

RUSSELL SANDERS

4-3-2024

PERSECUTED MEN OF GOD

Jesus warned his followers of persecution. He said in Matthew 5:11-12 [NKJV], ***“Blessed are you when they revile [verbally abuse] and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely [lies and accusations] for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad [in it], for great is your reward in heaven, for so [also] they persecuted the prophets [men of God] who were [in times past] before you.”***

Jesus made a historical reference to Old Testament times of persecution against men of God. Let us look at one specific example from 2 Chronicles 24:15-25.

Judah’s king was Joash, who was generally considered a godly king, and was influenced by the very godly priest Jehoiada. However, when Jehoiada died at the age of 130, the princes of Judah came to Joash to be his counsellors. They shunned God’s temple and set up groves with pagan idols.

God sent prophets to the princes and to King Joash, but they would not listen. When Jehoiada died, The Holy Spirit of God came upon Zechariah, his son. Zechariah rebuked Josiah and the princes [vs. 20] for their transgressions. The princes were offended by this word that came from the Lord, so King Joash had Zechariah stoned to death. [vs. 21-22.]

King Joash paid for his sin. A rather small Syrian army defeated Judah. The other sons of Jehoiada assassinated king Joash upon his bed.

Yes, they persecuted and killed the godly prophets like Jesus said, then they also persecuted and killed Jesus. Just as Joash was punished, shall those that persecute us for bringing forth truth, all in God’s timing. In the meantime, are you prepared for the advancing persecutions and revilements? How will you respond?

Do not fear but be encouraged by your future reward. God will not abandon you. Keep trusting him no matter how bad or painful it may become.

Jesus told us to rejoice in Him when this happens. Rejoice, and declare praises to the name of Jesus that he has accounted us worthy to suffer. [Philippians 1:29.]