

Handout: Isaiah Lesson 4

So let me warn you, holy seedlings, let me warn you, fresh plants in the field of the Lord, not to have it said of you what was said of the vineyard of the house of Israel: "I expected it to produce grapes, but it produced thorns." Let the Lord find good bunches of grapes on you, seeing that he was himself a bunch of grapes trodden in the winepress for you.

Produce grapes, live good lives.

St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430), *Sermon 376A.2*

What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his Life? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then he will repay everyone according to his conduct.

Matthew 16:26-27 NAB

The vineyard parable in Isaiah 5:1-7 (end of Lesson #3) establishes a number of Biblical truths:

- True religion is a divine event in human history.
- Divine election is intended to produce an example of righteousness.
- The mission of the elect can be derailed or thwarted by the free-will decision to turn away from God to embrace sin and rebellion.
- Judgment in the form of the withdrawal of God's protection and gracious intervention is the inevitable result of sin.
- The decision to engage in sin is not just a failure to do good, but it is a perversion of the good God intends for individuals and for society.

Isaiah calls down judgment against 6 different groups of people in 5:8-23:

1. Against a covetous people (verses 8-10)
2. Against a debauching people (verses 11-17)
3. Against a vain and unbelieving people (verses 18-19)
4. Against a people who pervert the truth (verse 20)
5. Against an arrogant people who are wise in their own eyes (verse 21)
6. Against a people who pervert justice (verses 22-23)

Sheol is the Hebrew word for the abode of the dead—Hades in the Greek; see CCC 633

Holy, Holy, Holy hymn in 6:3 points to the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity: St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan and teacher of St. Augustine (c. 333-397) wrote: "Cherubim and seraphim with unwearied voices praise him and say, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts.' They say it not once, lest you should believe that there is but one; not twice, lest you should exclude the Spirit; they say not holies [in the plural], lest you should imagine that there is plurality, but they repeat three times and say the same word, that even in a hymn you may understand the distinction of persons in the Trinity and the oneness of the Godhead, and while they say this they proclaim God" (*On the Holy Spirit*, 3.16.110).