

Matthew 21:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

Analysis

But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son—ὅστερον δὲ ἀπέστειλεν... τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ (hysteron de apesteilen... ton huion autou)—'last of all he sent... his son.' This climaxes the escalation: after servants (prophets), the Son (Jesus). **They will reverence** (ἐντραπήσονται, entrapēsontai) means 'show respect, feel shame before.'

The vineyard owner's expectation seems naive given past treatment, yet reveals God's nature: He gave Israel every possible opportunity. Sending the Son wasn't desperation but grace—the ultimate self-revelation. The unique status of 'the son' versus 'servants' establishes Jesus's superiority to all prophets (Heb 1:1-2). No messenger remains after this one is rejected.

Historical Context

Jesus spoke this parable days before His crucifixion, predicting His own fate. The Jewish leaders understood He spoke of them (v.45) yet proceeded to fulfill the parable by killing the Son. Their self-aware rejection of the heir exposed maximal guilt—they knew who He was yet chose murder over repentance.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the Father's sending of the Son demonstrate both ultimate love (John 3:16) and ultimate seriousness in demanding fruit?
2. What does it mean that no further messenger comes after Jesus—how does this urgency affect your response today?

Interlinear Text

ὕστερον δὲ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτοῦ τὸν υἱόν αὐτοῦ
last of all **But** **he sent** **unto** **them** ^{G3588} **son** **them**
G5305 G1161 G649 G4314 G846 G5207 G846

λέγων, Ἐντραπήσονται τὸν υἱόν μου
saying **They will reverence** ^{G3588} **son** **my**
G3004 G1788 G5207 G3450

Additional Cross-References

Zephaniah 3:7 (Parallel theme): I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.