



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V23 N17 April 25, 2021

KING JESUS “Eviction Notice” Mark 12:1-12

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners, and rose from the dead.

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

Hebrews 1:3



How does the rejection of Jesus by Jewish leaders affect God’s plan?

New Testament writers frequently quote the Old Testament, relating what it says to the life and ministry of Jesus. Salvation history finds its fulfillment in him. For example, quoting from the Old Testament in eight different places, Matthew *explicitly* refers to what is said being fulfilled in Jesus. In chapter two alone, he says that Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem (vv. 5-6; cf., Mic 5:2, 4), his return from Egypt after the death of Herod (v. 15; cf., Hos 11:1), and Herod’s slaughter of the innocents (vv. 16-18; cf., Jer 31:15) all fulfilled the words of the prophets. What’s more, he sees the words of Isaiah (cf., 6:9,10) fulfilled in 13:13-15, and the words of the psalmist (cf., 78:2) fulfilled in 13:34-35. In chapter 26 he quotes Jesus who refers to his arrest happening in a way that fulfills the Scriptures (vv. 54, 56). And finally in 27:9 he understands the betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver to be the fulfillment of what Jeremiah the prophet says (cf., Zec 11:12-13; Jer 19:1, 4, 6, 11). And that is just the tip of the iceberg.

Psalm 118 is frequently quoted in the New Testament: *verse 6* is quoted in Hebrews 13:6; *verses 22-23* in Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10, 11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; and 1 Peter 2, 4, 7; and *verses 25, 26* in Matthew 21:9; 23:39; Mark 11:9; Luke 13:35; 19:38; and John 12:13. One commentator calls the quotation of Psalm 118:22-23 “the key to understanding the parable” of the tenants recorded in Mark 12:1-11 (cf., Mt 21:33-46; Lk 20:9-19) (Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 2nd ed., 290). The psalmist says, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” In a nutshell, using an image from building construction, the psalmist declares proverbially that “what humans ‘reject’ the LORD makes pivotal” (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 400). Ironically, it’s

just his way. Snodgrass writes: “The quotation says explicitly and dramatically what the parable intends: the religious leaders have rejected the son, the climactic envoy from God, but this rejection will be reversed by God and the leaders will lose their role in God’s purposes. The parable says essentially what the passion prediction in Mark 8:31 and the lament over Jerusalem say” (290).

In Mark’s only parable outside of chapter four, “the stone” of Psalm 118:22 clearly refers to the “beloved son,” and “the builders” clearly refers to “the tenants.” A familiar wordplay between *‘eben*, the word for “stone,” and *ben*, the word for “son,” confirms the first identification, and the use of “builders” to refer to “the tenants” in the parable, namely, “the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders” confirms the second, which is further confirmed by the fact that the religious leaders knew Jesus “had spoken the parable against them” (v. 12). The religious leaders likely do not understand that the parable is about them until they hear the quotation. Only then does it dawn on them that Jesus is the “son,” and they are “the tenants” seeking to kill him. The idea that the Lord God is providentially at work to make the rejected one the central one in his plans only rubs salt in their wounds. “Certainly one of Jesus’ most important teachings, the parable of the Wicked Vineyard Tenants answers the question concerning Jesus’ authority, condemns the ruling priests as unfit to hold their high office, and predicts that God’s purposes will be accomplished despite deadly opposition . . . Jesus is the son, the last of God’s servants sent to Israel’s wicked leaders, and the stone that, although rejected by the religious authorities, will be established” (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34B, Mark 8:27-16:20, 239).

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

1 Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. 2 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. 3 But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 4 Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. 5 He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed.

6 "He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

7 "But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 8 So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

9 "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. 10 Haven't you read this passage of Scripture:

"The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; 11 the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

12 Then the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

READ Isaiah 5:1-2, 7

1 I will sing for the one I love
a song about his vineyard:
My loved one had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside.

2 He dug it up and cleared it of stones
and planted it with the choicest vines.
He built a watchtower in it
and cut out a winepress as well.
Then he looked for a crop of good grapes,
but it yielded only bad fruit.

