



# Book of Ezekiel

## Chapter 15

*Theme: Vision of the Vine*

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**Theme:** Vision of the Vine

**Missler Introduction:** The recent chapters have been a little heavy, but they were not particularly controversial. Ezekiel continued to focus on the sin and coming judgment of Judah, those who were in Babylon, and particularly those who were still back in Jerusalem.

The essence of the 3 parables in the next 3 chapters was to let those back in Jerusalem know that their sin was complete, and that God was going to judge it. Ezekiel was being used by the Lord to point out to them the reasons for the judgment that was about to come upon them.

This occurred in the last days of Zedekiah, and the context was that Zedekiah was restless. As a vassal king he was supposed to have allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar; but frankly he was conniving and hoping for aid from Edom, Ammon, Tyre and ultimately Egypt. So it was in that context that we will see in Chapter 15 what we could title “the unfruitful Vine.”

If you were going to do a study of idioms of Israel, you would discover that there are at least 4:

- 1) The Olive Tree
- 2) The Fig Tree
- 3) The Vine
- 4) The Bramble Bush

While there are others, these are the 4 which show up in the Parable of Jotham in Judges 9.

Israel is spoken of as the **Olive Tree** as an idiom, a figure of speech, in Romans 11 and in Jer 11. It specifically points to the covenant relationship between Jehovah and Israel.

The **Fig Tree** is a common idiom, which speaks of Israel in a National sense.

The **Vine** in Isa 5 and Hosea 10 speaks of the Spiritual relationship between Jehovah and Israel.

Then, of course, there is the **Bramble Bush**, which is idiomatic of Israel in terms of their failure.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Parable of Jotham (Judges 9:7-15)**

7] And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. (Mount Gerizim - see Deut 11:29; Josh 8:33) 8] The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. 9] But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? 10] And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. 11] But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? 12] Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. 13] And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and

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<sup>1</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, khouse.org

man, and go to be promoted over the trees? 14] Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. 15] And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

(Fire - see Exodus 3:2)

The only purpose of the vine is to bear fruit; and God's purpose for Israel was to bear fruit.

In Ezekiel we are hearing from a prophet who had been trained as a Priest, and who probably presumed his audience understood things of the Torah. Do see these passages for a better understanding of the idioms being used. Deut 32:32; Ps 80:8-12; Isa 5:1-7; Hosea 10:1-2; Jer 2:20-21.

Chapter 15 is the parable of the vine that would not bear fruit. The vine is one of the figures of the nation Israel. In Isaiah 5 the vine set before us is the nation Israel. We do not need to speculate about that because Isaiah said, "For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel ..." (Isa. 5:7).

#### **Fourth Objection (15:1–8) OTS:**

The fourth objection which Ezekiel anticipated can be paraphrased like this: "How can God forsake his covenant, the vine of his planting?" Ezekiel answered this objection with another parable, the parable of the worthless wood.

Through a series of questions the Lord directed Ezekiel's attention to the value of a vine tree. In comparison to other trees of the forest the vine tree was insignificant. Its wood was useless, incapable of being fashioned by craftsmen. One could not even make a peg from the wood of a vine tree. It was good for nothing except fuel. A charred vine was doubly worthless.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem were like that vine tree. They had been appointed by God as fuel for the fire of judgment. God's face was against them, i.e., he was hostile towards them. Once they had escaped from the fire, so to speak, when Nebuchadnezzar came against the city in 597 B.C.. Now the fire would consume them. When Jerusalem was in the throes of the ordeal of judgment, the inhabitants would realize the true nature of Yahweh. Lest there be any mistake about the application of his parable, God declared that he would make the land of Judah a "desolation." Such severity was justified because these people had "acted unfaithfully."<sup>2</sup>

This is the first in a series of three parables designed to impress on the overly optimistic exiles that there was no possibility that Jerusalem would escape destruction (cf. chs. 16—17).

