

Isaiah 5:1–30 — The Song of the Vineyard: God’s Care, Our Calling, and the Consequences of Refusal

The Song of the Vineyard (5:1–7)

“My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine... So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes.” (Isaiah 5:1–2 NKJV)

God pictures Judah/Israel as His carefully tended vineyard. He chose prime ground, removed obstacles, planted the best stock, built a tower, and cut a winepress—every sign of loving investment. Then He asks:

“What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it?” (v. 4)

Plain sense: God looked for fruit—justice and righteousness—but found “oppression” and “a cry” from the oppressed (v. 7).

Application: God has also planted us with care—lavish grace, Scripture, fellowship, the Spirit’s help. He reasonably looks for fruit. Jesus picks up this image: *“I am the true vine... My Father is the vinedresser... By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit”* (John 15:1, 8 NKJV). The fruit God seeks shows up as love that acts justly (Galatians 5:22; cf. Micah 6:8).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV)

He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8 NKJV)

God initiates with generous provision; we are genuinely responsible to respond with real, observable fruit. Grace is not passive; it invites a willing, obedient yes.

The Six Woes—When Fruit Fails (5:8–23)

Woe 1: Greedy Expansion (v. 8–10)

“Woe to those who join house to house... till there is no place.”

Result: desolation and famine (vv. 9–10).

Application: Hoarding land, power, or profit while pricing out the vulnerable opposes the Gardener’s heart. Steward what you have so others can live.

Pleasure Without God (vv. 11–12)

“Woe to those who rise early... to follow intoxicating drink... but they do not regard the work of the LORD.”

Application: Endless entertainment and addiction numb us to God. Build rhythms that re-center the heart—Word, prayer, worship, service.

Interlude: Captivity & Collapse (vv. 13–17)

Because people “*have no knowledge*,” honor fades, thirst rises, and the grave “enlarged itself.” Yet God is “*exalted in judgment*” (vv. 16–17).

Application: Ignoring God is not neutral; it corrodes souls and societies. Seek wisdom daily.

Woe 3: Brazen Sin (vv. 18–19)

“Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity... who say, ‘Let Him make speed...’”

Application: Mocking God’s warnings or daring Him to act is spiritual blindness. Respond humbly before crisis hits.

Woe 4: Moral Reversal (v. 20)

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil.”

Application: When culture flips the moral compass, disciples must keep Scripture as true north. Speak truth with courage and compassion.

Woe 5: Self-Wisdom (v. 21)

“Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes.”

Application: Invite correction. Teachability is fertile soil; pride is hardpan.

Woe 6: Corrupt Strength & Crooked Courts (vv. 22–23)

“Woe to men mighty at drinking... who justify the wicked for a bribe.”

Application: Influence is for protection of the weak, not personal indulgence. Use your authority—at home, work, church—to lift burdens, not add them.

Why Judgment Comes (5:24–30)

“Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.” (v. 24)

God’s anger is not random; it is righteous. He whistles for foreign armies (vv. 26–29), and darkness spreads (v. 30). The vineyard hedges come down (vv. 5–6). This is what happens when people refuse the Vinedresser’s care.

Application: Hedge-breaking is mercy if it wakes us up. Better to yield now than to lose what we thought would keep us safe.

Living This Chapter Today

Examine the Vine:

- **Roots:** What am I actually rooted in—Christ or comfort and pleasure?

- **Fruit:** Where do justice, mercy, generosity, and truth show? Name one relationship where love must become action this week.

Form New Rhythms:

- **Sabbath a screen:** Trade one hour of entertainment for prayer/Scripture.
- **Restore someone's dignity:** Pay a bill, make a meal, open a door for work, advocate fairly.
- **Practice teachability:** Ask a trusted believer to speak into one blind spot.

Lead Like a Steward:

- If you hire, pay fairly.
- If you judge, be impartial.
- If you parent/pastor/mentor, correct with truth and tenderness.

The Gospel Thread Through Isaiah 5

The vineyard failed, but God didn't abandon the story. He sent the **true** Vine (John 15) and the Servant who bears our iniquities (Isaiah 53). In Jesus, the Gardener Himself becomes our lifeline. He cleanses what's wild, grafts in what's withered, and produces what we could never manufacture.

Balanced truth: God truly offers; we truly must respond. Salvation isn't coerced and it isn't self-made. It's grace received by a willing heart that turns and trusts.

Give Your Life to Jesus—and Trust Him Every Day

If the Spirit is showing you "wild grapes"—pride, compromise, lovelessness—you don't have to stay there. Jesus, the true Vine, died and rose to forgive, cleanse, and make you fruitful.

Pray:

Lord Jesus, I see that without You produce wild grapes. I confess my sin and my self-reliance. Thank You for dying for me and rising again. Cleanse me, graft me into Your life, and make me truly fruitful—full of love, justice, and truth. I give You my life today and choose to trust and follow You every day. Amen.

Daily trust next steps:

1. **Abide:** Read John 15 and Isaiah 5 this week; ask, "What fruit are You seeking today, Lord?"
2. **Obey quickly:** Turn conviction into action within 24 hours.
3. **Walk with others:** Join a Bible-teaching (not theology-teaching) group; serve someone vulnerable.
4. **Keep short accounts:** Confess fast, forgive freely, keep abiding.

God still sings over His vineyard. In Christ, your life can bear the good grapes He planted you for.