

Luke 20:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

Analysis

He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid—Jesus pronounces the judgment: the owner will "come" (ἐλεύσεται, eleusetai, indicating future certainty) and "destroy" (ἀπολέσει, apolesei, utterly ruin) the wicked tenants, giving the vineyard to "others" (ἄλλοις, allois). The destruction is complete and just—they forfeited stewardship by murdering the heir. The "others" prophetically indicates the gospel's extension to Gentiles (Acts 13:46, Romans 11:11-24).

The crowd's response—"God forbid" (μὴ γένοιτο, mē genoito, literally "may it not be!")—reveals horror at the implication. Either they recognize that Israel's rejection of Messiah will bring judgment, or they reject the notion that God would transfer His covenant promises to outsiders. Their reaction shows they've grasped the parable's meaning: Jesus is the Son, the leaders are the wicked tenants, and judgment is coming. Yet mere recognition without repentance changes nothing.

Historical Context

This prophecy was literally fulfilled. In 70 AD, Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the temple after the Jewish revolt. The religious system centered on temple sacrifice ended permanently. The vineyard—representing God's covenant people and kingdom—was indeed given to "others": the church composed of both Jews and Gentiles. The gospel went to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul explained that

Gentiles were grafted into Israel's olive tree (Romans 11:17-24), inheriting the promises through faith in Jesus.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the transfer of the vineyard to others demonstrate that God's purposes cannot be thwarted by human rebellion?
2. What does the crowd's "God forbid" reveal about recognizing truth without acting on it?
3. How should the sobering reality that God will accomplish His purposes with or without us shape our faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

ἐλεύσεται	καὶ	ἀπολέσει	τοὺς	γεωργοὺς	τούτους	καὶ
He shall come	and	destroy	G3588	husbandmen	these	and
G2064	G2532	G622		G1092	G5128	G2532
δώσει	τὸν	ἀμπελῶνα	ἄλλοις	ἀκούσαντες	δὲ	εἶπον,
shall give	G3588	the vineyard	to others	when they heard	And	it they said
G1325		G290	G243	G191	G1161	G2036
Μὴ	γένοιτο					
God forbid	G1096					
G3361						

Additional Cross-References

Luke 19:27 (Parallel theme): But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Acts 13:46 (References God): Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Matthew 21:41 (Parallel theme): They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

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