

# Matthew 21:33-46 | Tom Grass

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[0:00] Morning. Just think of the rock-a-thon and donations to it like an NGO.! It goes there and we're not sure where it goes after that.

! Trust us! Just trust me on this one. I'm going to do three jokes and they're not going to be good.

And, uh, I don't know, after Mark's jokes last week, I don't know how you could even say that.

Those were pretty bad. All right, so Mark said a joke last week, and it was, there's two fish swimming along, and they hit a brick wall, hit a concrete wall, what did they say?

They didn't say anything. They went through the turbine and they became food for the other fish on the other side of the dam. Sorry, I'm sadistic. They did not say what Mark said. They got eaten.

Uh, this is a little age-sensitive joke. Frank, I asked permission to say a joke that might be relative to him.

[1:05] There's a new dating site called, uh, for older people, like older seniors, it's called Carbon Dating. Frank, that means that...

And then the last one's in honor of my good friend who passed away years ago, Sean Collins, I grew up with, my best friend growing up, he led me to the Lord, and we used to call them Sean jokes.

Sean jokes. So here we go. There's two guys walking along the street. One falls onto a mud puddle, and the other one yells out, Elephant!

Sorry. Yeah, it doesn't make any sense. That's Sean joke. And my kids would agree, Dad, you're not funny.

And I know that. So what? Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for, uh, this passage in scripture today in Matthew chapter 21.

[2:15] And, uh, the background and the timing of it for Jesus' life. It's the end of his earthly ministry. It's three and a half years or so.

It's a passion week, some call it, the last week of his life. Some say it may have been Tuesday of that week when he was crucified. Knowing what's coming, and he's right there.

Really in the, uh, I don't know how you say it, just the throngs of the evil that was going to happen.

Or just right there where all this is going to go down in a few days.

And he confronts the religious leaders with these parables. And, um, we'll see today they knew what he was talking about, knew who he was talking to. And, uh, I just know for myself when I study your word, I see myself sometimes in some of the characters or people that are in the scriptures.

And I, I can identify with them and realize I fall short often of your glory and your calling. And we're not alone in that.

[3:21] Uh, it's common to man. Um, you can even look at the Romans chapter 7 and, and know that the condition of man is often very distracted from the rule of God and his ways.

So we just ask that you would, uh, encourage us today somehow through these verses, uh, challenge us and teach us what you want us to learn today. In, in Jesus' name.

Um, we're in Matthew chapter 21 and I, what I want to do is back up a little bit and I want to build a little bit of a context or a little background.

What's leading up to these verses that we're going to talk about today. And, uh, um, we'll do that.

So, I would say that, uh, the title of this is The Continued Rejection of the King and the King being Jesus Christ.

Rejection defined is the act of refusing to accept, use, or believe something or someone. So, rejection is, you refuse to accept or believe something.

[4:41] And, if you've ever been rejected, you know, you can, we could go down a whole path of psychological implications of rejection. And we could talk, we could go on a tangent and talk about that.

But, uh, the Lord Jesus in these passages is being rejected. And, uh, by the ones he came to save, came into his own and his own received him not.

And I think it's a realistic way to approach this book of Matthew is the rejection of the king. In chapter 11, verses 20 to 24 of Matthew, it's an interesting section because it's actually where Jesus performed a lot of his miracles.

And he, and he, uh, I'm sorry. Matthew 11, verse 20.

Then he began to rebuke the cities in which most of his mighty works had been done because they did not repent. Woe to you, Chorazam! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

[6:02] But I say to you, it would be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades.

For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would still have remained until this day. I say to you, it would be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.

Very strong words of our Lord to those regions. And he did spend a lot of time in Capernaum during his earthly ministry. But Unger's Bible handbook, which some of us would know and be familiar with, said there's a comment, The kingdom of heaven announced by John, preached and authenticated by the king and his ambassadors by miraculous signs, was morally rejected, so the king announced judgment.

