

Publ'd South Norfolk - March 3, 1968 A.M.  
Brent Jox Jan 5, 1992 P.M. ✓ ✓  
Began Study Isa, Jan. 1980 -

SOUR GRAPES

Isaiah 5

INTRODUCTION:

Parable of vineyard. Christ said he is the vine. We are the branches.

Failure in the midst of favour. Planting and harvesting.

Chapter has music. Rhythm in it. Sounds like a musician.

I have outlined the chapter on this musical plan:

- 1. Singing in the grape vineyard. (Not shower) V. 1-7.
- 2. Sour grapes stop the music. V. 8-23.
- 3. Sad funeral hymn. V. 24-30.

Open your Bible to this anthem. Isaiah 5. Sing along with me. We plan to sing all six stanzas!

I. Singing In The Grape Vineyard. V. 1-7

Verse ① - Music begins on pitch - beloved!

Things God had done for Jewish nation.

✓ Fruitful hill - Canaan, the best soil.

Verse ② - Fenced it in - wall of protection - boundaries set up.

✓ Stones removed - idols, things that might obstruct growth.

✓ Choice plants - chosen people, best vine.

✓ Tower built - temple from which he could view their growth.

✓ Wine press - altar - upon which to sacrifice their fruit.

Great favour - great music.

→ America - Great favour - brought out of paganism and planted by the fruitful hill calvary. Planted on fruitful soil of America. Fenced in and protected by oceans.

Built churches for sacrificial service.

Why do we not bear more fruit?

~~Looks for a good yield of grapes --~~ wild grapes.

Wild - sour - better word - stench! To have a bad smell.

The singing turns sour!

Like poor old (Adam) in the garden when he had sinned all the music  
left his soul.

Did you ever taste a sour grape? Looked good but bitter and unfit  
for use.

## II. Sour Grapes Stop The Music - Verse 8-23.

(What) had happened to this excellent vine?

(Why) were the grapes bad?

Isaiah stops the sweet music and explains in six stanzas - responsible.

The reasons are in the form of (woes). I will use the word we all understand

-- SIN. Note 6 sins:

### 1. Sin of Prosperity - Verse 8

House to house.

Field to field.

Man (never knows) when he has enough - people are  
never satisfied.

Some people never enjoy what they have.

(Moses) directed an equal division of the land. Among  
the say 600,000 families -- any estate was made  
available for repurchase to the seller or his  
relatives. Repossession without purchase at the  
Jubilee.

*"Selfish Greed"*

Story of Naboth illustrates this law. Ahab had to have the vineyard. Neh. 5:1-13, 2 Chron. 36:21, Jer. 34:8-16.

Prosperity ought to lead to praise but usually hostile to spiritual life. Absorbs ones attention and give up his allegiance to God.

2. Sin of Problem Drinking - Verse 11-12.

*"Self indulgence"*

Verse 11 - Rise early to follow.

Brag about how much they can drink.

Verse 12 - Body is main concern - soul not considered.

Smart to drink! They have no knowledge - not smart for you to smoke.

*V. 22*

Unusual statement - Alcohol and (ink don't mix!)

Staff Sergeant Donald Duke of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who compared handwriting specimens taken before and after drinking from about 50 trainees -- using the breath test a mechanism used to measure alcohol in the bloodstream. The letters were usually enlarged and distorted and often had a different slant. Spelling errors increased and there was a tendency to use capital letters when not needed....with some of the trainees, the equivalent of only one cocktail upset their writing ability. Others were affected in varying degrees.

Marne - Sept. 9, 1914 - captured.

LaFrere - Champenoise found Prussian officers dead drunk at 9 A. M. on Sept. 10.

3. Sin Of Pursuing Vice - Verse 18-19.

*"Cynical Materialism"*

Pull sin along - cart rope - take pains to sin.

Cart hitched to a mule - He pulls it along - Drag sin along.

Verse (19) - Give God credit for nothing.

Even challenge God to bring on worse.

By long custom they are confirmed and

hardened in sin - scoffers on God!

Men say "Where is the promise of his

coming?" Defiant sinning unbelievers.

4. Sin of Playing Providence - Verse (20)

*"Perversion of the Standards of Morality"*

Acting as God - this is right - this is dark.

