

NO RAIN

Or “Cloud Stoppers that Hinder Revival”

“I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.” (V. 6)

Introduction

In Chapter 1, Isaiah addresses the need for repentance:

“Come now and let us reason together.” (v. 18)

In Chapter 2, Isaiah deals with pride and self conceit:

“The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down.” (v. 11)

In Chapter 3, Isaiah exposes the root causes of failure:

“For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory.” (v. 8)

In Chapter 4, Isaiah foretells the revival:

“In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious.” (v. 2)

In Chapter 5, Isaiah reveals a song (v. 1-7) a lament (8-23) and a judgment (24-30)

Isaiah 5 is powerful

(It is known as the Parable of the Vineyard)

- How Israel (the church) is a vineyard that God cares for
- How God is looking for good grapes (not wild grapes)
- How God wants to pour rain upon His vineyard
- How God is waiting for us to prepare for a heavenly shower

Is it possible?

Ask: Is it possible for God to withhold the rain?

Ask: Why is rain so necessary anyway?

Ask: What caused the Lord to “hold back” the rain?

Ask: How can I experience this influence of supernatural rain?

(Some absolutes)

1. Rain is essential for seed and fruit to grow!
2. “No rain” is a terrible condition in dry climates!
3. Spiritual Rain is imperative to our spiritual life!
4. The withdrawal of God’s Spirit is a terrible judgment upon any life!
5. Isaiah 5:6 is a record, proving that God is sometimes put “on hold”.
 - We sing and sing (yet God seems far off).
 - We read through the Bible (yet all seems dry as dust).
 - We perform all the duties (yet all passion and power are missing).
 - We smile and serve (yet joy and fire are absent).

Question: Is all of this really possible for a believer or for a church?

Answer: Isaiah 5 reveals that it is possible when sin is tolerated after warning has come from God.

(Remember)

1. God holds the key to every cloud and shower of the Spirit's Outpouring.
2. God alone can send the shower of rain to our souls.
3. God is the answer to every dry and barren heart.
4. God opens the heavens, only in response to our willingness to meet his conditions.

(Discover three revelations of God's Vineyard.)

I. **The "Hope" Of the Vineyard (v. 1-4)**

"Now will I sing to my wellbeloved." (v. 1)

Fact: God is singing about His church

Fact: God expresses how He feels

A. **God is Loving**

- The word "beloved" is used three times in v. 1.
- It means: "to be a friend or to be greatly loved."
- It refers to God's affectionate attachment to his own people
- It reveals that you are the object of God's attention and care.

B. **God is Longing**

"...A very fruitful hill." (v. 1)

- This refers to God planting His vineyard in a place where he expects fruit.
- For Israel, this was the land of Canaan that flowed with milk and honey.
- For you and me, this is the place wherever God has put you in.

Fact: God has invested Great Grace in all of us (and has a right to expect a good harvest).

C. **God is Looking**

"...He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." (v. 2)

Fact: God was looking for good fruit from Israel.

Fact: God instead, found "wild grapes".

Fact: The words "wild grapes" mean "corrupted".

- Israel had become offensive.
- Israel had abused their privilege
- Israel had corrupted their potential.
- God says, "Wild grapes are not what I was looking for."

II. **The "Hindrances" of the Vineyard (v. 5-30)**

Ask: Why did wild grapes overtake the good grapes?

Ask: Why did God shut up the rain clouds?

Ask: What will keep the rain from falling down upon my own life?

Ask: What can hinder the flow of God's anointing and presence in my life?

(Cloud stoppers that hinder any vineyard)

1. A Life “Unpruned”

“It shall not be pruned.” (v. 6)

Ask: What is a life “unpruned”?

- It is someone who resists the blade of conviction.
- It is someone who resents the voice of correction.
- It is someone who rejects the hand of purging.
- It is someone content to let dead leaves hang on.
- It is someone content to let weeds keep growing.

Fact: This unpruned life is hard on others, justifies itself and is quick to spot blemishes except in the mirror.

2. A Life “Unbroken”

“...Nor digged.” (v. 6)

Ask: What is a life unbroken, or unplowed or uncultivated?

