

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes: Isaiah Chapter 4 & 5**

12/18/13

**Chapter 4 Study Notes**

**A Promise of Restoration – Verses 1-6**

*<sup>1</sup>In that day seven women will take hold of one man and say, "We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes; only let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace!"<sup>2</sup>In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. <sup>3</sup>Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit<sup>[a]</sup> of judgment and a spirit<sup>[b]</sup> of fire. <sup>5</sup>Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over everything the glory<sup>[c]</sup> will be a canopy. <sup>6</sup>It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.*

**ISAIAH 4:2-4**

The "branch of the LORD" probably refers to the Messiah, although some believe it refers to Judah. The point is that during the distress predicted by Isaiah, some people will be protected by God's loving grace. Those protected will be set apart to God when Messiah rules the earth (Jeremiah 23:5, 6; Zechariah 6:12, 13). Their distinctive mark will be their holiness, not wealth or prestige. This holiness comes from a sincere desire to obey God and from wholehearted devotion to him. Evil will not always continue as it does now. The time will come when God will put an end to all evil, and his faithful followers will share in his glorious reign.

**Chapter 5 Study Notes**

**Song of the Vineyard – Verses 1-7**

*I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. <sup>2</sup>He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. <sup>3</sup>"Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. <sup>4</sup>What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? <sup>5</sup>Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. <sup>6</sup>I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it."<sup>7</sup>The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the nation of Israel, and the people of Judah are the vines he delighted in. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.*

## ISAIAH 5:1-7

The lesson of the song of the vineyard shows that God's chosen nation was to bear fruit—to carry out his work, to uphold justice. It did bear fruit, but the fruit was bad. This passage uses plays on words: the Hebrew words for *justice* and *bloodshed* sound very much alike, as do those for *righteousness* and *oppression*. Jesus said, "The way to identify a tree or a person is by the kind of fruit that is produced" (Matthew 7:20). Have you examined your own "fruit" lately? Is it good or bad—useful or wild?

## Judah's Guilt and Judgment – Verses 8-17

<sup>8</sup> *Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land.* <sup>9</sup> *The LORD Almighty has declared in my hearing: "Surely the great houses will become desolate,* <sup>10</sup> *A ten-acre vineyard will produce only a bath of wine; a homer of seed will yield only an ephah of grain."* <sup>11</sup> *Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine.* <sup>12</sup> *They have harps and lyres at their banquets, pipes and timbrels and wine, but they have no regard for the deeds of the LORD, no respect for the work of his hands.* <sup>13</sup> *Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding; those of high rank will die of hunger and the common people will be parched with thirst.* <sup>14</sup> *Therefore Death expands its jaws, opening wide its mouth; into it will descend their nobles and masses with all their brawlers and revelers.* <sup>15</sup> *So people will be brought low and everyone humbled, the eyes of the arrogant humbled.* <sup>16</sup> *But the LORD Almighty will be exalted by his justice, and the holy God will be proved holy by his righteous acts.* <sup>17</sup> *Then sheep will graze as in their own pasture; lambs will feed among the ruins of the rich.*

## ISAIAH 5:8-10

In this section, God condemns six sins: (1) exploiting others (5:8-10); (2) drunkenness (5:11, 12); (3) taking pride in sin (5:18, 19); (4) confusing moral standards (5:20); (5) being conceited (5:21); (6) perverting justice (5:22-24). Because of these sins, God punished Israel with destruction by Assyria (5:25-30). A similar fate was awaiting Judah if they didn't turn from these sins.

## ISAIAH 5:11-13

These people spent many hours drinking and partying, but Isaiah predicted that eventually many would die of hunger and thirst. Ironically, our pleasures—if they do not have God's blessing—may destroy us. Leaving God out of our life allows sin to come in. God wants us to enjoy life (1 Timothy 6:17) but to avoid those activities that could lead us away from him.

## ISAIAH 5:13

The nation's heroes—the "great and honored"—would suffer the same humiliation as the common people. Why? Because they lived by their own values rather than God's. Many of today's media and sports heroes are idolized because of their ability to live as they please. Are your heroes those who defy God or those who defy the world in order to serve God?

## Verses 18-30

<sup>18</sup> *Woe to those who draw sin along with cords of deceit, and wickedness as with cart ropes,* <sup>19</sup> *to those who say, "Let God hurry; let him hasten his work so we may see it. The plan of the Holy One of Israel— let it approach, let it come into view, so we may know it."*

<sup>20</sup> Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. <sup>21</sup> Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight. <sup>22</sup> Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks, <sup>23</sup> who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay and their flowers blow away like dust; for they have rejected the law of the LORD Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel. <sup>25</sup> Therefore the LORD's anger burns against his people; his hand is raised and he strikes them down. The mountains shake, and the dead bodies are like refuse in the streets. Yet for all this, his anger is not turned away, his hand is still upraised. <sup>26</sup> He lifts up a banner for the distant nations, he whistles for those at the ends of the earth. Here they come, swiftly and speedily! <sup>27</sup> Not one of them grows tired or stumbles, not one slumbers or sleeps; not a belt is loosened at the waist, not a sandal strap is broken. <sup>28</sup> Their arrows are sharp, all their bows are strung; their horses' hooves seem like flint, their chariot wheels like a whirlwind. <sup>29</sup> Their roar is like that of the lion, they roar like young lions; they growl as they seize their prey and carry it off with no one to rescue. <sup>30</sup> In that day they will roar over it like the roaring of the sea. And if one looks at the land, there is only darkness and distress; even the sun will be darkened by clouds.

### ISAIAH 5:18, 19

Some people drag their sins around with them. Some do so arrogantly, but for others, their sins have become a burden that wears them out. Are you dragging around a cartload of sins that you refuse to give up? Before you find yourself worn out and useless, turn to the one who promises to take away your burden of sin and replace it with a purpose for living that is a joy to fulfill (see Matthew 11:28-30).

### ISAIAH 5:20

When people see no distinction between good and evil, destruction soon follows. It is easy for people to say, "No one can decide for anyone else what is really right or wrong." They may think getting drunk can't hurt them, extramarital sex isn't really wrong, or money doesn't control them. But when they make excuses for their actions, they break down the distinction between right and wrong. If people do not take God's Word, the Bible, as their standard, soon all moral choices become fuzzy. Without God, they are headed for a breakdown and much suffering.

### ISAIAH 5:24

The people suffered because they rejected God's law. It is sad to see so many people today searching for meaning in life while spurning God's Word. We can avoid the error of Israel and Judah by making reading the Bible a high priority in our life.

### ISAIAH 5:26-30

This passage describes what God would do if the people disobeyed him (Deuteronomy 28). Assyria began to torment Israel during the reign of Ahaz (735-715 B.C.). This powerful aggressor destroyed the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. and scattered the people throughout its own empire. Sin has consequences. Although this judgment was not immediate, eventually Israel was punished.