

This is the Day that the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it...

(Matthew 21:33~46)

I want to speak to you this morning, on what is commonly referred to as "*The Parable of the Vineyard*." I love the parables, to me, there is no greater form of teaching, than the use of parables. A parable is merely a story, or analogy, that is used to declare a "*truth*." The actual word means "*to be like*" ... "*to lay along side*." It's where you use something that easily understood, to teach something hard to understand. Jesus often used parables, in Matthew 13, He used a bunch of them to describe the Kingdom of God. (Mt 13...) Vs 24, Vs 31, Vs 33, Vs 44, Vs 47...and so on. Jesus was constantly speaking in parables, with good reason. According to Psalms 78, one of the Messianic Psalms, it declares that the Messiah would come speaking in "*Parables*." (Read Ps 78:2~4) There He states that He will speak parables, to reveal the "*dark sayings of old*." A reference to "*wisdom*" previously hidden. In Matthew 13:10-17, while speaking in parables, one of the disciples asked Jesus, why He spoke in parables, and Jesus declares that there was a two-fold purpose of His speaking in parables, one was to reveal "*the dark sayings of old, the mysteries of the kingdom*" ...to those who believed on Him, while on the other hand, to "*Keep those truths HIDDEN*", from those who opposed Him. In short, Jesus would use these "*parables*" to teach the "*publicans and sinners*" the deep, mysteries of the "*kingdom*," while hiding them from the "*self-righteous, self-proclaimed religious scholars of the day!*"

Which is exactly what we see happening here in this parable I want to look at this morning, commonly referred to as "*The Parable of the Vineyard*." Here Jesus uses the story about some farmers and a landowner and His vineyard, to reveal one of those, "*dark sayings of old*" ...a truth that had been "*Hidden*" for thousands of years. Here He reveals His impending rejection and crucifixion by Israel, and how that the "*Kingdom*" will be taken away from them and given to the "*Gentiles*". It's an amazing prophetic truth that Jesus speaks here. Detailing down to the smallest detail, what would happen, concerning His rejection, and crucifixion by Israel...and how "*we the church*," came to be.

You know, what I read in Psalms 78 there, how He would use parables to "*utter dark sayings of old*"... Those hearing this at the time, had no idea, just "*how old*" this truth was that He was revealing to them. This truth He is revealing to them here, is one that was established, "*before the foundation of the world*." According to the scripture, this day was set in place before the foundation of the world... (Read Ephesians 1:3~7...1Peter 1:18~20) Think about that... "*before the foundation of the world*..." In Genesis 1:1 we read, "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*..." But read in light of what Paul and Peter tell us, even before He created the heaven and the earth, before He made the "*First Day*" as it states it there in Genesis 1, He already had the "*Day of the Cross*" in place! This is vital that we understand this because, it reveals that all of creation, everything God did in creating the world, all of history... revolves around "*this ONE DAY*" ...the day when Jesus Christ would be suspended between heaven and earth, nailed to a tree... offering up His life, for our sin!

It's important that we understand this, simply because of the impact that this great truth has on the rest of scripture. Everything that was written, was written concerning this "*one day*," the "*Cross*." We see the "*Shadow of this day*" throughout the writings of the O.T. Beginning from the very creation of the world, all the way up to He was crucified that day, we see the "*Shadow*" of the Cross...

- (Genesis 3:15) The promised seed... He shall bruise his heel, and he shall crush his head...
- In Abraham's offering up of Isaac...
- In the Passover lamb...
- In the story of Joseph, betrayed by his brothers...
- We see it, in every one the Sacrificial offering prescribed in Levitical law...
- He is the "*Suffering servant*" of Isaiah 53...

That's just a few, the list goes on and on... All of Israel's history, pointed towards this one event, this one day when Jesus Christ would be nailed to a tree, for our sin!

Well, here in this parable I want us to look at this morning, the Lord Jesus Himself, reveals part of the mystery of that day, by explaining just how it is that He will end up on the cross, and that is, by being rejected by His own people, the Jewish leaders. The image of Jesus Christ hanging on the cross, is a picture of “*Rejection!*” He ended up on that cross, as a result of being rejected by his own people! “*He came unto his own, but his own received him not...* (John 1:11) His own brethren had rejected Him... just as God had foretold us, through the story of Joseph!

Let’s look at this parable... He begins by telling a story of some dealings that a certain landowner had with some *unjust farmers*, that he had leased his vineyard out to... The agreement was, that the farmers would work the ground, harvest the fruit, and share the proceeds with the landowner. But story has it, at harvest time, the landowner sent some men to collect his part, the farmers attacked the men, even killing one of them. In response, the landowner sent more men, and they did the same to them. Finally, he sends his son, thinking they would reverence him. But that was not the case, they took council and rose up and killed him as well...

Having painted such an obvious, gross of injustice (as often was the style of Rabbinic teaching), he asked those listening, what they thought of the situation, and how they thought it should be handled.

(Vs 40) ⁴⁰*When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?*

(Vs 41) **To which they answered...** ⁴¹*...He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.*

Their suggestion was, that He should “miserably destroy those wicked men,” with the land being given to someone else, someone who will do the landowner right!

