

Christianity Clarified Volume 72

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[0 : 00] Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 1, Another Major Faulty Assumption. Few examples exist to top the faulty assumption made by Roman Catholics and Protestants concerning Acts chapter 2 and the annual Jewish feast called Pentecost.

If ever there was an example of a faulty assumption etched in stone, Acts 2 is surely it. Still, one can easily see how it was made, assumed to be true, and as we have admitted in time past, had we of present-day Christianity Clarified been back there 2,000 years ago, we no doubt would have reached the very same erroneous conclusion as they, which was, and of course still is, in the doctrinal statements of Catholics and Protestants, that the miraculous events of Acts 2 on Pentecost was the birthday of the Christian Church.

That seems so obvious. Everybody knows the Christian Church had its birthday at Pentecost, over and out. End of argument.

In fact, it was and is, by most, so confidently held that there is no argument to end. The chorus over history is unmistakable.

Both parties, Catholic and then, hundreds of years later, Protestant as well, were in complete agreement. The Christian Church began at Pentecost, Acts 2.

[1 : 36] This we are calling a major faulty assumption in that Acts chapter 2 was not the beginning of the Christian Church. Two related questions arise immediately.

One, if Acts 2 was not the beginning of the Christian Church, then what was it? The answer is, it was what the Apostle Peter said it was.

Well, imagine that. Nothing more, nothing less. Peter assured his exclusively Jewish audience that what they were all seeing and hearing was not because many had been drinking and were intoxicated, reminding them all, it's only nine o'clock in the morning.

What it is, said Peter, is what the prophet Joel was talking about. He then proceeded to tell his exclusively Jewish audience they were entering the period of the last days.

In the Bible, the former days and the last days are divided by Jesus the Messiah. Everything that occurred prior to the first coming of Christ constituted the former days, and everything after his ascension constitutes the latter days.

[2 : 53] Thus, we are right now living in what Scripture calls the last or latter days. It was the death and resurrection of Christ that provided the focal or pivotal point of all human history.

It was his earthly appearance at his first coming to Bethlehem, which served as the watershed in that everything on earth.

And it still does.

Thus, this remains one of the most basic and erroneous faulty assumptions to this date. More will be added as we go along. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 2, The Dominant Prominent Kingdom Remains Such, Part 1.

Recalling the key biblical issue of the kingdom, we emphasized it as being the very core of humanity and creation for all time. It is the larger issue of all of Scripture.

[4 : 08] McLean was spot on when he named his volume, The Greatness of the Kingdom. It is great because it will be the finished product of a terribly ruined and fallen world that will be redeemed and restored.

This present world is far removed from the original pristine creation of Genesis 1 and 2, described by the Creator himself as being very good.

The failure and fall of our first parents cast this world into the state of corruption, both physically and morally, that terminated in the death of all things living, human and animal.

The grand dynamic of the kingdom is to be realized in the king, also called the redeemer. He thus became the key, the restorer, the renewer of it all.

The purchase price he paid for the global rights to this creation was his own life poured out sacrificially on behalf of the entire creation, including the human race.

[5 : 15] God, his own father, commissioned his son to be the savior of the world. In his sinlessness, he alone was qualified and willing to do so.

His sacrificial death on our behalf makes that transaction the very focal point of the universe. Such was reduced to one word exclaimed by Jesus while on the cross as his very life was exiting his body, and the word was, Tetelestai!

It is finished! Did you get that? Jesus was saying the very reason he came into the world was to accomplish the transaction he was now saying was finished.

Do you get that? If you do, then it will also get you, and your life and your eternity will never be the same. And pray tell me, what else could the apostle Paul say in writing to the church congregation at Corinth when he penned his first letter to them stating, For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And did you get that? Paul was saying that nothing else he had to tell them could begin to compare with that singular truth, Jesus Christ and him crucified.

[6 : 47] For you, for me, for us all. Christ loved us all to the extent he poured out his own life to pay the penalty for our sin.

This is, was, and always shall be the focal point of the entire universe. Miss this, and miss personalizing it for yourself, and you miss everything.

