

The Stone the Builders Rejected

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[0 : 00] So when we go camping, as we, Dylan and I, we like to take one of those bird feeders, you know, and hang it up in the trees nearby the campsite so you can watch the hummingbirds fly in and out and zoom, zoom, zoom.

But have you ever noticed, maybe you have one of these or you've watched these hummingbirds, there always seems to be one knucklehead, one hummingbird that thinks that feeder is his and his alone.

He will be vigilant. He will violently attack any other, especially female, that comes near that feeder. He will bully them.

And it always makes me mad. When he comes around, I always chase them away. Hey, hey, let the girls in. Knucklehead. See, I think this hummingbird is not aware that the feeder is a gift, that it's owned and supplied by another, me.

It's my feeder, not his. But he's so self-absorbed. He's so tantalized by the sweet taste that he can't help himself.

[1 : 43] And in his blind folly does not understand that soon that feeder will be taken away from him. Now, is this not the same way that many treat the grace of God?

They think the gift of life is theirs. This is my life. I do with it whatever I want.

It belongs to me, does it? I'm master of my own fate. I did it my way.

Because it's about me. Is it? Think again. So many treat the grace of God and the gift of life at bare minimum is in terms of what we owe the Lord in terms of thanksgiving.

But God has given to many of us much, much more than just life. He's given us gifts and skills to do work. He's given us ability to earn a living. He's given us ability to have families.

[2 : 58] He's given us lots and lots and lots of things. Let alone those who are believers who have been given scriptures and teaching of God and a Savior. But some think that God does not really care what we do.

In fact, that He owes it to us. We are entitled to spend our life the way that we want to. And so they ignore all warnings. Just like the hummingbird ignores every time I try to chase them away.

It comes right back. These hummingbirds in our story in Mark 11 and 12 are here called priests, scribes, and elders.

They think that the temple belongs to them. They think that the kingdom belongs to them. They're building their own kingdom. And this Messiah who comes does not fit into their building plan.

He is a stone that doesn't fit their mold. And so they reject Him. So in the end of chapter 11 of Mark and the beginning of chapter 12, Jesus is in conflict with these authorities.

[4 : 17] In fact, we're going to see all the way through chapter 12, there's going to be different groups coming to Him, trying to trap Him, trying to snare Him, trying to over-outwit Him. And of course, each time they're outwitted.

They confront Him. And He in turn flips the confrontation on them. Do not try to outwit the Lord.

It's blind folly. So these are the builders who reject the stone and we see Jesus applying that to this context.

So we've seen from the beginning of Mark 11 that ever since Jesus has come to Jerusalem, He has made claims to authority.

On His very entrance in, He rides on a donkey, very purposefully, meticulously orchestrates where to get the donkey, what kind of donkey it is, how He will ride on it, and why He will ride on it.

[5 : 22] He is fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9 that your King will come to you, humble, mounted on a donkey. An animal of peace, not an animal of war.

He will come offering that He establishes peace, not seeking war with Rome. Already, they're not the kind of Messiah they're looking for.

But He's making a claim to be their King. And of course, the people sing from Psalm 118, which talks about not only is He blessed in the name of the Lord, but He's also the stone that's rejected. They're singing that very song that Jesus is going to remind them of in just a moment. Then He clears the temple the next day.

He curses a fig tree, which is a picture of what He's going to do to the temple. He comes in and clears. He does not clean it. I know all of our Bibles say He cleanses the temple. He's not cleansing it.

[6 : 19] He's condemning it. He's not fixing it up to be better again. He's pronouncing judgment on it. This is my house, which is called a house of prayer, and you, now He's pointing at those very same scribes, priests, and elders, and you have made it a den of thieves.

And so like the fig tree, it will have a similar end. It will wither. It will fade away. It is coming to an end.

In fact, by chapter 13 of Mark, Jesus will say, within one generation, this temple will be leveled. Every stone upheaved, which again was fulfilled in 70 A.D.

as Titus came into Jerusalem and leveled it and put up his abomination, the abomination of desolation as he goes into the Holy of Holies and puts his banner right there in the holy place.

So Jesus is basically saying that the temple that it's in, there is a new temple that will replace it.