Moral distinctions blotted out.

Error would make little progress if called by the

truthful name.

Free thought.

Rational religion.

Ignore Standards given by God!

Term (evil) as very good - reverse.

Your righteousness is filthy rags.

Justify evil - drink alright - don't over indulge!

Break The Sabbath Day if fairly honest during the week.

We do a lot of substituting and compromising -- but it will all lead to difficulty. Like the trombone player.

He wanted off from practice and knowing the director was near sighted hired a substitute and sent the fellow in his place.

So he watched the other two players and when they pushed out -- he did. Pulled in - he did. Giggled, he did.

He noticed the other two trombone players watched him and he got along fine until it was time for the trombone section to play a solo.

And it turned out that all three were substitutes!

In Morals there is no substitute! Right is right!

People get (divorces) for all kinds of reasons. These divorces are no pleasure.

Read of one wife can't cook! One thing worse than a woman back seat driver is a man who cooks from the table. Buy a cook book and stay married!

Saw an old lady walking down the street smoking. Almost too old to be outdoors. She would walk a mile for a Camel, but wouldn't go 10 steps to a prayer meeting.

We cover distinction between right and wrong! We don't like to hear about our sin!

Dr. Robert G. Lee once said a lady heard him preach on sin --- said, "I didn't like your sermon today". Next Sunday, she said the same thing. The third week - He told her the Devil didn't like my sermon either so go home and classify yourself and come back next Sunday!"

5. Sin of Prudent Pride - Verse 21.

Great opinion of self - own estimation!

Pride of their own understand - knew how to get around the Bible!

Modern school - wiser than all who preceded them!

Gen. Robt. E. Lee was an old man, a war widow came and asked him to bless her son.

"Teach him he must deny himself", Lee replied.

Conceited - probably Politicians.

6. Sin Of Perverted Justice - Verse 22-23.

Poor eye sight in justice.

Probably due to drink and it caused them to take bribes.

*Intellectual Pride & Self sufficiency*

*"loss of integrity"*

Frid. March 3, 1968 - Report from Saigon - Tearfully, President N.V. Thieu said that Corruption in So. Vietnam is a National Shame. We may lose our Motherland - Not by every Military or political conquest - but because of Corruption. We are humiliated. It is the result of 100 yrs. of colonial rule & 20 years of war.  
We should realize our <sup>National</sup> Shame. No anticorruption techniques will help as long as we are not conscious of this shame.

Forget the law.

Corrupt judges.

III. Sad Funeral Hymn - Verse 24-30.

Verse 5 - Remove Protection

All defense - exposed - people will be captured.

The vineyard will be uprooted!

Verse 6 - Turn His Back

I could tell you there is no judgment but....

Verse 10 - Unfruitful

Verse 11 - Miseries

Verse 14 - Graves Multiply

Verse 15 - Humiliation and Abasement

Honour laid in the dust.

Vineyard - little farms - happy working families where 10 families dwelt in simplicity. Happy with his little field - driven to the town and his miseries are increased. Land now just common land.

Verse 26 - Graphic Description Army.

V. 25  
V. 30

Spears sharp - arrows sharp - shoe strings tight.

Rushing chariots.

Short - quick - destruction. Assyria, Babylon, Rome.

Verse 4 - Where Had God Failed?

What more could be done? No excuse for not following Him.

Man in prison - Guard comes and says follow me. Would prisoner say let me think it over or come back tomorrow.

Who would be to blame!

God has been so good to us. We have been so sinful.

What more can be done?

Verse 25 - Hand Still Stretched Out!

# The Book of ISAIAH

## INTRODUCTION

-J. Vernon McGee

Beginning with Isaiah and continuing through the Old Testament, there is a section of Scripture which is called the prophetic portion of the Bible. That does not mean that prophecy begins with Isaiah, because there are prophecies as far back as the Pentateuch, which was written by Moses. Although the predictive element bulks large in this section, the prophets were more than foretellers. They were men raised up by God in a decadent day when neither priest nor king was a worthy channel through which the expressions of God might flow.