Get it, and personalize it for yourself, and you get everything. And that's why it's called good news. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 3. The Dominant Prominent Kingdom Remains, Part 2. In briefly considering Peter's Pentecostal message in Acts 2, he will stun his exclusively Jewish audience by telling them, Jesus of Nazareth, whom they crucified, really was their long-awaited Messiah.

Can you not see the eyes of those people enlarging and their jaws dropping as Peter spoke? Not only did you crucify him, said Peter, but God raised him from the dead.

[8 : 07] He continues to lay out his case, and what a case it was. He quotes directly from Psalm 116, a well-known but little-understood passage written by King David a thousand years earlier.

David wrote, Thou hast made known to me the ways of life.

Thou wilt make me full of gladness with thy presence. And then Peter, no doubt with piercing eyes and tongue, said, Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch King David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon the throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh suffer decay.

This Jesus God raised up again, to which we all are witnesses. Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured forth this which you have both seen and heard.

[9 : 53] For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make thine enemies a footstool for my feet.

Therefore, let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter, and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?

And Peter said to them, Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The faulty assumption Catholics and Protestants continue to make puts words in the mouth of Peter, He did not say, and this too will be revealed just ahead.

[11 : 04] Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 4. The Dominant Prominent Kingdom Remains, Part 3. Peter's explanation of the phenomenal events that took place at Pentecost in Acts, Chapter 2, is clearly a prophecy that was voiced by King David a thousand years before that, that his descendants would be one who, upon his death, would not experience his body undergoing corruption.

The reason being, he would be resurrected from the tomb. Peter reminds them that David was not speaking of himself simply because his body did undergo corruption and certainly had not been raised from the dead.

In fact, said Peter, we all know where David's tomb is that contains his body. David was prophetically speaking of his descendant, of whom that would be true, and Peter then goes on to declare that descendant to have been none other than Jesus, whom you crucified, and God then raised from the dead.

There is not even a hint that this Pentecostal event was the beginning of the Christian Church, as held later by Catholics and Protestants worldwide, and still is to the present day.

What it was, rather, was another demonstration of the miraculous added to those already performed by Jesus and his apostles, provided for the same reason during the three-year earthly ministry of Christ.

[12:48] It was to authenticate the Messiahship of Jesus and to identify him, accordingly, as the King of Israel, who would establish the long-awaited kingdom of heaven on earth.

That the 3,000 obviously took that to be the case resulted not only in their joyous attitude, but as well in their undertaking the activities the kingdom required, namely, repenting of their sin and submitting themselves to the water baptism instituted by John the Baptist.

They then began demonstrating their faith by meeting those same kingdom requirements already in place and already followed previously by the twelve and other Jews who had responded to the kingdom message.

Chapters 2 and 3 record such events. Selling property, dividing proceeds, were the very deeds the rich young ruler had refused to do when Jesus required that of him earlier in Matthew 19.

This is all kingdom-related content and not at all the origin of the Christian church, as both Catholics and Protestants assume. What it was was what Peter said it was, not what those later believed it to be with their faulty assumptions of the beginning of the Christian church.

[14:16] There was nothing we would call Christian about it. It was Jewish, Jewish, Jewish, but still a church, as explained next.

So, then on what basis do many today, including most Christians, Catholic and Protestant, still see this as the beginning of the Christian church? Well, that too, and the reason for it is upcoming, and had we lived back then and witnessed what they did, we likely would have been on board with them.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 5, The Dominant Prominent Kingdom Remains, Part 4. Under consideration is the familiar passage found in Acts chapter 2, commonly designated as the beginning of the Christian church.

Christianity Clarified identified it as a faulty assumption, not on the part of those who actually experienced it, but on the interpretation that was attached to it by those who came later and assumed it to be such.

Why did they make such an assumption? It appeared to be very logical. Still, as cautioned previously, things are not always as they seem.

[15:35] Faulty assumptions can be so easily and quickly embraced because they almost always appear obvious. That's why they were adopted. But then, years later, their flaws reveal them to be other than what they were assumed, and the faulty assumption has struck again.