[7 : 33] In fact, in John 2, Jesus said, you destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. A new temple to replace. The old temple. But these claims are not new.

We can go back to chapter 1 of the Gospel of Mark and see that people saw him who taught with authority, not like their scribes. One who had authority over demons.

He just speaks a word and they tremble and they leave. They had never seen such authority before. We get to Mark chapter 2 and here's this paralyzed man being cut through a roof, lowered before him.

And before Jesus heals him, he forgives his sins. And the same priests, scribes, elders are there watching, saying, who can forgive sins but God?

Who is this man? To which Jesus says, which is harder? To forgive sins? Or to say, rise, stand up and walk? So to prove that I have authority to say your sins are forgiven, he looks at the paralyzed man and says, stand, take up your pallet, walk, which he does.

[8 : 51] And all remains. Who is this man? Jesus, throughout the Gospel of Mark, Mark has shown us as witnesses, we're watching what he does, what he says, he is acting and speaking in the name of God himself.

He claims authority over the Sabbath of all things. He claims authority over food laws. He declares all foods clean in Mark chapter 7.

It's not what goes into the body that defiles a man, it's what goes out from the heart. It's not about what you eat that defiles you. This guy's radical.

Who is this man? So in experience after experience, this is building. And now when he comes to their town and enters claiming to be king and then dares to enter their holy temple and turn over their tables and push people out and not even allow the priest to do their business, not allowing anyone to walk through the temple, who does he think he is?

By what authority are you doing these things? He has gained the attention of the Jews. And as we said a few weeks ago, I believe what Jesus is doing is he's not just fulfilling scripture, he's throwing down the gauntlet.

[10 : 22] You will notice me and you will deal with me. I'm on a time frame here. And of course, even in this event, which is either on a Sunday or a Monday, days before Passover, they want to arrest him and destroy him, but the time is not yet.

A couple more days. A couple more days. And then Jesus will allow them to take him. So, these religious leaders have been watching him, plotting, ready to destroy him.

So it all comes to an inevitable confrontation the next day after Jesus has cleared the temple. We see Jesus' conflict with authority here now in verse 27 of Mark 11.

As they come and challenge him, by what authority are you doing these things? Who do you think you are? Jesus has two replies in essence. His initial reply at the end of chapter 11 is a counter question.

We've learned by now in Mark, haven't we, that when you ask Jesus a question, what are you going to get? A question. He's not going to give you the simple answer. He's going to make you think. But here it's more.

[11:49] Here it's more. He knows their hypocrisy and He's going to expose it. So first, there is a counter question by which He reveals their hypocrisy.

And then in chapter 12, His second reply is a parable to expose them even further. As by the end of that parable, chapter 12, verse 12, they recognized.

They understood that He spoke the parable against them. They may not have understood all the nuances of the parable, but they got it.

Okay? He was clear enough. You, like Nathan to David, you are the man. You are the man who is rejecting the stone.

So, let's break this down and look at this. His first reply is his counter question, which exposes their hypocrisy and unbelief.

[13:01] So, I want you to see three things here. We see the protest of these religious leaders. We see the predicament that Jesus puts them in by this counter question. And then we see their prejudice revealed by their answer.

So, let's look at the protest. First of all, who are these people? We see in verse 27 that as Jesus is walking in the temple, that these three groups of people, the priests, the scribes, and the elders come to Him.

Who are these guys? Well, these are representatives of the great Sanhedrin, the ruling council of the Jews.

It's made up of priests, scribes, and lay elders. It has 70 members in it plus the high priest who presides over the council.

It's like their supreme court except with more authority. They not only interpret the law, but they execute the law. So, they're like all the branches put together.

[14:05] So, you have scribes who are primarily Pharisees, the more conservative, the ones who accept all of the scriptures of the Old Testament.

Then the priests tend to be the Sadducees who are, we would call, more liberal, who don't believe in supernatural. They just believe in the moral truth, and they only hold to the first five books of the Bible.

So, they don't believe in resurrection, they don't believe in angels, those kind of things. And then there's the elders who are from both groups. They're Pharisees and Sadducees, kind of a mixture of both.

All led by the high priest who was Caiaphas at the time, who got his position from his father-in-law, who still had influential power there.

