

Christianity Clarified Volume 44

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[0 : 00] What is Christianity really all about? Here, in an ongoing effort to try and dispel some of the confusion, is Marv Wiseman with another session of Christianity Clarified.

The Why of Faulty Assumptions On current segments of Christianity Clarified, we are examining the very thing we believe to be most responsible for the numerous doctrinal divisions that divide the greater expression of Christianity.

And in the term greater expression, we include all that comes under the labels of Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestantism. In all three of these groups, there are many who are truly Christian, that is, they have personally appropriated by faith the finished work Christ accomplished on their behalf, having trusted Him alone for their salvation, and they enjoy His forgiveness.

But also, within all three groups, there are adherents who are merely in the church, as opposed to being in Christ. They may be religious, but they are not regenerated.

And, to add to that sadness, they are usually completely unaware of their true state, which is one of spiritual lostness. This kind of religiosity exists in Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches all over the world.

[1 : 27] Those poor souls in attendance are usually clueless as to the truth, and are content to follow whatever they are told by their church since they are the experts, quote-unquote.

And while this is true of many Catholics and Protestants, Judaism has not escaped. And while Judaism is certainly not to be confused with Christianity, whether Catholic or Protestant, it is most certainly referred to as the cradle of Christianity, and no one disputes that.

Such being the case, seems only logical to continue revealing the faulty assumptions embraced by Judaism before revealing the same involved in Catholicism and Protestantism.

And in doing so, we must limit ourselves to those most apparent, because there are so many, we cannot even identify them all. Already noted in previous segments of Christianity Clarified were segments of the faulty assumptions made by the patriarch Abraham and Isaac, included in volume 43.

And it should also be emphasized that if you or I had been in the place of Abraham and Isaac, we likely would have fared no better than they with the faulty assumptions they made.

[2 : 36] The kind of thinking that dominated the decisions made by Abraham and Isaac are systemic to the whole of humanity. Because in the fall, recorded in Genesis 3, everything fell.

Not merely the physical portion of humanity, but the intellects as well. Mankind in toto thinks and reasons with the warped intellect. And this is precisely how so many of us humans make the harebrained decisions we do about so many things.

The only correction for our skewed intellect is the truth and reality provided by God's Word. You ignore that, and you wind up with polytheism, the worship of dumb idols, or the opposite nonsense of atheism, and the human perversions found in Romans chapter 1, all of which are arrived at as seeming very logical to possessors of that skewed intellect.

Proverbs chapters 14 and 16 both tell us, there is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is death. And that is precisely where that warped intellect we all possess will lead you.

More about Judaism's faulty assumptions is coming just ahead. Faulty assumptions create differences. We have begun with and continue with the faulty assumptions of Judaism.

[3 : 54] Why Judaism? Simply because, historically, they were here first. Following their expose, the faulty assumptions of Catholic and Protestant will follow.

Never fear, we will not exhaust the faulty assumptions made by all of humanity. As there are far too many to consider, we will focus on those most obvious, and be reminded that wrong doctrine, whether found in Judaism, Catholicism, or Protestantism, is nearly always based on someone's

misinterpretation of Scripture, derived from having made a faulty assumption.

And the assumption was that a given passage and its interpretation meant one thing, and it was assumed to be true, but it was not true at all. And rather than recognizing the error, eventually doctrine was built upon it.

Over time, doctrine becomes firmly embedded in groups that believe it. But there are other groups that do not believe it with that interpretation, and voila, you have differences between the groups, and denominations were born as a result.

Are you aware, for instance, that a mere 500 years ago, there were no Lutherans, no Methodists, no Presbyterians, no Baptists, no Episcopal, no Church of God, no Pentecostal, no Nazarene, no Brethren denominations, as distinct denominations?

[5 : 17] Where did these all come from? They emerged from the Roman Catholic Church. And where did that come from? It emerged from Judaism, and its faulty assumptions we are now considering.

All of these groups and subgroups have, over the centuries, even over millennia, have, in good faith, mind you, arrived at erroneous interpretations of Scripture based on sincerely making faulty assumptions that eventually became established as doctrine.

And it is our differences in doctrine that provide the greater separation of these groups one from another. Essentially, it all goes back to how a given passage of Scripture is interpreted.

And that was the focus of our previous protracted study of hermeneutics. In it, we operated on the basis that what is to be believed depends entirely upon the source regarded as our authority.

And we pointed out that there are but three sources available for choosing. The mind of man, including, of course, our own. The mind of Satan, who is also labeled as a liar and a deceiver.

[6 : 26] However, the mind of God is the only one remaining. And of the three, the only dependable, trustworthy one is God's mind. And where do we find his mind? Only in the general revelation provided by creation and the special revelation provided by the Bible.

Being convinced that God, as our authority, is the only one worthy of trust, the issue then becomes one of what has God said in his word and what does it mean? That's hermeneutics.

That's the critical issue of interpretation in all its ramifications. And it is exciting and enlightening.

And it's the only way the differences between Christian beliefs and doctrine can be rectified.

But first, back to those faulty assumptions of Judaism. And these will focus upon the Messiah up next. Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 1 There are several issues separating Judaism from Christianity.

And of them all, none is so stark and central as that of the identity of the Messiah. For Christians, he is Jesus of Nazareth, born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem.

[7 : 43] For the Jew, their long-awaited Messiah has yet not been revealed. They deny the possibility that it was indeed Jesus of Nazareth, and they see Christians as mistaken regarding the whole affair.

While Christians point to the clear and repeated disclosure of Jesus being the Messiah throughout the New Testament, besides being prophesied in the Old, Jewish people do not regard the New Testament as God's Word.

Their belief, and very sincerely so, is that what Christians call the Old Testament, the Jews consider to be the entirety of God's written revelation.

This means, then, that while Christians believe Jesus the Messiah has come and gone, and is coming again for the second time, the Jews believe the Messiah has yet to come for the first time.