These books of prophecy also contain history, poetry, and law, but their primary message is prophecy. Each writer, from Isaiah to Malachi, is a prophet of God. Today we make an artificial division of the prophets by designating them as the *major prophets* and the *minor prophets*. All of the prophets are in the major league as far as I am concerned—I don't think you can put any of them back in the minors. This artificial division was determined by the length of the book, not by content. Some of the minor prophets are like atom bombs—they may be small, but their content is potent indeed.

These prophets not only spoke of events in the distant future, but they also spoke of local events in the immediate future. They had to speak in this manner in order to qualify for the prophetic office under God according to the Mosaic code. Codes for the priest, the king, and the prophet are given in the Book of Deuteronomy. Note the code for the prophet: "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:20-22). If the local event did not transpire exactly as the prophet predicted, he was labeled a false prophet and was so treated. You may be sure that the message of the false prophet is not in the library of inspired Scripture. The prophetic books are

filled with events that are local and fulfilled.

If you had lived in Isaiah's day, how would you have known that he was a true prophet? You would have judged him on his local prophecies. He not only spoke of events far in the future, like the first and second comings of Christ, but he also spoke of local things that would happen in the near future. If his local predictions had not come to pass exactly the way they were given, he would have been recognized as a false prophet and stoned.

The prophetic books are filled with local prophecies already fulfilled. All of the prophets gave local prophecies to prove that they were genuine. Remember that a sharp distinction needs to be drawn between fulfilled and unfulfilled prophecy. When any prophecy was first given, it was of course unfulfilled. Since the time the prophecies were given, a great many of them have been fulfilled. One of the greatest evidences that these men were speaking the words of God is that hundreds of their prophecies have been fulfilled—fulfilled literally.

Man cannot guess the future. Even the weatherman has difficulty in prognosticating the weather for twenty-four hours in advance, although he has the advantage of all sorts of scientific and mechanical devices to assist him. The fact of the matter is that no weatherman that you and I listen to so intently would survive as a prophet in Israel!

The law of compound probability forbids man from consistently foretelling the future. Each uncertain element which he adds decreases his chance of accuracy 50 percent. The example of hundreds of prophecies which have had literal fulfillment has a genuine appeal to the honest mind and sincere seeker after the truth. Fulfilled prophecy is one of the infallible proofs of plenary verbal inspiration of Scripture.

Let me illustrate: Suppose I make a prophecy that it is going to rain tomorrow. I would have a fifty-fifty chance of being right. It is either going to rain or it is not going to rain—that is for sure. Now I will add another element to my prophecy by predicting that it will begin raining at eleven o'clock in the morning. That reduces my chance of being right another 50 percent, but I still have a 25 percent chance of being correct. But I don't stop there. I not

only say that it will start raining at eleven o'clock, but I also say that it will stop raining at three o'clock. I have reduced my chances again and have only a 12½ percent chance of being right. If I keep adding uncertain elements until I have three hundred prophecies, you know they would never be literally fulfilled. No man can guess like that. Only the Holy Spirit of God could give such information. A man would not have a ghost of a chance of being right that many times, and yet God's Word has over three hundred prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ, which have been literally fulfilled.

Why did God give so many prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ to earth? There is a logical and obvious answer. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth was an important event. God did not want the children of Israel to miss Him. God marked Him out so clearly that Israel had no excuse for not recognizing Him when He was here on this earth.

Let me use a homey illustration: Suppose I am invited to your hometown. You ask me, "When you arrive at the airport, how will I know you?" I would write back and say, "I am arriving at the airport at a certain time on a certain flight. I will be wearing a pair of green-checked trousers and a blue-striped coat. I will have on a big yellow polka dot necktie and a pink shirt with a large purple flower on it. I will be wearing one brown shoe and one black shoe and white socks. On my head you will see a derby hat, and I will be holding a parrot in a cage in one hand, and with the other hand I will be leading a jaguar on a chain." When you arrive at the airport, do you think you would be able to pick me out of the crowd?

When Jesus came to earth more than nineteen hundred years ago, those who had the Old Testament and knew what it said should have been waiting at the inn in Bethlehem or waiting for the news of His birth, because they had all the information they needed. When the wise men appeared, looking for the Lord Jesus, the Israelites at least should have been interested enough to hitch a ride on the back of the camels to take a look themselves. Oh, how tremendously important His coming was, and how clearly God had predicted it!