So, they bring a protest. In verse 28, they say to him, by what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority? In other words, their protest is, you're not authorized by us.

[15:15] We're the authorities around here. Who gave you authority to come into our temple? Who gave you authority to come into our city? On a donkey.

To do these things. What things are they talking about? Well, the triumphal entry, the clearing of the temple, claiming to forgive sins, claiming to have authority over the Sabbath.

All of these things. And now he's teaching regularly. And then he dares to call them a den of thieves. Who gave you authority to call us that? So, they're protesting.

They can't deny his miracles. They can't overcome his teaching. Because every time they question his teaching, he brings up scripture. So, you know, you just, you know, they can't really deny his teaching.

So, they protest he's on their turf and he doesn't have authority to be doing these things. Which, then Jesus' answer snares them in a predicament.

[16:21] He turns the tables on them. Let me ask you one question. He traps them in their hypocrisy. He exposes their unbelief.

You want to ask me a question about authority? All right, let's go back to John the Baptist. Let me ask you about John the Baptist. And by the way, he demands the answer.

Both of the statements when he says, answer me and I will tell you. Did the baptism of John come from heaven or from earth?

Answer me! It's like that. It's not a suggestion. It's an authoritative command. You asking me about authority?

Answer me! Imagine Jesus saying that to you. They know who he is. He links himself with John the Baptist.

[17:35] What's the source of John's authority? Was he from heaven or from earth? Was he from God or from man? Did he do that of his own initiative, his own ingenuity, his own creativity, trying to do something new, trying to make ministry more exciting?

Or is he authorized by God himself and truly a prophet? Which all the people but the leaders believed? Or accepted?

Or accepted? Acknowledged? Who is this John the Baptist? Answer me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

Their reply reveals their prejudice, their predisposition. We see in verse 31 and 32, and they discussed it with one another, saying, if we say from heaven, he will say, why then do you not believe him?

So they're trapped. Okay, if we say yes, it exposes our unbelief. But can we say from man?

[18:46] We do that, the crowds will stone us. Which one of the other gospels says, they'll stone us. Because they really believe John was a prophet.

They believe he's an actual prophet. Not small p, big p. Prophet. You know, the thus saith the Lord kind of Isaiah kind of prophet.

Kind of Moses kind of thing. Hey, you know, can't speak against you. So what are we going to do?

They're trapped. They've been outwitted.

And Jesus is exposing that they're driven by the fear of man. They can't even stand up and be honest. What will the crowd say?

What will the people say? We've got to spin this in a good way. We've got to come out of this. But they're not going to come out of this looking good at all. Because there are these, waffle, well, we don't know.

[19:53] We're not smart enough to figure that out. He's just made them look stupid. You can't decide about John. You're the spiritual leaders of Israel and you can't decide this man that all Israel knows about.

That the majority of the people from all around the area have come to be baptized by him. To be, to show their repentance and their preparation for the coming of the Lord. You can't decide about that guy?

Hypocrites. Dishonest. See, spiritual leaders and teachers are supposed to teach the truth, not suppress the truth.

The priests and the scribes are supposed to be shepherds, not politicians. And for every teacher and servant of God, their only accountability is the word of God, not the tradition or counsel of men. Now, let me talk on a practical level. I'm accountable to you. But ultimately, I'm accountable to God. You are to hold me accountable.

[21:17] Am I teaching from here or am I teaching from here? If I'm not teaching from here, it's your responsibility.

They say, excuse me, text, right? But the only way you hold me accountable is by the truth.

And that's exactly what Jesus does to them as he pulls out the scriptures, as he confronts them and says, haven't you read? Hello? Haven't you read? How are you missing this?

It's right there in scripture. How are you missing the Messiah? Yeah. So what does John's baptism have to do with Jesus' authority?

Well, remember who John the Baptist was. He's the forerunner to the Messiah. He's the messenger of Malachi 3. He's the voice of Isaiah 40 crying out in the wilderness.

[22:18] He's the one coming in the spirit and power of Elijah. That Jesus has talked about earlier. That he is Elijah who is to come. He's already come.

That was John preparing the way. And John the Baptist is a unique character because he is the bridge between the Old Testament, the last of the Old Testament prophets, and the bridge to the New Testament.

