

gested is the fulness and sufficiency of the warning given, the long-suffering of the householder, and the increasing rebellion of the husbandmen. (Schaff).

II. THE SON SLAIN. 6. He had yet one, a beloved Son (R. V.).—Luke represents him as asking himself "what shall I do?" and then resolving upon this last effort of loving forbearance. This, of course represents the mission of Jesus. By this name, Son, Jesus establishes an immeasurable distance between the greatest of the prophets and himself (Godet). We can imagine with what breathless interest the half-perceiving audience would await the climax of the story. The fervent "God forbid" (Luke 20: 16) shews how deeply they were moved. **They will reverence my Son**—They will be ashamed and turn towards my Son. God had a right to expect this. He gave the highest possible expression of his love to man, and Jesus displayed that love in its most convincing form.

7. This is the heir—We can hardly believe that the chief priests acknowledged in their hearts that Jesus was the Son of God, and yet crucified him, but they were wilfully blind, and therefore guilty. Jesus himself prayed "Father forgive them for *they know not what they do.*" **The inheritance shall be ours**—They expected that the owner would be discouraged from sending any more, and that they would thus be left in undisturbed possession of the vineyard. Christ here touches upon the real motive of his enemies. he was undermining their influence with the people. Even Pilate knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy (Mark 15: 10). Jesus knew of all their plots.

8. Cast Him out—Christ was treated as an enemy of "the church," and having no place in the "vineyard" (Heb. 13: 12, 13; Luke 23: 33; John 19: 17).

9. He will come and destroy—Matthew says that the people, probably anticipating, or joining in with, our Saviour's words, said, "He will miserably destroy those miserable men." (R. V.) Luke tells us that others, shuddering at the doom so clearly pronounced upon the nation, uttered a fervent "God forbid," i. e., "that we should ever be so guilty or receive such a fearful penalty." This was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (Luke 21: 24). **Unto others**—Gentiles now possess the vineyard of religious privileges (Acts 13: 46; Rom. 9: 26; 11: 11, 17).

III. THE TRIUMPH OF GRACE. 10. And—Here Luke tells us that he turned upon them, perhaps for the last time, his marvellously penetrating and pitying look, "He beheld them," as he pointed out the prophecy of his own rejection and ultimate triumph. **This Scripture**—Ps. 118: 22, 23. From this psalm the "Hosannas" of but two days before were taken. Read Acts 4: 11; 1 Pet. 2: 7. **The stone**—Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2: 6; Isa. 28: 16). **Head of the corner**—

The place of chief honor and importance. "There is a tradition of the Jewish rabbis which relates the history of wonderful stone, prepared, as they say, for use in Solomon's temple. Each block for that matchless edifice was shaped and fitted for its particular place, and came away from the distant quarry marked for the masons. But this one was so different from any other that no one knew what to do with it. Beautiful, indeed, it was; carved with figures of exquisite loveliness and grace; but it had no fellow; it fitted nowhere, and at last the impatient and perplexed workmen flung it aside as only a splendid piece of folly. Years passed while the proud structure was going up without the sound of axe or hammer. During all this time this despised fragment of rock was lying in the valley of Jehosaphat covered with dirt and moss. Then came the day of dedication; the vast throng arrived to see what the Israelites were wont to call 'the noblest fabric under the sun.' There it stood, crowning the mountain's ridge, and shining with whiteness of silver and yellowness of gold. The wondering multitudes gazed admiringly upon its magnificent proportions, grand in their splendor of marble. But when one said that the east tower was unfinished, or, at least, looked so, the chief architect grew impatient again, and replied that Solomon was wise, but a builder must admit that there was a gap in his plans. By and by the king drew near in person; with his retinue he rode directly to the incomplete spot, as if he there expected most to be pleased. 'Why is this neglect?' he asked in tones of indignant surprise. 'Where is the piece I sent for the head of this corner?' Then suddenly the frightened workmen bethought themselves of that rejected stone which they had been spurning as worthless. They sought it again, cleared it from its defilement, swung it fairly up into its place, and found that it was indeed the topstone fitted so as to give the last grace to the whole." (C. E. Robinson).

11. This—The exaltation of the Crucified is the most wonderful display of the divine attributes that it is possible to imagine (Phil. 2: 6-11). Luke adds that whosoever shall fall upon that stone, reject Christ in his humiliation, shall be broken, suffer pain and loss, but may yet be saved by repentance. But that on whomsoever it shall fall, when, the day of grace being past, judgment shall descend, it will grind him to powder, in utter and irremediable destruction (Isa. 8: 14, 15; Dan. 2: 44).

12. His enemies felt themselves cornered before the people (Luke 20: 9), but feared to arrest him in public because "they took him for a prophet" (Matt. 21: 46).

13. Making a vineyard—"The parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen is full of minute touches beautifully illustrative of the agricultural methods and customs of the east,—methods and customs which remain unchanged to this day. Four operations are spoken of in the formation of a vineyard,