

Bible Study #1 - Tough talk for tentative disciples (Isaiah 5:1-7 and John 6:56-69)

(In preparation for Sermon on 22nd August 2021 by Geoff Davidson)

Here we come across a love poem or love song that Isaiah sings about His loved one (God) and His vineyard. Why do we like love songs so much?

Read Isaiah 5:1-7

1. Who is the vineyard in v1 (see also v7 and cf. Ps 80:8; Isa 17:10; 18:5; 37:30)
2. How did God plant and prepare the vineyard in v2? (cf. Ex 15:17; Isa 16:8; 1 Sam 2:9; Isa 27:3; 31:5; 49:8; Matt 21:33)
3. What were the crops like in His vineyard in v2? (Matt 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-26; Luke 13:6-9)
4. Who are the dwellers of Jerusalem and the people of Judah to judge between in v3?
5. What does v4 mean by: 'what more could I have done for my vineyard...'? (cf. 2 Chr 36:15; Jer 2:5-7; Mic 6:3-4; Matt 23:37)
6. What's going to happen to the vineyard in verses 5 and 6?
7. In verse 7b, what should have been found and what was actually found?
8. **Ponder:** This love poem of Isaiah 5:1-7 is like a parable. Read Matt 21: 33-46. List the similarities to Isaiah 5:1-7 and list the differences:

Similarities

Differences

9. **Ponder:** If God (the landowner) came and looked at us (His planted vineyard) what would he find? Are we challenged by this passage/parable?

10. What does God require of us? (cf. John 15:16)

Read John 6:51-69

11. How does Jesus describe himself in verse 51?

12. Jesus uses the same phrase in verses 51, 53, 54, so that we don't have the same problem as God's vineyard (Israel); what does Jesus mean here?

13. What is Jesus offering? (cf. vv53, 54, 56, 57 & 58)

14. Why do many disciples in verse 60 say this is a hard teaching? What are they afraid of?

15. What is Jesus aware of in verse 61? What added weight do Jesus' words have in verse 63?

16. What exclusive claim does Jesus make about Christianity in verse 65?

17. Why do some disciples turn back? (v66) Why do many people not want to follow Jesus today?

18. What choice does Jesus give the 12 Apostles in verse 67?

19. What will true followers of Jesus choose? (cf. verse 68-69)

20. What connection is there between John 6:51-69 and Matthew 26:17-30?

Finish in prayer: Thanking God for Jesus, the Bread of Life.

Bible Study #2 - Habakkuk's Prayer of Praise and Hope (Habakkuk 3 & Ephesians 6:10-19)
(In preparation for Sermon on 29th August 2021 by Ian Warrell)

Read Habakkuk 3:1-2

1. Do some investigation on the term *shigionoth* in verse 1?
2. What does Habakkuk reflect on in verse 2?
3. What does Habakkuk ask for in verse 3?

Read Habakkuk 3:3-7

4. List the things that Habakkuk remembers about God in these verses.

Read Habakkuk 3:8-11

5. List the things that Habakkuk remembers about God in these verses.

Read Habakkuk 3:12-15

6. List the things that Habakkuk remembers about God in these verses.

7. **Ponder:** What can we learn about praying from Habakkuk here?

Read Habakkuk 3:16-17

8. What does Habakkuk do here? What does that teach us?

Read Habakkuk 3:18-19

9. What is Habakkuk's hope in these verses? What do we learn from that?

Read Ephesians 6:10-19

In Habakkuk's time, God's people faced exile in Babylon. Today we are in a different type of exile (due to COVID) and we are living in a post-Christian world, where there are all sorts of difficulties we face as many societies and cultures thumb their nose at God and His rules. In these verses in Ephesians 6, Paul gives us some help against the darkness of this world.

10. What does Paul call Christians to do in verse 10 and how is that possible?

11. What does Paul tell Christians to do in verse 11? Why?

12. What warfare is going on in verse 12?

13. What does the full armour of God achieve in verse 13?

14. Describe the elements of God's armour from verses 14 to 17.

15. How do each of these elements of God's armour protect us as Christians?

16. What additional protection is described in verses 18 & 19? How is this similar to the Habakkuk passage?

17. What comfort do you get from Paul's predicament in verse 20?

Finish in prayer: Praising God for His sovereignty & protection and for the hope we have in Jesus.