

Pointed Parable, Prophetic Purpose

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[0 : 00] I hope you have a Bible with you, and if you do, please turn to Luke chapter 20.

Luke chapter 20, and we're going to start reading here in just a minute with verse 9. And our text for this morning is Luke chapter 20, verses 9 through 19.

So follow along with me in your copy of God's Word as I read. Then he began to tell the people this parable. A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vine dressers, and went into a far country for a long time.

Now at vintage time, he sent a servant to the vine dressers that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vine dressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

Again he sent another servant, and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent a third, and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

[1 : 25] Then the owner of the vineyard said, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect him when they see him.

But when the vine dressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vine dressers and give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, Certainly not.

Then he looked at them and said, What then is this that is written? The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. Whoever falls on that stone will be broken.

But on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder. The chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on him.

[2 : 25] But they feared the people, for they knew he had spoken this parable against them. So they got it, didn't they? I wonder if we do, as we listen to the telling of the parable as I read it to you.

Remember, this is, and we've kind of run through the chronology of events and days. This is Jesus' last week on planet Earth.

As a matter of fact, at this point, he is halfway through that final week. It is Wednesday. And before the end of the day on Friday, Jesus will be dead.

He will have been crucified. He will have died. He will have been buried. And so we're coming very close to the end, to the cross, to the crucifixion.

And so now it's Wednesday. And after he cleansed the temple on Tuesday, just the day before, and we studied that passage over the last couple of weeks. After that, Jesus has now been teaching daily in the temple.

[3 : 36] That's what chapter 19 and verse 47 tells us. And then chapter 20 begins with these words. Now, it happened on one of those days.

What days? One of the days that Jesus was teaching in the temple. All right, so what happened on one of those days? Well, it tells us in verse 9 that he began to tell the people this parable.

The parable that I just read to you out of the Word of God just a moment ago. So he tells a parable. And so we want to consider what Jesus is telling us and telling them and us through this amazing parable.

Now, before we look at the parable, let me just point out a few important points of interest. In the first place, this parable is recorded three times in the Gospels.

It appears three times in what we call the synoptic Gospels. Synoptic meaning seeing through the same eye. And so we're talking about Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

[4 : 36] And so you could look at Matthew chapter 21, verses 33 through 46. Jesus tells the parable there. It's recorded for us there by Matthew. You'll find it again in the Gospel of Mark in

chapter 12, verses 1 through 12.

And then here in our passage in Luke, Luke chapter 20, verse 9 through 19. All right, so the parable appears three times in the Gospel.

That's a very unusual thing for a parable to be recorded in three of the Gospels. Now, the point is this. The fact that the Holy Spirit inspired Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all three of them, to include this parable in their record of the Gospels, that should say something to us.

It actually should shout to us that there is something particularly important about this parable. Now, let me show you another point of interest.

Matthew's account of this parable, and we're not going to go back and read it. You can read it on your own sometime. And I will refer to it a couple of times throughout the sermon this morning. But Matthew's account of this parable is somewhat different.

[5 : 46] In fact, it is slightly longer. And he includes some minor additions to the story. And Matthew also includes some slightly different details in his account, in the story.

So there is a difference there in Matthew. And I think the answer to that is that Jesus apparently told this parable more than one time. In fact, he may have told it multiple times during these last few days of his ministry.

On Tuesday and Wednesday and part of Thursday, as he is teaching in the temple, he very likely told this parable a number of times. And so we ought to get the idea that where Jesus is teaching, not some small little isolated place or confined place.

It's a rather large place. The temple. We're not talking about, of course, the holy place or the holy of holies. We're talking about primarily the court of the Gentiles. And it's a quite large place.

And not only is there open space, but also there are hallways and also what the Bible calls porticos or porches. And I think we ought to have the idea that during these three days, Jesus is kind of meandering around in different places there in the temple.

[7 : 00] And he is teaching, teaching here, then teaching there, and teaching over there in every nook and cranny of the place. And so certainly Jesus is teaching the same people over and over again because they're interested, they're following him.