Now, for anyone reading the New Testament, it becomes very obvious the burning question all throughout it, particularly the four Gospels in the book of Acts, centers around the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

[8 : 57] Was he or was he not the one sent from God as promised by Moses and the prophets? Absolutely everything spiritually significant hangs upon one's answer to that question, and one thing was certain then, and remains certain today.

He was or he was not. There is no middle ground, and no one can have it both ways. Christians believed the Jews were mistaken for not recognizing and accepting Jesus as their Messiah, while the Jews, equally with good faith, remained convinced that Christians were mistaken for having done so.

Again, both cannot be right. And with the title of this program being called Christianity Clarified, it is, I suppose, intuitively obvious, even to the casual listener, where our convictions lie.

So, how do we account for the Jewish position being that of rejecting Jesus as their Messiah? We believe they have made serious, faulty assumptions in the interpretation of their own Scriptures, the Old Testament.

The Jews, again, in equally good faith, simply believe that we Christians have made faulty assumptions of our own that led to our accepting Jesus as our Messiah and Savior.

[10:18] And honesty does compel us to admit, yes, Christians have made a lot of faulty assumptions of our own. We are not so blind as to think we have none, having already claimed that they are responsible for the many different factions existing within the realm of Christianity.

But these will be addressed later on on Christianity Clarified, both Protestant and Catholic. And for now, we will examine what Christians consider the most colossal, faulty assumption made by the Jewish people.

And it, of course, remains so to this very day. Jewish Faulty Assumptions, Part 2 Our previous segment of Christianity Clarified referred to what Christians believe to be the most colossal, faulty assumptions of Judaism, centering upon the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

We believe Him to have been the very one promised by Moses and the prophets and sent by God Himself. The Jews, rather than embracing Him as their long-awaited Messiah, their leaders conspired with Judas Iscariot for Him to be brought before the Romans, occupying Israel at the time.

Pontius Pilate was manipulated into ordering the execution of Jesus. Yet, following His death, He arose the third day and bodily resurrection, spent the subsequent forty days with His followers, promised He would come again, and bodily ascended to heaven.

[11:49] While all this is clearly found in the New Testament Scriptures, it is the very New Testament that the Jews do not consider to be part of the Bible. To the Jewish people, their entire Bible consists of the Old Testament only, and they do not call it the Old Testament, as do we Christians.

In the Jewish view, what Christians call the Old Testament, the Jews call the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Law, or Torah, consists of the five books of Moses, Genesis through Deuteronomy.

The Prophets consist of the four major prophets and the twelve minor. All the rest are categorized as the Writings. So, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings comprise the entirety of the Word of God for the Jewish people.

And while they see the New Testament as being acceptable to Christians, it is not, in the Jewish view, part of the written revelation of God. For Christians, we see the Old Testament as the very Word of God also, yet incomplete in itself.

We believe you must see the New Testament as the rest of the story. In fact, the completion or end of the story is climaxed in the last book of the New Testament called the Revelation.

[13:10] Again, it needs to be emphasized that it is with complete sincerity and good faith that both positions are held. And it must also be said that good faith and sincerity, while necessary virtues, do not assure that one has arrived at truth.

From the standpoint of pure and simple logic, Jews and Christians may both be wrong. Yet, both cannot, simply cannot, both be right, because they represent mutually contradictory conclusions. Jesus was who he claimed to be, or he was not who he claimed to be. He cannot be neither, and certainly cannot be both. What Christians see as the most colossal, faulty assumption of Judaism is in their seeming inability or refusal to see Jesus as their Messiah oft appearing in the pages of their very own scriptures in the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

True, Jesus is much more clearly revealed in the New than he is in the Old, yet our contention is Jesus is also more than adequately revealed in the pages of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

And the most colossal of all their faulty assumptions is coming next. Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 3 There is no difficulty joining with our Jewish friends in making the same faulty assumption they made thousands of years ago as regards the coming of their Messiah.

[14:46] Their assumption was simple, and, at least on the surface, completely logical. It was this. When the prophesied Messiah arrived, he would set about to right all of the wrongs in the world.

He would also deliver the nation of Israel from any and all enemies, and install Israel as the head of all the nations. Do the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings in the Jewish Bible predict this? They most certainly do. Well, where then, or what was their faulty assumption? Their faulty assumption was that the Messiah would accomplish all of this merely by the force of arms. The Messiah would indeed rectify all of the wrongs that beset the world. And their faulty assumption, a quite remarkable faulty assumption, was that the Messiah would do this without addressing why it was the world needed to be set right.

What was the cause of the world having gone wrong in the first place? Where or how did the world get off track, that a Messiah would even be needed?

[15 : 56] The Jews' faulty assumption was either that the world had not gone wrong and did not need to be addressed thusly, or that such was not a part of the job description of the Messiah.

But both were definitely faulty assumptions. The world had, indeed, gone wrong seriously, and such was most definitely part of the Messiah's task when he arrived.

A very important part was to make all things right. Another aspect of Israel's faulty assumption was caused by ignoring the basis upon which the Messiah would possess the legal and moral right to set all things right.

He would purchase the right to do so, and this by taking upon himself the very penalty the world's inhabitants deserve for their rebellion against the authority of God.

Such rebellion, in which all of humanity had a share, deserve nothing less than the punishment and justice of God. That Jesus took upon himself when he died on that cross of Calvary.

[17 : 04] And in doing so, as Israel's Messiah, he purchased the legal and moral right to then come against all of humanity that compounded their sin by rejecting the very payment he made for it as their substitute.

This is precisely what all the animal sacrifices portrayed to the Jewish people, as they carried out the prescribed substitutionary system of the innocent animals year after year.

What Jesus did in his first coming as a sacrificial lamb gave him the right and even the responsibility to do what he will do when he appears as the lion of the tribe of Judah in his second coming.

Herein, one faulty assumption of the Jewish people led to another, and the plot continues to thicken as we shall see upcoming.

Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 4 Completely apart from the New Testament Scriptures, which the Jewish people do not accept, the Old Testament, which they do, speaks far more often and in greater detail about the second coming of the Messiah than it does the first.

