(Luke) and *“it may be they will reverence him,”* to signify His gracious adoption, for man’s sake, of every means which may turn sinners to repentance. The difference here is fully made between the Son and all the other messengers ; see Mark,— *“having yet therefore one Son, his wellbeloved ..:”* and, as Stier remarks, this is the real and direct answer to the question in ver. 23. The Son appears here, not in his character of Redeemer, but in that of a preacher—a messenger demanding the fruits of the vineyard. (See ch. iv. 17.)

**38. This is]** So Nicodemus, John iii. 2, **“we know** *that thou art a teacher come from God,”* even at the beginning of His ministry; how much more then after three years spent in His divine working. The latent consciousness that Jesus *was the Messiah,* expressed in the prophecy of Caiaphas (John xi. 49-62, compare the **Thou hast said** of our ch. xxvi. 64), added no doubt to the guilt of the Jewish rulers in rejecting and crucifying Him, however this consciousness may have been accompanied with ignorance of one kind or other in all of them,—see Acts iii. 17 and note.

**the heir]** This the Son is in virtue of *His human nature:* see Heb. i. 1, 2.

**come, let us kill him]** The very words of Gen. xxxvii. 20, where Joseph’s brethren express a similar resolution: and no doubt used by the Lord in reference to that history, so deeply typical of His rejection and exaltation. This resolution had actually been taken, see John xi. 53: and that immediately after the manifestation of His power as the Son of God in the raising of Lazarus, and also immediately after Caiaphas’s prophecy.

**let us seize]** See John xi. 48. As far as this, the parable is History: from this point, Prophecy.

**39.]** This is partly to be understood of our Lord being given up to the heathen to be judged; but also literally, as related by all three Evangelists. See also John xix. 17, and Heb. xiii. 11, 12. In Mark the order is different, *“they killed him, and cast him out Of the vineyard.”*

**40, 41.] {40}** See Isa. v. 5. All means had been tried, and nothing; but judgment was now left. {41} St. Mark and St. Luke omit the important words **they say unto him,** though St. Luke has given us the key to them, in telling us that the parable was spoken in the hearing of the people, who seem to have made the answer. Perhaps however the Pharisees may have made this answer, having *missed,* or *pretended* to miss, *the sense of the parable;* but from the strong language used, I incline to the former view. Whichever said it, it was a self-condemnation, similar to that in ch. xxvii. 25: the *last form,* as Nitzsch finely remarks (cited by Stier), of the divine warnings to men, ‘when they themselves speak of the deeds which they are about to do, and pronounce judgment upon them.’ So striking, even up to the last moment, is the mysterious union of human free-will with divine foresight (see Acts ii. 23: Gen. 1. 20), that after all other warnings frustrated, the conscience of the sinner himself interposes to save him from ruin. In the original the adverb rendered *“miserably”* is that belonging to the adjective rendered *“wicked.”* This could hardly be given in a version in English: it may be *represented* by some such expression as, *“ He will destroy them wretchedly, wretches as they are.”*

The **which,** applied to persons, is not equivalent to *who:* it means, of **a kind, who:** *“who”* would identify, *“which”* classifies. They do not specify *who,* but only *of what sort,* the new tenants will be. The clause is peculiar to Matthew. We may observe that our Lord here makes **when the lord ... cometh** *coincide with the destruction of Jerusalem,* which is incontestably the overthrow of the wicked husbandmen. This passage forms therefore