

isa. 5, which, however, was a parable referring to the whole people. There is great force in showing how perfectly God had provided for his vineyard, and how sacred was the trust betrayed. It is fanciful and useless to give allegorical meanings to every detail. *Hedge.* Made of prickly plants, to keep out wild animals (Song 6, 15). The natural barriers which preserved the people in Palestine from mixing much with foreigners are thus well indicated. *Fig.* A civility beneath the hollowed wine-press, which received the most trodden out above. *Tower.* For the watchman who gave warning of the approach of wild beasts and robbers. *Let.* Comp. Song 8, 11. The owner received rent in a share of the produce. The interpretation is like that of the talents and the pound. *Went.* At the death of Moses, before which Israel had been prepared by the direct agency of God. The law was given and the chosen people fitted for God's work. During the interval between Moses and Samuel, Jehovah left them to mature their fruits. *VER. 2. Season.* Comp. Lev. 19, 23-25, unless the word simply means "vintage-season." *Servant.* Answering to the Old Testament title of the prophet, "bond-servants of Christ." The prophets, although so numerous, had all an extraordinary mission, a definite and unimpeachable message, which widely separated them from the ordinary teachers of the people. *VER. 3.* The milder treatment of the first messenger is given similarly in the three reports. After this they reach their climax in different ways. Matthew says: "They beat, they killed the prophets, age after age; Messiah came and they killed him." Luke: "They beat, outraged, dishonored God's messengers, they killed his Son." Mark: "They beat, outraged, killed the King's servants, they killed the King's Son and cast him out from his own inheritance." Thus each brings out the special point of his gospel. (Space forbids the justification of these brief summaries.) *VER. 4. Wounded in the head.* This peculiar word may possibly answer to Matthew's "stoned," failing, however, to produce death. Comp. Paul's case (Acts 14, 19). *Handled shamefully.* The word is used in a curiously similar way at the beginning of the Iliad, of the sacrilegious outrage wrought by Agamemnon on the priest of the god of Apollo. *VER. 5.* Heb. 11, 35-38 tells the tale. *VER. 6. Yet one.* A touch of Mark's characteristic pathos. Every kind of messenger had been sent, and all in vain. The human analogy, of course, fails here; we cannot say more than that men might have been expected to "reverence" God's Son. Nor is the parable required to give a reason sufficiently strong to warrant sending the "Son" into such danger. *Last.* No other message could follow his. *VER. 7.* This brings out the consummate stupidity of men who could imagine that such an outrage would secure them undisturbed possession. The professional saint, the doctor of theology, acted as though there were no divinity to shape his ends. *Heir.* Comp. Heb. 1, 2, where (probably) he is "heir" as Son of God. The Son is called heir just as the Father is called Householder, the very name of son including that relation. *Psa. 2, 7, seqq.* contains the proclamation of the Heir. The title also belongs to him in a different sense, as Son of man (Eph. 1, 20-23; Phil. 2, 9-11). *VER. 8.* Mark's order does not imply that they killed him in the vineyard and then vented their malignity on the corpse. The two are parallel pictures of coincident actions, and that is placed second which marks the climax of enormity (see above). They symbolized the King's rejection by his own people, and their treating him as accused of God. Comp. Heb. 10, 29; 13, 12. *VER. 9.* Matthew shows that the hearers convicted themselves by answer-

ing the question, and Luke adds their involuntary shudder at the awful doom. We must not forget that God's long-suffering lasted for forty years after the Jewish nation had perpetrated the crowning crime. *VER. 10. Not even.* Psa. 118, the chant of the feast of the tabernacles. In the original (vers. 22, 23) the "stone" is the chosen people, here their antitype (see note on Chap. 11, 9). The words show what the imagery of the parable would not admit, that the murdered Son would eventually triumph in his own person. The quotation is very common in the New Testament. *This . . . it.* That is, the "head of the corner," *VER. 12.* Cowardice, dullness, and helplessness could hardly go further. Their shield of triple "brass" was impenetrable to parable; only a direct statement could arouse their dormant wits. And then they simply slink away, leaving their victorious adversary in possession of the field.

The Lesson Council.

Question 3. What is the application at the present time of the parable of the wicked husbandmen?

We have here the tragedy of selfishness. First, there is indifference. The claims of God are ignored. Increasing light is opposed by willful blindness; appeal by insult; patience by presumption; long-suffering by brutality; until at last the climax of mercy is met by the climax of madness. The rebellion is avowed and determined against the Almighty. Then comes judgment! Then doom!—*Rev. C. W. Millard.*

The vineyard is the Church. The husbandmen are the ministers and ecclesiastical officers by whom the intent of the Church is to be carried out, its instructions given, and the comforts of religion administered. These are but stewards. They must account to God. Usurpation of authority or abuse of privilege or indifference will be followed by sure and terrible punishment. The parable has also a broader and no less solemn application to the whole household of faith.—*Rev. J. R. Day, D.D.*

One pertinent application of the parable is to political corruption in our own land. Our system of popular government is in danger of betrayal and rejection by the systematized bribery at our great elections. Wholesale and scandalous bribery at the last national election was charged upon all parties. The party managers and politicians may have been chiefly to blame, but the whole nation will suffer. The people must see to it that "the vineyard is not given to others."—*Rev. Joseph Pullman, D.D.*

4. What is meant by the rejected stone becoming the head of the corner?

The rejected stone was Jesus. The triumph of Christianity will manifest the rejected stone as head of the corner. Isa. 8, 14 and 15 foretells the rejection, and Dan. 2, 34 foretells the triumph.—*Rev. Joseph Pullman, D.D.*

Refused by the Jews and cast aside as worthless, he is taken up by the Gentiles and become the cornerstone or foundation of a mighty faith and religion whose proportions are filling the whole earth. And the durability and permanency of the material and the magnificence of the structure emphasize the folly of the Jews.—*Rev. J. R. Day, D.D.*

The quotation from the Hosanna psalm was impressively significant. For the moment, Jesus thus tells them, he may be dishonored and spurned, a stone rejected by the bigot builders at Jerusalem. Nevertheless the glorious superstructure of God's temple among men shall yet be seen resting firmly on himself.—*Rev. C. W. Millard.*