- It fails to see its poverty of soul.
- It fails to see its nothingness without God.
- It fails to see its own need of God.
- It fails to mourn over its depraved conditions.
- It fails to cry out to God for mercy.
- It fails to break up its fallow ground.

C.S. Lewis in “Mere Christianity” said:

“If you believe that you are better than one other person you are in a human death trap.”

3. A Life “Unbridled”

“Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflames them.” (v. 11)

Fact: Israel became intoxicated and stimulated from external methods.

Fact: Israel partied and drank and drank and partied.

(Unbridled Passions)

- Passions yielded to sin.
- Passions yielded to temptation.
- Passions yielded to compromise.
- Passions yielded to the flesh.
- Passions yielded to pressure.

Fact: The spirit of wine dulled their senses to discern the presence of the Spirit.

Fact: Israel sought pleasure in restricted territory.

Fact: Israel lived to feel good instead of be good.

Fact: Israel had an area of living that was loose and out of control.

4. A Life “Unashamed”

“They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts but they do not regard the deeds of the Lord, neither do they consider the operation of His hands.” (v. 12)

Fact: Not only did Israel become unbridled in their discipline, but they became

unashamed in doing it.

Fact: They continued to play their sacred instruments while forgetting God. (Instruments used for the sacred festivals of worship.)

Fact: Israel became unashamed through worldly music, dance and drink.

Fact: Israel “forgot God” by using its talents to appease their flesh.

Fact: Israel was just plain “unashamed”.

- Unashamed to serve two masters.
- Unashamed to please two worlds.
- Unashamed to gratify the flesh.

(No more blushing, fear of God or reverence.)

5. A Life “Undiscerning”

“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.” (v. 20)

Question: How does one get to the place of calling evil good?

Answer: *“Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope.”* (v. 18)

“That say, let him make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it.” (v. 19)

Fact: The word “cords” in verse 18 refers to a thin, feeble string.

Fact: God says, Israel added one little sin to another sin, until the thin cord turned into a thick rope.

Fact: The meaning is clear; one sin unrepented of leads us deeper into sin that makes it harder to escape.

Question: What happens to someone who sins a hairbreadth sin and continues to do so?

Answer: 1. That person begins to believe that God won’t quickly deal with it (so it’s no big deal) (v. 19)

2. That person begins to lose the ability to discern between good and evil. (v. 20)

3. That person (worse yet) begins to cast away the law of the Lord. (v. 24)

4. Worse yet, this person “justifies the wicked” for personal gain. (v. 23)

(The result of these cloud stoppers?)

1. Clouds ready, that refuse to rain.
2. God removes the influence of Divine Grace.
3. Dryness and barrenness of soul occur.
4. The Spirit’s Outpouring is put “on hold”.

III. The “Healing” of the Vineyard

Ask: What heals a barren soul?

Ask: What restores the flow of God’s Spirit?

Ask: What opens the cloud under God’s control?

(Four Absolutes That Work)

1. Genuine Humility

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (II Chron. 7:14)

- Humility is knowing who God is and where you stand before Him.
- Humility is a willingness to take the low road.
- Humility is prostrating ourselves before the grace of God.

2. Heartfelt Repentance

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” (II Corinthians 7:10)

- Repentance is godly sorrow for grieving God.
- Repentance is confessing and forsaking every known sin.
- Repentance is a willingness to change.

3. Absolute Obedience

“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.” (Is 1:19)

- Obedience is doing whatever God says.
- Obedience is pleasing God above all else.
- Obedience is walking out the Word of God.

4. Passionate Prayer

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:13)

- Prayer is drawing nigh to God.
- Prayer is a mindset bent on seeking God.
- Prayer is the thermometer of our ministry.
- Prayer is the breath of the soul.
- Prayer is “taking hold” of God’s willingness.
- Prayer is the conversation of my soul with God.

“Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you.” (James 4:8)

Conclusion

(9 words that will open heaven to your soul)

3 “Three” Word Sentences:

1. “I was wrong.”
2. “I am sorry.”
3. “Please forgive me.”

Amen!
Bill Kirk