But also we ought to understand that apparently Jesus is holding some impromptu teaching moments or sessions with various groups of people who have congregated in different parts of the temple, the court of the Gentiles.

And I think we can also be sure that since it was the Passover week, each day there would be new people, different people. And so Jesus then teaches this parable, tells this parable, and makes the application of the parable multiple times throughout these three days.

And so it is a significant parable. It is significantly important for as many people as possible to hear it during that last week.

And so Jesus told it multiple times. And also it is significantly important for generations today for as many as possible to read this parable.

[8 : 12] And so it is repeated for us in the New Testament three times. All right, so it's important. Well, now everything that Jesus said is important. I'm not trying to say that somehow some things that Jesus said and some parables that he told were unimportant.

But this one is particularly important. And so why is this parable so important? Well, this parable represents a scathing indictment against Israel for their rejection of God and their rejection of his Messiah.

And so they have rejected God's servants, the prophets throughout the Old Testament period. And they have rejected now his son, Jesus, the Messiah.

And the result is God will take his kingdom away from Israel and give his kingdom to others, specifically the Gentiles.

The church, his church. But now, lest we think that this passage is only important for the people of Israel, God's chosen people, there is an important message for every one of us here today.

[9 : 25] Because, you see, the same condition of the heart that explains why Israel rejected Jesus is the same condition that exists in everyone, including every one of us.

So let's keep the story moored, attached, connected with who we are today and the struggles we have today and our own wickedness and unbelief of our hearts.

Now, looking at the parable, this parable, I think you would agree is pretty amazing. And it is, you know, it has all the elements of a great story, does it?

This parable. I mean, think about it. It has true-to-life elements in the story. And hopefully you know that, you know, having a large vineyard, pretty normal thing for that day.

And this vineyard would be quite extensive. So this owner had a large holding and a huge vineyard. And that would have been a true-to-life type of thing or element in the story.

[10:33] A landlord who lives far, far away from his vineyard or his land holdings also would have been a very common thing for that day. And the people would have been able to relate to that.

The farmers leasing the land also was a very common thing. They would lease the land and work the land and make a profit from the land. And so these elements in the story are very common, very real to life.

And so the people would have been engaged to the story, in the story, in that way. It also has exciting characters. None of them by name.

But, you know, the story has bad guys and has good guys. And it always makes a story interesting. And added to that, it has unexpected turns in the story.

And unexpected events, even shocking things that take place in the story. And so it's a great story. It has all the makings of a story. You can imagine that the readers there, or the listeners rather, there in the temple would have been quite engaged as Jesus told this parable.

[11:42] I've already read the parable, as I read the text a moment ago. But let me do this. Let me kind of retell the parable. And at the same time, highlight four key events or elements to the story.

Okay? Four key elements to this story. I want us to notice, first of all, the villainous sinners in the parable. The villainous sinners in this parable.

Every good story, as I've said, needs a villain, doesn't it? If it's going to be interesting to us, right? I mean, it has to have bad guys. And I think you would agree, the vinedressers in this story are, without a doubt, the most villainous bunch of bad guys you'd ever want to meet, or ever would not want to meet.

They have the bad guys there. Now, imagine hearing this story for the very first time. Now, most of us have probably read the story a number of times. We've heard it alluded to. We've heard sermons on it.

But imagine being there. And Jesus, the master storyteller, is telling this parable. And imagine being there to hear it for the very first time. What these vinedressers did in the story is outrageous.

[13:01] I mean, we even react in that way as we read again or listen to it read again. But imagine the original hearers. What these vinedressers did was over the top.

It was outrageous. It was wicked. And so here in the parable is a wealthy man who owns an extensive, I think we're to understand this is quite an extensive estate, this farm, this vineyard. And he leases this vineyard to a group of farmers. Perhaps it's a family. Of course, remember, this is a fictitious story. Jesus made it up. And so we can only guess about some of the other details. And it's just a story. So it's not real to life. A real life, true story. Though it is real to life. And so it could be that we're to imagine a family, a large family, a clan, so to speak, that is leasing this vineyard from the landowner.

