

File No. 152

MATTHEW 21:33–46

Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19

PARABLE OF THE WICKED TENANTS

(SBS Bk 5 Story No. 41)

Story Notes

Christ's parable is a thinly veiled reference to Isaiah 5:1–7. Israel's leaders did not want the reign or kingdom of God at all. They wanted to determine and achieve their own destiny. This had been so for most of Israel's history because they ignored God's prophets who called for the fruits of God's 'sowing' among them.

Their hatred of God was now focused on murdering the Son of God. However, through this, they would lose their inheritance. They had abused God's patience with them and were now rejecting his Son. They were wretched and would come to a miserable end. They would find themselves outside of the blessing of God's reign and others would be brought into it, people who, accepting the central place of the Messiah, would bring forth fruit (John 15) and worship God truly.

In spite of the hatred of his enemies, God's purpose to have his Messiah established as centre stone in his building would still be fulfilled. David had predicted this event (Ps. 118:22-23).

The religion of these leaders was man made and needed sustaining by political expediency, so, for the moment, they could do nothing about removing Jesus. The leaders knew that the parable applied to them but it failed to awaken them.

Israel succeeded in killing Jesus, but God raised him up for our salvation. Peter was full of this when he preached to Israel (Acts 4:11; cf. I Pet. 2:7). So was Paul as he took the gospel to the nations (Rom. 9:33). The kingdom belongs to those who believe in the Son of God, and they are his temple and give to true worship (Eph. 2:20). How good for us that the stone we rejected is still established by God!

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