The king of the world, of the universe, had the right to announce this judgment. All-powerful one. He can do that. Schofield Reference Bible agrees with this statement and says, The places chosen for the testing of the nation, Chorazam, Bethsaida, and these other cities we mentioned, having rejected both John and Jesus, the rejected king now speaks of judgment.

Well, the final judgment is later in Matthew. And then that's where they go and they end up rejecting.

[7:30] The final rejection really is in Matthew, where in Matthew 27, where Jesus is rejected by the people in Israel, the leaders of the Sanhedrin and all of them, and turn them over to Pilate to be crucified.

I believe that having a clear understanding of Jesus' earthly ministry, his offer to the nation of Israel, his clear presentation to the religious leaders of his day in Judaism, and his national rejection helps us understand many of the events of his public ministry leading up to his crucifixion.

I think if you take this concept of the rejection of Christ offering himself as the king, as we get into this last week and these parables we're going to look at today, it gives you a clear understanding of what the message is to us.

In Matthew 11, verse 28, there's a shift. A lot of people say this is a shift in Jesus' ministry from the rejection of the religious establishment to a new ministry.

And it's subtle. It's really subtle. But listen to these two verses, or three, 28 to 30. Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

[8:47] Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. For I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. I believe you can notice a real shift here.

He mentions earlier in chapter 11 this judgment against these cities where he performed all these miracles. Now he says, individually, come to me, all you who are burdened, weary, laden.

I'll give you rest. Do you believe that that's true? That that makes sense? And if you listen to the rest of Matthew, and especially in chapter 21, you'll see this judgment or this rejection by the established religious group, but he's constantly going to minister to these individuals.

These individual healings. These people that they'll bring to him. It's really interesting how this happens. In Matthew 21, verses 1 through 16, which was studied a while ago by us, this is where he sends the disciples ahead and says, go get this colt, a donkey that's never been ridden on.

Bring the colt's mom. And I'm going to ride into Jerusalem. And the crowd in verse 9, the multitudes who went before, and those who followed cried out saying, Hosanna to the Son of David.

[10:26] Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. And they recognized Jesus coming to them. The crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up saying, Who is this? And the crowd said, This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.

Do you know what Hosanna means? Does anybody know? No. We say it. It means save us.

We beseech you. Save us. Hosanna. Hosanna to the Son of David. A statement which means they recognize Christ's claim of Jesus to be the Christ.

So the people are saying this as Jesus comes into Jerusalem. Then he goes into the temple later in verses 12. And he says, He overturned the tables.

[11:36] He said to them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you make it a den of robbers. And what he's saying is, this place where the money changers were set up and they had the animals and they had the Jewish temple currency that had to be used in the temple if you were going to come and buy an animal for sacrifice.

Like if you're traveling a far distance, you wouldn't maybe bring the animal because what if the priests say that animal doesn't measure up to our standards? You have to buy one from us and we cannot use this one for sacrifice.

So I was thinking, what if you're bringing an animal to the sacrifice and you break a leg on the way there, right? Now that sheep becomes unworthy of being offered as an unblemished lamb.

So they have this market set up. Jesus doesn't condemn the fact that they're doing that necessarily, but it's where it's being done and how it's being done.

They're making extravagant money off of it. But the thing is, they're doing it in the court of the Gentiles. They were excluding people. Some writers believe that's exactly where it was, in the court of the Gentiles.

[12:47] So instead of being a nation of worshipers who include the world around them and want the Gentiles to come in and become proselytes and know the living God, they exclude them by doing the marketplace in the court of the Gentiles.

Could you imagine? That's a whole section of the temple that was set up for Gentiles to worship. What happens after he removes these people from the marketplace? What's the next thing that you see?

So, you know, if there's a vacuum, right? What happens? Something fills it. If there's a vacuum of leadership, something fills it. Right? That's true.

So what happens is, the blind come in. Verse 14, the blind and the lame came into the temple and he healed them. This would be in the court of the Gentiles. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did and the children crying out in the temple, Hosanna to the son of David, they were indignant.