7 The vineyard of the LORD Almighty
is the nation of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are the vines he delighted in.
And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;
for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline "them" in vv. 1, 12, and "the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders" and "the crowd" in v. 12.
- In the margin next to v. 1 write, "Cf., Isa 5:1-2, 7."
- Circle "rented" in v. 1.
- Circle "farmers" in v. 1.
- Underline "At harvest time" in v. 2.
- Circle "fruit" in v. 2.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 3, 7, 12.
- Bracket "on the head" in v. 4.
- Bracket "son, whom he loved" in v. 6.
- Underline "last of all" in v. 6.
- Circle "inheritance" in v. 7.
- Circle "others" in v. 9.
- Highlight "stone" and "builders" in v. 10.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Key terms in narrative parables have two referents—a *literal* one in the story-world, corresponding to a *non-literal* or *allegorical* one in the real world. Identify the real-world meaning of “a man planted a vineyard” (see Isa 5:1-2, 7).
2. Lesser terms in parables only have *literal* referents. So why mention “wall,” “pit,” “winepress,” and “watchtower” if these do not have *allegorical* significance?
3. Describe some *true-to-life* details of the parable’s first-century plot.
4. Describe some *not so true-to-life* details of the parable’s first-century plot.
5. The repeated abuse of the owner’s *servants* by the vineyard’s *tenants* imitates history. How so?
6. What do you infer about the “man” from his actions in the parable?
7. Why did the “tenants” kill the “beloved son” (ESV) sent to them?
8. Describe the judgment coming on “those tenants” from “the owner of the vineyard.”
9. Explain what “this” refers to in verse 11.
10. **Discussion:** Talk about what makes what God has done regarding Jesus “marvelous in our eyes.”

Commentary On The Text

On Wednesday of Passion Week, subsequent to his clearing of the temple courts the previous day (Mk 11:15-19; cf., Mt 21:12-13; Lk 19:45-46), Jesus is involved in a number of controversies with the religious establishment (see Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 91-92). The first one concerns Jesus' authority (Mk 11:27-33). Then following on the heels of the first, the second is a continuation of the first controversy and pertains to Jesus' parable of the vineyard tenants. One commentator explains: "The challenge to Jesus' authority by the Jewish officials in the previous incident (11:27-33) is symbolically portrayed in the figure of the vineyard tenants, who challenge the authority of the owner of the vineyard (God), of the owner's messengers (prophets), and of the owner's son (Jesus). The owner's judgment of the tenants symbolizes God's judgment of the temple and of Israel's leaders alluded to in Jesus' teaching that explained his disruption of commercial activities in the temple. The Jewish leaders who had decided after Jesus' demonstration in the temple that Jesus must be executed (11:18) conclude that the time has come to plan Jesus' arrest (12:12)" (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 282).

This *narrative* parable is what one writer calls "a complex three-point parable" (Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 268, 329-339). Like all three-point parables, it has three main characters: the owner/landlord of the vineyard; the original renters; and the new renters. The three main characters typically include a *major* character, e.g., a father, a master, a creditor, etc., and two contrasting *minor* characters, e.g., two sons, two servants, two debtors, etc. The parable of the vineyard tenants is *complex* because it includes an additional character, the owner's beloved son. The point or points of this kind of parable are usually conveyed by the *contrast* between the minor characters, e.g., obedient versus disobedient sons, faithful versus unfaithful servants, and forgiving versus unforgiving debtors.

One commentator offers this succinct summary of the parable's plot: "A man planted a vineyard, leased it to tenants, and sent a servant or servants to collect his portion of the proceeds, but they were rejected and abused. He tried again with the same result and then sent his son, thinking that the tenants would respect him. The tenants killed the son to acquire possession of the vineyard for themselves. The parable proper then ends with the question of what the owner will do and the judgment that he will destroy

the tenants and give the vineyard to other tenants. The quotation of Ps 118:22 (and probably 23) serves as the *nimshal*, the explanation, and belonged to the parable from the outset" (Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 2nd ed., 291).

