

# Astounding Three and One-Half Year Ministry of Jesus Christ II

Fred R. Coulter—November 21, 2009

The other day I was thinking: Isn't it amazing that when you look at the Bible, from beginning to ending, like I covered this morning, that the focal point of everything is the three and a half year ministry of Jesus Christ. The focal point of that is what? *The Passover, the Sabbath, and the Wave Sheaf Offering Day* during the Passover/Unleavened Bread week. Also as I have seen a pattern here that God not only uses the Holy Days, but when He brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, the Passover was in the middle of the week and the wave sheaf offering was on the following first day of the week. The first day of Unleavened Bread following the Passover, God used every one of those to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt and then brought them to Mount Sinai on Pentecost.

Likewise in the week that Jesus was crucified, we have the Passover in the middle of the week and that's the only sequence of Passover where you have three days and three nights in the grave; then the resurrection Sabbath and then the wave sheaf offering the first day of the week. The whole Bible focuses in on the three and a half year ministry of Jesus Christ. Think about that—only three and a half years. The world could not tolerate it, even right at the beginning they were seeking how they might kill Him.

So finally, according to the prophecies that God gave, and as we'll review one here, let's come to Romans 5:6 and let's see as we have tied that in with the other Scriptures, that Christ was slain, that is, it was planned for Him to be slain before the foundation of the world. So let's understand another truism with God, which is this: if God plans it and pronounces it, it is what? *As good as done!* Let's ask a question: What are the Feast days of God called? *Appointed times*—right?

Let's come here to Romans 5:6: "For even when we were without strength, **at the appointed time** Christ died for *the* ungodly." *At the set, appointed time.* The whole focal point of Jesus' ministry was the Passover. Remember what Jesus said. He said that the hour has come and He knew it, because He foreordained it.

Now let's look at some of the prophecies in the Old Testament showing that He would die. We've covered some of those where He was to be born, grow up, and be taught of the Father, and so forth, but let's look at these Scriptures, which talk about His death. Let's come first of all to Psalm 22, because what this is going to do, this astounding three and a half years of Jesus' ministry culminating

in the Passover, this also shows the unity of Scripture between the Old and New Testament. You cannot have the Old Testament set aside by itself. As one man said, 'Well, the Old Testament doesn't mention anything about Christ.' I wonder where he got that. It's *filled* with the things concerning Jesus Christ. That's why one-third of the New Testament are quotes from the Old Testament to verify and prove who was Jesus Christ.

Psalm 22:1, because this tells us an awful lot about His personal suffering while He was on the cross dying. A lot of people don't like the word *cross*, but that's what it was. It was a stake and a cross, because the Romans executed so many people that they had stakes like telephone poles in the ground. On these stakes they had big iron hooks on which to hang the crossbar on which a person was crucified. So when it talks about that Jesus took His cross, what He did He was carrying the crossbeam on which they would nail Him, and then they would lift that up and put it in those big hooks and then nail His feet to the stake.

So here are some of the very words of Christ. I've often wondered what David thought after he wrote this Psalm, because some of the things cannot apply to David directly, some of the things cannot apply to David directly, but they are a prophecy of Jesus Christ and His suffering. So let's read it. You'll probably see in your margin that for Psalm 22:1 there's a reference to Mark 15:34 where Jesus said this: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me, and *why are You so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?*"

Can you imagine that, that the One who was God, with God, created all things, became God manifested in the flesh, had to in order to save His creation, in order to save mankind (as we will see), to be the Redeemer and Savior of mankind, He had to experience the abandonment of God toward Him for the time He was on the cross, so that it would be. He had to do this by Himself, as a human being, and God turning His back on Him, because there was the darkness that covered the earth. God the Father did not want to bear to see this, but also there had to be that separation so that there would be the forsaking of Jesus while He was dying. Many people in their lives feel, 'Where is God? God has forsaken me.' Even some people say, 'God has forsaken the earth.' And of course all atheists don't even believe in God. Well, there's a couple Psalms about that.

"O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not answer; and in the night season, and am not

silent. Yet You are Holy, O You enthroned upon the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them.... [That is when they trusted in God. At other times they didn't.] ...They cried to You and were delivered; they trusted in You and were not ashamed" (vs 2-5).

Now what we're going to see, that's part of the prophecy of why He died to deliver us, or to save us. Now here's how Jesus felt: "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised by the people.... [Isn't that amazing! He came to His own creation, He came to the descendants of David of the tribe of Judah and they didn't receive Him. Now you can also read this in Matt. 27:39.] ...All who see Me mock Me; they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, 'he trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!'.... [And the priests and the Pharisees were the ones out there doing it. Even one of the robbers who was executed with Him, crucified with Him, starting jeering Jesus and the other one said, 'Look, don't do this. We're here because we deserve it, He because He did nothing.' Now then it refers back to His birth, and of course, that was at the set time as well.] ...I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother's womb. Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help" (vs 6-11).