Meanwhile, that earlier faulty assumption had already become etched in stone, as it were, in doctrinal statements accepted and believed by the faithful followers.

Then, how unlikely is it that it would later be corrected and overturned by the generations to come? Ha ha! Not very.

Especially if it had been installed as the truth and considered infallible, as in the case of Roman Catholic doctrine. In many cases, it is only history and what occurs years later that makes that earlier doctrinal conclusion etched in stone to have been patently untrue.

Over the past 1700 years, earlier conclusions have been revealed to have been based on faulty assumptions. And the fact that they were made in good faith does not at all alter their being untrue.

[16:55] They remain untrue. The most obvious example has earlier been identified and validated by actual history over the past several hundred years. When Jesus told His apostles in John 14 that He was going to leave them, but would come again and receive them unto Himself, that where He was, there they would be also.

And after two hundred years or more, and Jesus had still not returned, there could only be one of three explanations. Number one, Jesus lied to them.

Well, nobody believed that. Two, Jesus meant it when He said it, that He would return and receive them, but He was simply unable to do it. Nobody seriously believed that either.

The answer seized upon was that Jesus did return, but only in spirit, on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and not physically. How many and how soon that explanation was adopted is not clear.

That it was adopted is clear. And a leading light among Christians was Origen, one of the most respected intellects of the third century, who was extremely influential.

[18:09] His conclusion about Jesus having come spiritually was later adopted by Augustine, the most influential thinker of his day in the fourth century, and the whole concept of the return of Christ having been spiritual at Pentecost was off and running.

The consequences of that huge, faulty assumption, made completely in good faith, helped chart a path of error for both Catholics and Protestants to this day.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 6, The Dominant Prominent Kingdom Goes Spiritual Recently revealed was the faulty assumption made by influential leaders like Origen in the third century and Augustine in the fourth that gave rise to the return of Christ being spiritual or immaterial and actually occurred at Pentecost in Acts chapter 2.

Logically, or at least what seemed logical, was the return of Christ having been spiritual. That would, of course, follow that the kingdom of which he so often spoke and promised would also be, you guessed it, spiritual as well.

While history, and today, reveals that concept of a purely spiritual kingdom to have been a faulty assumption, those who made it in the third and fourth century had taken the idea of a literal, physical return of Christ to have been the faulty assumption.

[19:48] Do you see how involved and confusing this all can be? Augustine, convinced and in good faith, penned his outstanding classic titled The City of God.

In it, he clearly saw this present world as the kingdom of God having arrived in a spiritual sense. It was and continues to be one of the most influential treatises ever penned.

And there are elements of truth in it, many. It does describe a pitched spiritual battle of the forces of good versus those of evil with the forces of God and good eventually victorious.

But, as with Origen, a century earlier, Augustine had also abandoned the idea of Christ's return being physical, opting for its spiritual or immaterial influence as the city of God.

His was a fourth-century influence that impacted those for centuries to come. A key point, of course, was that the kingdom Christ had promised was clearly intended to be spiritual rather than literal and immaterial rather than material.

[21:02] Centuries later, that idea was confirmed when the years 1,000 A.D. and then 1,100 A.D., that is, 1,000 years after Christ ascended and still no return seemed to provide proof positive that His return was, again, never intended to be physical but limited to be spiritual.

Even so, confusion was multiplied among Christians who for two to three hundred years after Christ's ascension insisted His return would be literal.

Eventually, the spiritual only view became dominant and would remain such to the present time as referenced repeatedly by Catholics and Protestants.

Compounding the confusion and the complexity of it all was the precise situation of the Jewish people as the perceived original people of God. Were they or were they not replaced by Christianity due to the Jews' rejection of Jesus as their Messiah?

Many held they were permanently so. Others held they were but not permanently so, including the position of Augustine himself. So, confusion abounded with the ubiquitous, faulty assumption lurking nearby.

[22:26] Eventually, new winds will begin to blow, causing serious reconsideration about the replacement theology we have so frequently mentioned. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 7, A Necessary Digression It is imperative we address three key questions before we can move on to the faulty assumptions adopted by both Catholics and Protestants.