And they are allowed to work the vineyard, to make a profit, to make a living, and to then, of course, pay some agreed upon percentage of the yield of the vineyard every time that harvest would come around.

[14:15] And that's kind of the point of the story. And this would have been very common, very common business deal for that day, and even in our day as well. And so at vintage time, that means harvest time, the owner of the vineyard sends a trusted servant to do what?

To collect what is due him. To collect the rent, so to speak, which would, of course, been in the form of the fruit of the vineyard. So he sends his servant.

And what happens to the servant? Well, this is the first shocking part of the story. Verse 10, the Bible says, Jesus says, the vinedressers beat the servant. They beat him and send him away empty-handed.

Right? Send him packing. All right, so the owner of the vineyard, what does he do next? Well, he sends another servant. A second servant to collect his rent.

And verse 11 says, they beat him also. They beat him also and treated him shamefully. And by the way, let me just let you know that they did not just kind of rough these guys up a little bit.

[15:29] The Greek word is the word *darō*, *darō*, and it means to flay the skin. That's pretty awful to think of that. I mean, they beat these guys bloody and sent them away.

And so what did the landowner do? Well, verse 12, almost unbelievably, he sends a third servant. A third servant. And the vinedressers, what did they do?

They wounded, it says, wounded him also. This is a different word. Wounded him and cast him out. Ekbalo in the Greek, it means to throw him out.

They threw him out, literally, bodily threw him out. Now, this is a severe beating. This is a little bit worse, a lot worse, actually, than what the vinedressers did to the first two servants.

It is the word, in the Greek word, it's traumatizo. We get our word traumatize. You can hear that in the word. And it means to severely traumatize, to beat him, to injure him critically, severely.

[16:38] All right, so the first two servants, they are beaten up and sent running home to their master. But the third one is severely injured, and they throw him out, literally.

And I think we can kind of picture that. Two guys, you know, picking up this poor servant, bleeding servant, probably unconscious from his severe beating. And, you know, one guy grabs the legs, the other guy grabs the arms, and they go to the gate, and they open the gate, and they just throw him out on the ground and close the gate.

It's probably pretty amazing that the man even made it back to his master alive. All right, so this is shocking, isn't it? When you look at Matthew's account in Matthew 21, 35, he adds these details. He says, And the vinedressers took his servants, plural, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. And again, he sent other servants, plural, more than the first, he says here in Matthew 21, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.

That is, they beat and killed and stoned them. Not all of them the same thing. Some they beat, some they killed, some they stoned. All right, so what do we have here?

[17:59] The landowner sent more than just one, then two, a second one, and then a third. The landowner, in the parable, as you put the two parables together, two accounts together, sent groups of servants.

Some smaller, some even larger groups. And what happened to them? Well, some were beaten, and some were stoned, and some were killed, but all were rejected.

All of them. And each one of these servants, mind you, represented the authority of the owner of the vineyard.

They represented the owner. They came under his authority and with his authority and power to collect what was rightfully his. And they were rejected.

The vine dressers rejected the servants and they did so because they had rejected the vine owner, the vineyard owner. Now, having gone that far in the story, you know, don't you, who these servants represent?

[19:07] It's really pretty clear. They represent the prophets. The Old Testament prophets. You see, God is the owner of the vineyard.

All right, that's the parallel here. God is the owner who lives far away in his heaven. And the vineyard is this earth.

It's his created kingdom. And Israel was chosen by God to be stewards of his kingdom, especially stewards of those who inhabit this world.

They were to be the evangelists of this world, to tell the world about Jesus, about the Messiah. And so God sent prophets to communicate with his people and they would not hear them.

And God sent prophets to rebuke his people when they rebelled against him. And what did they do? They beat them. And killed them.

[20:09] They stoned them and killed them. And did all kinds of terrible things to them. To the prophets. To the prophets of God. Elijah, remember, said in 1 Kings 19, verse 10, he said, For the sons of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword.