I often think of this. I wonder if Satan and the demons were circling around the cross. I wonder if they were mocking Him as well. Certainly they were inspiring the mocking of the people. And of course He would be able to see that. I believe this is a prophecy of it, v 12: "Many bulls have encircled around Me; strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me. They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and roaring lion.... [And who is a roaring lion but Satan the devil. 'He goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.'] ...I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels: (vs 12-14). Just total weakness; everything gone. Then, of course, when the spear was thrust into His side, and went up and pierced His heart, that took out the last bit of blood and then out came blood and water.

"Dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death.... [And He had to suffer that way. He had to suffer more than any other man, which He would because He never sinned.] ...I can count all My bones... [The scourging stripped the flesh right away from His ribs and He could look down and see His bones.] ...they look and gloat over Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture.... [God can make even carnal people,

the soldiers, who were involved in this. They didn't know that they were fulfilling the Scriptures—did they? They didn't say, 'Well, it says in the Old Testament that we cast lots. Okay, everybody over here, let's cast lots so we can make it be fulfilled.' No, they did it.] ...But You, O LORD, be not far from Me; O My strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver My soul from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth... [Satan again] ...yea, and from the wild ox's horns. You have answered Me" (vs 16-21).

Now then He declares victory and He did overcome and was victorious through His death. "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will praise You" (v 22). So that's something! That's what Christ is going to do at the resurrection—isn't it? The great congregation that is resurrected, meet Christ in the air on the Sea of Glass, and God the Father comes down, and we're all presented to God the Father. Can you imagine what kind of ceremony that is going to be?

Verse 23: "You who fear the LORD, praise Him; all of you; the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and stand in awe of Him all of you, the seed of Israel, For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; and He has not hidden His face from him, but when he cried to Him, He heard. From You comes my praise in the great congregation; I will pay my vows before those who fear Him" (vs 23-25). So that's quite a thing concerning the crucifixion of Christ.

Now let's come to Isaiah 53:1 and this is something that the Jews could not understand, because they would read the prophecies that God is coming to the earth to set up His kingdom. And yet Jesus was born as a human being and they couldn't put the two together. How can God be a man? But that's the whole thing that we covered this morning. Let's begin in v 1. "Who has believed our report?... [Because the report is an incredible report—right? That God would die for the sins of His creation in order to save them. Jesus even said, 'Every sin and blasphemy that men do against the Son of Man will be forgiven. The only one is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, which is blaspheming God the Father.' So 'who has believed our report?'] ...And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?"

Now then it talks about Him growing up and we'll see something else concerning His growing up here, too. "For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him" (v 2).

Now just turn back here to Isaiah 50:4. Here's how Jesus was taught and educated. God

didn't leave it to evil God-rejecting tradition-keeping rabbis to teach Him. "The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned, to know to help the weary *with* a word. He awakens *Me* morning by morning... [That's how Jesus was taught and Jesus said, 'I speak the things that the Father has taught Me.] ...He awakens my ear to hear as one being taught.... [Now notice His attitude]: ...The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor turned away backwards.'.... [Then it goes from His youth right in to the events leading up to the crucifixion.] ...'I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair... [So that showed He had a beard.] ...I did not hide My face from shame and spitting, for the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore I have not been disgraced. On account of this I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed'" (vs 3-7). So that's quite a prophecy—isn't it? Now we'll see how that ties in here with Isaiah 53 in just a minute.

"*He* is near who justified Me; who will contend with Me? Let us stand together; who is My adversary? Let him come near Me. Behold, the Lord GOD will help Me; who *is* he *who* shall condemn Me? Lo, they all shall grow old like a garment; the moth shall eat them. Who among you fears the LORD, who obeys the voice of His servant, who walks *in* darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely upon his God'" (vs 8-10).

Now let's come back to Isaiah 53. As we go through some of these prophecies, it's just like it says in Isa. 28, 'line up line, here a little, there a little.' We can go one verse talking about His death, another verse talking about His growing up right after that. Here's what we need to realize what Jesus went through, so that we can come to Him. Remember what it says in Heb. 4 that we need to 'come boldly to the throne of grace in time of need so that we may find help and grace. For he was tempted in all temptation such as we have been tempted, *yet without sin*.' So here we see it. How many people in their lives—how many of you in your lives have you felt this way.