The three questions are all directly connected to the Kingdom of God and Christian Church entities. Whether they seem to be or not, nevertheless, they are.

Here is question number one. Who was in charge of planet Earth before Jesus was born in Bethlehem and also 33 years later when He left Earth to go back to Heaven?

The answer is Satan, the adversary of God, also known as the devil. From the time in Genesis 3, thousands of years earlier, he had been in charge, was in charge during the earthly life of Jesus, and remains in charge today.

He achieved that position of authority by deceiving Adam and Eve, causing their moral, spiritual, and physical fall from the exalted dominion God had entrusted to them.

[23 : 55] Satan took over and remains in charge to this very day. Question number two. Why doesn't God simply overpower or eliminate Satan?

He certainly has the ability to do that, and it would prevent all the damage Satan does. Answer. God most definitely will do that as Revelation 19 and 20 explain.

But, He will do it according to His timetable, not ours. Be assured, God knows what He is doing and when to do it.

Question three. Why did Christians as early as the third and fourth century after Christ assume the church had replaced the nation of Israel as God's chosen people?

Answer. Multiple reasons were involved, but two were outstanding. First, even though many Jews had believed in Jesus, His death and resurrection, still most, especially the leaders of Israel, did not.

[25 : 09] Yet, there were more and more Gentiles coming to faith in Jesus, while Jews mostly remained in a rejection mode. Numbers of Gentiles continued to accept Christ, while most Jews continued to reject Him.

Gentiles concluded God was accepting Gentiles, but rejecting Jews as His special people. And while that was a faulty assumption, it certainly appeared to be true.

Clearly, God did not intervene and protect the Jews from the Romans and their destruction of the beloved Jewish temple and the city of Jerusalem, not only in 70 A.D., but again in 134 A.D.

Both destructions saw tens of thousands of Jews massacred and led into slavery, and from all appearances, it looked like God really was finished with Israel.

He would tolerate their rejection of His Son and their continued corruption no longer. It was true, God was setting Israel aside in their sin and unbelief, but as Romans chapters 9 through 11 explain, it was not to be permanent.

[26 : 23] Yet, that faulty assumption prevailed, and it still does for many today. Three important questions, three important answers. You're welcome.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 8, Unnecessary Digression, Part 2. Of the three questions asked and answered on the previous session of Christianity Clarified, we devote our attention to the first.

So very much that will follow on subsequent sessions depends directly upon one's understanding of this initial issue of who was in charge of planet Earth before Jesus was born and also 33 years later when he left Earth to return to Heaven.

And who is it that remains in charge? The answer was and is Satan, the adversary, also known as the devil.

Satan successfully deceived those originally in charge, our first parents, Adam and Eve, and usurped control over creation that inserted his fallenness as an injection of evil into every fiber of God's original creation.

[27 : 43] It is critical that this be understood. There is no other explanation for the condition and events in the world from Genesis chapter 3 to the present day.

Of course, we recoil at that thought wanting to think that the world is surely better than that. No, it is not.

If you think so, please put away your rosy tinted glasses and get a good look at all around you. Reality will not allow us to escape this world that is unless one is simply intent on engaging in denial.

And if so, then that is a different problem. Seriously now, folks, so very much depends upon our grasping with a good grasp the precise condition of planet Earth and its inhabitants.

Don't be deceived by the planet's display of things in great beauty. Even gorgeous scenes, breathtaking to observe. And yes, enjoy them, visit them, some for which we gladly pay an admission charge.

[29 : 04] Have I, your host on Christianity Clarified, done that? Well, of course I have. In my mind's eye, I still relive the sheer dazzling beauty of the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Niagara Falls,

magnificent scenes of the sunset on one of our great oceans.

As sincere believers in what the Bible describes as the history of planet Earth from creation onward, we see the flood of Noah as having seriously rearranged the topography of Earth.

We can only wonder what our world looked like before that radical rearrangement change the face of the planet. And, there are no pictures to satisfy our curiosity.