Jesus said, you might remember this back when we were studying Luke 13. In Luke 13, verse 34, Jesus said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her.

How often I wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you would not. Have it.

You see? Clearly, the servants in the parable represent the prophets that God had been sending to Israel and they had killed them and stoned them and persecuted and imprisoned them and sawed them, took saws and sawed them in two and put the sword to them and all sorts of terrible things to

God's prophets.

Now getting back to the story, you can sense, I think, the outrage on the part of those who were hearing this story. They're outraged. They're appalled.

[21 : 33] This is terrible. This is horrible. What a villainous lot. And they're reacting that way because they had not quite guessed Jesus' point.

Hadn't clicked with them yet, but it's going to. And so Jesus goes on, doesn't he? He says the owner of the vineyard decides to do what? To send his beloved son. His son.

And what happens next is so incredibly shocking to those who are listening to it and to us as well. Verse 14, But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves and kind of huddled together and they hatched a plan.

I'm just kind of adding that into it. And they said, this is the heir. Which means they probably thought the landowner was dead now. And so the ownership of the vineyard had passed to the son, his heir. And so they said, come, let us kill him that the inheritance may be ours. By the way, by law, they were right about that point.

[22 : 40] If there is no heir, no remaining heir, then the ownership of the vineyard passes to those who are keeping the vineyard.

Those who have been working it and living there and working at that vineyard. It would pass to them. So they were right about that, their conclusion. By law, that would be the case.

And so verse 15, they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. They killed him. It's tragic.

Shocking. It's terrible. And I think, you know, the people who are listening to it are reacting that way.

This is appalling. I've never heard a story like this. You know, you look back at many of Jesus' parables and he quite often interjected some shocking element and it was all by design.

It was for effect. And it had the right effect here. But the point here, the point that still the listeners there that day had not quite grasped, the point of it is that this story has a prophetic element to it.

[23 : 52] It has a prophetic element to the parable. Because you see, the rejection of the servants looks backward. Backward, actually, to the Old Testament and the killing of God's prophets.

But the rejection of the son looks forward to an event that has not yet happened. The killing of God's son at the cross outside the gates, outside the walls of Jerusalem.

Which is, of course, what Israel will do in less than 48 hours from when Jesus told this parable. But Jesus is pointing forward.

This is prophetic of what is going to take place. John chapter 1 and verse 11, the Bible says, He came to His own. That would be to the Israelites, to the people of Israel.

He came to His own and His own did not receive Him. They rejected Him. They killed Him. Villainous sinners.

[24 : 56] And now, before we kind of shake our heads and say, tsk, tsk, you know, about these terrible Israelites, do we really understand the condition of our own hearts here this morning?

Do we realize how often we, you and me, how often we are in the grip of the lusts of the flesh and we are rejecting Jesus without even realizing, without even admitting, the villainous sinners in the parable at heart?

That's who we are. Second, the virtuous sovereign in the parable. And this is really an interesting part of the story. You have to kind of read between the lines to see this, but it's clearly here.

The virtuous sovereign in the parable. In verse 15, after the part about the vinedressers murdering the vine or the landowner's son, Jesus asks a question.

He asks, therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? That's a pretty important question. And yet, I'm thinking, and I really think that those who were listening were thinking the same thing.

[26 : 13] The question should have been worded a little bit differently. Jesus should have asked. I'm not trying to tell Jesus what to do. It's just kind of speculation here. Now I'm going to make a point out of this.

But Jesus, maybe the proper question would have been, what should have the owner of the vineyard done to them long before this? That is, after the very first servant was beaten and sent packing.

What should he have done then? That's really the question. Isn't that the question? I mean, did you kind of, weren't you kind of surprised by this element of the story?

You were meant to be surprised by it. You were, it was by design that we would react that way to this story. I'm just thinking, you know, that the owner of the vineyard should have dealt with these servants, or these tenants rather, when they beat the first of the servants.

