

# Biblical Notes — Matthew 21:43

**43 – Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.** (43. διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἀρθήσεται ἀφ’ ὑμῶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ δοθήσεται ἔθνει ποιοῦντι τοὺς καρποὺς αὐτῆς)

“this text does not speak explicitly . . . of Israel’s being rejected, but of the “kingdom of God” being taken from “you”; in Matthew’s view, the saving activity of God continues in that community where taking up the “yoke of the kingdom” means adherence to the Torah as fulfilled in the teaching of Jesus.”

—— M. Eugene Boring, The Gospel of Matthew: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections, in The New Interpreter’s Bible: General Articles & Introduction, Commentary, & Reflections for Each Book of the Bible, Including the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books: Vol. VIII, New Testament Articles, Matthew, Mark (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 415.

“commentators understand this *ethnos* . . . [the term “nation” as used in the Matthew text] . . . as the Gentile Church replacing Israel. Numerous problems beset this interpretation and the supersessionist replacement theology which motivates it. First, the addressees of the parable are unclear. Second . . . in Matthew the vineyard [the Jewish people as a whole] is faultlessly fruitful and only its tenants [the leaders of the people] are unsatisfactory . . . The author of Matthew does not say that . . . believers-in-Jesus are a new or true Israel, nor a replacement for Israel.”

—— Anthony J. Saldarini, Reading Matthew without Anti-Semitism, in D.E. Aune, ed., The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study: Studies in Memory of William G. Thompson, S.J. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 170–172.

“My view of Matt 21:43 is that the kingdom of God would be taken from the current unbelieving nation of Israel and given to a future nation of Israel that would believe. Matthew 23: 37-39 indicates several important truths that support this understanding. Verses 37-38 indicate that Jerusalem, the representative city of Israel and the people of Israel, would be judged despite Jesus’ attempts to gather it like a hen gathers her chicks. But verse 39 offers hope: “For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say,” He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One !” While the current nation of Israel would be judged, Jesus says the day will come when another generation of Israel will cry out in acceptance of its Messiah.”

—— Michael J. Vlach, Has the Church Replaced Israel? (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2014), 12.