

## ***The Parable of the Evil Tenants***

As usual, the chief priests and the scribes along with the elders were try to trap Jesus with a trick question. After Jesus handles their question, perfectly as the perfect son of God would, He told those around him a parable. The parable was that of a man who owned a vineyard and lent it to the tenants (Luke 20:9). The master of the vineyard then attempts three times to retrieve what rightfully belonged to him; he sends a one servant, that was beaten and sent away empty-handed (v.10), then an other servant, that was not only beaten but treated shamefully and sent away (v.11), then a third servant, that was treated the same (v.12). The master began to contemplate, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him." (v.13). But the tenants did not feel the same, "they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him." (v. 14-15). Imagine the scene that is playing out, first the attempt to ensnare Jesus, he easily evades the attempt, and then he begins to reveal this parable. Throughout the parable the men became drawn in by the story. Then Jesus asks and answers a rhetorical question, "What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." (v.15-16). The purpose of the parable then became evident to the chief priests, scribes, and elders, "When they heard this, they said, "Surely not!" (v.16). What would we do in this situation, avoid these Jews? Change the subject? start a fight? Jesus then looks directly at them and address this problem head on, "What then is this that is written: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?" Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, git will crush him." (v.17-18). Even though the men were not happy to hear this, Jesus did not disguise the truth. He did not beat around the bush, but he dealt with the issue at hand while it was still fresh in everyone's minds. We are told in James 4:17, "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." If we know that there is something we can do good or something we need to correct it is our obligation to do it, "let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." (James 5:20).