[18 : 25] And the second will be far more dramatic and immediately consequential than the first. Another of the Jewish Faulty Assumptions completely overlooks the clear teaching of their own scriptures that there are two separate and distinct advents or arrivals of their Messiah.

The first is that which gave him the right to do what he will do at the second. He became the Lamb of God at the first, that he might reappear as the Lion of God at the second.

He bore the cross of shame, that he might claim the crown of glory. The faulty assumption of the Jews, both two thousand years ago and at the present, was and is that when their Messiah presents himself, it will be with great power and glory, certainly not as any sacrificial type of lamb. Unwittingly, they are even denying the objective that God had built into their very own sacrificial system, instituted under Moses, carried out by the priests who descended from Levi and Aaron. To the Jews then and now, the very idea of their Messiah suffering with a crown of thorns upon a Roman cross is a complete absurdity.

[19 : 43] Most of the Jews of Jesus' day regarded it as such, and certainly most do today as well. That faulty assumption has been kept alive by them for two thousand years and counting.

And, like nearly all faulty assumptions, it is held by very sincere and well-intended people who embrace it. Historically, the Jewish people have been persecuted, vilified, maligned, marginalized, and scapegoated by non-Jews from the Egyptians to the Nazis for the past three millennia plus. Now, a question. If you as a Jew and your ancestors have suffered thusly, and you were anticipating a Messiah, a deliverer who would destroy Israel's persecutors and enemies and elevate the nation to worldwide supremacy, what kind of person would you be looking for in a Messiah? Would it be one who died a shameful death on a cruel cross bearing mockery and cursing? Or would it be one appearing in splendor and majesty who would literally decimate Israel's enemies?

Clearly the latter, as anyone can see. And so it will be when he comes again to claim what he paid for in his first coming. This coming the Old Testament declares far more than it does the first.

[21 : 06] And the contrast between Messiah's first coming and his second could not be more different. Both are there. Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 5 As we continue encountering the Jewish Faulty Assumptions of the Messiah, be reminded when we conclude it, we shall then turn to the Faulty Assumptions of the Roman Catholics, followed by the same regarding Protestants.

There are, as you can see, plenty of Faulty Assumptions to go around. We all make them, or are at least prone to doing so, through misunderstanding and misinterpreting Scripture.

We today have the great advantage over all three groups, Jews, Catholics, and Protestants of years, even millennia gone by, because we see what history has done with their faulty assumptions. And now, with a completed canon of Scripture, and hindsight that is 20-20, it's easy for us to spot their faulty assumptions. It is also possible for us to make some faulty assumptions of our own.

Of course it is. None of us are immune to misunderstanding and or misinterpreting Scripture. We need to admit that, and as best we can, be on guard against it.

[22 : 53] Faulty Assumptions can be drastically reduced, even if not completely eliminated, simply by rightly dividing the word of truth, and consistently applying the rules of interpretation set forth by Miles Coverdale in 1535.

We have presented those numerous times in the past. Yet, for the present, we are occupied with the faulty assumptions of the Jews, both ancient and modern. And while fully acknowledging the Jews' rejection of the New Testament Scriptures, there is a poignant passage found therein that so powerfully reinforces the point we are trying to make in understanding the Jewish rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah.

And I refer to it unapologetically because, after all, the name and goal of this program is Christianity Clarified, not Judaism Clarified.

Said passage is found in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 22, in an encounter between Jesus and the Sadducees. They posed a ridiculous hypothetical about a woman who had outlived seven husbands and then asked Jesus which husband would get her as his wife in the resurrection.

The entire question was posed as a setup designed to stump Jesus and make him look bad. Being Sadducees, they didn't even believe in the resurrection. Jesus' response was, as expected, spot on.

[24 : 20] He replied, You do err, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God. He then went on to set them straight. Rather than his being embarrassed before the crowd, Jesus astounded them with his answer.

The revelation he gave about their not knowing the Scriptures can well be applied to the Jew of today, and as well to today's Roman Catholics and Protestants as well, as those of bygone years. It is sad and ironic that the source book for humanity is available by billions in multiple languages, and yet remains the world's least understood document.

This is why Christianity has come into existence. We can't stand that. Jewish Faulty Assumptions, Part 6 When this passage, now to be read to you, is read to most in a Jewish audience, the result is often the conclusion you will be hearing at the end of the passage.

Here is the passage in question. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him.

[25 : 40] He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted.

Yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb. So he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment.

And who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living. For the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death.

[26 : 39] Because he had done no violence, and neither was any deceit found in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering

for sin, he shall see his seed.

He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he has poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The end of the quote. Christians point out to our Jewish friends that this passage speaks with great clarity about the person and suffering of Jesus Christ. And most Jews would then reply that it may very well speak of Jesus.

But you see, we Jews do not accept the Christian New Testament, where that passage is found. Again and again, across the ages and across the continents, Jews have been utterly stunned when shown the passage is not from the New Testament, but from the Jewish scriptures and their very own prophet Isaiah.

[27 : 59] It was written 700 years before Jesus was born. As the clearest, most extensive of all the prophetic passages referring to the coming Messiah of Israel.

Jewish scholars have agonized over the interpretation of Isaiah 53, and they dare not concede it refers to Jesus of Nazareth, which could be the complete undoing of Judaism, as it is known.

Scrambling to arrive at an alternate interpretation, most have made the person mentioned throughout the passage to refer to the nation of Israel, not to an individual, and certainly not to Jesus of Nazareth, perhaps the most colossal of all of the Jewish Faulty Assumptions.

More just ahead. Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 7 The 53rd chapter of the prophet Isaiah is the most descriptive account of prophecies given in the Old Testament regarding the Messiah.

Christians see this passage as being fulfilled in the treatment and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. We marvel at the fact Isaiah wrote of it in great detail a full 700 years prior to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

[29 : 18] It is but one of many such Old Testament passages that describe the coming of the Jewish Messiah and Savior of the world. But our Jewish friends do not share in that interpretation.

