

## Luke 20:9-18, "Masterful Answers from the Master, Part 2"

- ↪ Last time, we watched as Jesus gave them no more answers. There certainly is a time for that, and I think we are living in those times. Shocked and appalled at all the questions about gender dysphoria, instead of he and she, it is "they" and "them." There is a big urge to have an answer to this, I would say don't waste your breath because the answer is patently obvious, but, also, there is no answer for a person who's debauched and confused by sin. They are inebriated by sin and its consequences; you don't argue with drunk people! You try to help them; you try to protect them from themselves. In fact, we could say, as far as the lost world is concerned, we should almost never argue with them, **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:23-25**. Jesus dealt constantly with confused and debauched people, controlled by forces beyond themselves, demon possessed, or demonically influenced at the very least. He was always kind and gentle with them, expressing love and forgiveness, not harshness and quarreling. It's the arrogant elite who promoted false doctrine and who were incurably hypocritical that Jesus sparred with, and then only because they were attacking Him every chance they got.
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↪ **Two groups were waiting for Jesus to say the right thing for them, Luke 19:47-48.**

- 1) One was waiting for a call to arms. He's just cleared the Temple in magnificent fashion, so they are expecting Him to move on to the Roman garrison.
- 2) The other is waiting for any word He might say so they can have Him arrested and put to death. Neither get what they want because He's the Master!

- ↪ The second masterful answer from the Master. Remember what a parable is: it means "to lay alongside." Jesus would lay a very commonly understood scenario next to something that was not understood in order to teach a lesson.
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### 1. The story Jesus tells is one of common sense to those listening.

- ✓ All of Jesus' parables were common sense up to a certain point, and at that certain point is where He would bring in things that they didn't know. "A man planted a vineyard." Jerusalem was surrounded by terraced vineyards: everybody there understood grapes, grapevines, and wine production. it was common sense. A rented vineyard, again, a common experience, the larger land and vineyard owners did not do their own work but hired workers to handle it. The salary of the workers was up to them, the owner would have a set amount of produce that would be agreed upon by the workers, and whatever they got above that was theirs. If the owner hired them to produce 20 barrels of wine for him and they produced 40, the difference would be theirs. The owner goes, "into a far country for a long time," again very common to them. Trips to other countries always took a long time because they mostly traveled on foot.
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### 2. The story now breaks from what they considered common sense.

- ✓ At the harvest time, he sent a slave to the vine-growers, so that they would give him some of the produce of the vineyard; but the vine-growers beat him and sent him away empty-handed.", **Luke 20:10**. This did not happen, or, at least, was pretty much unheard of. Most there understood the grape and wine industry intimately as it was integral to their day to day life. Nobody would do what these tenants did because they would never be able to work in that town again. Others there who owned vineyards and rented them out would have been incensed, they would see this as a very ungrateful and criminal act. Jesus has their attention! Their first inclination is to get perturbed by what Jesus is saying: "Who's doing that? Those guys need to go!"
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- ✓ Matthew's version of this same story points out some of the crowd's responses. Jesus asks the crowd to render the verdict on these tenants, and they say: "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?" <sup>41</sup> They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.", **Matthew 21:40-41.** The Master grabs them with a story that would incite such a visceral response in order to catch them with the punch line: God is the owner; His people were the vineyard, and the leaders were these evil tenants.
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### 3. They maim or mistreat all of the owner's servants, so he sends His Son?

- ✓ Jesus is the Master, and these parables are His masterpieces. His practice is often to set up a "of course you would" and "of course you wouldn't" scenario, "planted a vineyard; rented it out; sent a servant to ask for the proceeds": of course, "the tenants rebel; abuse his servants": of course not. "So, he sends his son." Of course, you wouldn't do that! In that world, the patience of the owner would have gone no further than the first altercation. The story verges on the ridiculous from this point on: a soliloquy?, 'What shall I do?' Isn't it obvious? Why is he even asking this question?
  - ✓ Understanding the answer to this question is extremely important for us and our current existence. Jesus is not posing a question about a regular landowner, there would be no question of what to do for any of us. Jesus is posing the question of the Sovereign of the Universe as to what He should do with people who live in rebellion against Him. What would you do? Sending your servants to tell them the truth over and over again, and, over and over again, they ignore, abuse, and kill them. The response of the human race to God is: "You'll never rule over us; we will never submit to you; you can't stop us." What would you do if you were God? Again, the answer is patently obvious, "You should wipe them all out; what are you waiting for? Why do you need more proof of their wickedness?" He's already been more patient, merciful, and gracious than anyone else would be. Now He decides to send his son? That is just crazy! And they killed him; what did he really expect? It seems extremely foolish from where we sit, and, this is the big point, it is foolish!
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**This is a story about God and His relationship to us; God is not at all like us and, doesn't reason like us, or work like us, and we need to be so grateful for that. God is weird (in our thinking), He loves sinners, He loves those who are in rebellion against Him, we would never do that! We would never be so gracious, we would never be so, seemingly, naive to send our son to those who had behaved so badly. And so, the seemingly crazy question that comes in the form of a soliloquy, "What shall I do?" is actually the question that comes between us and an eternity of torment because God's decision was to send His Son.**

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