Now, I need to inject a question that I admit I cannot answer, nor can you. But, I cannot just dismiss it because of the implications it poses, so please indulge me while I pass it on to you in our next get-together.

We can at least pool our ignorance while we think about it. And, oh yes, one word of caution in advance, don't put anything past the devil.

[30 : 21] He really is evil totally through and through. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 9, A Necessary Digression, Part 3.

Let's get right down to it with that question we admitted we can't answer, but we can't help wondering about it, so we want to share it with you. And here it is.

Just how much latitude does God allow Satan to have? There is no doubt, as Scripture and history testify, Satan's powers of deception and destruction are very real.

And it's also clear they are not total. Otherwise, things would be even worse than they are.

Previously, we've characterized Satan like a mad dog set loose on humanity.

Yet, and of necessity, think of, and thank God for, a divine leash around the devil's neck that will allow him to go only so far and no further. God himself holds the other end of the leash, and he can yank on the devil's leash any time he wishes, thus preventing him from going even further than God would allow.

[31 : 38] So if you want something to be really thankful about, start there. Yet, while there is no doubt about it, God does corral Satan and prevents him from doing all he would like to do, and if he did not do that, probably none of us would even be here.

Because Satan does love a high body count. He salivated over six million Jews who succumbed to the evil of Adolf Hitler and Eichmann during World War II.

You can only imagine the purely evil glee that he will enjoy as the Antichrist brutally eliminates two-thirds of the world's Jews during the terrible time called the upcoming Great Tribulation.

It's described by Jesus in Matthew chapter 24. Unbeknown to the vast majority of humanity, including the world's leaders, Satan and his activities constitute an enormous blind spot in all of their thinking.

If one were to even suggest the involvement of a personal devil named Satan, such an one would likely be dismissed as a believer in fantasy, just so much gobbledygook or make-believe nonsense.

[33 : 05] But, let's get back to the issue of how much latitude does God give Satan? And we must confess we really don't know. We only know from history how much God has given him in the past and what is prophesied he will give in the future to him.

Also, we don't know how much latitude God gives to humans. We already were horrified at how much he allowed Hitler and those of past centuries like the brutal Emperor Nero, the Herods, and the like.

And does not all of that speak volumes as to the extreme latitude God does grant not only to Satan but to us humans as well when it comes to exercising our personal volition.

Volition, such a scary but critical concept that alone explains so very much. Volition, the exercise of our will that will determine the consequences of how and for what we used our volition.

It is a serious thing to be a human being and possess a free will. Christianity Clarified Volume 72 Track 10 A Necessary Digression Part 4 Our necessary digression is only to acknowledge and identify the moral and spiritual fallenness of this present world.

[34 : 41] The original world God created was described as very good upon its completion after the sixth day. We do not know exactly how long our first parents lived in that very good environment until through the enticement of Satan they disobeyed God their creator and everything changed.

Chiefest among the changes was the arrival of this thing called death, a concept with which they were unfamiliar but nonetheless were warned about earlier.

within the first three chapters of the book of Genesis already the first two of the big three elements were in place. They are and were creation as number one and ruination as number two.

All of the remainder of the Bible from Genesis chapter 3 until Revelation chapter 22 is directed toward the repair or correction of those first two elements creation and ruination.

The third and last from Genesis 3 all the way through the remainder of the Old Testament and the entirety of the New Testament is called redemption.

[36 : 05] That's the remedy for ruination. Man with Satan's help succeeded in contaminating the original pristine creation including their physical bodies with that foreign element called sin.

Sin was and is the comprehensive ingredient called evil contrary to the purity with which Adam and Eve were created.

Apparently the earth itself in its vegetation and all animals were likewise altered in their being so as to undergo a change, a negative change in their bodies.

The result was calamitous. Everything alive took on the destiny for life to be ended called death.

And so everything alive headed for that common exit called death, termination of life itself.

[37 : 16] Still, God had implanted in all things living the innate capacity to reproduce each after its own kind.

And that ability to reproduce a new generation like itself before passing on in death has succeeded in perpetuating the lives of all living earthly things.

