

## God's Church: Under New Management



- You ever recall seeing bsns/store/rstrnt w/sign front: under new mgt? What mean? If “ownrshp,” mean: old owners/bsns sold bsns to new owners. But “under new mgt” would probly mean: owner of store/rstrnt replaced old mngrs w/new mngrs. Maybe old mngrs not doing good job running store: sales down, custmr service reviews poor; maybe restrnt food qulty, service qulty dropping – change was needed to make things better. So new mgt hired – thus sign: under new mgt. And if you’ve seen sign like that, maybe you were inclined say: I could visit store again, been awhile; I’d like go out eat that rstrnt again, give it a try. They’re making imprmnts; things getting better – under new mgt.
- There’s no sign in front of vnyrd in today’s prbl. But changes taking place. Not a bsns/store/rstrnt getting new mngrs in this prbl; it’s a vnyrd, which here: symbol for God’s ppl/Ch. And clearly God loves his Ch/ppl/vnyrd. J: **vs. 33bc** – cares re this vnyrd. And as J intrdcs this prbl, evryone listning knows refrncng Isa 5, 1<sup>st</sup> lesson: **5:1-2ab; 4a**. What more God’ve done for his OT ppl: promsd Sav; delivrd frm slavry in Egypt; designtd them as cvnt ppl; brought to promsd land; gave them special systm/wrshp – tabrncl/tmpl, sacrfcfs/fstvl – evrythng pointd ahead to comng Sav; delvrd frm enmys; freed frm captvty/Bbyln. What more could’ve done!? Even sent them prphts, to proclaim GW to them – like Eljh, Isa, Jer. In today’s prbl, the srvnts that the master sends to vnyrd reprsnt prphts God sent to his OT ppl, to encourage/warn/teach, bec God loves his vnyrd, desires fruits from his vnyrd.
- However, the vnyrd (to use today’s termnlgy): was under bad mgt. Listen J: **vs. 34-36**. This remrkbl: master so patient, sends not 1 but 2 rounds servnts; and both times mistreated, killed – which makes next part even more remrkbl: **vs. 37-39**.
- Pause. This: prbl, earthly story, hvnlly meaning. In earthly story, you’ve got: incrdibly patient/loving vnyrd owner, & incrdibly wicked tenants. But what’s hvnlly meanng? Well, if vnyrd owner = God; vnyrd = God’s ppl/Ch; srvnts = prphts; then who’s son that gets killed? Must be J, Son/God himself. So undrstnd what J sayng here. He’s speaking to Phrss, chf prsts; saying: you, wicked tenants; you, guilty killing prphts (just as guilty as Jewish leaders were back then who actly did it); and you, guilty (or soon will be) of killing Son! So hvnlly meaning: you Phrss are about lose vnyrd for good.
- Now, here’s smthng you need realize: J tells this prbl Tues of HW, 2 days before arrested. And on this Tues, tells 3 very contrvrsl prbls. 1<sup>st</sup>, from last Sun’s Gos, Prbl 2 Sons, where one son delbrtly disobyd father’s will. 2<sup>nd</sup>, today’s Prbl Wicked Tenants, who violently kill vnyrd owners’s own son. And 3<sup>rd</sup>, prbl we’ll hear next Sun, Prbl Wed Banqt, where king invites bunch guests to wed, but they kill srvnts who delvr invttns. 3 very clear, contrvrsl prbls in which J says: you Pharss have offended God; killed his prphts; about kill me, Son/God; and God’s had enough! You’re right: **vs. 41a** – that’s you! You’re fired! God’s vnyrd is now under new mgt.
- It was this prbl, tog w/other 2 I mentnd, that really put Xp on cross. This was straw broke camel’s back. **Vs. 45-46b**. But that fear didn’t last long; in little over 48 hours, they’d pull tog a mob, arrest J in Gthsmn; and this prbl’d be fulfilled: Son/God’d be killed outside Jrslm, just like son in prbl killed outside vnyrd. But even though this prbl was dirctd prmrlly at those Phrss, who right on cusp of hauling J before Pilate, shouting Crucify, nvrthlss there’s # lessons here for us to learn today.
- #1: we all guilty of rejecting J. We may not have killed him, shouted Crucify. But our sins put Xp on cross, just as much as Phrss’ sins did. We have much repent of. We cannot look at this prbl, say: I thank you Lord I’m not like those wicked tenants. Whnvr we prop up on pedestal in our hrts a god that’s more imp to us than J, that’s idltry/rejctng J. And it could be god/politics (are you lettng poltcl opnins become more imp than J?); or could be god/self-secrty/pers hlth (certly hlth on evryone’s minds, but you lettng hlth concerns consume so much: more imp than J?); or could just be god/lazines, where wrshpng J reglrly just not as imp you as once was or should be. All this: idltry, a quiet/passive form of thrwnng J out vnyrd. Beware! Fight these temptns. Prioritize J in evry aspcct/life. That’s #1.

