

Mark 12:1-12 – Passion Week: Rejection and Murder

Brink, Vincent, TSK, Handfuls, GreekLexicon, Geneva, Robertson, Rienecker, Trapp, JFB, Barnes, Clarke, Lightfoot, Henry, Calvin, Trapp, INT

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: It was Passion Week (耶稣受难周) . Jesus was confidently heading to the cross and with determination – but with anticipation of his coming suffering and death. Today you will see how **Jesus telegraphed (发电报) to those around that he would be rejected and murdered by the Jews.** He telegraphed this message through a parable (比喻) .

Our headings are:

God established Israel as his people

Israel's leaders executed God's Son

God expelled (驱逐) Israel's wicked leaders

Our goals are: That you will continue to draw closer to and serve the one who suffered and died in your place.

God established Israel as his people

1 Then He began to speak to them in parables: "A man **planted a vineyard** (葡萄园) and set a **hedge around** it, **dug a place for the wine vat** (压酒池) and **built a tower**. And he **leased it to vinedressers** (园户) and **went into a far country**.² "Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might **receive some of the fruit** of the vineyard from the vinedressers.

1. A parable is an earthly story with a spiritual (or heavenly) meaning.

2. What was the earthly story that the Lord told?

He said that a man **established a vineyard**, **built a hedge** around it, **installed a wine vat**, and **built a tower**. **The hedge** was for preventing wild animals from entering, especially foxes, and to prevent grape vines from running over into another man's vineyard. **The wine vat** was the place where the grape juice was stored after the grapes were crushed. **The tower** was for security from thieves and wild animals. With everything set, the owner then leased the vineyard to workers and went away to a far country. A harvest time he sent his servants to collect some of the wine (real wine, not what Charismatics allege) and bring it back to him. The owner's desire for payment was reasonable and fair.

3. What was the spiritual message of this earthly story?

God formed Israel into a nation (called a vineyard in Psalm 80:15, with the choicest vines, Isaiah 5:2), gave him everything he needed, and gave him the assurance of eternal blessings in the future. God built a hedge around him to keep him safe. God provided signs and seals (封印) of his people's separation from the world. After some time God sent prophets (先知) to see if his nation was producing fruits of righteousness (义) : Obedience and worship.

4. Lessons:

a. The church belongs to God. This is not Pastor Mitchell's church. Don't put that pressure on me. I can't do what Christ does.

b. Pastors and elders are the stewards (管家) of the house of God. This is why Apostle Paul challenged Timothy and the elders in Ephesus to do their job faithfully.

Israel's Leaders Executed God's Son

3 "And they took him and **beat him and sent him away empty-handed**. 4 "Again he sent them another servant, and at him they **threw stones, wounded him in the head**, and sent him away shamefully treated.

5 "And again he sent another, and him **they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some.**

6 "Therefore still having one son, **his beloved, he also sent him** to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 7 "But those vinedressers said among themselves, 'This is the heir (继承人) . Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance (产业) will be ours.' 8 "So they took him and killed him and **cast him out of the vineyard.**

1. The earthly story continued.

Instead of sending wine to the owner of the vineyard, **the workers beat the one who came to receive the wine** and chased him away. The word "beat" literally means to "flay" or take the skin off by beating it. **Then the owner sent another** one to collect the wine, but the workers treated him worse, throwing stones and wounding him in the head. Then the **owner sent a third one to collect the wine**, but they killed him. They continued to refuse to send wine to the owner and **mistreating (虐待) all whom he sent to collect it.** Finally, frustrated, the owner then **sent his own son to collect the wine**, thinking that the workers would respect his son. Instead, **they plotted and killed the son** with the hope that they would then inherit the vineyard for themselves.

2. What was the spiritual meaning?

Instead of honoring God, the rulers of Israel abused the prophets of God, persecuting (逼迫) and killing many of them. Examples:

Saul killed the priests.

1 Samuel 22:18 And the king said to Doeg, "You turn and kill the priests!" So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck the priests, and **killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod.**

The rulers beat and imprisoned Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 37:15 Therefore the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and they **struck him and put him in prison** in the house of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made that the prison. 6 So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon (地牢) of Malchiah the king's son...

The rulers killed Zechariah.

2 Chronicles 24:21 So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king **they stoned him with stones** in the court of the house of the LORD.

They persecuted many others.

Nehemiah 9:26 "Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs **And killed Your prophets**, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself...

Jesus confirmed this.

Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the **one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent** to her...

Stephen confirmed this.

Acts 7:52 "**Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?** And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

Israel had always shorted (亏欠) God and did not produce fruits of righteousness. Isaiah 5:4, Jeremiah 2:21.

Later, the leaders plotted (with premeditation) and killed the very Son of God. (Jesus spoke prophetically.) They did this with the hope that they would be able to control Israel for their own selfish purposes. They refused to honor Jesus! John 5:23.

Pilate and Herod were somewhat ignorant of what was happening to Jesus, **but the chief priest and the Scribes knew better!** Yet they made it look like they were doing something for the good of the people, when they were only preserving their pockets.

John 11:50 "**nor do you consider that it is expedient (有利的 , 权宜之计) for us that one man should die for the people**, and not that the whole nation should perish."