The ultimate answer to death is the coming kingdom promised by God, preached by John the Baptist, by Jesus and his apostles, and it is destined to redeem, restore, renew all the damage and destruction caused by the original inhabitants.

We are continuing our examination and anticipation of that redemption called the kingdom of heaven come to earth, and you are welcome and encouraged to join us.

The big three, creation, ruination, and redemption. It is key and it is glorious beyond words.

Christianity Clarified, volume 72, track 11, A Necessary Digression, part 5.

[38 : 40] Earlier on volume 70 of Christianity Clarified, the kingdom of heaven was referred to as prominent and dominant and so it is.

Understandably, the kingdom may well sound otherworldly because in many respects it is. In reality, it is the reign of God in heaven that will come to earth and be established here that will be very much unlike our present world.

So, start now, if you have not already done so, trying to contemplate the idea of living in a world that is the ultimate provision of God called the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Because you are going to be living in it if you are now a believer in Jesus Christ when that time comes. You will be a subject in it along with millions others.

After that millennium, that is the thousand year literal reign of the kingdom of heaven on earth, it will then give way to the eternal state described in the last two chapters of the book of Revelation.

[39 : 52] But, for the present, we must confine ourselves to the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Pentecost, in his valuable volume titled Things to Come, and McLean, with another stellar volume titled The Greatness of the Kingdom, both deal profusely with this all-important subject.

Still, in a category all its own, is the massive three-volume treatise titled The Theocratic Kingdom by George N.H.

Peters. It is simply astounding in its thoroughness and expansiveness. Peters published this work in 1884, and it was printed by Funk and Weignolls, the reputable publisher of encyclopedias, and the theocratic kingdom certainly qualifies for being encyclopedic.

Contrary to the Lutheran Church, to which Peters was a highly respected clergyman, he and a fellow Lutheran, J.A. Seiss, had both broken ranks with the official theological position of amillennialism endorsed by the Lutheran denomination, as well as all of the mainline denomination.

So, if ever there were two scholars swimming against the current of opposition, it was G.N.H.

Peters and Seiss. Their premillennial position was dwarfed by all, literally all, of the solidly entrenched Roman Catholic and officials, all of the Lutherans coming from Catholicism through the efforts of Luther in 1517.

[41 : 37] And then, add to them the Church of England, which also stemmed from the Catholic Church by King Henry VIII, who then went on to establish the Church of England with himself as its head, and it also became known as the Episcopalian or the Anglican Church that broke from Rome, but brought with them much of Rome's theology, including, of course, Rome's view of replacement theology.

Then, out of the Church of England, there would come the Methodist Church, many of the Presbyterians, and out of those in later years, lesser groups would form that remain active today. But, something else very significant is going to cause a lot of new questions about an old issue. Yes, replacement theology. Could it be that replacement theology might be replaced? Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 12, Unnecessary Digression, Part 5. Replacement theology, frequently referred to on Christianity Clarified, is sometimes called supersessionism, but currently it is being questioned, seriously reconsidered by many who never questioned it before. The majority opinion for nearly 70 1700 years has been that God has permanently cast off His originally chosen people, the Jews, and has replaced them with a new chosen people known as the Christian Church.

[43 : 18] There did appear to be logical reasons for believing that. After all, the Jews had been complicit with the Romans in the crucifixion of Jesus, the very one God had sent to them to be their Savior.

So, as Jesus had earlier prophesied, the Romans destroyed Jerusalem completely in 70 A.D., and again, where was God?

He allowed that to happen. Then in 137 A.D., about 75 years later, Rome again destroyed Jerusalem that had been since rebuilt.

revolt. This time, it was due to the revolt led by Bar Kokhba, who had claimed to be Israel's Messiah. There was a massive slaughter of the Jews, and again, the question, where was God? He did not prevent thousands of His so-called chosen people from being butchered by the Romans. Those not killed were enslaved by the thousands.

[44 : 24] All Jews were forbidden to return to Jerusalem under penalty of death if caught there. Then, they even renamed the city, giving it the Roman name of Capalatina.