As we go from old to new, as we go from God's old covenant to Jesus' new covenant, he's the bridge. He's so important.

How does John the Baptist relate to Jesus? Well, I want you to notice that the beginning of the Gospel of Mark points it out. It's so significant. John is the very beginning of the Gospel.

Look at Mark chapter 11. It talks about how John prepares the way. And through his particular distinct means of ministry, that is, baptism of water, he's preparing these people.

[23 : 28] And then John himself compares himself to the coming Christ. Listen to this in Mark chapter 1. The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah, the prophet, behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will what? Prepare your way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight.

Application, John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for what? For the forgiveness of sins.

Wait a minute, forgiveness of sins happens in the temple, doesn't it? John's giving forgiveness of sins by confession and repentance in the wilderness?

this? Oh. Malachi 3 talked about how this messenger who comes before the Messiah, before the coming of the Lord, will purify, will cleanse, will wash.

[24 : 37] That's what baptism's doing. He's washing. He's giving a picture of what the Messiah will do. he preaches. What did John preach?

He preached saying, after me comes he who is mightier than me, greater than me, the strap of whose sandals I'm not even worthy to stoop down and untie.

He's so great. He's incomparable. I have baptized you with water, but he, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

He's the real deal. I use water as a picture, as a symbol of washing. He will bring the Holy Spirit to you.

That's a whole other level. That's a whole much greater fulfillment. And then in those days it talks about how Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

[25 : 39] And when he came up out of the water, Mark tells us that immediately he saw three things. He saw the heavens being torn open, and he saw the Spirit descending on him like a dove, and then a voice that came from heaven that said, you are my beloved son, with you I am well pleased.

So what does the baptism of John have to do with Jesus? What's the whole beginning? It's the heart of it. He's the pointer, he's the messenger, he's the preparer, he's the proclaimer that this one after me is the mighty one.

And when Jesus is baptized, what's happening when he's baptized? Why are the heavens open? Why does the Spirit descend? Why does a voice speak? He is being not only affirmed, he is being authorized.

He is being anointed, anointed with the Spirit. The Spirit comes down upon him and the voice affirms, this is my son, the beloved, at whom I'm well pleased.

And of course the picture of the dove reminds us of sacrifice. So, if they had truly answered Jesus, he would have told them, the Father himself authorized me.

[27 : 15] By whom am I given authority? The Father himself. I have many witnesses to this. but the Jewish leaders are unwilling to take a stand about John the Baptist and therefore prove their unbelief and their hypocrisy and their rejection and their dishonesty about who they really are.

But Jesus isn't finished with them. Now we come to chapter 12 verses 1 to 12 and we see a parable now where he's going to expose them even further.

He's taken them one step, counter question, shows their hypocrisy and their unbelief. Now, with a parable, he's going to drive it home and give them a picture of who they are.

He's going to show their rebelliousness and their wickedness for what it is. So, he gives this parable and this parable exposes their rebellious and wicked hearts.

I don't know a stronger way to say it. This parable reveals them as these tenants who are rebellious to the owner and downright wicked.

[28 : 39] And by verse 12, they know it's about them. They get it. And what do they do? Well, they repent, right? No.

Like most people, they hear the word of God, they're convicted by the word of God, but they will not repent. My life, do with it as I please.

So, I want you to notice three things here again. We've got the parable, we see in the parable the patience of the owner, and finally we will see the purpose of God in this whole way of doing things. So, notice in the parable, and remember parables, verse 1, 12, 1, Jesus began to speak to them in parables. What does that usually highlight for us? To whom does he teach, excuse me, to whom does he speak parables?

The outsiders, right? It's the outsiders. Parables, parables is a test. Those who are true seekers will come and ask him, we didn't get the parable, would you explain it to us?

[29 : 55] The true seekers, the true followers, the true disciples will follow up and want to learn more. But those who don't, the parable simply keeps them out there, where they belong, on the outside, like his brothers and his mother, who aren't interested in who he is.

They want him to conform to who they want him to be. So he's telling a parable. And this parable is about a vineyard, a man planting a vineyard, doing all the work to prepare the vineyard.