After they recover from the shock of seeing this in their own scriptures of the Old Testament from the prophet Isaiah, they must come up with an alternate interpretation of it.

To them, it cannot possibly describe their Messiah, because when their Messiah comes, He will come in power, majesty, and great glory, and He will definitely deliver Israel from all her enemies. The person described in Isaiah 53 is one who will undergo great suffering and an inglorious death. While Christians see this Isaiah passage as revealing Christ in His first coming to Bethlehem and eventually dying on a Roman cross, the Jews completely discount that concept as unworthy of their Messiah.

To Christians, Isaiah 53 speaks of the first coming, and the power and glory factors are later to be realized in His second coming, which yet await fulfillment.

[30 : 34] Being forced to accept the content of Isaiah because it is part of the Jewish Bible, they are then pressed to come up with that alternate interpretation that is more acceptable to the Jewish people.

They dare not embrace the idea of it describing their own Messiah, because to do so would mean the utter undoing of Judaism as known and practiced worldwide by Jews for thousands of years.

And to any respectable Jew worthy of the name, such would be totally unacceptable in their mind and treasonous to all things Jewish, going back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Well, what then could the passage mean? Of whom does this suffering person in Isaiah 53 speak? If not the Messiah, as Christians believe, who then is it that Jews believe it to be?

Their most widely accepted answer is that the person described as undergoing terrible shame and suffering to whom Isaiah speaks is none other than Israel the nation.

[31 : 41] And while there is no question, many of the characteristics found in the Isaiah passage are indeed true of much of the people that Israel has undergone as a nation throughout their existence.

Yet, there are severe problems with that interpretation. Attributing the passage to Israel as the nation simply ignores too much of the description that just will not allow for that.

After all, words do mean things. And essentially, words mean what they say, not what we wish them to say. More of this must be pursued and will be upcoming.

Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 8 The passage in question is Isaiah 53. The issue is the identity of the person referred to who is obviously the subject of suffering and death.

The Christian interpretation is that the one spoken of throughout is none other than Jesus of Nazareth, predicted by Isaiah 700 years before he was born. The Jewish interpretation is that the person spoken of is not actually an individual at all, but is, in fact, a reference to the nation of Israel. [32 : 58] Now, while it is true, Israel has undergone untold suffering and persecution throughout the millennia. And what is not inflicted upon them by God himself punishing the nation because of their idolatry and disobedience, the balance of the suffering of Jewish people has been due to the ignorance, arrogance, and hatred of the Gentiles.

But similarities between Israel's suffering as a nation and the person in the text suffering as spoken of in the passage certainly does not equate them.

To insist they are the same requires a stretch no credible interpreter can abide. Consider, if you will, in these brief 12 verses of Isaiah 53, there are no less than 44 times where the third person singular masculine pronoun is used.

44 times, whether used as he, him, or his, cannot be responsibly denied. And if, as our Jewish friends insist, these all speak of Israel as the nation and not the Messiah as an individual, then who was it in verse 3 saying, we hid our faces from him?

Who are the we? If it is Israel, then it would then make the sense of the text to say Israel hid their faces from Israel. Is there any sense in that?

[34 : 29] Note the frequent use of the first person plural throughout as well. That usage is clearly Israel as a nation. But to say that he, him, and his is the same as we, us, and ours completely denies the ability of language to say anything intelligible, because words do mean things if they are to have any communicative value at all.

And while it is true one can easily see why the Jews much prefer their Messiah to be identified with glory and a conquering majesty rather than with a baby harmlessly born in an obscure village, this does not justify their ignoring the clear identification of that baby.

Indeed, the babe will eventually be the conquering monarch they so long for, but it will be with his second coming, not with his first. The baby will grow to manhood and eventually wear the crown of thorns that will in his return become a crown of glory.

It was because of what the Messiah did in his first coming to Bethlehem that will give him the legal and moral right to do as he will in his second coming. And it will be nothing less than to utterly destroy the enemies of God and Israel and establish himself as the rightful ruler of the world. He bought and paid for it in his first coming. He will collect and obtain what he paid for in his second coming. Jewish Faulty Assumptions, Part 9 It is fully acknowledged the Jewish people do not accept the Christian New Testament as being part of God's written revelation.

[36 : 13] Yet it is imperative that it be appealed to now because it evokes an issue found in the Old Testament which Jews do accept as God's Word.

It is in reference to the statement made by Jesus in Luke's Gospel, chapter 24. Our Lord chided the disciples on the Dimaeus Road following his resurrection for having violated a clear principle for interpreting Scripture.

And in doing so, he clearly was referring to the Old Testament Scriptures, which of course was the only Scripture in existence at the time Christ spoke of them. His rebuke was simple and one we hope all would agree with, including Jews, despite the fact the saying is in the New Testament. Here it is as Jesus spoke it. O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written. Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?

The Jews of today make the same mistake as the Jews of Jesus' day. They do not read all that the prophets have written. They have selectively chosen only those portions that speak of the Messiah as they wanted him to be.

[37 : 34] They are eager to omit his suffering part as described in Isaiah 53 and elsewhere, accepting only the portions that foretell his coming in conquering glory.

His suffering was what he endured from the Romans, the Jewish religious establishment, and the cross. His glory related to his resurrection from the dead with his glorified body, eventually to ascend and return to his Father who sent him.

All would agree, the picture given by the prophets of Messiah coming in great power and splendor to deliver his people is certainly far more appealing than a Messiah who would come to suffer. Yet, intellectual honesty should not allow us to pick and choose those portions that are simply more appealing. The Old Testament references must be considered, all the Old Testament references, in order to get the fullest picture of the Messiah.

And as Jesus told the Emmaus Road disciples, men are slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written. And when men do, they will conclude the prophets spoke of a Messiah who must suffer before he enters into his glory.

[38 : 50] Jesus of Nazareth did both. He was made a complete Savior in every sense. In his suffering and sacrificial death, he secured the legal and moral right to claim the title deed of the earth.