Isaiah 53:3: "*He* is despised and rejected of men... [Have you ever said, 'No one cares for me, no one loves me, no one knows who I am, no one knows where I am.' A lot of people.] ...a Man of sorrows... [How many people have been filled with sorrows?] ...and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him... [That is when He was scourged and going through all of this.] ...He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.... [No, they ridiculed Him, just like we saw there in Psa. 22.] ...Surely He has borne our infirmities... [Now it's very interesting how the Jews who do not accept Christ interpret this. They say this means Israel and

this means the Jewish people and in particularly those who survived the Holocaust. They were the offering to God, so that's how they interpret it. But it says, *He*, not *they*. It says, *He*, not *Israel*. It says, *He*, not the *Jews*.] ...But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He* *was* crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed" (vs 3-5). Quite a thing!

Now remember, we're talking about the expansive time in human existence from beginning clear down to the end, and we're focusing in on *one day* that was the 'appointed time' for this and all of these events. So when you take all of the different prophecies from the different ones who were inspired to speak about it, and give the details of it, and they were separated sometimes by hundreds of years and yet they all agree. And yet they all came to pass, like I have in the *Harmony of the Gospels* and we also have in one of the appendices in the Bible, the *Twenty-Eight Prophecies Fulfilled in One Day*.

Now notice, it talks about how we react, how we behave, how we are as people, v 6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." That's why He had to be God manifested in the flesh. And yet in spite of clear Scriptures, especially in the book of John, there are those who say, 'Well, Jesus didn't exist until He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary.' Those who ridicule the virgin birth, the virgin conception, and say, 'Joseph was His father.' That's why you have to understand the Bible and believe God.

Remember this: *It's always wise to believe God, rather than men*, even if their theories sound convincing. Remember Satan was very convincing to Adam and Eve. Good argument: 'You'll become like God.' Well, of course, who would not want to become like God, and isn't that the ultimate of the whole plan of God? *Yes!* So Satan comes along and says, 'I'll give you a benefit.' He doesn't tell them about the sin and the penalty that's going to come.

Verse 7: "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth.... [Now you talk about strength of character, you talk about being able to resist all the pulls of the flesh. Think about how if you were afflicted like that, would you not scream out? *Yes, indeed!*] ...He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.... [It says twice He didn't open His mouth.] ...By oppression and judgment... [*False* judgment—right? *Wrong* judgment—correct?] ...He was taken away; and with His generation who did consider that He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He *was* stricken? Yet, the LORD willed to crush Him and He has put Him

to grief; You shall make His life an offering for sin” (vs 7-10).

Now all of this is in the singular *He*, not in the plural *They*. But notice, there is hope beyond this. And the Bible does this all the time. In the middle of one of the most, cutting and deeply grievous reading of what happened to Christ, now notice: “...He shall see His seed... [Because the plan of God is going forward.] ...He shall prolong His days, and that the purpose of the LORD might prosper in His Hand.... [God always does that. In the midst of trouble, there’s some hope. We can look to God.] ...He shall see of the travail of His soul. He shall be fully satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; and He shall bear their iniquities” (vs 10-11).

Now, because God did this, understand, there is no work, there is no sacrifice, there is no payment of money, there is no payment of anything which can forgive sins of human beings. That’s why all the religions and rituals of people in this world, and even those that God gave to Israel with the tabernacle and the temple, cannot save. Even if they were forgiven, they were only forgiven to the temple. They were not forgiven before God the Father in heaven above unto salvation. So remember that.

Now let’s finish with v 12 here: “Therefore I will divide to Him *a portion* with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He has poured out His soul to death; and He was counted among the transgressors; and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for transgressors.”

Now let’s continue on, let’s come to Isaiah 52:14: “Many were astonished at Him—*for His body was* so disfigured—even His form beyond that of the sons of men.... [Now notice, here the next verse is to save the world by forgiving their sins]: ...So shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths because of Him; for they will see *that* which *was* not told to them; yea, what they had not heard, shall they consider” (vs 14-15).

Let’s see what else it did, too. Let’s come here to Isaiah 42:21: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness sake... [Lived the perfect life.] ...He will magnify the Law and make *it* glorious.” That’s what He did in Matthew 5, 6, and 7 and all through His ministry *to show and teach what was the right way of God and the meaning of the Scriptures*.

Let’s look at some others here. Let’s look at these things concerning His ministry. Come to Isaiah 61. Isn’t it interesting how many things that there are in Isaiah and in the Psalms? Many, many of these are there in these two books. Here we’ll see in just a little bit how He started out His ministry in His

home town. He actually started His ministry after His temptation and recovery from that. He went to the temple and suddenly appeared. Then He was making His way down to Galilee and when He heard that John was put in prison, He went into Galilee and began preaching. So we’ll see that also.

Isaiah 61:1: “‘The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me because the LORD has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the broken hearted... [Why? *Because He experienced that and He can bind up and He can heal.*] ...to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound... [Now that is literal in prisons and that is also figurative by those who are bound in the chains of demonism and released them. And He did that by casting out demons.] ...to preach the acceptable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn’” (vs 1-2).