More than ever, surviving Jews were being scattered all over the Mediterranean world and further abroad. It was little wonder that for centuries following, they would be known worldwide as the wandering Jews.

Their brutal persecution and ostracism went on throughout all the world, but especially in Europe. From every indication, it appeared God had abandoned the Jews.

Yet, as has been often noted, things are not always as they seem. When World War II ended in 1945, fully one-third of the world's Jewish people had been brutally murdered.

The only reason they survived anywhere was due to the war ending before Hitler could kill them all. What then was to happen to the Jews who did survive World War II?

[45 : 44] Well, as many as could began migrating in and from Europe, but to where? No nation, to their shame, was willing to take the surviving Jews in.

Where could they go? What had been their homeland when God gave it to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had not been theirs for centuries. A perplexing desperation was all they could muster. And then, the utterly unthinkable happened. Against odds so great they could not be calculated, but no matter, it still happened, and it's up next.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 13, Unnecessary Digression, Part 6. Understandably, with a war of international scope involving millions of combatants from multiple nations having finally come to an end six years later, confusion still reigned supreme.

Entire countries had been ravaged, and every kind of abnormality one could imagine had ruled for those torturous years. And as a people, an ethnic extreme minority of Jewish people, could anyone be found who had suffered more?

[47 : 13] Their physical displacement was indescribable. Homeless, nationless, and mostly penniless, surviving Jews were huddled by the thousands in makeshift displacement camps, while the Allies, primarily British and American, tried to decide what to do with the Jews.

No nation volunteered to receive them, but all had turned them away. Clandestinely, and in every way they could, homeless Jews began their trek to Palestine, as it was then called.

For years, it had been in control by various Arab populations from nations in the Mideast. But, wasn't Palestine the same geography as ancient Israel?

It sure was. Even the latitude and longitude geographicals on the map declared it to be so. Return to the land soon became the heart cry, the land from which we came and were driven out hundreds of years ago.

The land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The land God gave our ancestors who were buried there. The problem with the dream of returning was, they were not welcome there either.

[48 : 45] Palestine was largely inhabited by Arabs who had taken it over, having moved there from surrounding Arab nations. The Jews were no more welcome there in Palestine than they were elsewhere in the world.

But what were they to do? They have to live somewhere and no one had the welcome mat out. It looked very much like these surviving Jews were simply tired of being on the receiving end of the bullies of the world, chiefest among them the Hitlers and his ilk.

Could the Jews go on the offensive for once instead of letting everyone else make decisions for them? Well, it would begin only with a trickle to Palestine.

But some Jews, somewhere in all of this rejection and confusion, had begun saying, we're going home. Soon, others were saying, and so are we.

a steady stream of Jewish survivors began showing up in their ancient home by the sea that was called Palestine.

[50 : 03] They would have to fight to stay there. They were no more welcome there than anywhere else. And fight they did. And could it be that a seemingly absent God of Israel showed up?

Ah, the plot is thickening. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 14, A Necessary Digression, Part 7. With World War II now concluded, the world in general, and Europe and Asia in particular, had begun rebuilding and instituting peacetime changes.

In tiny Palestine, constant skirmishes were occurring between the Arab population and the Jews who were flowing in after the war. Conflict was inevitable, and many lives were lost on both sides. The British military had been there in an effort to keep the peace and to try and arrange some kind of partitioning of the land. Negotiations were taking place among the Allied nations as to what the final disposition of Palestine should be.

It was a hornet's nest trying to keep the Arabs and the Jews separated, so a lot of blood was shed on both sides. Great Britain had been authorized by the United Nations to oversee the partitioning of the land, with a certain area to be granted to the Jews, and another area to be granted to the Arabs.

[51 : 34] But the Arabs refused any apportionment of the land at all. They insisted on having all of it. Recognizing that there was no way an agreeable solution could be found, on May 14, the British troops withdrew all their supplies and men and shipped out.

The very next day, May 15, 1948, the Jews declared their independence and announced to the world their new nation is to be named not Palestine, but Israel.

David Ben-Gurion had been installed as Israel's Prime Minister. President Harry Truman of the United States was the first to officially recognize Israel as the new nation state.

