

## GOD CARES FOR HIS PEOPLE

Jesus told this story, "Once there was a man who owned a vineyard where grapes are grown. He needed help with the land, so he hired farmers to help. But, they didn't take care of the vineyard. And, when he sent his servants to tell them, they killed the servants. He even sent his son, but they killed him, too."

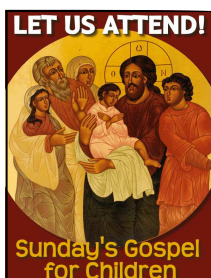
Jesus told this story to teach a lesson. He was telling the Jewish leaders that they were not taking care of God's people. He knew they would even kill Him, like the owner's son. But Jesus rose from the dead and became the new leader of God's people.



Icon courtesy of Iconographics ([www.theologic.com](http://www.theologic.com))

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. To whom was Jesus telling this story?
2. The land owner got the land all ready for the tenants to use. What would he get for letting the tenants use the land?
3. When it was time for the fruit to be ready, the land owner sent some servants to get his fruit. What happened?
4. When the group of servants was not able to get the land owner's fruit, whom did he send? Why?
5. What did the tenants do to the land owner's son? Why did they do that?
6. Jesus told this story to teach the leaders a lesson. What did He want them to know? Does God take care of His people?
7. The next time the bishop visits your parish, listen for the prayer when he asks God to "look down, O Lord, upon this vineyard..." He is praying for your parish. YOU are part of God's vineyard, too!



*Let Us Attend!* is published by the **Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education** ([www.antiochian.org](http://www.antiochian.org)). If you would like information on our present programs and future initiatives, contact Mrs. Carole Buleza at [aodce@antiochian.org](mailto:aodce@antiochian.org). We gratefully acknowledge support from the Order of St. Ignatius which funds, in part, the work of the Department.



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# JESUS IS THE NEW LEADER

One day, our Lord Jesus Christ told a parable, a story with a special meaning, to some of the important leaders in the Hebrew faith. He told them, "Once upon a time, there was a land owner who planted a vineyard. He worked very hard to make it nice: he planted a hedge around it to protect it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower where someone could watch over the vineyard. Then, he lent the vineyard to tenants, in exchange for some of the fruit that they would grow there, and he went away.

When it was time for the fruit to be ready, the land owner sent three servants to the tenants to ask for his fruit. When the tenants saw the servants coming, they wanted to keep all of the fruit, so they beat one servant, killed another, and threw stones at the third one.

When the land owner found out what the tenants had done, he sent more servants than he had sent the first time. The tenants did the same thing to these servants! The land owner thought, "I will send my son to get the fruit. The tenants will obey him because he is my son!"

But, when the tenants saw who was coming to get the fruit, they said to each other, "He's the one that will own this land one day. If we kill him, we'll get the land to ourselves and will not have to listen to the land owner any more!" So, they threw the son out of the vineyard and killed him."

Then, our Lord Jesus Christ turned to the important leaders and asked them, "Now what do you think that the land owner will do with these tenants?"

They said, "Well, he will put them all to death, and let someone better be in charge of the vineyards!"

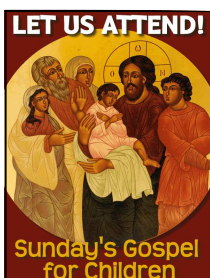
Jesus told the leaders this story to teach them a lesson. He wanted them to know that they were not taking care of God's people in the way that they should have. He wanted them to know that He knew they would kill Him one day. He also wanted them to know that God would take care of his people, his "vineyard," even if they would not.



Icon courtesy of Iconographics (www.theologic.com)

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. To whom was Jesus telling this story?
2. The land owner got the land all ready for the tenants to use. What would he get for letting the tenants use the land?
3. When it was time for the fruit to be ready, the land owner sent some servants to get his fruit. What happened?
4. When the second group of servants was not able to get the land owner's fruit, whom did he send? Why?
5. What did the tenants do to the land owner's son? Why did they do that?
6. Jesus told this story to teach the leaders a lesson. What did He want them to know? Does God take care of His people?
7. The next time the bishop visits your parish, listen for the prayer when he asks God to "look down, O Lord, upon this vineyard..." He is praying for your parish. YOU are part of God's vineyard, too!



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# THE TENANTS OF THE VINEYARD

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The Lord spoke this parable. "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country.

"When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

"But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and collect his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

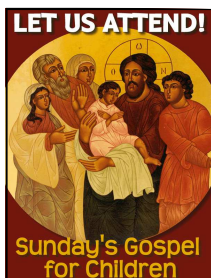
"When therefore the owner of the Vineyard comes, what will he do with his tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give them the fruits in their seasons."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. At the beginning of this Gospel passage, what did the householder do, before lending his land out to tenants and leaving for another country? Did the tenants have all that they needed, to do what they needed to do to pay the householder?
2. How did the tenants respond when the householder sent servants to collect his fruit? What about when he sent more servants?
3. Why did the householder send his own son to collect the fruit? What did the tenants do, this time?
4. Jesus was telling this parable to some of the religious leaders in Israel. Why do you think Jesus was telling it to them? What did He want them to think about?
5. If the householder in the story represented God, and the land represented the people of Israel, who do you think the tenants represented? Who had been asked to care for the people of Israel? When the "householder" (God) sent His own Son (Jesus), did the real-life "tenants" recognize and honor Him?
6. Do you think the religious leaders were happy about what Jesus was saying?
7. What about you? When God (or an adult who is acting in your life on His behalf) lets you know about something that you are not doing right, do you ignore Him? Do you get angry? Or do you receive His correction and make changes to do what is right?



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# THE TENANTS OF THE VINEYARD

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Householder, Tenants, People

Jesus: Have you never read in the scriptures: "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

Narrator: The Lord spoke this parable.

Jesus: There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country.

When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying,

Householder: They will respect my son.

Jesus: But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves,

Tenants: This is the heir; come, let us kill him and collect his inheritance.

Jesus: And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

When therefore the owner of the Vineyard comes, what will he do with his tenants?

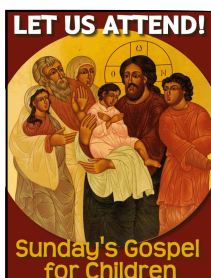
Narrator: They said to him,

People: He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give them the fruits in their seasons.

Narrator: Jesus said to them,



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# THE FATHER'S VINEYARD

The Lord spoke this parable. "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country.

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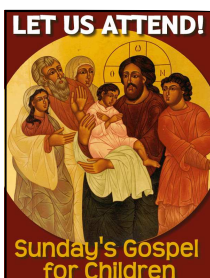
vineyard to other tenants who will give them the fruits in their seasons."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the

scriptures: "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What is a tenant farmer?
2. What does a tenant farmer pay to the landlord?
3. In this story, which is an allegory, there are many "characters" who represent real-life players at the time of Jesus.
4. In the story, which group of characters gets killed? These are the prophets.
5. Who do you think the landlord's son is? He is also the cornerstone referred to in the last paragraph.
6. The vineyard is Israel, given to the religious leaders for their care. Why were the Jewish leaders angry after hearing this story?



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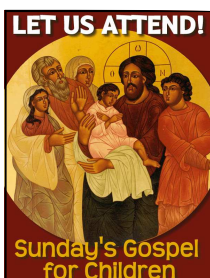
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7. Does this story have a message for us?



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