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<sup>2</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 15:1–8). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

**ESV 15:1–8:** The Useless Vine. This “parable of the vine” is very different from John 15! The metaphor of the vine for Israel is common in the OT (e.g., Ps. 80:8–16; Jer. 2:21; Hos. 10:1), which explains Jesus' claim in John 15:1 (“I am the true vine”) to embody the people of God. (On Israel as a vineyard, cf. Isa. 5:1–7; Jer. 12:10; as an olive tree, cf. Jer. 11:16; Rom. 11:17–24.) The juxtaposition of vine and harlotry themes in Jer. 2:20–21 is exactly what one finds on a different scale in Ezekiel 15–16. Ezekiel himself further develops the vine metaphor in ch. 17 (cf. 19:10–14). Here, the point is simple: the wood of a vine is fit only for burning—and so it is with the inhabitants of Jerusalem (15:6). Such a pessimistic evaluation is not only consistent with Ezekiel's oracles up to this point, it also marks his evaluation of the whole of Israelite history in ch. 20.

### **Ezekiel 15:1**

**And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,**

**Dake:** [And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying ...] The 21st prophecy in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 15:1-8, fulfilled). Next, Ezekiel 16:35.

Five Predictions—Fulfilled (Dake):

1. As the vine tree among the trees of the forest which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 15:6).
2. I will set My face against them (Ezekiel 15:7).
3. They will go out from one fire, and another will devour them.
4. You will know that I am Jehovah, when I set My face against them.
5. I will make the land desolate, because they have committed trespass (Ezekiel 15:8).<sup>3</sup>

**LAN:** The messages given to Ezekiel in Ezekiel 15-17 provided further evidence that God was going to destroy Jerusalem. The first message was about a vine, useless at first and even more useless after being burned. The people of Jerusalem were useless to God because of their idol worship, and so they would be destroyed and their cities burned. Isaiah also compared the nation of Israel to a vineyard (see Isaiah 5:1-8). Have you also become dormant and unfruitful to God? How can you begin fulfilling his plan for you?<sup>4</sup>

### **Ezekiel 15:2**

**Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest?**

**Constable:** The Lord asked Ezekiel how the wood of a vine was superior to the wood of other trees.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>4</sup> Life Application Bible Notes

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Thomas Constable, Notes on Ezekiel, 2010 (online)

**Clarke: What is the vine tree more than any tree**—It is certain that the vine is esteemed only on account of its fruit. In some countries, it is true, it grows to a considerable size and thickness: but, even then, it is not of a sufficient density to work into furniture. But whatever may be said of the stock of the vine, it is the branch that the prophet speaks of here; and I scarcely know the branch of any tree in the forest more useless than is the branch of the vine. Out of it who can even make a pin to drive into a mud wall, or hang any vessel on? A vine would never be cultivated for the sake of its wood; it is really worthless but as it bears fruit. What is Israel? Good for nothing, but as God influenced them to bring forth fruit to his glory. But now that they have ceased to be fruitful, they are good for nothing, but, like a withered branch of the vine, to be burnt.<sup>6</sup>

**BSB:** Ezekiel noted that the wood of the vine was worthless (vv. 3, 4). Israel was a small and insignificant nation among the powerful empires of the world. Because Israel rejected God, He had already acted in judgment, first with the fall of the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. and then with the invasion of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. After the destruction of the city and the exile of her people, Jerusalem remained as worthless as the charred vine wood (vv. 6-8).<sup>7</sup>

**Ryrie:** Judah is compared to the wild vine of the forest (not the cultivated one of the vineyard, as elsewhere in the OT), from which God has been able to make nothing useful (v. 3), which was partly charred by judgment (v. 4) and which would soon be completely burned in judgment (v. 6).<sup>8</sup>