The meaning of the parable is suggested by the reaction of the religious establishment to it: "They knew Jesus had spoken the parable against them" (v. 12), which implies they see themselves in the faces of "the tenants" and see their behavior mirrored in the actions of the ones who kill the owner's son. Jesus is clearly represented by the "beloved son," for their animosity is directed toward him, and God is clearly represented by the "man" who owns the vineyard, for Isaiah 5:1-2, 7 indicates as much. The "others" to whom the vineyard is given in judgement are the *new* tenants representing those to whom is given the responsibility to lead Israel, especially spiritually. Judgment on the original tenants, namely, "the chief priest, the teachers of the law and the elders" (v. 12) implied judgment on the nation of Israel. "Their place of power and prestige will soon come to an end. Their positions will be given to others . . . Jesus expected God to appoint righteous persons, probably from among his disciples (though Jesus himself acknowledged that this was not his decision to make), to govern Israel . . . The vineyard, that is, Israel, will be given over to new administrators who will rule over Israel with justice and integrity, in contrast to the present rulers who exploit the people . . . Jesus is not saying that Israel is about to be replaced by Gentiles" (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34B, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 237).

The quotation from Ps 118 says it all. God will take "the stone," namely, Jesus, whom "the builders," namely, the religious establishment, "rejected" as inessential, and make him "the cornerstone," that is, indispensable, pivotal to his plan.

The parable reveals at least three things: (1) God has been patient and longsuffering in his dealings with his people Israel; (2) A day will come—in fact, long since has come—when God's patience will be exhausted and those who have rejected his beloved Son will experience judgment; and (3) God's purposes will not be frustrated (cf., Ac 13:27), for he will raise up new leaders, spiritually equipped individuals to lead and guide his people (see early chapters of the book of Acts).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *them* Cf., v. 12. “‘To them’ (*autois*) is not indefinite but refers back to the ‘to them’ in 11:33 and ultimately to the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders in 11:27” (Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT, 534).

v. 1 *a man planted* . . . “The details of the vineyard’s construction are derived from Isaiah 5:1-2 (part of a prophecy of God’s judgment on Israel), as the vineyard is a familiar symbol for the nation of Israel (cf. Ps. 80:8-19)” (John D. Grassmick, “Mark,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 160). “The [*anthrōpos*], ‘man,’ who plants the vineyard is an allegorical reference to God, which is consistent with the meaning of Isaiah’s Song of the Vineyard. Likewise the vineyard represents Israel. Other details, such as the fence, the winepress, and the tower probably do not convey any allegorical meaning, at least not in the parable itself” (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34B, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 232). Some see in the “tower” and the “winepress” allegorical references to the temple in Jerusalem (see Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 2nd ed., 330).

v. 1 *rented* “The practice of leasing out farmland by an absentee landlord was common in Israel. What is uncommon is the behavior of the landlord and the tenants in Jesus’ parable” (Stein, 534). “Most of the features of this parable would have raised no questions in first-century Palestine. The language used for leasing, development of the vineyard, conflict between owners and tenants, rejection of emissaries, and redress of wrong are paralleled in ancient contracts and parables. Two or three missions to acquire the owner’s share would not be surprising at all” (Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 291).

v. 2 *at harvest time* Cf., “When the season came” (ESV); “When it was time” (CEB). “[*tō kairō*], ‘in due course,’ means after the time prescribed by the lease agreement (probably three to five years). By this time the vineyard should be producing a substantial crop” (Evans, 233).

v. 2 *farmers* “Many of the aristocratic priestly and non-priestly families owned estates farmed by local tenants. Since vineyards were often farmed commercially and since the high-handed behaviour of the tenants in the parable implies a high level of presumed authority, the farmers of the parable should be viewed as ‘wealthy commercial farmers’ (Evans, p. 233)” (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 283).

v. 2 *fruit* “We should not imagine that the owner expects the servant to return

with wagons loaded with grapes or barrels of wine. Rather, the servant is to return with money from the sale of the grapes and wine. [*karpoi*, ‘fruit,’ or ‘fruits,’ is often understood as money (MM, 321; cf. BAG, 406)” (Evans, 233; cf., Stein, 535).