And they said to him, Do you hear what they are saying? And Jesus said to them, Have you never read out of the mouths of infants and nursing babes? You have prepared praise. So, I believe that when they, the marketplace was turned over, in came these people and he individually ministered to people because he was being rejected by the religious leaders of the day.

[14:07] I wrote this note down and I thought, In the absence of religion, which kept people away from God, Jesus was able to heal the blind and the lame and the children were able to offer praise to God in the court of the Gentiles.

Do you see the subtle way in which the writer of Matthew drives home the point of the national rejection of Jesus while Jesus willingly accepts the individuals who have come to him?

And that's what it means when he says in 21, 31-32, Truly I say to you, the tax collectors and prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you do not believe him.

But the tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. Even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe to him. Numerous times, Jesus clearly stated his offer and they continued to reject him.

You see the point? Religious establishment of the day rejected Christ and they just continued to right up to the time they crucify him.

[15:23] Matthew 21, verse 33-46 is our passage for today. And it's the parable of the wicked vinedressers. Again, Jesus says a parable, but this one's not hard to understand.

And I gave you a handout and it has the breakdown of the different characters in this parable and what they mean in relation to the story or the account that Jesus gives here.

God is the landowner. Israel is the vineyard. The hedge is the law of Moses. The winepress signifies the fruit which Israel should have produced. The tower suggests Jehovah's watchful care for his people.

Why do you have a tower and a vineyard? It's for protection. Keep the wild animals, boars, foxes out. You're going to protect it because it takes a while to produce grapes, right? Six, seven years maybe before they produce.

And grapes have to be picked at just the right time. It's a very delicate product. When I used to work at the winery, we'd pick the grapes in the early morning before it got too hot.

[16:24] And then he'd wait for the grapes to get a certain sweetness, a certain sugar content. Then you got the most out of them. But you couldn't wait too long. You'd lose your crop. So there's a lot to it, you know.

Psalms 80, verses 3 to 14. Let's go down to verse 8 in Psalm 80.

You brought a vine out of Egypt. You drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground for it. It took deep root and filled the land. The mountains were covered with its shade.

The mighty cedars with its branches. It sent out its branches to the sea and its roots to the river. It shoots to the river. Why then have you broken down its walls so that all who pass by along the way pluck its fruit?

The boar from the forest ravages it and all that move in the field feed on it. Turn, O God of hosts. Look down from heaven and see. Have regard for this vine. So Israel is presented as this vine taken out of Egypt.

[17:26] Planted to be a beautiful thing. And it goes, the grape vines go beyond just a regular grape vine that you would see in it. It provides shade to the cedars.

You know, the cedars are big trees. And yet, God said He wanted it to be a blessing, a really great thing. The vineyard of the Lord destroyed.

This is Isaiah 5, verses 1 to 7. When God thinks of His people, Israel, or you and I, you know, to Him, we're beloved.

Right? We're beloved. And He wants to, us to flourish. And where is the problem with us flourishing?

Is it with God? Or is it with us? It's me. It's you. You're the problem. But God does all this.

[18:26] And we'll see this in this parable today where He plants this vineyard. And He takes all this effort to produce a great crop. And you and I don't measure up to that a lot of times, right?

Because we're human. We're frail. But as Ted mentioned something, you know, God is always reaching out to us. I believe that in the Scripture you can often find a lot of times whenever there is God judging somebody or asking what's going on, God speaking directly to man, Adam, where are you?

Three times he'll ask. Peter, three times you denied me. Three times you love me. That's all you got, Peter? Love? A little bit of love? I'll take it. I believe God always keeps extending that grace to us.

Isaiah 5. The reason I'm reading these verses in the Old Testament is because the scribes and Pharisees knew the Scriptures and they knew these verses and they knew who Jesus was taught to when we see what he says to them.