He builds the fence, he builds the tower, he digs the pit for the wine press, this is going to be a winery. So he does all of that, and then he leases it or rents it out to farmers, tenant farmers, whom he expects to pay him back when the fruit comes, with a portion of the fruit.

Right? Right? He doesn't give them the vineyard, he's given them to work the vineyard, by which they earn a living and pay the owner his rightful share.

So, what happens is he sends, now here's the big turning point, he begins to send servants. Verse 2, he sends a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard.

[31 : 21] By the way, if he's just planted a vineyard, this would be at least four years later. It takes at least four years for a vineyard to start to produce fruit. So, in the season, that's what it says, when the season came for the real fruit to be coming, he sent the servant.

to get from them some of the fruit, not all of it, but some of the fruit of the vineyard. And what do they do? Verse 3, they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

So, again, verse 4, he sent to them another servant, and they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed. And so, summarizing, with many others, some they beat and some they killed.

Until, verse 6, he had one more. He still had one other, a beloved son. Now, why does he call him a beloved son? That's just a coincidence, isn't it?

And finally, he sent him to them, saying, they will respect my son. Why will they respect my son? Because he has authority. Because, like me, he's co-owner, or he's the heir.

[32 : 33] The servants are servants. Maybe they didn't understand. Maybe they didn't trust that they servants were. You know, this owner is giving them every possible opportunity. So finally, he sends the son, they will respect my son.

And, we see that they do not. Instead, they say, this is the heir, come let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours. Now, first response to that, we think, how do they think that they get the vineyard if they just kill the son?

Are they that dumb? Now, Mark doesn't tell us, but perhaps, well, it's been years since they've seen the owner. They've seen our servants coming.

Perhaps they think since the son's coming, the father's dead. And if the father's dead and we kill the heir, it's ours. Because under the law of the day, if it's an unowned property, first come, first earth.

That may be the thing. Mark doesn't tell us, it's just, we don't know. Or they think the owner simply doesn't really care. He'll never come. It's like people say about God, God really doesn't care.

[33 : 40] He hasn't come around lately. I can get away with it. So, we see that they rebel and defy, even by killing the son.

So what does this show us? Well, one of the things it shows us about the owner is his patience.

This parable is a picture of God's grace with the nation Israel throughout their history.

God has sent them prophet, after prophet, after prophet, after prophet. Some they beat, some they abuse, some they imprison, some they kill.

We go through the line. Go all the way back to Genesis 4. Abel. And who's the first to be killed?

Abel. Why? Because his offering was pleasing to the Lord. Because he walked by faith.

[34 : 53] And so Cain killed him. Who's next? Who's next? Who's next? Who's next? Who's next? Who's next? Who's next? Who's next? Noah preaches and is rejected.

Joseph, now, again, he's a kid and he's flaunting a little bit, but still he's preaching the true word and he's rejected by his brother, sold off.

Moses comes to his people, is rejected. Who are you? Forty years later comes back and is, in fact, the leader and the deliverer. Prophet after prophet after prophet, we have Elijah, we have David himself who's rejected before he's elevated.

We see prophet after Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel. In fact, they're told up front, by the way, no one's going to listen to you.

Have fun. Preach the word. Their ears are going to be closed, their eyes are going to be blind, but you do tell them the truth. We see this is the history of Israel.

[36 : 11] In fact, it's summarized at the end of 2 Chronicles 36, just before Israel goes into captivity. The writer summarizes how Israel kept mocking the messengers of God.

They were despising God's words and scoffing at his prophets until until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people until there was no remedy.

And finally, there was, okay, into captivity you go. Now, consider how patient God was through all of that. Consider how patient he was with the people in the wilderness.

He could have struck them down the first time they rebelled. God is continually patient. He's forbearing. His kindness leads us to repentance.

And yet there are those even taking advantage of that patience, that grace. Oh, see, God's never going to come. He's never going to call me to account.

[37 : 20] He hasn't yet. Hmm. Dangerous words. And so what's the purpose of all of this? Why does God do this?

Why does he send his servants who are killed and beaten and rejected, and he sends more, and they're killed and they're beaten? Or probably the reverse of that.

I don't know how to do it. Maybe they're killed and then beaten. Some are beaten and then killed.