Should have dealt with them then, right? I mean, wouldn't that be right? Huh? I mean, at the very least, he lives a long way away. He should have sent another servant to the authorities and have the authorities come and deal with these people who murdered, well, not murdered, well, some of them he murdered, his servants.

[27 : 29] And certainly, after the second one, the owner of the vineyard should have acted. I mean, that's how we would react to the story when we read the story or if we're there listening to the story.

That would be kind of what we would think in our hearts. I mean, why doesn't he do something? I mean, why didn't he? And then after the third and the fourth and the fifth and the sixth, I don't know how many, after groups of servants were sent and they were, some of them beaten and some of them stoned and some of them murdered.

I mean, why did he not act? I mean, this is how we ought to react to the story. And Jesus means for us to react that way because he's making a point.

He's making a point. I mean, it seems strange that the owner of the vineyard would do nothing. And in fact, the story ends, really. The parable ends without any, you know, any action taken.

Now, Jesus makes an application to the parable and we know that the landowner has acted and is going to act. But in the parable itself, the landowner seems like he's not going to do anything about it.

[28 : 52] Now, do you know what the point is to us? It is the impeccable virtue of our God.

His loving patience. His long-suffering. His mercy. The mercy of our sovereign God.

That is who the owner of the vineyard represents. God. And, therefore, that is what his actions, the actions of the landowner in the story, that's what those actions teach us about God.

His eternal virtue of mercy towards us. I wonder, you know, do we sometimes, as Paul wrote in Romans 2, 4, do we sometimes presume on the riches of God's kindness?

upon his forbearance, Paul says, that's just a word that means his delayed punishment. And we just presume upon that.

[29 : 59] We get away with it, so maybe God doesn't care, God's not going to do anything. Do we presume, Paul asks, upon his patience, his long-suffering?

Do we? Not knowing, Paul goes on to say, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance. That's God's design.

His patience to lead us to repentance. The villainous sinners in the parable. The virtuous sovereign in the parable. And then third, the vicarious sacrifice in the parable.

The owner of the vineyard sent his beloved son to go to his vineyard and to collect what was due him. And again, remember, God the Father is the owner of the vineyard.

And so, his beloved son is Jesus. Of course. Now, he's not one of the servants. He's not one of the slaves.

[31 : 05] He's not just another one of his messengers. He is his beloved son. It says here in the text. His beloved son. The heir of all the father possesses.

You see. And the vine dressers kill him. They murder him. And so you see, here Jesus, he is, in telling this part of the parable, he wants the Jewish leadership to know that he knows something. He knows what their plans are. You see, the leaders of the Jews, the chief priests, and the scribes, and the Pharisees, they are there in this crowd, listening to the parable being told.

In fact, the parable is meant for them, specifically. And everywhere Jesus goes as he's teaching those three days, or two and a half days, they're in the temple area.

Everywhere he goes, every group he teaches to, there are some of the leaders there, the leaders of Israel mixed in there. They're listening to what he has to say and they are analyzing his words and they are even asking questions and trying to trip him and they're scrutinizing him and baiting him and all of these things are going to happen over the next two and a half days.

[32 : 26] And so, they are there. And so Jesus, by telling this parable, he wants those Jewish leaders to know that he knows what their plan is. But little do they know that their plan is actually God's plan.

That's the amazing thing about it, isn't it? Because you see, the cross was at the same time a monstrous act of murder. It definitely was.

But at the same time, it was a monumental act of mercy and grace from God the Father. Just like the son of the vineyard owner, Jesus, God's beloved son, was murdered outside the gate on Calvary.

He died in our place. He died vicariously. He is the vicarious sacrifice. Hebrews 13, 12 says, Therefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people, that he saved his people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate.

Therefore, let us go forth to him outside the camp bearing the reproach he endured. Let's go outside the camp. Let's go to the cross.

[33 : 48] And let's bear the cross. Carry the cross. So, the villainous sinners in the parable, rejecting God's messengers, rejecting God's son, his Messiah, that's us before we met Jesus and were redeemed.