Now it’s very interesting when we go back to Luke 4, we will see that when He started His ministry He did not read the phrase, ‘and the day of vengeance of our God.’ That’s reserved for His second coming. So here’s a good example of what you have in the Old Testament of ‘line upon line, precept upon precept’, first coming, second coming, all intermingled together. That’s why we need the New Testament to understand the Old Testament and to properly put it together.

Now continuing, v 3: “‘To appoint to those who mourn in Zion, giving to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the mantle of praise for the spirit of heaviness; so that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified.’” So now then it blends in also to the millennial setting. That’s quite something—isn’t it? That’s quite something!

Let’s come to Luke 4 and let’s see where this is fulfilled and He came into Nazareth and we will see what Jesus did. It was also called *His custom*. Luke 4:14: “Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee; and word about Him went out into the entire country around. And He taught in their synagogues, *and* was gloried by all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and according to His custom, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read” (vs 14-16). Now the synagogue was quite different from what we have in churches today. The one doing the speaking was more in the middle of all of the people. The one who would read the scroll, the rabbi would come down and hand the scroll to him, and then he would read while he was standing in the middle.

“And there was given Him *the* book... [or the scroll] ...of the prophet Isaiah; and when He had

unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written... [What we just read.] ... *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; for this reason, He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal those who are brokenhearted, to proclaim pardon to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to send forth in deliverance those who have been crushed... [A little slight difference in the translation of it.] ...To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord'...* [Notice He left off vengeance. That would come later. Now notice what He did, because He knew what He was to do and say, He knew that the Father had sent Him]: ...And after rolling up the scroll *and* delivering it to the attendant, He sat down; and the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him. Then He began to say to them, 'Today... [Now this is astounding!] ...this Scripture is being fulfilled in your ears'" (vs 17-21).

And everyone rushed and said, 'Oh, it's the Messiah,' and bowed down and worshipped and said, 'Oh, this is marvelous!' No, the world could only stand God manifested in the flesh for three and a half years and they were plotting all along how to get rid of Him. Not only was it the scribes and Pharisees and the other religious leaders, it was also the people. Notice v 22: "And all bore witness to Him and were amazed at the words of grace that were coming out of His mouth; and they said, 'Is not this the son of Joseph?'.... [In other words, how could that be?] ...And He said to them, 'Surely, you will say this parable to Me: "Physician, heal Yourself! Whatever we have heard being done in Capernaum, do also here in Your own country.'" But He said, 'Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country'" (vs 22-23).

Now then He said some things that really infuriate them. They were of the belief that, 'Oh, we're of the seed of Abraham so God has to honor us because we're of the seed of Abraham.' So notice what He said to them, v 24: "'For in truth, I say to you, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up for three years and six months, and there was great famine upon all the land; and Elijah was not sent to any of them, but only a widow in Sarepta, a city of Sidonia.... [Probably a little Jewish widow living over there.] ...There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian'.... [The general who carried off the ten tribes of Israel. Now notice how they responded]: ...Now all in the synagogue who heard these things were filled with indignation. And they rose up *and* cast Him out of the city, and led Him to the edge of the mountain on which their city was built, in order to throw Him down headlong... [But all of a sudden, they couldn't find Him.] ...But He passed *safely* through their

midst *and* departed'" (vs 25-30). Welcoming committee. I tell you, that's something!

Now let's see another very, I think, important prophecy in Jeremiah 17. Now let's turn there and we're going to go through the whole thing because it shows us the sin, the severity of sin, the depravation of human nature, and God's salvation for us. That's really quite a chapter. Now generally we read certain verses in there, especially Jeremiah 17:9.

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Now let's come to Jeremiah 17, and what I want you to understand—and this has to do with forgiveness of sin and salvation. Because what did Jesus say in Matt. 12? 'Every sin and blasphemy against the Son of Man shall be forgiven, but the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven in this age or in the coming age.' Now why against the Holy Spirit? *Because the Holy Spirit comes directly from God the Father*, so what is happening they are rejecting God the Father completely and blaspheming Him. Now let's recall some sins that we are aware of. Remember Ahab.

Elijah was told by God, 'You go to Ahab and say: you're the most sinful, wicked man that there is and you're going to die and the dogs are going to lick the blood of you and Jezebel off the wall.' So he went and told him. Lo and behold, Ahab repented, put on sackcloth and ashes, and before Elijah was able to go very far, God says, 'Elijah, look at my servant Ahab, how he walks tenderly. You go tell him that I will forestall the punishment.'

