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The Vineyard of the LORD is the House of Isra'el 5: 1-30



The Church, made up of both **Jewish** and **Gentile** believers (**Ephesians 2:14**), faces a crisis of major proportion today. It is a crisis of worldview. The issue is as new as today and as old as **Isaiah's** day. This is the question: Is there any meaning to life outside myself and the meaning I give it? Our culture has come to the conclusion that there is not.

The implications of this conclusion are all around us, and they are profound. Like the ancients, we recognize the obvious: a culture where lying and stealing are the norm cannot survive. So we give lip service to stopping such behaviors. However, the fact is that a little judicious lying and stealing can help me meet my needs. So a whole society says one thing and does another. For two centuries a Godly ethic has dominated America. That is, we have obeyed the laws of the land because we believed that they fairly represented the laws of **the Creator** and **Savior**. We had an allegiance to something outside of ourselves, and so we obeyed the laws even when no one else was looking or even when it was not convenient. We became an unusually law-abiding people.

But all that is changing. We are losing the idea that there is a **God** outside of ourselves to whom we owe obedience. As a result, we choose which laws we want to obey. We have a hard time in seeing the personal benefit in most laws, so we are

becoming increasingly lawless. There is not enough force in the world to make a nation of people obey if they do not want to obey. Tragically, we cannot see that we are enjoying the benefits of our ancestors' choices and that the way we are choosing now will destroy those benefits.

The challenge to the Church is that this kind of thinking has crept in among us as well because we are losing the idea of the authority of the Bible. If we compromise on this issue, the Church will have lost its reason to exist. The salt will have lost its saltiness (see my commentary on [The Life of Christ, to see link click **Df - You are the Salt of the Earth and the Light of the World**](#)), and just like the leaders of **Isra'el** who were supposed to be tending **the vineyard of the LORD**, we will deserve to be thrown out.¹⁴

Isaiah had prophesied earlier in **3:14-15**, **ADONAI enters into judgment against the elders and leaders of His people**. Then speaking through **His** prophet, **the LORD of heaven's** angelic **armies** said: **It is you who have ruined My vineyard; the plunder from the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing My people and grinding the faces of the poor? He** will now elaborate.