He bought and paid for it and all living in it. When he returns with the force of arms in his second coming, depicted in the Old Testament references of Zechariah chapter 14, it will be Messiah's hour of victory and glory in that second coming because of what he accomplished in his first coming. Jewish Faulty Assumptions Part 10 Before leaving this critical consequential issue of the identity of the person suffering in Isaiah 53, something yet unmentioned needs to be brought forth.

It is unquestionable that this Isaiah 53 is valid content found in the Jewish scriptures. Also unquestionable is that it depicts someone undergoing severe pain and suffering.

Christians interpret this suffering one to be none other than Israel's Messiah, spoken of by Isaiah 700 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Our Jewish friends deny this.

[40 : 16] And one common interpretation the Jews set forth is that this suffering one is not an individual at all, but is rather a description of the nation of Israel and all Isaiah says they are destined to suffer.

Well, there certainly is no question the Jewish people have endured unparalleled pain and persecution at the hands of ignorant, hateful people throughout their history. The past 3,000 years, beginning with the Egyptians.

Still, the universal acceptable laws of language will simply not accommodate the idea of this suffering one being the nation of Israel. Merely comparing the personal pronouns throughout the chapter requires identifying this suffering person as an individual.

The singular, third-person pronouns of he, him, and his, compared to the first-person plural pronouns of we, us, and our simply will not allow for commingling or making them synonymous. If words mean anything and have any ability to communicate, this simply cannot be allowed. The use of he, him, and his, a singular person, is denoted, and just as clearly usage of we, us, and our requires a plurality as in a nation.

[41 : 34] Also, little known to most Jewish people is the undeniable fact that some of their most respected rabbis and Jewish scholars, long before Christ was born, attributed this Isaiah 53 passage to be a description of their Messiah when he should come, and that he would indeed undergo suffering for the world.

This position was advanced in Talmudic and Midrashic literature of the Jews. The Yalkat is a Jewish thesaurus on the whole of the Jewish Bible. And in referring to Isaiah 53, it is ascribed to the coming Messiah, saying he shall be higher than Abraham, higher than Moses, and greater than the angels.

The revered scholar Ramban said the subject of Isaiah 53 is the Messiah, and he will be recognized on account of the great miracles he will perform.

This is found in the Jewish Yalkat. Second paragraph of number 338 in the Amsterdam edition. Christians insist Jesus possessed all the credentials that Isaiah prophesied, while the Jews remain unconvinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the one.

Well, each must decide for himself. One thing, however, is certain. It cannot be both. Jewish Faulty Assumptions of the Law, Part 1 It has already been noted that the Jewish people, historically and worldwide, consider only the Old Testament to be truly the Word of God.

[43 : 25] In fact, they do not even refer to it as the Old Testament, as Christians do. Jews refer to it simply as the Bible, for in their view, it is the entirety of the revelation they believe God has given.

And in it, they divide their Bible, that is, the Christian Old Testament, into three parts. First, there is the Law. This consists of what is attributed as having come from God through Moses, referred to as the Pentateuch, or the five books comprised of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and

Deuteronomy.

The remainder of the Jewish Bible is referred to as the Writings and the Prophets. The section they call the Prophets is made up of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and the remaining books are the twelve minor Prophets of Hosea through Malachi.

The balance consists of the Writings. Those first five books, called the Pentateuch, are also called the Torah. All books that remain, including Psalms, Proverbs, and that called the Wisdom Literature, make up the rest.

And of those three categories, the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets, that which seems to be the primary focus of the Jewish people is the Law. Those five books God gave through Moses, as mentioned earlier, Genesis through Deuteronomy.

[44 : 55] These also provide the content for another very important concept in Judaism, and that is the term Covenant. The Covenant was that agreement or contract God entered into with the nation of Israel shortly after the exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses.

When they arrived at Mount Sinai, Moses was instructed to communicate God's terms of the contract or covenant to the nation of Israel. Terms of the contract required the obedience of Israel in return for God's provision and protection.

God told them they, Israel, would be His people exclusively and uniquely if they would obey and serve Him as their God exclusively.

When Moses came down from the mount and explained to Israel what God was proposing, they responded to the terms positively and stated, All that the Lord has said will we do.

This is recorded in Exodus 19. And then, in chapter 24, the covenant was formally adopted or ratified. God was the party of the first part represented by Moses and the nation of Israel constituted the party of the second part.

[46 : 16] An animal was slain, its blood was sprinkled on the tablets of the law, and the people of Israel in a Solomon binding ceremony agreed to it. Thus, Israel became the people of the law.

And perhaps they thought because the God was eternal, so was the law. But was it? Or was it another faulty assumption Israel was making? Upcoming on our next session.

Jewish Faulty Assumptions of the Law Part 2 In the overall historical scheme of things, it looks obvious the Jewish people have made a major faulty assumption regarding the law that God gave through Moses, commonly called the Torah.

Their faulty assumption was in assuming that the law was not only binding but everlasting. And why would they assume that? Well, largely, one may suppose, was because God who gave it certainly was everlasting.

Why then would the law he gave to Israel not be everlasting also? And it is not at all difficult to see why they would assume that. In fact, had we been in Israel's place under the time and conditions they were, we likely would have assumed the very same thing.

[47 : 33] Still, our sympathizing with them in their faulty assumption does not make it right. It merely would make both us and the Jews guilty of faulty assumptions.

But there is also reason to conclude the Jews were without excuse for making that assumption, at least later on. The idea that God gave the law through Moses was everlasting like God himself. And the reason we say they were unjustified in making that assumption is because a later revelation that God will give through Israel's very own prophets, speaking of course in the Old Testament, which the Jews do fully embrace as the word of God, we find not only are all the major and minor prophets truth from God, but they all record truth revealed long after the truth given through Moses.

In other words, through revelation progressively revealed within the Jewish Bible, that is, our Old Testament, God was merely updating the earlier word given through Moses a thousand years earlier.

And why would God be providing an update? Certainly it was not because God had changed, for he is the immutable, unchanging God. But you couldn't say that about Israel.