Now let's look another example--Manasseh. He was king for 55-years, cavorted with witchcraft, familiar spirits, caused the children to pass through the fire unto Molech, shed much innocent blood in Jerusalem, filled it with homosexuality and everything like this. God sent the Babylonians—in that particular time it was the Assyrians from Babylon—to take him captive. So what did he do in captivity? He repented and sought God. God forgave him and caused the Assyrian king to send him back to Jerusalem as a vassal king under the Assyrian aegis. What did he do? He tore down the idol that he put in the house of God. He tore down all the incense altars all the way around the temple and caused it to be cleaned up. The reason I'm bringing that out is because we're going to see some of the strongest condemnation in the Bible concerning people's sins. We are going to see that they can be forgiven and salvation come from God.

Jeremiah 17:1: "'The sin of Judah is engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars.... [Their altars to other gods.] (v 5): ...Thus says the LORD, 'Cursed

*is* the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD.... [Now notice what's going to happen to him.] ...For he shall be like a shrub in the desert... [Or as you read Psa. 1, 'blessed is the one who meditates on the law of God. He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water,' etc.] ...and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in a salt land that is not inhabited*" (vs 1, 5-6).

When you look geographically around the world, who lives in areas like those? That tells you about their behavior. Now notice, v 7, here's the contrast again. "Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD, for he shall be like a tree planted by the waters; *it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit" (vs 7-8). In other words, that's symbolic of us being able to love and serve God in all circumstances regardless of what it's like.

Notice how v 9 goes evil/good, evil/good, now here's evil again: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Now we quote this all the time, especially during the Days of Unleavened Bread, so that we understand we still have sin to overcome—right? When was the last time you deceived yourself into doing something that you did that you knew that you shouldn't do, but did even though you deceived yourself? Well, whatever, you figure that out. And what is so important about this is you tie in the Proverbs, 'Every way of a man is just in his own sight.' There you go.

But, v 10, now notice: "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins... [Now the reins is whatever connection that God has with an individual through the spirit of man, through His Spirit, or through the seven spirits of God that come from His throne, which are the eyes of God sent throughout all the world to keep Him informed as to what is going on.] ...even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." So this tells us what? God is always judging. And how is He judging? He is judging because He has His laws, and whenever we keep the laws of God, whether we're converted or not, we receive blessings from God in a certain measure. Whenever we break the laws of God, we receive cursings in whatever measure that they come. But there's always mercy and forgiveness *if* we come to God with a repentant heart.

Now notice, here's a good way of showing that the person doesn't know what he or she is doing. "As the quail that hatches eggs it has not laid... [Can't even find its own nest.] ...in the same

way he who gets riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the middle of his days... [Hello, Wall Street.] ...and in his end he shall be a fool.'.... [Now notice it changes the scene again.] ...A glorious high throne from the beginning *is* the place of our sanctuary.... [In other words we can come directly to God.] ...O LORD, the Hope of Israel... [The hope of the whole world now through Christ.] ...all who forsake You shall be ashamed. 'Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth because they have forsaken the LORD, the Fountain of living waters'" (vs 11-13).

Now notice it changes again, **repentance**. "Heal me, O LORD... [From what? From v 1 where you have 'sin engraved with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond.' From trusting in men, v 5; from having a desperately deceitful heart.] ...Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed, save me, and I shall be saved; for You are my praise" (v 14). Now that's quite something to understand how God works. That's why God in Eze. 33 says, 'I do not delight in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way.' So God said of Israel, 'Turn, Israel, turn from your ways, for why will you die, O Israel?' So God is always there merciful and kind and forgiving and He's our Savior and Redeemer.

Now let's come to Isaiah 45, and let's see where it talks about God being our Savior. Let's understand this: Little did they understand that God would become manifested in the flesh, as we saw in the first message, and that He would become the sacrifice for their sin. When you read in the book of Isaiah, you see that God is Savior and you find the same thing also in the book of Titus, 'God our Savior, Jesus Christ.'

Let's come to Isaiah 45 and let's see what it talks about here concerning salvation and how God intervenes for us. Now notice Isaiah 45:5: "I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.... [Now since the Father was not yet revealed in the Old Testament, but that was saved for the New Testament, Matt. 11:25, that He personally reveals God the Father to us; therefore, He says:] ...*There is* no God besides Me... [That is in the earth.] ...I clothed you, though you had not known Me; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none besides Me. I *am* the LORD, and there is none else" (vs 5-6). Now He's leading up to His salvation, but notice what He says here.

Verse 7: "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil.... [Now how does He do that? *Because there are blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience*—and would you not say the curses are evil? Did God not have to create the automatic penalty that would happen? *Yes!* just like with the law if gravity. If you hold something in the air and drop it, you have grace until

it hits the floor. Or like one man said, ‘If you jump out of a plane at 15,000 feet, your freefall is grace all the way to the ground, then the penalty hits you.’] ...I the LORD do all these things. Drop down from above, O heavens, and let the clouds pour down righteousness. Let the earth open, and let salvation bear fruit... [I think that’s an interesting phrase— isn’t it? When we have received the salvation of God, what do we have to do? *Bear fruit.*] ...and let righteousness spring up together. I the LORD have created it” (vs 7-8). Now notice again, notice how the Old Testament does: blessing, warning; encouragement, warning.

