

See Psalms 118:22-24; Isaiah 8:14; 28:16; Luke 2:34; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:7).

- D. Matthew, Mark and Luke all mention the effect of the parable upon the scribes and Pharisees, that they perceived it was spoken to them and they were disturbed greatly by it; but fearing the people, did not then lay violent hands upon Jesus.
- V. THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD (Romans 11:22).
- A. Two extreme positions or concepts of God:
1. The Middle Age concept, that God is a cruel tyrant or father with an ox whip, etc.
  2. The modern situation ethics concept that God is so loving he will not punish the wicked as his word declares he will.
- B. God's goodness and mercy declared.
1. Creation of man (body, mind, soul, health, joy) in his own image. Woman as companion (Gen. 1 & 2).
  2. Providing Saviour, salvation, forgiveness and all spiritual blessings through Christ.
  3. Revealing his will and preparing heaven.
- C. God is also severe.
1. Three examples in 2 Peter 2:4-6; Hebrews 10:25-31; 2:1-4; etc).
  2. Old Testament shows God will punish the disobedient (Genesis 2:17; 4; etc).
  3. New Testament also shows this (Acts 5:1-14; 13:6-12; Hebrews 13:8).
  4. Jesus teaches more about eternal punishment than any prophet.
  5. God hates as well as loves (Psalm 101:3; Proverbs 6:16-19; Revelation 2:6; Hebrews 1).
  6. Men should tremble at God's word (Isaiah 66:2; 1 Cor. 10:12; Phil. 2:12).

#### CONCLUSION -

- I. Let us not make the mistake Israel made: We cannot afford to do so.
- II. Let us, as God's people today, take seriously our high and heavenly citizenship, and glorify our Maker with the fruit of righteous lives, in the name of Christ, according to God's purpose (Gal. 5:22,23; Titus 2:11-14).

#### STUDIES IN MARK--LESSON THIRTY-FOUR

##### The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen

Mark 12:1-12; Matthew 21:33-43; Luke 20:9-20

#### INTRODUCTION -

- I. Jesus taught this parable, likely on Tuesday, in the temple, during the final week before the crucifixion.
- II. This and the preceding parable (Matt. 21:28-32) follow his encounter in the temple with the Jewish leaders regarding his authority, and both parables deal with the Jewish attitude toward divine authority.
- III. Like the parable of the two sons, this parable speaks of the perils of rejecting Christ.
- IV. Jesus, no longer speaking in "dark sayings," in this parable speaks freely and openly against the leaders of the Jewish nation, showing that the kingdom would be taken from them and given to another.
- V. This parable is also a lesson on faithfulness or stewardship, the nature and mission of Christ, the nature and certain judgment of man, but especially on "the goodness and severity of God" (Cf. Romans 11:22).

#### DISCUSSION -

- I. "A MAN PLANTED A VINEYARD" (Mark 12:1; Matthew 21:33; Luke 20:9).
  - A. The Jews are pictured as God's vineyard in the Old Testament (Isaiah 5:1-7).
    1. God planted them for special purposes.
    2. They received special care, a demonstration of his love for men.
  - B. The vineyard especially represents the truth God planted in Israel as a people, from which he expected fruit.
  - C. The owner or householder is God; the husbandmen are the priests, scribes, etc.
  - D. The tower, the place of watching and abode for the vinedressers, represents God's infinite eye watching over his people.
  - E. The householder "went to another country."
    1. Luke says, "for a long time" (20:9). God left Israel largely to her own ways for a long time before Jesus came.
    2. God made certain leaders responsible as rulers, teachers, stewards.
- II. COLLECTING THE FRUIT: THE GREEDY AND CRUEL HUSBANDMEN (Mark 12:2-5).

- A. "And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruits of the vineyard" (2).
1. The owner expected fruit or rent from his vineyard, which he planted.
  2. Favors granted established the right of the owner.
- B. Sending the servants. (Prophets, who irritated the Jewish leaders).
1. The first was beaten and "sent away empty" (vs. 3).
  2. The next was "wounded in his head," and shamefully handled (vs. 4).
  3. Others were beaten, kicked, stoned and some killed (vs. 5).
- C. All this pictures God's great longsuffering through the centuries as many prophets tried to lead Israel in God's way.
1. The "many others" includes John the Baptist.
  2. Stephen said, in Acts 7:51-53, "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye."
- III. "LAST OF ALL," THE OWNER SENDS HIS BELOVED SON (Mark 12:6-8; Matthew 21:37-39).
- A. "Saying, They will reverence my son" (Mark 12:6).
1. Luke 20:13b: "It may be they will reverence him."
  2. This represents God's sending Christ on his glorious mission to Israel, and (as) God's last word to dying people.
  3. Though limited to Israel then, its benefits reached far beyond.
- B. The son killed (12:7,8).
1. The husbandmen plot his death: "But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours" (7).
  2. In the parable, they recognized the son as "the heir;" but Peter said the Jews did not really "know" the Lord of glory" (Acts 3:17).
  3. "And they took him, and killed him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard," thinking the vineyard would be theirs (8).
  4. Greed led to brutality and murder. Sin is progressive, but it will be punished.
- C. Implications in sending and killing the heir.
1. "This was the last and crowning effort of divine

- mercy, after which, on the one side, all the resources even of heavenly love are exhausted, on the other the measure of sins is perfectly filled up"--Trench , p. 71.
2. Compare Hebrews 11:36; cf. John 11:47-53; and Genesis 37:19.
  3. In the killing of the son the application of the parable "passes from history into prophecy."--Lamar; cf. McGarvey-Pendleton, p. 593.
- IV. SENTENCE PRONOUNCED AGAINST THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN (Mark 12:9-12; Matthew 21:40-43; Luke 20:15-18).
- A. What will he do: "What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others" (9).
1. The case is clear and the limit is reached: something must be done. In this question Jesus forces his enemies to condemn themselves.
  2. Matthew reports the priests seemingly answering their own question. Mark and Luke record Jesus answering his own question, perhaps repeating the answer given by the Pharisees.
  3. It is possible the Jews, as Matthew reports, gave an insincere, ironic or mocking answer, as compelled by the force of the parable, which Jesus immediately confirmed as truth.
  4. In each of the three records of the parable it is made clear that (a) the men will be destroyed, and (b) the vineyard given to others who will bring its fruit to the owner.
- B. What God will do: "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given unto another nation..." (Matt. 21:43).
1. This refers to the Gentiles (See 1 Pet. 2:4-10).
  2. But if we fail to use the advantages God has given us, these advantages will also be taken away from us.
  3. If we are no more faithful or productive than Israel, we can expect Israel's fate to be ours.
- C. The rejected cornerstone becomes the head of the corner: "Have ye not read even this scripture: The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner: This was from the Lord, And it is marvellous in our eyes"(Mk. 12:10,11).