The prophets were extremely nationalistic. They rebuked sin in high places as well as low places. They warned the nation. They pleaded with a proud people to humble themselves and return to God. Fire and tears were mingled in their message, which was not one of doom and gloom alone, for they saw the Day of the Lord

and the glory to follow. All of them looked through the darkness to the dawn of a new day. In the night of sin they saw the light of a coming Savior and Sovereign; they saw the millennial kingdom coming in all its fullness. Their message must be interpreted before an appreciation of the kingdom in the New Testament can be attained; the correct perspective of the kingdom must be gained through the eyes of the Old Testament prophets.

The prophets were not supermen. They were men of passions as we are, but having spoken for God, their message is still the infallible and inspired Word of God. This is substantiated by writers of the New Testament. Peter tells us: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pet. 1:10-11).

"Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:15-21).

It was William Cowper who said, "Sweet is the harp of prophecy; too sweet not to be wronged by a mere mortal touch."

Most of the prophets moved in an orbit of obscurity and anonymity. They did not project their personalities into the prophecy they proclaimed. Jeremiah and Hosea are the exceptions to this, which we will see when we study their books. Isaiah gives us very little history concerning himself. There are a few scant references to his life and ministry. In Isaiah 1:1 he gives the times in which his life



was cast: during the reigns of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, all kings of Judah. In Isaiah 6 he records his personal call and commission.

The days in which Isaiah prophesied were not the darkest days in Judah internally. Uzziah and Hezekiah were enlightened rulers who sought to serve God, but the days were extremely dark because of the menace of the formidable kingdom of Assyria in the north. The northern kingdom of Israel had already been carried away into captivity.

Isaiah 36-39 records the historical section of the ministry of Isaiah during the crisis when the Assyrian host encompassed Jerusalem. Beyond these few personal sections, Isaiah stands in the shadow as he points to Another who is coming, the One who is the Light of the world.

There are those who believe that Isaiah belonged to the royal family of David. This is supposition and certainly cannot be proven. Likewise it has been stated that he is referred to in Hebrews 11:37 as the one "sawn asunder."

Whether or not this is true, the liberal critic has sawn him asunder as the writer of the book. They have fabricated the ghastly theory that there are several Isaiahs. According to this theory the book was produced by ghost writers whom they have labeled "Deutero-Isaiah" and "Trito-Isaiah." The book will not yield to being torn apart in this manner, for the New Testament quotes from all sections of the book and gives credit to one Isaiah. The critics have cut up Isaiah like a railroad restaurant pie, but history presents only one Isaiah, not two or three.

A friend of mine, who has made quite a study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, tells me that Isaiah is the scroll the scholars work with the most. There is a great section of Isaiah intact, and only one Isaiah is presented. It is quite interesting that the Lord let a little shepherd boy reach down into a clay pot, in Qumran by the Dead Sea, and pick out a scroll that confounds the critics. The Lord will take care of the critics.

Let me illustrate how ridiculous the double or triple Isaiah hypothesis really is. Suppose a thousand years from today some archaeologists are digging in different parts of the world. One group digs in Kansas, another in Washington, D.C., and another group digs in Europe. They come up with the conclusion that there must have been three Dwight Eisenhowers. There was a General Eisenhower, the military leader of the victorious

Allied forces of World War II in the European theater. There was another Eisenhower who was elected president of the United States in 1952 and 1956. There was still another Eisenhower, an invalid and victim of a heart attack and of a serious operation for ileitis. This illustration may seem ridiculous to some people, but that is exactly how I feel when I hear the critics talk about three Isaiahs. Of course there was only one man by the name of Dwight Eisenhower who fulfilled all the requirements without any absurdity. The same is true of Isaiah.