The Jews were responsible for Jesus death even though they did not physically kill him... just as David was responsible for Uriah's death even though he did not touch Uriah. Jesus was the rightful heir, but he was killed!

Hebrews 1:2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom **He has appointed heir of all things**, through whom also He made the worlds;

3. Lessons:

a. Look at God's graciousness in sending one prophet after another after the leaders threatened and killed others. God could have pulled the plug and said: "No more."

b. Men will always try to stymie (阻挠) the rule of Jesus – whether from hate or because they want to make a personal profit, but none can stop his kingdom. Many have tried and many have died.

c. Greed and covetousness (贪心) destroyed the leaders of Israel, just as they destroyed Adam and Eve in the Garden, and just as they have destroyed many homes, churches, and nations today. This warning against greed and covetousness is **not just for non-believers, and not just for Christians, but it is for those in leadership in Christian circles:** Fathers, mothers, pastors, elders, and deacons. These can become so focused on money and creature comforts that they ignore teaching – or they literally teach untruths – to those under their charge. This contributes to the death of their family and their own judgment. You may not physically kill Jesus, but you are contributing to the death of his church.

d. The sacrifice of the Son of God outside Jerusalem brought judgment on them who rejected him inside of the city.

Hebrews 13:11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary (圣所) by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify (使成圣) the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

God Expelled Israel's Wicked Rulers

9 "Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and **destroy the vinedressers**, and give the vineyard to others. 10 "Have you not even read this Scripture: 'The stone which the builders rejected **Has become the chief cornerstone** (房角石). 11 This was the LORD'S doing, And it is **marvelous in our eyes**?'"

1. The earthly story continued.

The owner of the vineyard then came and destroyed those wicked workers who thought they would inherit the whole vineyard and he then give the vineyard over to others so they could work and share in its blessings.

2. What was the spiritual meaning of the rest of the story?

a. The Lord (speaking prophetically) taught that his Father would ultimately destroy the leaders of Israel who were abusing the flock for their own gratification (满足) and who had persecuted and killed his prophets... and who were about to kill him. There is a play on words, as God often does when describing judgment. He said that he would "**miserably destroy these miserable men**." In Matthew's account the leaders themselves pronounced their own judgment.

Matthew 21:41 They said to Him, "**He will destroy those wicked men miserably**, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

It is interesting that Israel's judgment when Rome came in AD70 caused their walls to be torn down and they were exposed.

b. These so-called experts in building God's temple rejected the cornerstone chosen by God for his own house. (A cornerstone determined the alignment of a house.) So God set aside the "building experts" and put his Son as the Head. It was a withering indictment (控诉) of Jewish wickedness. Yes, the Son would die but would be made alive and become the Chief Cornerstone in the kingdom. The Lord rightly applied Psalm 118 to himself and showed the perpetuity (长久) of his kingdom. Further, the Jews rejected him because he did not look like the Messiah they

expected.

c. The Lord would then turn over the running of the vineyard to others – the Gentiles (外邦人) .

Romans 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, **that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles**

has come in. 30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,

Ultimately, the Jews' loss was the Gentile's gain.

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "**It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first**"; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, **we turn to the Gentiles.**

47 "For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

d. In fact, it was God's secret plan all along!

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

e. This act of killing the Son of God would not diminish the kingdom but would bring an increasing glory in the kingdom. All this was marvelous in God's eyes, but not in the eyes of the Jewish leaders. The thing the Jewish leaders should have recognized they didn't. If they had received the Son they would have been under-shepherds for life! But they rejected the Lord and he rejected them.

12 And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

3. After Jesus told this parable the Jewish leaders (the workers) then tried to grab him and kill him, but couldn't.

They did not like what he had to say. But out of love for his people, and in order to confront the Jewish leaders, Jesus spoke truth to them.

4. Lessons:

a. Jesus suffered and was killed by his enemies. But he rose again and rules forever and ever! How can anyone escape God's righteous judgment who does not reverence (尊崇) the Son of God and kiss him?

Psalms 2:12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, **And you perish in the way,** When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

Christ was the only one fit to do the work of redemption and the Jews rejected him. Make sure you don't reject him.

b. God will always have a church. He will always have a witness in the world. Don't panic if the church seems small from time to time. Just play your part now as the redeemed of God to work to build up the kingdom of Jesus.

Conclusion:

Jesus telegraphed that the leaders of Israel would reject and kill him because they were full of greed and self-promotion (自高) . Because they rejected Jesus they lost their place of prominence (卓越) and their opportunity to be part of the kingdom of God. Even though the Jews killed Jesus they were simply opening up the kingdom to the Gentiles.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus suffered for you so you could become part of his family.

1 Peter 2:4 *Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, **And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame...***

2. As part of his family you have to help build his house. Are you playing your part? What are you doing? Examine your own heart.

3. When you build his house you will have more family and more joy! These are the good people, not the ones you wished wouldn't show up.

Finally: If you are not a Christian, God is offering you an opportunity to come into his wonderful family. Outside of it is death in hell. Take the opportunity to come inside. The blood required for your entrance into God's family was paid for by Jesus.