**McGee:** God makes a very interesting application here. Just what is the purpose of a vine? The Lord Jesus also used the vine as a picture of believers today in John 15. He said, by the way, that Israel was no longer a vine, but “I am the true [genuine] vine ...” (John 15:1). The Lord Jesus was not talking about salvation in that chapter. Again, I ask you: What is the purpose of a vine? It is to do one thing—bear fruit—nothing else. What God is saying here in Ezekiel is that you do not go to the furniture store and ask for a Louis XIV bedroom set made of grapevine wood! The salesman would look at you in amazement and say, “We do not have anything made of grapevine wood. It’s not good for anything like that. It’s just good for bearing fruit.” Furthermore, God says, if a vine will not bear fruit, the only thing it is good for is burning. In John, the Lord Jesus said that if a believer does not bear fruit, you do not lose your salvation, but you are removed from the place of fruit bearing. God sets men aside in many, many ways if they do not bear fruit. The Lord Jesus said, “Herein, is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit ...” (John 15:8).

The people of Israel were not bearing fruit, and God said, “There is nothing left for me to do but to burn Jerusalem.” That is the reason He did it—the people were supposed to represent God, and they had failed to do it.

If you have been given great privilege as a Christian today, then you have a great responsibility. Have you ever thought of that poor fellow in Africa or China or Russia

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<sup>6</sup> Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Old Testament

<sup>7</sup> Believer’s Study Bible Notes

<sup>8</sup> Ryrie Study Bible Notes

who has not had the privilege of hearing the Word of God? We who have heard His Word have a great responsibility. God wants us to be bearing fruit today.<sup>9</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** Now you remember God said concerning the nation Israel in Isaiah, chapter 5, that God had planted a pleasant vineyard, the nation of Israel. He put a hedge around it, built walls around it, fenced it in, built a winepress therein and He came at the time of harvest that He might partake of the fruit from His vine. But, behold, it had wild grapes. "What shall I do? I'll let the wall go into deterioration. I'll let the weeds grow in. I'll let the vine just go to rot and I won't watch over it. I won't come to it anymore." The vine failed to bring forth fruit. And thus saith the Lord concerning the nation Israel, "You've been My vine. What else could I have done for you, but what I've already done? And yet you haven't brought forth fruit." And of course, brings to mind, Jesus in Matthew...in John's gospel, chapter 15, "I am the true vine, My Father is the husbandman, every branch in Me that bringeth forth fruit..." and all. Ye are the branches, and the whole idea and the purpose of God for you is that you might bring forth fruit unto God. There is only one purpose, there is only one value, one thing that a vine is good for, and that is to bring forth fruit. And He is pointing that out here, and that's the whole gist of chapter 15. The vine has one purpose only, to bring forth fruit. And if it doesn't bring forth fruit it's worthless for anything else.<sup>10</sup>

### **Ezekiel 15:3**

**Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will *men* take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?**

**Constable 3-5:** Vine wood was not good for making much of anything because it was too soft, weak, and crooked. It was not even good for making a peg on which to hang a vessel because it was so weak. It was only good for producing grapes. If vine wood was naturally of so little value, it was of even less value when charred by fire.

**JFB 2, 3:** What has the vine-*wood* to make it pre-eminent above other forest-*wood*? Nothing. Nay, the reverse. Other trees yield useful timber, but vine-wood is soft, brittle, crooked, and seldom large; not so much as a "pin" (the large wooden peg used inside houses in the East to hang household articles on, Is 22:23–25) can be made of it. Its sole excellency is that it should bear fruit; when it does not bear fruit, it is not only not better, but inferior to other trees: so if God's people lose their distinctive excellency by not bearing fruits of righteousness, they are more unprofitable than the worldly (De 32:32), for they are the vine; the sole end of their being is to bear fruit to His glory (Ps 80:8, 9; Is 5:1, &c. Je 2:21; Ho 10:1; Mt 21:33). In all respects, except in their being planted by

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<sup>9</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 15:4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>10</sup> Chuck Smith, Calvary Chapel, Notes on Ezekiel,