[48 : 56] They had changed. Their circumstances had changed. Their needs had changed. Their national attitude had changed. And as a result, an ever-gracious, ever-merciful God will provide what Israel will need in accord with her changes as a nation and the peculiar people of God.

And what will that updated provision be? It will be the new covenant revealed in Isaiah 55, Jeremiah 31 and 32, Ezekiel 16, 34 and 37.

Sometimes it's called a new covenant, sometimes called an everlasting covenant. But both must be seen in contrast to the covenant earlier given through Moses. The major Jewish prophet Jeremiah in chapter 31 prophesies that God will provide an altogether new covenant for Israel that will replace the covenant given through Moses hundreds of years earlier at Mount Sinai.

The Jews may have had grounds for assuming the law given through Moses was everlasting as the God who gave it, but they surely could not maintain that faulty assumption after the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all foretold a new covenant would be given to replace the old.

Thus, Israel's false assumption made hundreds of years ago remains a faulty assumption to this day. Jewish Faulty Assumptions of the New Testament As referenced earlier on Christianity Clarified, it was acknowledged that the Jewish people do not regard the New Testament to be a part of the written revelation God has given.

[50 : 34] They believe God's Word has been limited to what is commonly called the Old Testament, only to the Jew it is not called the Old Testament, it is simply called the Bible, and they regard it as the whole of the Bible.

For Christians who embrace the New Testament as well as the Old, the Jewish rejection of the New is another of their faulty assumptions. An earlier faulty assumption centered on their assuming the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 53 to be the nation of Israel rather than a reference to the coming Messiah.

Yet, long before Jesus was born, there were numerous Jewish rabbis and scholars who did believe Isaiah 53 was none other than their Messiah who, when he was to come, would undergo the suffering depicted by Isaiah.

However, that idea that Jesus of Nazareth was the one spoken of by Isaiah was never accepted by the Jews when Jesus appeared on the scene.

The Jewish hierarchy, headed by the chief priest and his underlings, soundly rejected Jesus as their Messiah. So, having done so, they could not later be expected to accept the New Testament that, told of Jesus' arrival in Bethlehem, his life in Israel, his resurrection and ascension back to heaven and to the Father who had sent him.

[52 : 08] And they did not, nor do they to the present day. We must categorize their rejection of the New Testament and of Jesus simply as their major faulty assumption.

The assumption, the Christian New Testament, was not inspired in a continuation of their own Bible. Christians, of course, believe the New Testament to be an ongoing revelation from God and that, when added to the Old Testament, completes the story of redemption that began with Genesis and ends with Revelation.

The fact that, for 400 years after the Old Testament was completed, there had been no revelation from God forthcoming, that may well have led the Jews to conclude the revelation of God was complete with the Old Testament.

If so, that would result in an automatic rejection of what was claimed by Christians to be additional revelation. But Christians contend that anyone limiting themselves to the Old Testament alone must surely see the information given there to be lacking a conclusion, and it does.

Only when the New Testament is added to the Old, despite its appearance coming after a 400-year absence of God speaking, do we clearly see the rest of the story. Even a cursory reading of the New will reveal the interconnection between the Testaments to be undeniable.

[53 : 36] And it has been aptly said, the New is in the Old concealed, and the Old is in the New revealed. Our Jewish friends' denial of this is another of their faulty assumptions.

Messianic Jewish Faulty Assumptions As referenced earlier on Christianity Clarified, it was acknowledged that Jews do not regard the New Testament to be part of the written revelation that God has given, but they accept only that which is commonly called the Old Testament.

To them, it is not the Old Testament, but the entire Bible. And for Christians who embrace the New as well as the Old, we see the Jewish rejection of the New as another of their faulty assumptions. Their earlier faulty assumption was their believing the subject of suffering in Isaiah 53 to refer to the nation of Israel collectively instead of Israel's Messiah personally.

Yet, long before Jesus was born, multiple rabbinical scholars did indeed believe the suffering servant of Isaiah 53 to be none other than the Jewish Messiah, who when he came would undergo the suffering depicted by Isaiah.

[54 : 55] However, that was never interpreted by them to mean Jesus of Nazareth when he arrived on the scene, despite the fact he fulfilled perfectly the description given in the chapter.

The Jewish hierarchy headed by the chief priest along with his underlings soundly rejected Jesus as Israel's long-awaited Messiah. And having done so, they could not then accept the New Testament that told of his arrival in Bethlehem, his life and miracles in Israel, death on the cross, resurrection and ascension back to heaven, and the Father who sent him.

And, of course, they did not then and do not to this day. Actually, the stage was set for Israel to reject Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah even before he arrived on the scene and began his earthly ministry.

And how so? Well, recall, if you will, how the chief priest earlier rejected the ministry and message of John the Baptist. And while the common people heard John and revered him as a prophet sent from God, the Jewish establishment clearly did not.

They regarded John as unauthorized by God to preach as he did with the message he had. Feisty encounters took place between John the Baptist and the Jewish leadership in Matthew 3, Mark 1, and Luke 1.

[56 : 19] And John 1 states ever so clearly that there was a man sent from God whose name was John. And that John, by the way, was not the same John who wrote the gospel, but was John the Baptist.

And the baptizer made it known that his principal ministry and message was to introduce Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah of Israel and the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. One can see that Israel's leaders were surely in no position to embrace Jesus after having already rejected the one who came to introduce him. Of necessity, they rejected this one of whom John spoke just as they rejected John himself.

And in the plan of God, John the Baptist and Jesus the Messiah were actually inseparable. Accept both or reject both. The Jews did the latter.

A major faulty assumption they made with ongoing consequences to the present day. Revisit faulty assumptions origins The reaching of a faulty assumption is always the result of a misunderstanding.

[57 : 38] And when it comes to issues of faith, the misunderstanding is derived from a misinterpretation of a text of Scripture. The potential for doing that is with us all.