Notice v 9: “Woe to him who fights with the One who formed him... [All atheists listen up, your day of reckoning is coming. All you preachers who despise the Word of God and preach a lawless grace, you better listen up.] ...a potsherd among the potsherds of the earth! Shall the clay say to him who forms it, “What are you making?” Or your work, “He *has* no hands”? Woe to him who says to *his* father, “What are you begetting?” Or to the woman, “What are you laboring over?” Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and the One who formed him... [Now notice, we’re starting to get into salvation again.] ...‘Ask Me of things that are to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands” (vs 9-11).

What are we talking about? *The plan of God*—right? *Yes!* So here it is in the book of Isaiah talking about the plan of God, talking about salvation, talking about these things that God is going to do which were fulfilled in the New Testament. But the two come together and we have the unity of Scripture again.

Verse 12: “I have made the earth and created man upon it; I *with* My hands have stretched out the heavens; and all their host have I commanded... [Yet scientists say that everything came from nothing, which is an impossibility.] ...I have raised him up in righteousness... [Now that refers to Cyrus above, but in type also to Christ.] ...and I will make straight all his ways; he shall build My city... [And he’s the one who gave the order to rebuild Jerusalem.] ...and he shall let My captives go... [out of captivity in Babylon to go back to Judea] ...not for price nor reward’... [What did he do? He sent them loaded down with silver and gold and everything that they needed.] ...says the LORD of hosts” (vs 12-13).

Come down here to v 15: “Truly You *are* a God Who hides Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior.” Now little did they realize that this Lord God was the One who would become Jesus Christ and would literally be their Savior through His death and offering of Himself for the sins of the people.

“They shall be ashamed and also confounded, all of them; they *who are* makers of idols shall go into confusion together. *But* Israel shall be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation.... [Because God is our Savior, Christ is our Savior. But before He could bring about salvation for eternal life, He had to go through what He went through, and that’s why everything in the Bible is concentrated to the three and a half year ministry of Jesus Christ and then the finale is the Passover day. Then three days and three nights in the grave, then the resurrection at the end of the Sabbath, and the ascension by Christ into heaven to present Himself to God the Father as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Now they weren’t all forgiven at that time, because also remember, ***there is no forgiveness without repentance.*** But everything was structured then from that time forward.] ...You shall not be ashamed nor disgraced *even* into the ages of eternity” (vs 16-17).

Now that tells you a lot—doesn’t it? Now v 18: “For thus says the LORD the Creator of the heavens, He Himself is God, Who formed the earth and made it; He has established it. He created it not in vain, but formed it to be inhabited. ‘I am the LORD, and there is no other.’” This is especially true today since we have so many Bibles, and that’s one of the chapters that we have in the beginning of the commentary in the Bible, *Why So Many Bibles in the World?* We’re rapidly approaching the time that there’s one Bible for every human being. Remember, the Bible is the Word of God in print as a witness to those who receive it, whether they read it or not.

Right now between the American Bible Society and the British Bible Society, they are printing 1.2-million Bibles a year in China, of all places. One big press in eastern China is putting out 800,000 Bibles a year on a ten-year contract. Imagine that! They are printing them in all of the languages that are in the countries around that, not only Chinese, but also Russian, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Iran, all of those languages. And there is another company in India that just recently contracted with a company in Brazil to print two million Bibles in Portuguese. Just like the soldiers who were unaware of what they were doing, though God caused them to do it, I’m sure that those printing houses in India are not over there saying, ‘Oh, good, we’re printing out the Word of the Lord to go the world.’ They don’t know they’re fulfilling the prophecy of Christ where He said, ‘And this Gospel’—which is contained in the Bible—‘shall be published’—that is printed—‘in the whole world and then the end shall come.’ So God is going to do that.

Now notice why I said that, v 19: “‘I have not spoken in secret...” But let’s also understand

something else. And I'm going to give a sermon on this pretty quick, which is: the Bible was made for today. Everything else leading up to it is for today. Yes, there were people saved down through all the ages, that is true, from the time of Christ till now, but in many cases they didn't have the full Bible. Now we have it, now it's available, now it's out there. And in America we're quadruply responsible because the average household in America has four Bibles per household. Now we make up for a lot of those, because one time I counted, we had forty-two and I think we have a few more now.

“...I did not say to the seed of Jacob, “Seek me in vain.”... [No, there's eternal life, there's forgiveness, there's righteousness, there's grace.] ...I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. Gather yourselves and come; draw near together, you who have escaped of the nations; they have no knowledge who carry the wood of their graven image, and those who pray to a god *that* cannot save” (vs 19-20).

