

The Deep, Ancient Roots of the LORD's Vineyard

How (and What) the

Parables of Jesus

Help Us See

Lesson 3

“There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard...” (Matt 21:33)

Seven hundred years before Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” the prophet Isaiah was inspired by God to deliver a parable-like song of his own. Let’s turn back to [Isaiah 5:1-7](#) and carefully read the prophet’s “love song.” **In simplest terms, what is God communicating in this passage?**

Centuries later, Jesus had made his “triumphal entry” into Jerusalem ([Matt 21:1-11](#)), cleansed the temple ([21:12-17](#)), and had his authority challenged by the chief priests and elders of the people ([21:23-27](#)). In [Matthew 21:28](#), he asked a simple question: **“What do you think?”** and launched into a series of parables. For the moment, let’s focus in on the first two:

- The parable of the two sons ([21:28-32](#))
- The parable of the tenants ([21:33-46](#))

In your own words, **what is Jesus now communicating?** Do you see a connection to [Isaiah 5](#)?

What good signs of growth and fruit—the sort of fruit God has been looking for all along—can be seen, even in [Matthew 21](#)?

What did Jesus mean by the warning in [21:43-46](#)?

How had the chief priests and elders of the people slipped so hard and far? We’ll dive deeper into some of the accompanying parables soon, but for the moment, consider:

- “If this man were a prophet, he would have known what sort of woman this is...” ([Luke 7:36-40](#))
- “This man receives sinners and eats with them...” ([Luke 15:1-3](#))

How do these glimpses from the gospels connect us to the deep, ancient roots of the LORD’s vineyard?



For Next Week...

Go back to [Isaiah](#), and carefully read [6:8-13](#). Does that sound familiar? Can you find in your Bible where it was eventually quoted by Jesus? What's the context? What prompted Jesus to quote this 700-year-old prophecy? And what's the connection to Jesus' parables?