And while a misinterpretation is arrived at by sincere people acting in good faith, that does not safeguard us from the error of arriving at a misunderstanding of the text, finding of which may then be embedded as doctrine and embraced by those to whom it is taught.

That has been already pointed out to be the basis for the multitude of denominations, councils, synods, presbyteries, associations, and other groups coming into existence, particularly over the past 500 years.

While it is true we do have an infallibly inerrant Bible to interpret, that does not mean we have obtained an infallible inerrant interpretation of any given text.

And to increase the likelihood of arriving at sound interpretations, considerable time was spent in explaining and applying the tried and true principles of interpretation.

[58 : 52] These began with volume 26 of Christianity Clarified through several succeeding volumes devoted exclusively to issues of interpretation.

If you have had the advantage of hearing this content, you are then much better equipped to arrive at a solid, consistent understanding of the Scriptures. These are available upon request free of charge, no strings attached, and they begin with volumes 26 of Christianity Clarified pertaining to the principles of biblical interpretation.

Failure to know or heed these principles, which, by the way, are not Christian or Jewish or even religious per se at all, but actually are rather the rules for approaching literary genre of any type to the interpreting of the text.

And those who ignore these rules will find themselves all over the map of inconsistency when they try to understand a given text, whether in the Bible or some other literary work.

In fact, it is this very shortcoming that is mostly responsible for Jews, Christians, secularists, and even atheists for having reached faulty assumptions upon which they build their doctrine and positions.

[60 : 14] This subject is inserted here in this segment of Christianity Clarified simply to remind you that faulty assumptions are the great nemesis of us all, and a sound hermeneutic is the only safeguard against them.

For the immediate present, our focus zeroes in on the faulty assumptions most often made by the Jewish segment of civilization. And following, in chronological order, will be the faulty assumptions of Roman Catholics and then those of Protestants.

And it will be apparent there are plenty of faulty assumptions to go around. We'll all be enlightened, upcoming, and ongoing. faulty assumptions via the adversary.

In Peter's first letter, near the end of the New Testament, in chapter 5 and verse 8, Satan is described as our adversary. He is said to walk upon the earth as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Now, he doesn't devour people by eating them physically, as a real lion would, but Satan devours people by deceiving them. And when people are sufficiently deceived, it is as though they are not. [61 : 34] That is, they are devoured in such a way that they no longer count or matter. They have been neutralized by being deceived. To be deceived means one is caused to believe things are other than they truly are.

It is, of course, another way of saying one has arrived at a faulty or false assumption regarding the issue at hand. And being deceived about it, they then reach a wrong or faulty conclusion about it, which then leads to a wrong action based upon that faulty conclusion, or perhaps no action at all, which can also at times be deadly.

This whole issue of truth and deception is greater than any of us can imagine, and it is the only area in which Satan the adversary functions. Actually, he began plying his deceptive wares even before he deceived Eve in the garden as reported in Genesis 3.

Prior to that, he succeeded in recruiting one-third of the angels God had created and persuaded them to follow him, as found in Revelation chapter 12. No mere mortal is any match for Satan.

In fact, it required the very confrontation of the Son of God himself to be more than a match for this infernal majesty, the devil. And that confrontation is found in Matthew 4, Mark 1, and Luke 4.

[62 : 57] For our Jewish listeners who do not rely on the New Testament, Satan's activities are described in Job chapters 1 and 2, Isaiah chapter 14, and Ezekiel 28.

And being the master of deception, he contributes significantly in aiding all people everywhere to arrive at faulty assumptions of everything in general and the scriptures in particular.

Satan is adverse to everything in the plan and program of God. Thus, he is called the adversary.

Since there is no truth in him, he traffics only in untruth, sowing deception, division, and confusion wherever he can.

In 2 Corinthians 4, the apostle Paul declares Satan to be the god of this fallen, corrupt world. He is said to blind the minds of the unbelieving so as to prevent their arriving at the right conclusions about Jesus Christ.

And not arriving at right conclusions means one arrives at wrong conclusions. Wrong conclusions mean wrong decisions or actions to follow, which, of course, keeps the thinking processes of people focused on their unbelief.

[64 : 12] Satan is so good at applying his wares of deception, he has convinced many to scoff and sneer at even the idea of a personal devil. So make no mistake about it, this satanic blindness and deception contributes significantly to the continued unbelief of both Jews and Gentiles, produces faulty assumptions unnumbered.

faulty assumptions via innate deficiency. In considering the principal reasons why we are all susceptible to making faulty assumptions, brave attention was given to the influence of Satan the adversary, plus the influence of our own fallen intellect, which allows us to reach absurd conclusions, even to the historical worshipping of gods made of wood and stone.

Today, we can add to the absurdities same-sex marriage, gender transformation, homosexuality, and perverse behaviors that have not only become socially and legally permitted, but are even celebrated in much of society.

This should not surprise us any more than it surprised the Apostle Paul, who spoke of these vices in his day two millennia ago. It is precisely because fallen man reasons with a fallen intellect that he is able to not only do these things, but give hearty approval to others who practice them.

Because of their warped logic, they easily discard moral absolutes that govern normal behavior and enter into abnormal behavior. With moral relativity in place instead of moral absolutes, they are well able to establish their own code of conduct.

[66 : 04] This they never violate because its boundaries can be moved to wherever they want them. Such is the benefit of establishing one's own sense of right and wrong, and as always, the

issue is authority.

When you make yourself the authority, only you determine the parameters of behavior, and if you wish, you may declare these to be no parameters.

In addition, since guilt is a consequence of violating a moral code or standard, one who sets their own standards is in no danger of violating them. If one has gone so far as to set moral standards for themselves, they can always be moved, and if they wish to go beyond what they have set as acceptable, no problem.

Just establish for yourself a new boundary. Again, it's all about authority and who one recognizes as the authority. Recalling a line from Fyodor Dostoevsky and the brothers Karamazov, If there is no God, all things are permitted.

For many, especially in the Western world, this is what things have come to. And again, the most common result of the moral fall of our first parents remains a strident self-centeredness that has afflicted all of humanity.

