



## PROPER 22 ARTICLE NO. 2005.83

### Prophets? - What Prophets?

Matthew chapter 21 verses 33 to 43  
2 days before the trial - Parable of the Vineyard



**“H**ear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and **hedged** it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to **husbandmen**, and went into a far country:

And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the **head of the corner**: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (KJV 1769).

**Much of this tract is commentary - don't take it as Gospel. It is here to encourage meditation and study. Use your gift of discernment, to find the truth.**

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### Matthew chapter 21 verses 33 to 43

The vineyard is Israel and the householder is Yahweh. Yahweh prepared Israel properly by *hedging* (them) *around* with dietary and marriage laws that would keep them isolated from the pagans, and also to protect them from committing grievous sins. This way He could keep them together as a Nation, unpolluted by the morals of the people around them. He established a priestly heirarchy with an *high* priest to watch over them to warn away intruders and to keep Israel undefiled He built a temple for the acceptance of sacrifices and offerings (*winepress*).

The Priests were given all that was needed to produce *good fruit*. Yahweh left Israel in the hands of the priests. Every now and then Yahweh sent prophets to continue the education of the Israelites, and to build on the *fruit* of the priests work. But the Priests objected to the visitors interference with the working of the Vineyard. They believed that this was exclusively given to them by Yahweh, who had left it in their care for many years. They did not believe that these prophets were sent by their Lord, and treated them badly; sometimes killing them. Eventually after a very long time, Yahweh sent his *Son* to negotiate with the Priests, but the Priests believing that Yahweh had no son, even though the prophets had explicitly told them about Him, killed him - thus the story foretold the crucifixion of Jesus.

Jesus's question, that follows the parable, elicited the answer he was waiting for. He tells them that when the Lord comes back to claim Israel as His, their priesthood will be destroyed (though Matthew in his conclusion plays this down) and *The Kingdom of God* (Israel) given to the care of another Nation (or people) who produce good fruit.

*The Views expressed here are strictly those of the author and probably disagree with what you have previously thought. Read other commentaries - meditate on the original KJV.*

**Additional Comments***Page 3*

Finally (verses 45 to 46 following) the Pharisees understood the story, and did not like his condemnation of the Priesthood, nor his suggestion that He was the man sent by the Lord as prophesied {Ps 118:22,23}. They were angry with Jesus, but He escaped.

The message I get is this:

That the care of the Church is in the hands of the Priesthood Clergy and Lay ministers. They must look after the Church as God has instructed them.

They must listen to the prophets of the Church whom God has already sent to them, and they should not ignore these prophets.

If these prophets are ignored, the Church leaders will be replaced by others who are already producing good fruit.

Today, September 28, 2005, we are experiencing fragmentation of the Church, as congregations, one after another, are uprooting themselves, because they feel that God's prophets are being ignored by their own Leaders.

**Doing Theology***Page 4*

We must support our Vicars, Rectors and Bishops in our Diocese. Our care is in their hands. We are very fortunate to have them in our lives. During these difficult times they need to know that we are behind them. Let your Clergy know that they can count on you to be there, and to support them during this difficult time. This is important.

Become properly informed on what is happening to the Church. It is very easy to be misled by vocal groups lobbying for changes. Change can be good for us, but let it come from our own Diocese whom we trust to listen to the prophets of God.

Remember - love thy neighbor means to also take care of each other's spiritual needs, so if anyone is feeling confused, or discouraged, we must help them.

Don't harbor ill feelings towards people who are causing changes . You might not agree with them, or understand their arguments, but you should love them - they are after all, the brethren.

Luke 6:27

"27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you," Luke 6:37

"37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:"

Put your money where your conscience rests, and contribute **extra** to encourage those programs and ministries within the Diocese that are teaching the traditions as they have been handed down over the centuries.

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Psalms 118:22, 23

“22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

23 This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. {the LORD’s...: Heb. from the LORD}”

Ac 4:11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Ro 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Eph 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

1Pe 2:7 Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

-----what happened to the prophets -----

Isaiah - sawn in half

Jeremiah - beaten put in stocks. killed in Egypt

Zechariah - killed



### NIV translation and comment on it

“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 went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the **tenants** to collect his fruit. “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them in the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. “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.’ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” “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.” Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “The stone the builders rejected has become the **capstone**; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes?” “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.”

### Why it is important to compare the NIV/NRSV with the original KJV translation

The NIV uses *listen* whereas the KJV uses *hear* which means both listening and **understanding**.

The NIV here uses *farmers*, but it translates the same Greek word as *tenants*, whereas the KJV always uses *husbandmen*. Husbandmen is a much better description for a Priesthood which is what is implied in this story. And priests were more God’s employees, than tenants. The NKJV uses *vinedressers* rather than *tenants* which, since the Jews were called vines in both the OT and NT, is closer to the job of the priesthood.

Amori Christi et Ecclesiae –  
Glen C. Miller OSV

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The *wall* (NIV) is a metaphor for the “fence of laws” (a Hebrew expression) that were created to protect the Israelites from committing grievous sin. These laws were the dietary laws, cleanliness laws, Sabbath laws etc. NRSV uses *fence* here rather than *wall*, which is good. KJV uses *hedged it around* - ambiguous, deliberately, so that you are encouraged to search for the hidden meaning. *Wall*<sup>NIV</sup> is so specific that it leaves no room for additional insight.

KJV’s *the time of the fruit drew near*, makes you think of the coming Kingdom of God as in verse 43. Whereas *harvest time* (NIV) leads you to think of reaping and judgment day. As here:

Matthew 13:39 (KJV)

“39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels.”

And why did the NIV use capstone? You will not find this word mentioned in any of the best commentaries, nor lexicons. Capstone is the top stone of a construction, sometimes the tower stone. But what is meant by *head of the corner* in KJV is a **foundation** stone on which the rest of the house is built. This interpretation is shared by the best commentaries. Jesus was the foundation stone on which was built his church.

So if you read the NIV, make sure you have a KJV alongside it, so that you can use good lexicons, and commentaries. I find that the hidden meaning of parables “pop out” in the KJV, but in other translation something always is distracting my understanding.

### **Recommended Books**

			<b>ISBN</b>
The Holy Bible 1611 Version	Bible	Hendrickson	1-56563-162-5
The Complete Word Study Dictionary	Zodhiates	AMG Publishers	0-89957-663-X
The Complete Word Study New	Zodhiates	AMG Publishers	0-89957-651-6
The R.S.V. Interlinear Greek - English	Marshall, Alfred	Regency/Zondervan	0-310-20410-0