

Ministers:  
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley  
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Sunday:  
8:00 AM: WGCY  
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:  
7:00 PM: Bible Study

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Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofChrist.com)

**This Past Week:**  
Worship—40  
Wednesday—15  
Contribution—\$665

**For meditation:**  
**Proverbs 28.15–16**  
Government is a  
divine institution,  
but governors can  
be bestial, fool-  
ish, and finally  
abandoned. Note  
what Solomon  
says about each  
of these possibili-  
ties in this  
week's text.

**Radio program:**  
WGCY FM, 106.3  
Sundays at 8 AM

## *The Chapel of Hate*

In *Shadow of the Sword* (Vol. 3, 1876), author Robert Buchanan writes about the “Chapel of Hate.” Out on a French moor was a shrine where people would go to cry down curses on their enemies—such as cheating spouses—asking that the hated one die within a year. Buchanan’s aim was to satirize those who outwardly attended churches where “the Christian light” shone, but inwardly worshiped their malignity at the shrine of hate.

Without question, hate is to blame for crimes without number. But this past Wednesday in Bible class, we read where God said, “I *hate* . . . your feast days” (Amos 5.21). God, said Jeremiah, also hates the abominations of idolatry (Jer. 44.4). If God hates, maybe there’s something to be said in defense of hate.

The great Samuel Johnson spoke of “good hate”; he liked some people precisely because they were excellent haters. Hatred of slavery is what led Wilberforce to rattle the chain that finally did away with slavery in England. By contrast, just recently, three university presidents in a Congressional hearing were unwilling to condemn threats of genocide against Jews. Can you believe it?!

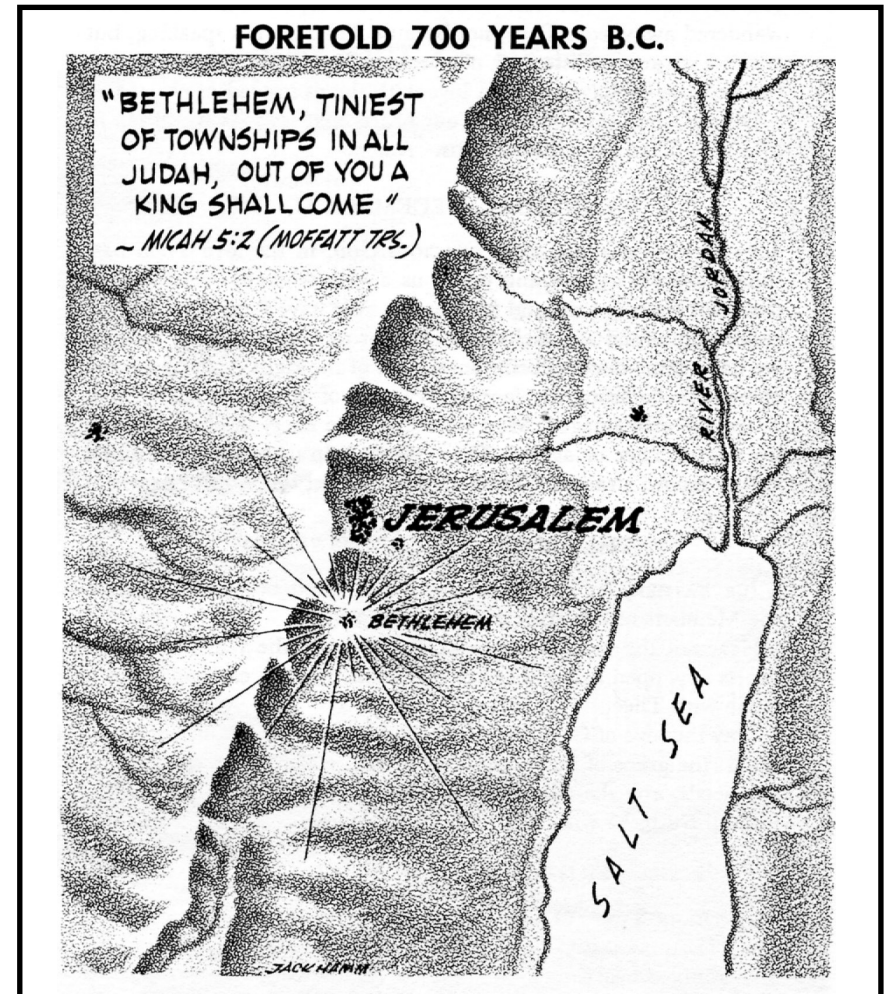
This world needs more good haters. What do I mean by that? I mean what Paul meant when he wrote in Romans 12.9, “Hate what is evil” (NIV). The hatred of evil—the intense, uncompromised hatred of everything corrupt, unjust, and wicked—is what it takes to eradicate entrenched evil.