(Vs 42~44) Upon hearing their answer... **Jesus reveals the point of the parable...**

⁴²*Jesus saith unto them, **Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?***

⁴²*...**Did ye never read in the scriptures...** It’s like, “You guys pride yourselves as authorities on spiritual matters, scholars of the scripture...**have you not read what it so clearly says?**”*

He is quoting from *Psalms 118*...the writings of King David...*as if to say, “**Have you never read this?**”*

Have you never read that, according to the Holy Scriptures, that the one, whom God would send, would first be “*rejected*” by the people, and how God would take this same man, that the people rejected, and set Him in a position of authority and honor? ***Have you never read that?***

Here in Matthew, though Jesus uses a completely different analogy than David did, but the point was the same. Jesus uses this parable of the vineyard, to reveal a great mystery of God’s plan of redemption, before it took place.

- “*Certain householder*”...“**Landowner**”...refers to **God the Father**...

- “*Vineyard*”...speaks of the **nation Israel**...(Jerusalem being the winepress- Temple)

“*Husbandmen*”...“**Farmer**” refers to the **religious leaders**... “*Chief Priest, the Scribes & Pharisees*”

It serves as a picture of how God entrusted the nation Israel with His kingdom... God had brought them into this blessed land that He had prepared for them, to watch over and take care of for Him. Israel had been entrusted with the Holy Scripture, and the things of God. But as history reveals, they became poor and unjust stewards...

(Vs 34~36) The Servants of the Landowner refers to **the prophets** that God sent to Israel, and how the nation mistreated them, and rejected them, and killed some of them... John the Baptist being the latest.

(Vs 37~39) Lastly, the landowner’s son...is a reference to the Lord Jesus... Notice, how the parable states that they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him...*a prophetic image of the cross!*

Jesus looks to the chief priest and Pharisees and says, “*You are the “**Wicked husbandmen**”...It was your fathers who beat and killed the prophets...it was you who rejected and killed the greatest prophet born among women...John the Baptist! And it is you, who are plotting to “Kill the Son” of the landowner...*

(Vs 43) *Jesus reveals, that THEY are the wicked men...and that it will be done unto them, just as they said it should be... You wicked men will be miserably destroyed... and the kingdom will be taken from you, and given to the Gentiles!”*

⁴³ *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

Jesus reveals, that as a result of Israel rejection of Him, the kingdom will be taken from them and given to the Gentiles. That’s us beloved, the Church! And that’s exactly what happened...**to the letter!** Praise God!

Now something I don’t want us to miss here, is the basis of this parable Jesus gives, concerning the vineyard. And that being, the prophetic words of David, recorded in Psalms 118...that Jesus quotes here. The parable of the vineyard served as an illustration to declare the truth of what David was saying.

Here, Jesus used the analogy of a vineyard, to express the truth of His impending rejection, while in Psalms 118, King David used the analogy of the construction of a building, to express the same truth. In David’s analogy, the “*religious leaders*” were responsible for the oversight and construction of the Temple of God. And here, David says that they will “*reject*” a certain stone, deeming it unfit and unworthy to be used in the kingdom, yet, as David explains, it is the Chief Cornerstone of the Kingdom!

(Psalms 118) ²²*The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.*

Here in Psalms 118, God reveals that part of His plan included the rejection of His Son!

The “*Rejected Stone*” is a picture of a “*Crucified Christ.*” And the reference to the rejected stone becoming the “*Head stone*” or “*Cornerstone*”...is a reference to the exaltation of Christ, to the position of supreme authority, even though He was rejected! There’s a great message in that, in that even though there are many who deny and reject Christ authority in their lives, it does not change the fact that He is still Lord, and that one day “*every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, that He is Lord.*”

Having said that, I don’t want us to miss, a very crucial part of what David says here... Read that passage again with me, reading verse 24 along with it...

²²*The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.*

²³*This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.*

²⁴This is the day, which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Close... Now listen, I don’t want you to miss this... I’m sure many of you are familiar with the Hymn we sometimes sing, “*This is day, that the Lord has made...*” Well, chances are, we may have misapplied it in the past, singing about “*each day*” we’ve be given... Though it’s true, that the Lord makes every day, He’s given us this day, and we should be grateful for it, but that’s not what that hymn was written about. To honor the Holy Scripture of God, it’s important that we “*Sing the Psalm*” in the manner it was intended. It was written, hundreds of years prior to the cross, a song about the “**Day of the Cross!**” David made this statement, looking hundreds of years into the future, to the day when Jesus Christ would be suspended between heaven and earth...on the Cross, as a result of being rejected by His own people. Here we see the “*Landowners Son,*” cast outside the vineyard, and slew... Here hangs David’s “*Rejected Stone*”, the one that God would later establish as the “*Chief Cornerstone*” of the entire kingdom!

As I said in the opening comments...all of history revolves around this one day, this one event that God had established, before the foundation of the world! Beginning with the promise to Adam and Eve in the garden, throughout the ages, they continued to look for this day! And this morning, we here, thousands of years after the fact, look back to that day, and praise God for it!

(Psalms 118) Let's read that again... ²²*The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.* ²³*This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.* ²⁴***This is the day, which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.***

As they stood there that day on Calvary's hill, gazing upon the beaten, despised, blood soaked body of the "rejected son of God"... (though many may have thought it unfitting), they could have sang... "*This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made. And we will rejoice, we will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it...*"

In closing, I want to remind us, that as Gentiles, as those who have now been entrusted with the "kingdom"... it is vital that we be found faithful! God has entrusted us, the church, with "*His Kingdom,*" His "*Vineyard*" as it were... And one day, His Son will return to reap the harvest... the question will be, whether He finds us faithful or unfaithful...