And listen to the kind words. Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard. My beloved has a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

[19:37] He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines. He built a watchtower in the midst of it. He hewn out a wine vat in it or a cistern and he looked for it to yield grapes but it yielded wild grapes.

Verse 5. And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge and it shall be devoured. I will break down its wall. It shall be trampled down.

I will make it a waste. It shall not be pruned or hoed and briars and thorns shall grow up. I will also command the clouds that they will not rain upon it. for the vineyard of the Lord of hosts verse 7 of Isaiah is the house of Israel and the men of Judah are as pleasant planting and he looked for justice but behold bloodshed for righteousness but behold an outcry.

what a judgment what a statement about the people of Israel. I'm going to say the answer to the parable ahead of reading the parable because I think sometimes if you're like me I like to hear what the solution is before the problem or what is the end and then hear the beginning.

Does that make sense? You know like when I hear on the radio I'm driving in the morning in traffic if I'm having to drive up St. Louis County or whatever and you hear the traffic report well on Highway 170 and you're just brain dead you know and out in St. Charles County you're not listening you're not listening and then all of a sudden it says well 270 northbound and you're like and then they're on to Highway 55 south and you're like what did they say about 270 northbound?

[21:19] I'm at 44 and 270 going north and I didn't hear it. Now if they would say and I really wrote this out because you know this is how I think if they would say traffic hold on if it was me giving the traffic report I'd say it like this are you headed northbound on Highway 270?

On northbound 270 as you approach Manchester Road traffic is backed up to Big Bend the traffic on 270 just north of Big Bend is moving slow and the right lane is shut down due to an accident. I think knowing the solution first is helpful. Right? I hate it when they say blah blah blah there's a car parked on the right side of the highway at Manchester Road and 270 you know and you're like you don't hear I didn't hear what's going on?

you know so anyway so the conclusion of this parable is verse 45 to 46 when the chief priest and the Pharisees heard his parables they perceived that he was speaking about them and although they were seeking to arrest him they feared the crowds because they held him to be a prophet these religious leaders clearly understood what he was talking about and who he was referring to however again they reject him and develop a plan to kill him you could look up Hebrews chapter 11 verse 32 to 12.3 let's go there briefly this this is what the writer here says about Israel and everything going up to it go to this talking about anyway verse 37 some were stoned they were sawn in two were tempted were slain with the sword they wondered about in sheepskins goatskins being destitute afflicted tormented these are like prophets of Israel of whom the world was not worthy they wandered in desert and mountains in dens and caves and on the earth chapter 12 of Hebrews therefore we also since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witness let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God so we see these prophets and these people that God appointed being rejected and then of course he sends his son and he's rejected you can look up these other verses

I have let's read this parable one last thing before I read it in the gospels we learn of Jesus' fate at the hands of sinful men these Jewish leaders and their spineless followers along with a compromised leader have rejected and will reject God's only son Jesus Christ they will humiliate torture whip and sentence Jesus to death ultimately they will crucify the son of God in open humiliation he was hung on a cross and people could pass by hurl insults at him as they made an open and public shame of him so it's hard to read those those comments and not think about the Lord Jesus and everything he went through for us because we sin but the effort he took to redeem us let's read this parable

[25:40] Matthew 21 33 to 46 here another parable there's a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it dug a winepress in it and built a tower and he leased it to the vine dressers

and went into a far country now in the vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the vine dressers that they might receive its fruit and the vine dressers took his servants beat one killed one stoned another again he sent other servants more than the first and they did likewise to them then last of all they sent his son saying this they will respect my son but when the vine dressers saw the son they said among themselves this is the heir come let us kill him and seize his inheritance so they took him cast him out of the vineyard and killed him therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes what will he do to these vine dressers very clear parable isn't it very simple the religious leader said to him he will destroy those wicked men miserably and lease his vineyard to other vine dressers who will render to him the fruit in their seasons they're speaking about themselves yeah what a deal