God, the Jews were inferior to other nations, as Egypt, Babylon, &c., for example, in antiquity, extent of territory, resources, military power, attainments in arts and sciences.<sup>11</sup>

**Shall wood be taken.** If the vine did not bear fruit, its wood could not be used even to make a peg. If in addition, it has been burned at both ends, **is it useful for anything** (AV, *meet for any work*) except for fuel?<sup>12</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** Can you build you a bookcase out of the wood from a grape vine? No way! The wood is not good for working. You can't make anything out of vines. Actually, the vine begins to rot almost immediately and it becomes very weak and you can't put any weight on it or anything else. Neither can you use it for pegs; it has no value. You can't even use it for a pin to hang something on, because it'll just rot and fall. It just sort of becomes hollow inside and just like a piece of paper; it just falls. It has no value for wood at all.

### **Ezekiel 15:4**

**Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for *any* work?**

**Dake:** [it is cast into the fire for fuel] Here it is shown how useless wood of any tree can become if burned in the fire—not fit for work, to use as pegs, or anything else; so Judah and Jerusalem were to become useless (Ezekiel 15:2-8).

**Clarke:** **The fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned**—Judea is like a vine branch thrown into the fire, which seizes on both the ends, and scorches the middle: so both the extremities of the land is wasted; and the middle, Jerusalem, is now threatened with a siege, and by and by will be totally destroyed.

**Chuck Smith:** It makes punkish kind of fuel. It doesn't even burn good. There's only one thing that a vine is good for and that is to bring forth fruit.

Now, you are God's vineyard, is what the Lord is saying, and there's only one thing that God is desiring from you and that is that you bring forth fruit. "Herein is My Father glorified," Jesus said, "That you bear much fruit" (John 15:8). God wants your life to be fruitful for Him. That you might bring forth those fruits of righteousness from your life unto the Lord.

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<sup>11</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Eze 15:2–3). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>12</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 15:3). Chicago: Moody Press.

## **Ezekiel 15:5**

**Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for *any* work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?**

**Nelson:** The **wood of the vine** is depicted as useless. Unlike an olive tree, whose wood is also useful, the vine has only one use, to bear grapes. The regular use of *vine* imagery in the Bible (see Ps. 80:8–19; Isa. 5:1–7; John 15) demonstrates the importance of grapevine cultivation in Israel.<sup>13</sup>

1-5. God posed a question to Ezekiel. Son of man, how is the wood of a vine better than that of a branch on any of the trees in the forest? The obvious answer is that apart from its ability to bear fruit the wood of a tangled vine is inferior to the wood of a tree. God pressed His point by asking two additional questions. Is wood ever taken from it to make anything useful? Do they make pegs from it to hang things on? The wood of grapevines is useless as a building material. Its twisting, gnarled branches cannot even be fashioned into a stout peg for hanging objects.

If the vine by itself was nearly useless, how much more so would it be after it had been through the fire? The worthlessness of a charred branch with its crooked, blackened ends is obvious.<sup>14</sup>

## **Ezekiel 15:6**

**Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem.**

He is talking about the part of Israel that was still in Jerusalem.

**Constable 6-7:** The Lord compared the inhabitants of Jerusalem to a piece of vine wood that He had used for fuel. Vine wood is not even good for fuel since it is so soft and burns so quickly. The vine was one of the most common symbols of Israel (Gen. 49:22; Deut. 32:32; Ps. 80:8-16; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 2:21; Hos. 10:1; Matt. 21:33-41; John 15:1-6). Clusters of grapes decorated Herod's temple as national symbols.<sup>244</sup> Israel's purpose was to bless the nations with fruitfulness; she was to be a source of blessing to the world (Gen. 12:1-3). If she failed to do that, she was of very little value. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist church, prayed, "Lord, let me not live to be useless!"