The prophecy of Isaiah is strikingly similar to the organization of the entire Bible. This similarity can be seen in the following comparison:

BIBLE	ISAIAH
66 Books	66 Chapters
39 Books—Old Testament	39 Chapters—Law, Government of God
27 Books—New Testament	27 Chapters—Grace, Salvation of God

There are sixty-six direct quotations from Isaiah in the New Testament. (Some have found eighty-five quotations and allusions to Isaiah in the New Testament.) Twenty of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament have direct quotations. Isaiah is woven into the New Testament as a brightly colored thread is woven into a beautiful pattern. Isaiah is discernible and conspicuous in the New Testament. Isaiah is chiseled into the rock of the New Testament with the power tool of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah is often used to enforce and enlarge upon the New Testament passages that speak of Christ.

The historic interlude (chs. 36-39) leaves the high plateau of prophecy and drops down to the record of history. Even the form of language is different. It is couched in the form of prose rather than poetry.

The third and last major division (chs. 40-66) returns to the poetic form but is in contrast to the first major section. In the first we had judgment and the righteous government of God; in the last we have the grace of God, the suffering, and the glory to follow. Here all is grace and glory. The opening "Comfort ye" sets the mood and tempo.

It is this section that has caused the liberal critics to postulate the Deutero-Isaiah hypothesis. A change of subject matter does not necessitate a change of authorship. It is interesting that for nineteen hundred years

there was not a word about a second Isaiah. John refers to this section as authored by Isaiah (see John 1:23). Our Lord likewise referred to this section as written by Isaiah (see Luke 4:17-21). Philip used a chapter from this section to win an Ethiopian to Christ (see Acts 8). There are numerous other references which confirm the authorship of Isaiah.

Isaiah prophesied many local events. When Jerusalem was surrounded by the Assyrian army, Isaiah made a very daring prophecy: "Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it" (Isa. 37:33). Also see Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sickness of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38.

There are other prophecies which were not fulfilled in his lifetime, but today they stand fulfilled. See, for instance, his prophecies concerning the city of Babylon: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild

beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged" (Isa. 13:19-22).

Further fulfillments relative to Babylon are recorded in Isaiah 47. Excavations at Babylon have revealed the accuracy of these prophecies. More than fifty miles of the walls of Babylon have been excavated. The culture of this great civilization is still impressive but lies in dust and debris today according to the written word of Isaiah. This is one of many examples that could be given. Others will come before us in this study as we proceed through the book.

The New Testament presents the Lord Jesus Christ as its theme, and by the same token Isaiah presents the Lord Jesus Christ as his theme. Isaiah has been called the fifth evangelist, and the Book of Isaiah has been called the fifth gospel. Christ's virgin birth, His character, His life, His death, His resurrection, and His second coming are all presented in Isaiah clearly and definitively.

1 -  
Chap. 5 - Four Evanes - Are you interested in  
vineyards?

Repeatedly our Lord used emblems of his people.  
He provided generously for a fruitful people -

v.1  
1. Position of the vineyard

Fruitful hill = well drained - Fertile soil.  
Site chosen for Israel.

v.2  
2. Preparation of the vineyard

The owner tediously removed the unwanted  
stones. Back breaking labour!

3. Plant selection for the vineyard

Selected the choicest vines, the finest grapes  
grown in Syria.

4. Protection of the vineyard

Stone fence to keep animals out - A great  
tower for protection and for pleasure of  
observation over the growing vineyard.

5. Prospects of the harvest.

The owner even excavated a vat for the  
new wine, out of solid stone. Nothing was  
wanting; nothing was spared. From  
the lower vat the wine was drained into  
wineskins.

v.7  
6. Patiently the owner waits for fruit!

The Lord expected a fruitful people, looking  
for inward righteousness. His vineyard yielded bitter fruit.  
How long will God wait on His Church to become fruitful??

No Provision has been left wanting for God's Church - The Church is now the vineyard.

Most pointedly our congregation:

We are provided with more resources for fruitfulness than any generation of believers before us!

Review:

Sour grapes - Form of Woes - Jews.

- v. 8 1. Prosperity selfish greed
- v. 11, 22 2. Problem of drinking self indulgence
- v. 18 3. Pursuing vice cynical materialism
- v. 20 4. Playing Providence Perversion of the standards of morality.
- v. 21 5. Prudent Pride intellectual pride of self sufficiency.
- v. 22-23 6. Perverted justice loss of integrity

v. 25 God's hand still stretched out,