The comment was made the Chinese are not doing this out of the goodness of their heart. True, but they're doing it for God, even though they don't know it. But they're doing it for money.

Notice, he asked this question. No other book in the world has this. “*Who* has told it from ancient times? Have not I, the LORD?... [Yes, He has.] ...And *there is* no other God besides Me; a just God and a Savior; there is none besides Me.... [Now notice what He says, here's the Gospel right here, v 22]: ...Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I *am* God, and there *is* none else.... [Now what did Jesus say to the disciples? That you 'go to the ends of the earth.' Now they didn't get there, but their writings have.] ...I have sworn by Myself... [Now when God swears by Himself, that's double assurance that it's going to happen. All God has to do is speak that it is so, and it is, though it may not be fulfilled for years. But when He swears by Himself, you know that that's double assurance that it's true.] ...the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not turn back, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear” (vs 21-23). It's going to happen.

And if you understand the plan of God with the Millennium and the second resurrection and the great white throne judgment period of one hundred years, every knee will bow. “*One* shall say... [And this is how salvation comes. It comes because of God:

- through His Spirit
- through His righteousness
- through His mercy
- through His forgiveness
- through His grace

- through His laws and commandments

...One shall say, ‘Only in the LORD do I have righteousness and strength... [Not in himself, not in his ways.] ...even to Him shall men come.... [Remember Isa. 2, ‘Many nations shall say, come let us go up the house of the Lord and let us learn of His ways, for the law shall go forth out of Zion’—right? *Yes!*] ...And they are ashamed, all who are angry against Him’.... [Now think about how shameful it's going to be to fight Christ when He's returning.] ...In the LORD shall the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (vs 24-25). Now that's quite a story of God's salvation.

Now let's come to Isaiah 43:1: “But now thus says the LORD Who created you, O Jacob, and He Who formed you, O Israel, ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you... [God is the One who buys us back, because when we sin we sell ourselves to Satan the devil. If we continue in that, he becomes our god, becomes our slave master, becomes our bondageholder, until we repent to God and He redeems us. He rescues us.] ...I have called *you* by your name; you *are* Mine. When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; nor shall the flame kindle on you, for I *am* the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior....” (vs 1-3).

Now that's something—isn't it? Think of that! Think when things are difficult for you, when you're trying to overcome sin and you're trying to overcome problems and difficulties, let's notice this:

Verse 4: “Since you are precious in My sight... [Now think of that! Because Christ has died for us to forgive us our sins, He has bought us back from Satan the devil, we are precious in His sight. Why? *Because we are headed for the first resurrection.* You need to keep that in mind.] ...you have been honored, and I have loved you... [Never forget, **God the Father Himself personally loves you.** That's why Jesus said, ‘Don't pray to Me, for Me to ask the Father, but you pray to the Father, for the Father Himself loves you.’] ...therefore, I will give men for you, and people for your life. Fear not; for I *am* with you” (vs 4-5).

- You have God's Spirit in you, *He is with you.*
- You have God's Spirit in you, *you are a dwelling place for God.*
- You have God's Spirit in you, *you are a tabernacle for God.*
- You have God's Spirit in you, *you are a begotten son or daughter of God, waiting for the first resurrection.*

Now I'm going through these things, because when you look at what's happening in the



world, and all the things that are coming down, there's lots of evil, there's lots of difficulty, there are lots of problems, BUT when we realize that God, God Himself, **died for us to save us**—and the whole world—that's something!

Verse 6, when He brings Israel out of captivity when Christ returns. “I will say to the north, “Give up;” and to the south, “Do not keep back;” bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth.... [Now we could also say, we could apply this to the resurrection—couldn't we? *Yes, we could.*] ...Fear not; for I am with you. I will bring your seed from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, “Give up;” and to the south, “Do not keep back;” bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth.... [And who's going to do that? The angels—right?] ...Even everyone who is called by My name... [Now this has to apply to the saints—does it not?] ...for I have created him for My glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (vs 6-7). That's what God is doing with us. When you understand these things, and understand that God Himself is our Savior, and we'll see this in the New Testament in just a minute. This becomes really exciting when you understand it and put it together.

Notice v 8: “Bring out the blind people who have eyes, and the deaf who have ears. Let all the nations be brought together, and let the people be gathered; who among them can declare this and show us the former things? Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, ‘*It is truth*’” (vs 8-9). So this is the confrontation that's going to be presented to the world. What they're going to say, ‘*It is truth.*’ ***That's what the whole Word of God is all about.***

Verse 10: “‘You are My witnesses,’ says the LORD, ‘and My servant whom I have chosen... [Christ] ...that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I *am* He. Before Me... [That is in My presence before Me.] ...no God was formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, *even* I, *am* the LORD; and ***besides Me there is no savior***” (vs 10-11). That's why Jesus said, ‘***I am the way and the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Me***’—because He alone is Savior.