- #2: prbl ends w/son dead. But J explns, doesn't stay dead. Quotes Ps 118: vs. 42bc [rejected: J, like son in prbl rejected] – which means: J would come back to life; after death/cross, J be raised from dead. We saw that hpn Easter Sun morn; and it's marvelous in our eyes – bec res of J means all our sins forgvn; J truly is our Sav; we too will someday rise, live w/J forever in hvn. God vindctd Xp & raised his Son, for us, bec God loves his vnyrd. Just think what God's done today for his vnyrd/NT Ch: sent us J, raised J; recorded that good news for us in Gospels, whole NT; sends apstls/missnrs/prs into wrld to spread good news – (and smwhr along line smeone shared Gos w/you; and good news of J touched your hrt; and God brought you to faith in J); God's given his Ch Sacr/Bap, whereby he washes away sins, adopts us into fam, creates faith in hrts, clothes us w/rightsns Xp; given his Ch Sacr/HC, the true bdy/bld of Xp as pledge of his love/forgvnss & as foretaste of banquet in hvn; promsd to always be w/us, to always hear prayers; and given us prom of etnl life w/J in hvn. **Isa 5:4a.** God has blessed us in so many ways thru Xp our Sav. That's #2.
- Finally, #3: God's Ch now under new mgt. Been taken away from Jewish leaders, given to you. In prbl J: vs. 43. And that's you. As Xians, you're not only vnyrd/Ch; also mngrs. And God has high expctns for his mngrs. Vs. 41b. God expcts you produce fruits/faith. He wants harvest of good wrks & godly livng to come from you, his belovd vnyrd. So you have to manage self well. Guard heart; give God best (in wrds/thghts/actns) – just like mngr of store/restrnt has to be good/faithful mngr & give owner their best. It's clear Jewish leader became bad mngrs. But now the vnyrd been entrusted to you, and with it, respnsblty to manag it well. Smday owner will return, and he's going want see fruit. It's not your fruits/faith that will save you. Only Xp can save you. He's the son killed outside vnyrd for you; the stone rejected but raised to life for you – that's your salvtn. But God's Ch is under new mgt. So manage it well. In your own life, offer God fruits he seeks, fruits he deserves, as your sacrfc/praise to your incrdibly patient and eternally loving vnyrd owner Father in hvn.

### Matthew 21:33-46

<sup>33</sup> “Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. <sup>34</sup> When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants [*prophets*] to the tenants to collect his fruit. <sup>35</sup> “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup> Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. <sup>37</sup> Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. <sup>38</sup> “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup> So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” <sup>41</sup> “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

<sup>43</sup> “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you [*Phrss*] and given to a people who will produce its fruit. <sup>44</sup> Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. <sup>46</sup> They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

### Isaiah 5:1-7

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... <sup>4</sup> What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it?