

Aesop's Fables are a collection of moral tales credited to Aesop, a story-teller and a slave who is thought to have lived in Greece between 620 BC and 560 BC. Examples of his stories are: *The Tortoise and the Hare*, *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* and *The Ant and the Grasshopper*.

Perhaps the best known fable in this collection is *The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs*. Wherein a couple owned a goose that laid a golden egg daily. In their desire for more, they kill the goose, and inside find only ... what you normally find inside of a goose. And by their own actions, lose what they had.

One of the morals of this story is a failure to consider the ultimate consequences of ones' actions.

In the first reading, the brothers of Joseph are intent on ridding themselves of their nuisance of a little brother. In their eyes, he's spoiled, haughty, and all-around irritating. Seeing an opportunity, they fake his death and sell him off to a passing caravan.

Sounded like a good thing at the time.

Yet a consequence of their short-sighted action causes great pain and sorrow to their father - who in his old age mourns the loss of his youngest and most-beloved son.

In the Gospel, we hear another story, about a landowner, his vineyard, and his unruly tenants. The more the tenants get away with, the bolder they become; killing messengers ... and ultimately the landowner's son.

Seemed like a good thing at the time.

Our Lord's story parallels in many ways the fifth chapter of Isaiah - in which the landowner receives no produce from his well-tended vineyard which only yields sour grapes. The prophet Isaiah ends his story by stating - The vineyard of the Lord is the House of Israel.

Most certainly the chief priests and elders of the people knew this - yet they answer Jesus' question almost as if they don't realize that they are the bad tenants.

Temptation often clouds the ultimate consequences of our own actions. Sadly, we live in a post-Christian world. We must stand against an increasingly secular culture, and carefully examine our actions ... and give solid thought to their consequences.

As we move more deeply into this Holy Season of Lent, let us reflect not only on our behaviors that influence our actions; but also on our habits - the actions we may not even notice. Let us ask the Lord, as the master of the vineyard, to prune us, as it were, of anything that stands between Him and us.