That's all of us. The virtuous sovereign in the parable, his mercy, his long-suffering, his patience for sinners, for us.

For us. And the vicarious sacrifice in the parable, the son dying for the ungodly. The son dying in my place for you, for me.

And then one last one. The victorious savior. The victorious savior in the parable. There's victory in this parable. It's a shocking story and a sad story and all of these servants being beaten and killed and so forth and then the son being killed.

It's a sad story but it's a story that ends with victory. It ends with victory. It reveals the victorious savior. And not only that, but because of his victory, it also reveals the victorious saints.

[35 : 12] It's a great story. Now, it is assumed, there's an assumed outcome in the parable, by the way. Something that is implied in the story.

The listeners and even readers today would assume that the owner of the vineyard is going to have his day. He's going to harshly deal with these vine dressers.

That's assumed in the story and then when Jesus applies the story then we know that this is the case. And this is part of the story even though it's like the story is not quite ended.

But we know that the vine vineyard owner is going to deal with these guys. Take care of them. He's going to destroy them and give the vineyard to others. And so in verse 15 Jesus again asks the question, therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them?

Now in Luke's account here, Jesus answers the question, doesn't he? He asks the question then answers the question for them. He says in verse 16, he will come and destroy those vine dressers and give the vineyard to others.

[36 : 22] So he answers his own question. Now if you look at Matthew's account, in Matthew 21, 41 he has the people answering the question. Now either this is just a different time that Jesus told the parable, or the people are answering and then Jesus is following it up with a confirmation to their correct answer.

And so we have in Matthew 21, verse 41, they said to him, he will destroy those wicked men miserably. So this is how the people respond. He will destroy them. Jesus asked, what will the landowner do?

He will destroy them miserably and leave his vineyard to other vine dressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons. That's how they responded.

Matthew records that. That's what they said. And it would be a natural reaction to the story. It is the right answer to the story. And so this is what they said.

And so again, I think Luke leaves their answer out of his account and only records Jesus agreeing with them. It's kind of like saying, you're right. You're absolutely right.

[37 : 32] He will come and destroy them and give his vineyard to others. Then comes what I think we could call the aha moment in the parable.

Not in the parable, but in this event. It's the ah, aha. Now I know what he's talking about. See, Jesus drew them into the story.

He led them down a path. He kind of lured them to the bait and then he set the hook. And so notice what they said. Verse 16.

And when they heard it, they said, certainly not. Certainly not. In the Greek, it's meganoito.

It is the strongest negative in the Greek language. And so let me translate what they said. No, no, no, no, no. No. That's what they said.

[38 : 33] Never. Never. Never. Can't be. Can't be. Can't happen. Ever. That's how they responded. Now, let's think about this.

I mean, wait a minute here. I mean, didn't they just say, as recorded by Matthew, he will destroy those wicked men and lease his vineyard to other to other vine dressers.

Didn't they just say that? Didn't they? How could they just say that? And then say, no, no, no. Certainly not. That can't happen.

It's a contradiction. Well, here's the answer. They're not saying no to the outcome of some fictitious story. They're saying no to what Jesus means by the story.

His application of it. Because it suddenly dawned on them what he's talking about. Jesus is talking about us. He's talking about Israel.

[39 : 40] Jesus is talking about God's kingdom being taken away from us and given to the Gentiles. That's what he's talking about. No, no, no. In fact, verse 16 says, when they heard this, that is when they heard what Jesus said the vine vineyard owner was going to do.

When they heard it, the word is *akuo*, from which we get our word *acoustic*. And it means not just simply to hear the sound of something, it means to comprehend it.

It'd be like our sound system, you know, it might not be it could not be set right and you could hear sound, but not understand what's said. You know, sometimes that happens.

Maybe the acoustics, the acoustics are wrong and so it just sounds like a wah, wah, wah, wah, wah. Sometimes it sounds like that. But the meaning of the word means to understand, to comprehend.

That is, they got it. And when they got it, they said, no, never, never, ever, can't happen. Now, this was no idle threat on the part of Jesus.