Jesus said to them have you never read the scriptures I just went back to Isaiah right in Psalms Israel is a vineyard planted by the Lord and then he tells them he says the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone this was the Lord's doing it's marvelous in our eyes therefore I say to you the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it and whoever falls on this stone will be broken but on whoever it falls on it will grind him to powder when the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables they perceived they were talking of him of them but when they sought to lay hands on him they feared the multitudes because they took him for a profit these guys are wimps aren't they they don't have a backbone they just are so entrenched in the system that's been set up that they won't even repent to the God of the universe God in the flesh they won't even change their mind and follow Christ they go ahead with their scheme they loved pomp circumstances power political stature more than they loved God and they destroyed the people the sheep were not fed they were horrible shepherds right it's interesting I really believe that as we look into after the resurrection of Jesus Christ and you get into the book of Acts you will see that this kingdom the gospel is given to these apostles who go out into the world and they proselytize first in Jerusalem Judea Samaria and to the other most parts of the earth and then we see that it is no longer just to the Jews only

God never intended that anyway but it went to the Gentiles also that God may be and later we'll learn that God may be all in all that we may become all children of God by faith through Jesus you know but you'll see that this setting aside of Israel happened people of Israel and if you follow the scriptures properly you'll see that is laid out really well in Romans 9 verse 30 it says what shall we say then that the Gentiles did not pursue righteousness have attained it that is a righteousness that is by faith but the Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law why because they did not pursue it by faith but it was based on works they have stumbled over the stumbling stone as written behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling a rock of offense everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame if the musicians want to come up we will begin to wrap this up here in his commentary

William MacDonald says about verse 44 verse 44 says whoever falls on this stone will be broken but whoever falls will be ground to powder he said in the first part of this verse the stone is on the ground the second part is descending from above this suggests the two advents of Christ when he came the first time the Jewish leaders stumbled over him were broken to pieces when he comes again he will descend in judgment scattering his enemies like dust in the Schofield reference Bible he states it this way to Israel Christ coming not as a splendid monarch but in the form of a servant is a stumbling stone and a rock of a fence and I have a bunch of verses listed there on your handout to the church Christ is the foundation stone and the head of the corner you could do a whole study on how important that corner stone is in the buildings back then it was load bearing it kept the corner it kept the building square not a carpenter

[31:26] I'm not a finished carpenter I'm a RV guy you don't have to be straight you don't use levels yeah and but a corner stone back then you built around it and it was load bearing and the corner stone it says about Jesus they rejected he was rejected you know if it wasn't good enough the architect would say this is not going to work it's not going to hold this building up to the gentile world powers he is to be the smiting stone of destruction you can read that in Daniel Israel stumbled

over Christ the church is built upon Christ gentile world dominion will be broken by Christ threefold thing about the stumbling stone or the stone Israel stumbled over Christ the church is built upon Christ he's our cornerstone gentile world dominion will be broken by Christ in the future one day God's going to come

Jesus is going to come back in judgment in conclusion I hope this study was a benefit to you it's hard for me to imagine all powerful God Emmanuel allowing sinful man to put him to death and not fight back I can't imagine not fighting back can you I can't imagine that moment where those soldiers raised those hands with the power strength and air that God gave them and whipped my back I would not have taken that you know I'm pretty nice guy I say but don't put me in a corner I'll come out fighting that's just a natural response but Jesus just took it took it all took all that punishment to redeem us to have this conversation you know for

Jesus to have this conversation with the very ones who knew would lead him to a cruel death and not stopping it is an absolute brave heroic selfless act isn't it in total humility he emptied himself to the point of death even the death of a cross Lord we thank you for your word we thank you how pointed it was today for those who heard it and we can put ourselves in those characters maybe we're like this tenants of the of the fields of the vine vineyard that don't give you the produce you deserve and we allow it to go unkempt!

and produce briars and wild grapes and you want more than that and we thank you that you died on the cross for our sins amen amen Thank you.