

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

BIBLICAL TRUTH CONCERNING THE STATE OF ISRAEL

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PART 7A: THE MESSIAH ARRIVES

We learned from the last sermon that life in Judea at the time when Jesus was born was extremely difficult. Let me restate some of the most burning issues of that day including the problems with their rulers.

1. Judea was a Roman province. King Herod the Great died when Jesus was three years and his kingdom under Roman control was divided into three parts, each ruled by one of his sons.
 - a. Herod Archelaus was given Judea, Samaria and Edom.
 - b. Herod Antipas was given Galilee and Peraea (east of the Jordan River).
 - c. Philip was given Trachonitis, Batanaea and Auranitis (the area between Decapolis and Damascus).

Philip and Antipas were both given the title tetrarchs while Archelaus was given the title ethnarch. Tetrarch is Greek and means "ruler of a quarter." Ethnarch is also Greek and means "people ruler" and had a higher status than a tetrarch.

Philip was the most benign of the three sons and ruled his area from 4 B.C. until he died in 34 A.D.

Antipas reigned in Galilee and Peraea until 39 A.D. but was removed by the Roman Emperor Caligula who accused him of having been too friendly with the enemies of Rome.

Archelaus only reigned for ten years, from 4 B.C. to 6 A.D., when he was removed by Rome at the request of the Jewish population who accused him of being too cruel.

Compare this with the length of the life of Jesus, who was born 7 B.C. and died on the cross around 26 A.D.

2. Judea, Samaria and Edom were lumped together as the Province of Judea and was ruled by Roman Prefects from 6 A.D. to 36 A.D. History doesn't give us the names of these men, but the last Prefect to rule Judea was Pontius Pilate, who ruled from 26 A.D. to 36 A.D.

It was Pilate who ordered the crucifixion of Jesus. In 36 A.D. he faced a revolt in Samaria crushed the revolt on Mount Gerizim. The Samaritans appealed to the Roman legate of Syria claiming cruelty and oppression. Pilate was ordered back to Rome to stand trial. At the trial in 39 A.D. he was ordered by Emperor Caligula to kill himself.



According to Roman law in Judea, any Roman soldier could force a Jew to carry equipment for him for one mile or to the destination the soldier and his group were going. It didn't matter if the Jewish person had an urgent task to perform, he still had to drop everything he was doing and do the bidding of the Roman soldier. The Jewish people hated this law. **Matthew 5:41; 27:27-32**

There were many babies born to Jewish prostitutes who serviced the Roman officers and soldiers. At times the soldiers would rape Jewish women. Many Christians have read **John 8:48-53** and never understood accusation leveled at Jesus by the Jews. Most Christians don't have access to the Talmudic writings so let me share what they say about Jesus. There are several versions but here are the most damning:

- a) Mary the mother of Jesus had committed adultery.
- b) Mary played the harlot with carpenters.
- c) Mary was seduced by a Roman soldier by the name of Penthera who made her pregnant.¹

Regardless what version is believed by Jewish people, Jesus would still be a bastard and classified as a Samaritan, which was a half-breed offspring between a Hebrew and a Gentile.

THE FEUD BETWEEN JEWS AND SAMARITANS

Samaria was the old heartland of the Northern Kingdom and sandwiched in between Galilee in the north and Judea in the south. In the west it is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea and on the east by the Jordan River.

When the Northern Kingdom (Israel) was destroyed in 721 B.C., the Assyrian king forcefully resettled them in different parts of the Assyrian Empire and a number of different nationalities of people living in Assyria were forced to move and settle in Israel. This was done to break the back of the people of Israel and destroy them as a nation. **2 Kings 17:5-24**

A number of Israelites moved back to resettle Israel once the Assyrian Empire had been destroyed by the Babylonian Empire. But since they had been deeply involved in idolatry and added many rituals from other religions, they became very weak spiritually and totally corrupted. They were not careful in selecting spouses for their children and over time they became a mixed people who were no longer pure Israelites of the ten tribes. They became known as Samaritans since they lived in the province called Samaria. They were hated, despised and looked upon to be worse than Gentiles by the Jews in the Southern Kingdom. They were considered a nation of bastards by the Jewish leadership.

When Ezra came back with a remnant of the Jews in 539 B.C., they went straight to Judea to rebuild the temple. The Samaritans wanted to join the Jews, be part of rebuilding the temple and be able to come and worship and sacrifice at the

¹ THE JEWISH RELIGION: ITS INFLUENCE TODAY, Elizabeth Dilling, Noontide Press, 1983, p.14

temple. But the Jewish leadership rejected their kinsmen from the north and told them that they had no part in God's work on this earth anymore. **Ezra 4:1-3**

Later on there was a purge among the Jews as all women and children of Gentile blood were rejected and driven out from Judea. **Ezra 9:1-15; 10:1-17**

Hate began to grow on both sides after these events, and at the time of Jesus, it was so bad that when Jews from Galilee had to travel to Jerusalem to worship at the temple they would not travel through Samaria but cross into what is today Jordan and travel on the east side of Jordan until they could cross over into Judea. Let us now see how Jesus dealt with this issue:

1. When Jesus first started ministering, He limited it to Jews only. **Matthew 10:5-8**
2. Later on Jesus traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem, and instead of taking the long road through the other side of the River Jordan, He went straight through Samaria. **Luke 9:51-56**
3. Jesus introduced the concept to the Jews that the Samaritans are people also and have value in God's eyes. **Luke 10:25-37**
4. While traveling through Samaria, Jesus healed ten lepers but only one came back to thank Jesus and he was a Samaritan. **Luke 17:11-19**
5. The story of the woman at the well was an earth shaking event in the lives of the apostles and made them think about God loving Samaritans. **John 4:1-42**

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Every believer in Christ must come to the realization that the religion of Judaism is not of God, it never was and never will be! God's intention from the very beginning was to save all people on this earth. **Genesis 12:1-3; 22:16-18**

After Jesus' resurrection He made it clear that He wanted His followers to go out and reach every human being on this planet. **Acts 1:4-8**

The apostle Peter understood this and his disciple Mark could not have written it more clearly. **Mark 16:14-20**

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS MESSAGE?

Any Christian who accepts the doctrine of Christian Zionism is working against God and is rejecting the final work of Jesus Christ on the cross and become a Judaizer! **Galatians 3:1-10**

God doesn't have a special salvation plan for Jews! It simply doesn't exist nor will it exist in the future. There is only one Messiah and that is Jesus Christ! If Christians are not clear on this matter, how can the Jews understand? **John 14:6**

WHO IS JESUS TO YOU?

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?