I pray that God raises up men and women capable of good hate, passionately hating what ought to be hated, hating it enough to work to remove it.

kenny

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: John 1.14

## What happened at Bethlehem?

24 December 2023

## *Tenants who killed the Owner*

For the third time, Mark identifies something Jesus said as a “parable” (3.23, 4.2), and for a second time, His parable is directed against His enemies (3.23). This parable of judgment is perhaps the most scorching thing Christ ever said.

Jesus had humiliated the Jews (11.27–33), and I’m sure they would have liked to have slinked away, but the Lord wouldn’t let them off the hook that easily. He’s not content merely to expose their incompetence, He proceeds to charge them with the worst sin of which they were capable: killing the Son of God.

The story Christ tells isn’t hard to understand. The owner of the vineyard is God; those tending it are the Jews (esp. the Jewish leadership, chief priests and scribes). The servants are the prophets. And the son is the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

All of this is easy enough, but there are some things about the parable not so easily explained. Perhaps the hardest to explain is why the owner would endanger his son by sending him to collect rent from brutal, murderous tenants?

In thinking about this, here are three thoughts I would offer.

***There is no excusing evil.*** As Glover says, there is always rent to pay for privileges. The owner of land has the right to receive rent from those who work and enjoy the fruits of the land. Everyone recognizes the justness of rent. Even those who refuse to pay rent recognize the legitimacy of rent (Matt. 21.41). The owner of the vineyard was patient and willing to forgive what the tenants did, but he wasn’t going to excuse what they did.

***There is no escaping judgment.*** “What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others.” “Whoever stumbles on this Stone gets shattered; whoever the Stone falls on gets smashed” (Matt. 21.44). The Jews knew Christ was talking about them (v 12); do we understand that He’s also talking about us?

***There is no explaining love.*** Why would the owner be so illogical as to send his son to those who killed his servants? The answer is *love*. God’s love for Israel made no sense at all. God didn’t choose Israel because they were big and important—Israel was next to nothing (Deut. 7.7). Why did God choose them? Because He loved them (Deut. 7.8). Isn’t it often the case that love makes sense to nobody but the lover?

Why does God love us, who are next to nothing? Love.

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## *Herodian Masada, 7*

*Continued from last week . . .*

The resourcefulness and courage of the Jews at Jotapata was remarkable, but after forty-seven days of siege, the citadel fell.

Vespasian had learned that the Jewish sentries, exhausted from constant fighting and vigilance, would sometimes fall asleep in the middle of the night. One night, troops were quietly sent up to the wall with ladders; the ramparts were scaled, the sentries overwhelmed, and the Roman army gained entrance to the citadel.

Josephus tells us what happened then.

“Now when the citadel was taken, and the enemy were in the very midst of the city, and when it was already day, yet was not the taking of the city known by those that held it; for a great many of them were fast asleep, and a great mist, which then by chance fell upon the city, hindered those that got up from distinctly seeing the case they were in, till the whole Roman army was gotten in, and they were raised up only to find the miseries they were under; and as they were slaying, they perceived the city was taken. And for the Romans, they so well remembered what they had suffered during the siege, that they spared none, nor pitied any, but drove the people down the precipice from the citadel, and slew them as they drove them down; . . . This provoked a great many, even of those chosen men that were about Josephus, to kill themselves with their own hands; for when they saw that they could kill none of the Romans, they resolved to prevent being killed by the Romans, and got together in great numbers in the utmost parts of the city, and killed themselves” (*Wars of the Jews*, III, vii, 34). Forty-thousand Jews dead . . . siege ended.

The assault on Masada began five years later.

Josephus was the ancient equivalent of the German scientist Werner von Braun—he went over to the other side. Spared by Vespasian, he was made a slave and interpreter. When Vespasian became emperor (AD 69), Josephus was granted freedom. Next to the Bible, his writings are our chief source of information about first-century Judea, the fall of Jerusalem, and the siege of Masada.

kenny

## *News about us*

- Jerry got a good report this week from his checkup, for which we are so grateful to God!
- Karen is in Chicago with her kids.