Verse 12: “‘I have declared, and have saved, and I have shown, when *there was* no strange *god* among you; therefore you *are* My witnesses,’ says the LORD, ‘that I *am* God... [Now that's what we are to do. We are to witness that God is God, not only in word, but in deed and the way that we conduct our lives, the way that we are before God, and everything. That's why the most important thing to always remember is this: ***You have nothing that you didn't receive.*** Everything that you are and have

received has come from God—everything physical, everything spiritual, every breath that you breathe, every day.] ...Yea, before the day *was*, I *am* He... [and notice] ...and no one delivers out of My hand... [Once you belong to God didn't Jesus say, ‘And I shall lose none, save the son of perdition.’] ...I will work, and who can reverse it?’” (vs 12-13).

So, you start from Genesis and go to Revelation and everything there from the first to the last, the beginning and the ending, God is the One who is working it all. Let's come to the New Testament, and let's see where Jesus is called *God* and Jesus is called *Redeemer* and Jesus is called *Savior*. So little did they know that the things we have read in the Old Testament applied to Jesus Christ as our Savior.

Titus 1:1: “Paul, *a* servant of God and *an* apostle of Jesus Christ, according to *the* faith of God's elect and *the* knowledge of *the* Truth that is according to Godliness... [And if you want a very interesting Bible study, do a word study on *Truth*. It'll shock you.] ...in *the* hope of eternal life, which God Who **cannot lie**... [And you can prove that over and over and over again through the pages of the Bible. Truth is truth is truth is truth and there is no lie in it.] ...promised before the ages of time... [Now think about that. That was God's plan in the beginning.] ...But revealed in **its own set time**... [Isn't that interesting? *Set time*, much like *appointed time*, not exactly the same, but nearly the same.] ...in *the* proclamation of His Word, with which I was entrusted according to *the* commandment of God our Savior” ( vs 1-3). Who was Christ, we'll see that in just a little bit here.

Titus 2:10: “Not misappropriating *anything*, but showing all good faithfulness; so that they may do credit to the doctrine of our Savior God in everything [Christ]. For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared... [And we read of the prophecies of it.] ...Teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live moderately and righteously and Godly in this present world, Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ” (vs 10-13).

So when you read back there in Isa. 43, 44, 45 about God being our Savior, it's talking about Jesus Christ. Now that's something— isn't it? Now there are other Scriptures we could go, but we'll end it here by finishing off this chapter.

“Who gave Himself for us... [I want you to also know and understand, not *only* for us but you think of it, I think of it for me, *in the set time*, Christ died for the ungodly being me.] ...so that He might redeem us... [Buy us back from Satan the devil, rescue us from sin, grant us righteousness.] ...Who

gave Himself for us, so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique people, zealous of good works” (vs 14).

This should give us some zeal to know and understand that it was very God Himself who came in the flesh in order to redeem us and save us. That’s the whole focal point of the Bible. That was all accomplished in the three and a half year ministry of Jesus Christ. And the world could only tolerate Him that long, because of the evil and carnality of people and Satan the devil who had them in his grasp and in his clutches.

So as we look at all the things that are coming down—I know when I’ve been watching the news I’ve been feeling kind of oppressed and just thinking: Can they really do that? How can they do that? Well, today they just got the sixty votes to go for Obama-care that started in the Senate, just as Dolores said they would. They’ll vote on it. ***You cannot look to political solutions for spiritual problems.*** What is happening to us is because the collective sins of the United States and in particularly those people who think that Jesus is their Savior and they’re out there sinning in the name of God and thinking that they are righteous! They don’t even know what the Bible really says. So unless there is a change in how these people are behaving toward God and living their lives, there’s not going to be any change politically. So that’s why God is our Savior and Jesus Christ has made it possible.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 5:6
- 2) Psalm 22:1-14, 16-25
- 3) Isaiah 53:1-2
- 4) Isaiah 50:4-10
- 5) Isaiah 53:3-12
- 6) Isaiah 52:14-15
- 7) Isaiah 42:21
- 8) Isaiah 61:1-3
- 9) Luke 4:14-30
- 10) Jeremiah 17:1, 5-14
- 11) Isaiah 45:5-13, 15-25
- 12) Isaiah 43:1-13
- 13) Titus 1:1-3
- 14) Titus 2:10-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 15:34
- Matthew 27:39
- Isaiah 28
- Hebrews 4
- Matthew 5, 6 & 7
- Luke 4
- Matthew 12
- Psalm 1

- Ezekiel 33
- Matthew 11:25
- Isaiah 2

Also referenced: Books: *Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

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