Why? So Jesus brings it to a point.

Notice this. He tells the parable, they throw him out, verse 9, now he asks a question. He invites his listeners to make a decision. Just like the Gospel of Mark has done all the way through.

He's kind of invited us as readers and listeners to make our own decision about who is this Jesus.

Right? So Jesus says, what do you think the owner will do? One of the Gospels, I don't remember if it's Matthew or Luke, but one of them, the crowd actually answers.

[38 : 25] Oh, he's going to come and they're toast. But here, Mark presents Jesus giving the answer. He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.

I wonder who those are. If the religious leaders are the Jewish leaders and he takes the vineyard away from them, what does he give it to?

Now, it's only implied here in the Gospel of Mark he's going to give it to a new people. But in Matthew, which is written to the Jews, it's explicit.

Jesus says he will take the kingdom away from you and give it to another nation. An ethnos, a pagan nation. Gentiles. Oh, no way.

Never give it to the Gentiles. So, if they don't get that, notice what Jesus does next in verse 10.

[39 : 35] He's going to apply it. Have you not read this scripture? priests, scribes, elders, spiritual leaders of the nation of Israel, have you not read this scripture?

By the way, we just sang it two days ago as we came into Jerusalem. And by the way, we will sing it in two more days at Passover. Passover. So you sing it, you know it, but have you read it?

Have you read the actual words of the scripture? Have you paid attention to what you're singing in Psalm 118? So Jesus pulls out this particular portion of the psalm in Psalm 118 and he says, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, literally, has become the chief corner, the head corner, the most important corner.

This was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. See, the stone that the builders said, no, doesn't fit, no, doesn't fit into our temple, doesn't fit into our kingdom, doesn't fit with what we want, this isn't the kind of Messiah we're looking for, it's not the stone we want.

So God takes the stone that was rejected and starts a whole new temple. It becomes the corner chief stone. Remember, we studied that in Ephesians chapter 2, the foundation built upon Christ, the cornerstone and the apostles.

[41 : 15] And remember that first cornerstone, the first one that's laid, determines the direction this way, the direction this way, and the direction this way. And that everything that the apostles build on top of Jesus must line up with Him.

From every angle. Those that follow, those that build the church following, as we put the stones in place, as this new temple is being built, it still must line up with the cornerstone.

So it doesn't become something else that Jesus never intended. It still looks at the apostles and Jesus Christ, and is that what Jesus laid out for us?

Because that's the line we follow. And that's how we know we're true. It goes back to His word. And so Jesus is exposing them. Have you not read?

And then He not only says the one verse from that psalm, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, then He adds the next verse of the psalm.

[42 : 27] This was the Lord's doing. What? That the stone is to be rejected was what? This was the Lord's doing.

Wait a minute. The Lord intended for His chief stone to be rejected? That's exactly what it says. This is the Lord's doing, and it's marvelous in our eyes.

We're like, what? Of course we're going, what? Why would God want His chief cornerstone, the Messiah, the beloved Son, to be rejected?

Why would that be plan A from the beginning? See, there are some who say, that's plan B. Some who say, oh, no, Jesus offered the kingdom to the Jews, and the Jews rejected it, so God had to go to plan B.

Eh. Please, let's read Scripture honestly. plan A from the beginning, Jesus was to be rejected.

[43 : 33] Just as Jesus has been telling them for three chapters, remember? The Son is going to Jerusalem, He's going to be rejected, He's going to be condemned, He's going to be killed, and He's going to rise on the third day.

Three times He tells them that in chapter 8, 9, and 10. And now He comes to these priests and says, guess who you are?

Guess, Scripture talks about you guys. Isn't that exciting? You're the rejecters. But God's purpose, the Lord's doing, was His plan because through the Son's death, the Son brings salvation.

salvation. So how do these guys respond to this verse 12? They were seeking to arrest Him. But again, don't do what they want to do, aren't courageous enough to do what they want to do, but continue to be driven by fear.

But feared the people. For they perceived that He had told the parable against them. What do they do?

[44 : 48] They continue to rebel. They continue to act wickedly. Instead of being convicted, they are enraged. And all the more set to destroy Him.

So, what about us in all this? What's this have for us? Is there any application for us? This parable applies to all of us.

