prisoners. The remainder of this chapter gives the preparations necessary for entering the kingdom Christ will establish here on earth *in that day*. That makes this entire chapter eschatological. Verse one is the result of frightening casualties from devastating war in which the male population has been decimated. When seven women are willing to share one man, I suppose the man will just sit around while the women work, and he will make sure they all bring home their share of bacon – or something like that. Well, seriously, it reveals awful conditions. Actually, this result has been experienced before to

differing degrees in the nations of the world at various times throughout history. Today, there are slightly more women than men; but when the ratio becomes seven to one, there's going to be a real problem....

***2 In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.***

***3 And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:***

***4 When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.***

~ Verse two brings us "in that day" again – which looks forward to the future "day of the Lord" - and, by the time we complete the prophetic section of the Word of God, you're going to have heard that phrase so many times I promise you that you will be sick of hearing it. Well, the Hebrew day always began at sundown and moved from darkness to the dawn. So, "in that day" begins with the darkness of the Great Tribulation period and continues into the light of the Millennial Kingdom.

Where we see "the Branch" we have a direct reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. There are some eighteen Hebrew words that are translated into the one English word "branch." Wherever we see that term in Scripture, it always refers to Christ Jesus. Jesus said, "I am the vine" in the Gospel accounts. In this chapter, Isaiah is describing a mere sprout. In chapter eleven, we'll really get all the details of the branch – so, we'll just pass it by at this time. Jesus is going to bring a peace that the nation Israel does not have today, my friends.

Those Scriptural facts are but one more indication that this prophecy is *NOT* being fulfilled today. The nation Israel is *IN NO WAY* back in that land in fulfillment of prophecy today. We can know that very definitely because, among other truths, when they are back in the land according to a

fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy, every man will dwell under his own vine and fig tree in peace and safety. Isaiah has already been over that before; and if you have not read our first several reports from this book of the Bible, I suggest you go back and do so now. Peace *ALWAYS* follows grace and cleansing. There simply *CANNOT* be peace in this world until those things happen first – and in that order.

In verse three, we learn that during the Great Tribulation period, both Jew and Gentile will have a way made for them to survive. Jesus made this very clear when He said, *“he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved.”* Of course, Jesus stated this as He answered the apostle’s specific questions about the end times; and this refers to those who are sealed at the beginning of the Great Tribulation period to ensure they make it through. That’s also what God means when He says, *“the Shepherd is able to keep His own sheep.”* The same thought is developed later in the Book of Revelation; but, in order to avoid being tedious, we’re not going to dwell on that at this time.

So, moving along, we see God’s people are going to have to be prepared to enter the kingdom age. This brings up a major concern for any sincere student of Scripture; because none of us are fit for Heaven as we are. I know most self-professing believers honestly and sincerely think they are fit to just be translated into Heaven’s glory – but they aren’t – not even close. In fact, if God took us all to Heaven just the way we are, then all we would have in Heaven is another corrupt earth. Even well-meaning and dear, sweet Christians, if they were taken just the way they are, would foul the place up to the point where it wouldn’t even be Heaven anymore. Alright, maybe *YOU* are the exception to that; but there is going to have to be some radical changes in Andrew C. Hunt to make me ready for Heaven. Perhaps you already knew that. The way I am, I would just be a square peg trying to fit in a triangle hole. That’s what life is really all about, friends. It’s just a prep-school to correctly shape us for the higher education of eternity. Some people think this life is all there is; but they’re making a grave error. That’s something we should all contemplate carefully in those odd moments as we lay on our beds at night. It doth not yet appear what we shall be – thank God....

***5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.***

***6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.***

## **V**

***1 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:***

***2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.***

***3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.***

***4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?***

***5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:***

***6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.***

***7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.***

~ The first six verses of chapter five is actually a Hebrew song; and the language is an equally incomparable, sweet, and beautiful musical symphony — similar to that which we encountered in Song of Solomon. Frankly, the English translation is unfortunate, because it cheapens the thought. See, there's nothing wrong with the soil in this vineyard; the problem is with the strain of the vine. The vineyard is Israel, friends; Israel, Judah, and God's chosen people at the time in which we are studying, just happen to be what Isaiah is talking about. We're *NOT* talking about the church, nor a spiritual organization, or anything similar. That's very important to understand and keep before us. We don't have to guess at prophecy; because the prophets all spell-out very clearly what they are talking about. In this instance, verse seven tells us what Isaiah is speaking of. The problem comes when we isolate a verse, or fracture a passage, and attempt to make an application of it in our own personal philosophy of religion; and I see that tragic mistake made *ALL* the time around this forum on which I teach.

If we read the prophet Isaiah properly, correctly and completely, my friends, you are going to find yourself condemned. If you don't, then you simply do not grasp what you are reading. It simply cannot be otherwise. Candidly, when we examine your own life against this prophecy that Isaiah is giving, we need to ask ourself if we are really prepared to make a complaint against whatever God is doing in your life. We all whine and howl when things don't go exactly as we planned; we always seem to feel like the Lord is being unfair if, for example, He gives us cancer or some other sickness or calamity, and our faith is shipwrecked. Well, a few minutes of quiet time alone with God and Isaiah should tell you that God isn't wrong — *YOU* are wrong. It's something we need to face up to today.

The idea man has today that he is something special is entirely erroneous and misguided. God isn't going to do anything that isn't fair and just. God doesn't do things that are wrong. We deserve every world-problem that exists. Remember also, we're talking about God's people now — we are *NOT* talking about the lost man. Trust me, friends, the unbeliever stopped reading this report a *L-O-N-G* time ago — and so did most so-called Christians, too, by the way; but I digress. God put Israel in the Promised Land and for five hundred years, and He placed a wall around them which

protected them from the surrounding nations. They deserved judgment *MANY* times in their history; but God restrained His wrath and anger.

Then came the day when Israel simply had to be judged. The wall was broken down and Egypt, Syria and Assyria came into the land; Assyria took away the northern kingdom into captivity, and Babylon later took away Judah and Jerusalem. That's when that land was laid to utter waste, my beloved. Today, in spite of all the developments and improvements in Israel, it is a barren waste land. It is utterly desolate; I don't care what you say about it – that's what it is. God has judged it. For over a thousand years, the former and latter rains have not fallen on that land, friends – that's a simple scientific fact. They have former rains – but not latter rains. That's why the land is currently a complete desert waste land....

***8 Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!***

~ The remainder of chapter five contains six "woes." Each one reveals a certain and particular sin. These are the things God is judging Israel for at the time in which we are studying. Naturally, they can be placed down on our individual lives and certainly the life of the nation known as the United States of America – and even of the other nations of the entire world presently; but the interpretation we are considering in this Spiritual Safari is against the nation Israel. In that sense, it has already been completely fulfilled. The first woe concerns the lust of the eyes; specifically, covetousness. Paul said covetousness is idolatry. Covetousness is, without question, the great sin of our present hour. I think it also encompasses big business; which expands at the expense and dispensing of the little man on the ladder of life.

In ancient Israel, the little man was squeezed out in order for great fortunes to be accumulated in the name of greed and wealth hoarding. That was Israel's sad and sordid story. Frankly, God will judge a people on that basis alone. You can just write that down. Well, when man falls into that cycle of greed and fraud, they can never accumulate enough lucre. You could say the more a greedy man gets, the less he has. It's an axiom of God that can never be changed. We can write it down, again. God sends a famine to that

person, and they may own all the land in the world, but it won't do them a bit of good in that day. That person will never experience a bumper crop....

***9 In mine ears said the LORD of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant.***

***10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.***

***11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflames them! ~***

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