The Lord had set His face against His people in judgment twice already (cf. Ps. 66:12). They had experienced two invasions and deportations, in 605 and 597 B.C. Even though some of them had escaped complete destruction, they were still not bearing fruit and would end up completely burned (cf. John 15:6; Heb. 12:28-29). This would happen when the Chaldeans destroyed the city and deported the rest of the Judahites in 586 B.C. (2 Chron. 36:10; cf. Josh. 6:24; 8:19; 11:11). It will happen again in the Tribulation (Rev. 14:18).

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<sup>13</sup> The Nelson Study Bible Notes

<sup>14</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 15:1–5). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**Clarke: Therefore thus saith the Lord**—As surely as I have allotted such a vine branch, or vine branches, for fuel; so surely have I appointed the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be consumed.

The design of this parable is to abate the pride of the Jews; to show them that, in their best estate, they had nothing but what they had received, and therefore deserved nothing; and now, having fallen from all righteousness, they can have no expectation of any thing but judgment unmixed with mercy.

**History, Judgment**—God’s judgment comes when His people are unfaithful to Him. Judgment reveals the divine nature and power of God to a people who have forgotten the lessons of God’s deliverance.

6-8. God then applied the parable to Jerusalem. She was the vine branch; since she had stopped bearing the fruit of righteousness, she was useless.

Israel thought of herself as the vine of God’s blessing, but she had not produced the spiritual fruit God intended (cf. Ps. 80:8-18; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 2:21; Hosea 10:1). In fact Israel had become a wild vine of the forest that had tendrils expanding in all directions but with no fruit of any value. Its only use was as fuel for the fire. In the same way God would treat His people in Jerusalem.

God’s judgment was certain: I will set My face against them. Jerusalem had surrendered to Babylon in 597 B.C.; and though they escaped total destruction then, God would bring Babylon back to finish the job. Although they have come out of the fire, the fire will yet consume them. There was no cause for optimism, for the judgment from Babylon had only been delayed.<sup>15</sup>

### **Ezekiel 15:7**

**And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from *one* fire, and *another* fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I set my face against them.**

**Clarke: They shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them**—If they escape the sword, they shall perish by the famine; if they escape the famine, they shall be led away captives. To escape will be impossible. It will be to them according to the proverb:—

“Out of the scald, into the flame.”

**Nelson:** In this instance the vine is symbolic of the Israelites still in Jerusalem (see Ps. 80:8–19; Isa. 5:1–7). God had designed the people of Israel for a particular purpose, to bring glory to His name by living faithfully to His covenant and by bringing the nations to the knowledge of the Lord. Instead, Israel had become like the pagan nations around them. Israel had **persisted in unfaithfulness** and had failed to trust in God’s power. Jerusalem, and by implication the entire nation, had not faced exile before but now would

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<sup>15</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 15:6–8). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

be disciplined with **another fire**. This refers to additional destruction and deportation to be brought by Nebuchadnezzar, whose armies burned Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (see 7:23–27). The Judeans had already endured two deportations to Babylon, in 605 and 597 B.C.

**[out of the fire]** The siege of Jerusalem in 597 B.C., during which Ezekiel was taken to Babylon. *fire*. The complete destruction in 586.

**from one fire ... another**—(Compare Is 24:18). “Fire” means here every kind of calamity (Ps 66:12). The Jewish fugitives shall escape from the ruin of Jerusalem, only to fall into some other calamity.<sup>16</sup>

### **Ezekiel 15:8**

**And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.**

**Missler:** Some commentators say the “casting into the fire” speaks of Israel being cast into fire by Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kgs 25:9 and John 15:6 are examples of this.

The concept of fire may be seen in many places. If you are used to the idea of the vine whose purpose is to bear fruit, that is an idiom also found in Revelation. See Rev 14:18–20. Cf. Isa 63:1–4.

