

Zion's King Shall Reign Victorious! - 4

We saw last time how those who saw Jesus as the king of the Jews were taught this fact by Jesus in the parable of the vineyard, Luke 20:9. The vineyard to which Jesus refers is identified by Isaiah 5:7 to be "the house of Israel."

God had promised the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:18) to Abraham and his offspring (Jesus, Galatians 3:16). Abraham, his son Isaac, and his grandson Jacob (later named Israel) lived as sojourners or visitors in Canaan. Afterwards God sent Jacob and his family into Egypt where they multiplied and were enslaved.

God then sent Moses to rescue the descendants of Israel from Egypt, and prepared them for entry into Canaan, which they forcibly occupied under Joshua who acted under God's direction. The tribes of Israel then settled into their inheritance, which God portrayed as His Vineyard - Isa 5.

From that Vineyard, God expected a harvest of spiritual fruit - and that was for His chosen nation to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength," and to "love your neighbor as yourself" - Mark 12:30.

But their response is described in Isaiah 5:7, "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, weeping."

God had educated the nation with His Law, giving them "the wisdom that is from above" which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." But instead of the sweet spiritual fruit, they produced "bitter envy and self-seeking in their hearts," bringing "confusion and every evil thing" - James 3:14.

When God sent the prophets to warn His people, "they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy." Then the Babylonians burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions - 2 Chronicles 36:16.

Sadly, said Jesus, this history was going to be repeated. This body of men who were granted control of the Jewish state which was restored during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, decided that "it is expedient FOR US that one man (Jesus) should die," otherwise, "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both OUR PLACE and nation" - John 11:48 - in the words of Jesus' parable, "This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours" - Luke 20:14.

"Then from that day on they plotted to put Him to death" - John 11:53. Managing to arrest him with Judas' help, they asked the Roman governor Pilate for the death penalty. Asked by Pilate if he claimed to be a king, Jesus' reply was "My kingdom is not of this world (Greek, kosmos)."

To make this clear Jesus added, "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews" - John 18:36. This showed Pilate that Jesus was not planning to take Caesar's job, nor even king Herod's.

But Jesus was not telling Pilate that his kingdom is somewhere else rather than on the earth.