[40 : 58] This was no mere warning, you know, that if you guys don't straighten up, this is what's going to happen to you. This was a promise. And more than that, it was a prophecy.

A prophecy. Look at verse 17. Then he looked at them and said, so they have said, certainly not, this can't happen. And so Jesus looks at them. It's kind of like, you say, no, never.

Well, what then is this that is written? So now he's going to refer to prophecy. And Jesus quotes actually from a passage that appears twice in the Old Testament.

in Psalm 118, verse 22, and again in Daniel chapter 2, verse 34. He's quoting the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Jesus is the stone, of course. And Israel has rejected him. and he has become the chief cornerstone.

[42 : 10] The stone that was rejected. That's the prophecy. I believe he's talking about the church. The chief cornerstone. That's what Peter said in Acts chapter 4, verse 10.

He said, he is the stone which was rejected by you. He's speaking to the Jews. rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief cornerstone.

Peter also wrote in his first epistle in chapter 2, in verse 4, coming to him, to Jesus, as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious.

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.

He's talking about the church. The church. He's talking about the vineyards being given to others.

It's the Gentile, the Gentile church. Therefore, he says, it is also contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on him will by no mean be put to shame.

[43 : 28] Praise the Lord. So this is victory. These are words of victory for us. We're victorious saints because of the victorious Savior.

But now notice that this is not what Jesus is saying to his audience, specifically the leaders of Israel. Rather, he says in verse 18, whoever falls on that stone will be broken.

That is, talking about those who will stumble or trip over that stone that has been rejected, actually trip over, stumble over Jesus whom they have rejected, then they will be broken.

And then he says, but on whomever it falls, this stone falls, it will grind him to powder. And that is those upon whom his judgment falls because of their rejection, they will be destroyed.

These are words of judgment, clearly. And it looks beyond the cross to the judgment of Israel as the vineyard is taken from them and given to others.

[44 : 48] You see, the cross was not the end of Jesus. Not the end of him. Now we know that, don't we?

Jewish leadership thought it was the end of him. They've taken care of this guy. In fact, many Jews today still believe that. But they're wrong. That's what the vine dressers in the parable thought. You know, we'll kill the son and then that'll end all of our troubles. They were wrong. See, there's victory built into this story.

The vineyard will continue on. It'll continue on. Now, no matter what the wicked tenants do, the vineyard will carry on.

It will continue. They will be destroyed, but the vineyard will be given to others. But the vineyard continues on. And so, likewise, the kingdom will continue on no matter what the wicked leaders of Israel do.

[46 : 01] No matter what wicked people have done and will continue to do since. The kingdom will go on. They will be destroyed and the kingdom will be given to others, to the Gentiles.

But the kingdom of God is going to prevail. No matter what. That's why I say there's victory in this parable. Wholesale rejection of Christ, which is what we see every day and intensifying.

Wholesale rejection of Christ. Wholesale out and out rejection of the gospel will not bring an end to the kingdom. I don't care what happens in our culture.

They can make every sin and every perverted thing legal in our country and it will not end the kingdom of God. It will prevail.

And so we don't have to change our message to make it more acceptable to our culture. We don't have to improve upon the message. We don't have to kind of bring it up to date, so to speak.

[47 : 16] It's what some people are proposing to do. We don't have to make it more appealing thinking that somehow that if we don't do that, that Christianity will begin to falter or maybe even fail in our country.

No, Jesus says the kingdom will prevail. It will prevail. The victorious Savior and his victorious saints.

will prevail. As we face growing rejection of the gospel and of the truth of God's word in our day, the question is not and never is whether God's kingdom will prevail.

It will prevail. The question is who will be a part of it? Or maybe more pointed, will you be a part? will you participate in his kingdom and his glory? Will you enjoy the eternal inheritance of God's kingdom?

[48 : 27] That's the real question. And if you will, if you are part of his kingdom, that's great victory.

Our victorious saint. And through him, we are his victorious saint. Nej