

## 37- The Rejected Servant (Son) of the Vineyard Mark 12:1-12

Rejection, Israel majored in rejecting the prophets that God sent. They were spoken of a stiff necked people. They were self-willed, especially the leadership. It is not new to us that the Jewish leaders were in major conflict with Jesus during the last part of His life. He is now in Jerusalem where the conflict will reach its final crescendo that will lead to His death. He spoke to the fig tree a day or so before that withered away. Now, He is going to speak a parable about a vineyard that leaves no doubt that He is talking about the Sanhedrin and the Jewish ruling class.

### I- Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen:

Mark told us that Jesus used parables but he does not give us many of them in his gospel. When Jesus was in the temple He began to speak to them in parables. The parable recorded here is one often called the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen.

Before we read the parable let me give us a couple of things to help us understand it. The characters represented here are:

- 1) A certain man who planted a vineyard is a picture of God.
- 2) The vineyard was Israel and the husbandmen were the leader of Israel over the years.
- 3) The servants sent were the prophets sent to Israel who had mistreated them.
- 4) The Beloved Son is none other than the Lord Jesus who was standing among them at the time and being rejected.

Let's dissect the Word and see what it says to us.

### II- The Vineyard Owner:

*Mark 12:1 And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.*

There have been archaeologist discoveries that show this tenant farmer relationship. It is much like the sharecroppers of our country. In those days there were many uncertain titles to land and if someone used the land for three years it was presumed he owned it if someone did not make a claim. The owner of the vineyard had prepared it for the harvest that would come and leased it to the tenant. Remember God is the owner of all and therefore had a right to expect His creation to work the will of Him.

### III- The Servants Sent:

*Mark 12:2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.*

It was not too much to ask for the owner to send a servant and expect to have fruit produced by the vineyard. God had entrusted Israel as the keeper of the vineyard and expected fruit to be produced.

Notice the Old Testament foundation of this fact in *Isaiah 5:1-7 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: 2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. 3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. 4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? 5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: 6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. 7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

Israel was entrusted to show the world God through their lives and worship. God sent them prophet after prophet and they were ignored, mistreated and my time killed. *Mark 12:3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. 4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. 5 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.*

**Mark 10:45** For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Listen to the words of Jesus in other places about the killing of the prophets. **Matthew 23:31** *Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.*

**Luke 11:47** *Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.*

With the rejection of the prophets sent they were fast coming to the time when Heaven had only one more emissary to send.

#### IV- The Beloved Son Rejected:

It says in **Hebrews 1:1-2 HCSB** *Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. 2 In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things and through whom He made the universe.*

In the parable we have a very sharp focused example of the coming of Jesus. Sure He had been received but it was plain that the leaders had already rejected Him and were making plans and plots to kill Him. **Mark 12:6** *Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. 7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. 8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.*

Perhaps because the land owner was not present they thought they could get away with anything. My friend even though many think God is absent I present that He is every and all present. He is watching over His vineyard. Spurgeon said, *"If you do not hear the wellbeloved Son of God, you have refused your last hope. He is God's ultimatum. Nothing remains when Christ is refused. No one else can be sent; heaven itself contains no further messenger. If Christ be rejected, hope is rejected."*

#### V- The Application of the Parable:

Jesus ask the question that applied the dagger to the heart of the parable. He asked what the vineyard owner options were. He says to come and judge and remove the vineyard keepers and replace them. **Mark 12:9** *What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.*

This was followed by another Scripture application. Remember that they had shouted Hosanna, a quote from Psalms 118 when Jesus arrived. The rest of the Psalm is applied here. **Mark 12:10** *And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: 11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?*

Jesus is often spoken of as the rock or stone. **1 Corinthians 10:4** *And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.* The rock that gave water in the desert was none other than Jesus. He is the rock of judgment in **Daniel 2:45** *Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*

He is the Rock of offense and stumbling in **1 Peter 2:8** *And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.* It is obvious from the last verse of our text that they were stumbling over Him. **Mark 12: 12** *And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way*

Beloved the Son has come, been rejected, that rejection gave life to all believers by His death. He still demands that we produce fruit in His vineyard today.