The idea that God desires fruit is one we might pause and focus on ourselves. We get interested in Ezekiel because he does so many quaint things, and we get fascinated with the book because it does give us glimpses into our lives in today’s circumstances. But it is important for us to let the Lord speak to us in our lives in the application. This notion that the purpose of the vine is to bear fruit is an important concept for us.

See Mt 21:33–46; John 15:1–5, 18–25. Note that all the way through these verses we see the emphasis is on fruit-bearing; but fruit-bearing is not without a price. The only way you can bear fruit is by abiding in Jesus Christ; and if you do that, do not expect to be popular.

**Constable:** Yahweh would desolate the land of Judah because His people had not been faithful to the Mosaic Covenant. The exiles could still be fruitful, but only if they remained faithful to the Lord.

It is clear from Matthew 21:33–41 and other passages that God desires fruit. This is spiritual fruit, fruit of the spiritual life. Instead, God finds sour grapes or none at all. Unless men come into vital relationship with the true vine [cf. John 15:1], there can be no fruit. The vital link must be formed by faith.

"This parable implies that the exiles had asked about God's consistency. They understood that they were his chosen people, his choice vine. How could he destroy them? They had been through the fire of two invasions and deportations by the Babylonians, but each time they had endured and sprouted up again. They did not believe that God's judgments would destroy Judah as Ezekiel had proclaimed.

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<sup>16</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Eze 15:7). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

**Clarke: They have committed a trespass**—They have prevaricated; they are the worst of sinners, and shall have the heaviest of punishments. Can men suppose that it is possible to hide even their dark hearts from God?

**trespass**—rather, “they have perversely fallen into perverse rebellion.” The Jews were not merely *sinners* as the other nations, but *revolters* and *apostates*. It is one thing to neglect what we know not, but quite another thing to despise what we profess to worship [JEROME], as the Jews did towards God and the law.<sup>17</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** And so, as God through Isaiah speaks of the failure of the people as a vineyard, as a vine to bring forth fruit and thus the desolation was coming. So the prophet Ezekiel takes up the same figure and again the idea that their failure to bring forth fruit. They're worthless for anything else, no sense of keeping them around, destroy them. They have no value, destroy them.

You remember Jesus gave the parable of the tree that failed to bring forth any fruit and the master said, "Destroy it. Why encumbereth it the ground?" The servant said, "Oh Lord, give me another year, you know. I'll plant around it, fertilize it and all, and see what will happen." But the question of Jesus is, "Hey, if you're not bringing forth any fruit, why encumbereth you the ground? What value are you? What good for you being around if you're not bringing forth fruit?" God desires that you bring forth fruit for His glory. Therefore, look at your life. Are you bringing forth fruit unto righteousness for God?

Now, Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love." God is looking for fruit from your life. He's looking for love. Love for Him, which is manifested in our love one for another. How much fruit is God finding in your life?

God comes to His garden desiring to partake of the fruit, enjoy the fruit of it. There was nothing but wild grapes; they're sour. They're no good. They're no value. I wonder how many times God comes just to have a time of fellowship with us, just to experience our love for Him. And just to have a time of the expression of a loving relationship and here we are all soured out. Bummed out at God, because you know, things aren't going like I wanted them to go and, you know, and I'm all sour and bitter against God. How tragic that when God is coming to just receive love and friendship and fellowship with us that He finds us in these sour, bitter attitudes. God wants your life to be fruitful, to bring forth fruit for His glory. And really, that's the only value that you have. The vine has no other purpose. It's good for nothing else but to bring forth fruit.

Now, Jesus said, "I'm the vine; you're the branches." And the idea is, bring forth fruit. May your life be fruitful for God.

Shall we pray.

Father, help us that we might be so filled with Thy Spirit and with Thy love that any time You come to Your garden You may take Your fill of the fruit. As we express to You our love, our worship, our appreciation for all that You are and for all the goodness that You have bestowed upon us. Lord, help us to be more expressive of our love and of our thanksgiving in all things unto Thee. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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<sup>17</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Eze 15:8). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

