

## God's Fruitful Vineyard

Read Isaiah 27:2-6; Hosea 14:1-7

According to Isaiah 5:1-7, God's vineyard, His people, had failed to yield the fruit He deeply desired, the fruit of justice and righteousness. Therefore He would let them be plundered.

But God has an unquenchable love for His people. As we read the Old Testament prophets, we realize that God tears down in order to rebuild. He destroys in order to cleanse and renew.

Today's passage, Isaiah 27:2-6, takes place "in that day". From the preceding context we learn that this refers to God's day of judgment on all the earth, when He completes His plans for His people and brings them salvation.

Notice that today's picture of God's vineyard is radically different than the last one from Isaiah 5:1-7:

- Instead of abandoning His vineyard to destruction, He continually, joyfully guards it, watering it and protecting it from any kind of harm (27:3).
- His anger is gone (27:4a). God directs His anger toward what harms His people. It is an expression of His love. In anger He cleanses. Then in love He renews.
- In Isaiah 5, God said He would let the "briars and thorns", the enemies of God's people, take over His vineyard. But here in 27:4-5, He says He will completely destroy these "briars and thorns", unless they are wise enough to make peace with Him.
- Now God is joyfully singing about how fruitful His vineyard is. His people will take root, blossom, and sprout, and fill all the world with delicious fruit (27:6).

What makes such a drastic difference? How can God turn a worthless vine into a fruitful one?

Part of the answer comes in Hosea 14:1-7, which paints a similar picture of God's fruitful vine. There we see that His judgment on Israel was not final destruction, but correction that bowed them in repentance and drew them back to Himself.

The rest of the answer comes in the New Testament. There God's own holy Son becomes the vine, and His people are the branches.