We can't just look at this parable and say, see, they're the bad guys. They're the bad guys. Stay away from those guys. Be careful when you point the fingers because sometimes they come back around.

This parable applies to all of us. It's about how do we respond to the Lord? How has Israel responded to the Lord over time? When God speaks, do you listen? When God warns, do you heed it?

When God is silent, do you dismiss Him? How do you respond to the Lord? Listen to Psalm 2, which I think kind of supplements Psalm 118, which again talks about how the Lord's plan, the Lord's will, the Lord's purpose in the Messiah, that this Messiah would be rejected, that this Messiah, for those who reject Him, they must heed the warning.

[46 : 14] it is no small thing to reject this Messiah. So here's Psalm 2. It begins this way, Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

Speaking of these religious leaders plotting to destroy Him in vain. The kings of the earth have set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Yahweh and against His anointed.

By the way, anointed is a way of referring to the Messiah. Messiah means anointed one. Against His anointed saying, let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

We want nothing to do with the Lord. We want our independence and freedom. This is my life. He who sits in the heavens laughs.

Laughs. This is so foolish. If they could only see from His perspective how silly they are. The Lord holds them in derision. These are foolish people.

[47 : 22] The fool has said in his heart, there's no God. That's a fool. He's not thinking. He's not even taking in the evidence and weighing it honestly.

That's a fool. Fool. Then He will speak to them in His wrath and terrify them in His fury saying, as for me, I have set my king in Zion, my holy hill.

I will tell of the decree the Lord said to me, you are my son. See, the anointed, the Messiah, Messiah is actually the son.

Tying those together. Today I have begotten you. Interesting phrase. Begotten you, the only begotten one. You ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession.

In other words, you have authority over everything in heaven and on earth. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. Again, imagery of the stone upon which those who fall are broken.

[48 : 31] The image of the stone upon where it falls will break to pieces. This is the son. Here's the counsel. Here's the application. Now therefore, O kings, be wise.

Be warned, O rulers of the earth. Be very careful now. Serve the Lord with fear. and rejoice with what? Trembling. Trembling. Rejoice with trembling? Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Kiss the son. Worship the son. S-O-N. Lest he be angry and you perish in the way for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Or it might be better to translate, his wrath is suddenly kindled. Might take a long time before, but once it is, it's sudden and quick.

[49 : 45] And listen to how this psalm ends. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Good news. Good news.

grace. So how about you? Are you fighting God? Do you think you can be free from him?

Do you think that he does not care how you live? Do you seek to cast away his authority out of your life? Put him at, you know, just have three dollars worth of God, that's all I want.

I just want him when I need comfort. I don't want him to run things. God has anointed one as king. It is his son. Do you serve him or do you serve yourself? Now, each one of us as believers, we're going to say, yes and yes.

[50 : 47] I serve him and I serve myself. Yes, I see my hypocrisy, but I want to serve him. Do you ignore him or love him?

Do you take refuge in him or do you run from him? Maybe you're like the hummingbird. You treat life like your own hummingbird feeder.

You think and act as if there is no God, that it's all about you, that your life is your own, and you are master of your own fate.

and in the process you push others away in order to satisfy yourself. You do not know or acknowledge or recognize or remember that your life is actually a gift from God and you are only a steward.

That God himself is watching and he does care. He does care. He is patient. He is long-suffering. But he will send a reminder here.

[51 : 52] Send a reminder here. Send a warning here. He'll send a word here. Do we hear? Every once in a while he'll send a brick.

But he does keep pursuing us, doesn't he? He is a pursuer of sinners. He does not turn away from sinners. He goes after sinners to know him.

So be wise. Be warned. Serve Christ Jesus with fear.

Rejoice with trembling. Worship and kiss him. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

For to them belong salvation, freedom, satisfaction, protection, love, caring, conviction, comfort, life and forgiveness.

[52 : 55] Let us take refuge in him. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We see in the story of Jesus how this, he is being confronted and confronting back in terms of his oppressors.

But Lord, we know that your scripture not only speaks of others, but also speaks to us. So help us to be honest. Help us not be like these men who refuse to see, who refuse to listen.

Grant us ears to hear and hearts to submit. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.