[67 : 31] Such do not suffer from the pangs of guilt. These may be those spoken of by the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 4, whom he described as having a conscience that is scarred or cauterized with a hot iron.

As a hot iron produces scar tissue on the skin that is devoid of feeling due to there being no nerve endings, such is the effect of one's conscience morally. No feelings of guilt, no shame, no remorse, and no repentance.

It's truly tragic. A predictable result of being one's own authority for right and wrong. Faulty Assumptions via Ancestry Ancestry is probably the greatest single source of our faulty assumptions.

And by ancestry, we simply mean our ancestors may have made certain faulty assumptions in years past, and then each succeeding generation has perpetuated them. One can easily see the automatic tendency to do this.

Faulty Assumptions many at the present are operating from may have been established in the generation immediately preceding them, that is, by their parents. Or it may have been perpetuated from several generations past.

[68 : 51] Among many today, the sentiment is, well, if it was good enough for my parents and my grandparents and their parents before them, then it's good enough for me.

Well, such is tantamount to saying, whatever it was my ancestors believed must be true. Therein is a truly major faulty assumption.

Now, while one's ancestral beliefs may be true, they are not true because your ancestors believed it. We have established in previous segments of Christianity clarified that a thing is not true simply because one believes it to be true.

Truth is determined by its inherent truthfulness and correspondence to reality, not by who or how many believe it. Because believing something, no matter how sincerely, does not make it so.

What makes faulty assumptions by ancestry so difficult to expose and overcome is their inevitable connection with emotional family ties, and these can be very strong, and in some cases is so strong that descendants are unwilling to even consider the possibility of their being wrong.

[70 : 06] The emotional magnetism connected with family loyalty is frequently triumphant over even the consideration of their being erroneous, much less the idea of abandoning them.

Such would make out one to be the traitor of the family name in the eyes of other family members. And while it ought not to be true, it so often is true that emotional ties and tradition trumps the truth most of the time.

Never mind that truth is associated with God and error is associated with the adversary. It must also be admitted, and happily so, that one's ancestry might have been firmly on solid ground in matters pertaining to the truth of God as revealed in Scripture.

You may be a descendant of those who place the same premium on truth that God does in His Word, and if so, count yourself among the very most blessed of God for a godly ancestry of that kind.

It is assumed that you will then do all in your power to perpetuate that priceless heritage by passing it on to the next generation. God, through Moses in Deuteronomy 6, commanded the nation of Israel to do that very thing.

[71 : 31] And you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, when you rise up.

Deuteronomy 6, 7. You've just heard another session of Christianity Clarified with Marv Wiseman. Preview of Upcoming Volume 45 Throughout this 44th volume of Christianity Clarified, our emphasis continued to be on the concept of faulty assumptions.

We major on this issue because, as we have explained, it is the faulty assumptions one makes in interpreting a text of Scripture that results in a wrong doctrinal conclusion.

And if that conclusion was reached by one of stature and respect, it is often unquestioned and adopted by the faithful as doctrine. It isn't long then until it shows up in statements of faith.

And it often then results in separating from others who do not subscribe to that statement of faith. These often have leaders of their own who also make faulty assumptions of their own that also become doctrine, and so it goes.

[72 : 56] This is precisely how denominations, councils, synods, assemblies, and so on, all of a different doctrinal stripe or emphasis have come into being.

And it is safe to say that nearly all of these, if not all, arrived at their faulty assumptions with great sincerity and motivated by only the best of intentions.

But as pointed out earlier, even though we have an inerrant and infallible Bible, that does not mean we arrive at inerrant and infallible interpretations of it.

And because well-intentioned men over the past arrived at diverse interpretations of the same passages, explains how and why Christendom is so terribly divided.

Recall, if you will, the observations we've made earlier, 500 years ago, not really very long compared to human history. There were no Lutherans, no Methodists, no Presbyterians, no brethren, no Church of God, no Nazarenes, no Assembly of God, councils, and so on, until you arrive at today's total in excess of 250 different groups of major denominations, splits, splinters, cults, and isms.

[74 : 22] And where did all these come from? Well, they came from the parent group of Roman Catholicism, and they each latched on to their particular doctrinal emphasis that separated them from others with a different doctrinal emphasis.

And where did the Roman Catholic Church come from? It came out of the Judaism that preceded it, and both the Roman Catholics and the Jews before them had fallen prey to their own faulty assumptions.

In essence, there are faulty assumptions that have begotten faulty assumptions, and the beat goes on. And never forget, who is it that fuels and aids us all in the direction of making and adding to faulty assumptions?

It is none other than the father of error, Satan himself, of whom Christ said, has no truth in him. Satan, our adversary, sows lies, deception, confusion, separation, and faulty assumptions everywhere he can.

[75 : 36] His wiles, plus our own fallenness that allows us to reason with a warped intellect, has inundated the Christian faith.

And this is precisely why Christianity Clarified has come into existence. And we fully acknowledge we are not exempt from adding to the faulty assumptions already out there.

We rely on the rules we've made much of from Miles Coverdale plus the principles of sound hermeneutics to help us avoid faulty assumptions. But does that enable us to guarantee that the positions we present are all free of error?

Ha ha! That would be another faulty assumption. So, if you want to continue studying with us, listen for faulty assumptions we might make of our own.

And of late, we have directed our efforts toward the faulty assumptions made by the Jews. They started this, you know, back in the Old Testament. And then we will expose the faulty assumptions of Roman Catholics.

[76 : 43] And, for sure, we Protestants have not escaped. We have a plethora of faulty assumptions of our own. So, we will be dragging some sacred cows to the altar and slaying them there, no matter to whom or what denomination they may belong, so long as they do not comply with the word of God as it is rightly divided.

So, you may, we hope, plan on coming with us and watch the fur fly. Hey, nothing matters but the truth. Buy it and sell it not, is the way Proverbs put it.

So, this is Pastor Marv Wiseman from Grace Bible Church. Thanks so much for being a part of our happy band. May the Lord richly bless you.