v. 4 *on the head* “Although the meaning of ‘beat on the head’ (*ekephaliosan*) is uncertain, it cannot refer to his being beheaded, for he is also shamed after time . . . That other servants follow means that Mark did not interpret this servant as John the Baptist” (Stein, 535). Perhaps it means “treated him dishonorably” (Evans, 234).

v. 6 *son, whom he loved* Cf., “a beloved son” (ESV); “one dear son” (NET). “For Mark’s readers, the expression ‘beloved son’ recalls the voice of heaven addressing Jesus as ‘my beloved son’ (1:11; 9:7)” (Schnabel, 285). “Some may have understood a reference to the messiah, but all hearers would at least have understood that reference was to a godly person who enjoyed intimacy with God” (Snodgrass, 294). “The owner assumes ([*legōn*], lit. ‘saying,’ but here meaning ‘thinking’) that by sending someone of higher rank, as opposed to servant (or slaves), the tenant farmers might be more compliant” (Evans, 235).

v. 6 *last of all* “The word *last of all* means that the sending of the son is not just one more attempt to collect, but God’s last appeal to Israel. The word one (*hena*) emphasizes the finality of the owner’s action as well as the uniqueness of the son over against the multitude of slaves” (Schnabel, 285).

v. 7 *inheritance* Whatever the reason (possibly the assumption that the son’s coming meant that the father has died, and with the son’s death, ownership would fall to those who have been working the vineyard for years), in a fictional parable, a legitimate, legal rationale for their thinking is not required” (Stein, 536). “The tenants do not think they will inherit the vineyard legally; they will take possession of it the way Ahab ‘inherited’ Naboth’s vineyard” (Snodgrass, 292); see 1Ki 21:15-19. “The Greek word *klēronomia* often means ‘possession’ rather than ‘inheritance’” (Snodgrass, 284).

v. 11 *stone, builders* “The stone (Jesus, like the son), which the builders (the Jewish religious leaders, like the tenant farmers) rejected has become the capstone (‘cornerstone,’ NIV marg.; lit., ‘head of the corner’). This is considered the most important stone of a building” (Grassmick, 161).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

God marvelously used Jesus' rejection by Jewish religious leaders to fulfill the words of the psalmist, "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and to raise up new leaders spiritually equipped to lead God's people.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

So much of parenting is dealing with the issue of the moment. Our current job might be to make sure that there are no throw-down tantrums or sibling arguments or even broken bones. Sometimes it's all we can do to get our child to put a vegetable on the tip of their tongue without throwing up. We survive the here and now and then fall into bed at the end of the day exhausted. In my opinion, the most rewarding part of parenting is when we are able to step away from survival mode and help set our kids up for growth. With utmost care, we set boundaries that help them understand how to navigate the world they're in. We meticulously cultivate character teaching them how to be kind or share or simply think of others over themselves. We gently and lovingly nurture them and feed them, guiding growth so that they know Christ and walk according to His way. We daily pray for fruit and rejoice when we see the evidence of a life lived for Christ. Parents, we are children of God and isn't it refreshing to know that He cares for us in the same way? He is leading us and guiding us for the sake of His name. He loves us deeply and celebrates when there is evidence of growth and fruit in our lives. He is rejoicing over us with gladness and singing and quieting us with His love (Zeph 3:17). Thank you, Lord, for being our example. Help us as we lead our kids. Remind us to sing over them with gladness!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Mark 12:1-12.

1. Who do these represent – the vineyard owner, the vineyard, the tenants, the servants, the son?
2. How did the tenants treat the servants and the son?
3. What was the leaders' reaction to this parable?

What Do You Think?

What is a cornerstone and why is it important?

What Do You Do?

Plant something this week! Think about the care you put into planting. How does God care for you so you can grow?

CORE COMPETENCY: Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is fully God/fully man and died for my sins.

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 28:18

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.'"

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME _____

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE _____

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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