Within a matter of hours, this newly born country was attacked militarily by Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia.

Israel did not even have what could be called an army. They were a bunch of ragtag civilians with no organization or strategy for a full-scale defense.

[52 : 57] There was simply no human reason why this fledgling nation could possibly survive. They were babes in the woods regarding necessary defense strategies for survival.

All over the world, uninvolved military experts anticipated the speedy defeat and elimination of the new state. Israel would be seen as the stillborn state that never really got to take its first breath.

The Jews were out manned, out generated, out gunned, under supplied, and in every way under financed. If anyone in Las Vegas was betting on this, Israel's quick defeat was where all of the smart money was.

But, nobody told Israel that. Ignoring the doomsdayers, these people who could not possibly win, won, they took their first deep breath of freedom for their new state.

Could it possibly be? No, it couldn't be that the chosen of God saw their separated God show up?

[54 : 20] Christianity Clarified Volume 72 Track 15 Unnecessary Digression Part 8 Well, there was no question about it.

The world was stunned. Military experts, fresh from their experiences of World War II and all of that carnage, could do little more than sit behind their desks, scratching their heads.

Israel survived? You mean, they won that thing? That bunch of world outcasts that no one would take in?

They beat the Arab nations? All seven of the Arab nations? Well, they could only chalk it up to a modern David and Goliath thing, but this time, there was one David and seven Goliaths. In times of conflict between nations, there are always unpredictables, but this Israel thing winning that war is crazy.

[55 : 34] After all, these aren't Bible days complete with miracles and all of that Bible stuff. This was 1948. Yep, sure was.

Tiny Israel had a calendar too, and sure enough, it was 1948. Okay, so much for the world's generals and military strategists, so much for the political experts near and far, nothing left to do or look for any other possible explanation than to resort to the theologians?

You know, those people who think the Bible has the answer for everything? Well, bless their heart, it does. Preachers, you know, those weird people who actually believe that old outdated book means what it says and says what it means?

Well, that same old book says God chose Israel way back in Genesis chapter 12 to be the daddy of all of the Jews, a wandering tent dweller named Abraham.

And by the way, the same guy was also the daddy of, ah, the Arabs too? Imagine that. Over 3,000 years ago, God told Abraham that his offspring would one day become a great nation.

[57 : 01] And the irony of it all was that Abraham and his wife Sarah were then both nearing 100 years of age and had never been able to produce the first baby. God told Abraham he'd take care of that.

And he also told him he was going to make a contract with Abraham whereby he, God, would make it official that he would be Abraham's God and Abraham would be his special guy.

God went on and on about all of that, adding that Abe would be the father of many nations. And here, poor old Abraham and Sarah hadn't even managed to produce one little baby.

Never mind fathering nations. Oh, yes, one more thing that really covers everything. How could it be overlooked? Well, the replacement theology folks did overlook it and we need to take a look at it ourselves, which we will do and we would love to have you join us.

Folks, this is absolutely stunning stuff. No possible explanation exists other than it was a God thing. God. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 16, Unnecessary Digression, Part 9.

[58 : 24] So, regarding Abraham and the encounter he had early on with the living God in Genesis chapters 12, 13, 15, 17, and 18, and especially chapter 15, where God personally established a contract with Abraham.

Normally, a contract would be ratified with both parties who swore they would abide by its terms. But for this contract, Abraham was fast asleep.

God alone signed on to the contract while Abraham was asleep and could not fulfill his part walking between the slain animal pieces and the ancient way of making a contract back then.

This, of course, was long before signatures of both parties would be affixed to it. With Abraham asleep and purposely by God's design, it effectively meant the contract was signed, if you will, by just one party to the deal.

God alone walked between those animal parts as was done in that ancient day of two parties making a contract while Abraham was fast asleep by God's design.

[59 : 36] So, what did that mean? It meant it was, in effect, a one-sided document. It's hard to even call it a contract since only one signed it.

Actually, it was more of a one-sided promise being made by God rather than anything being promised by Abraham. And, to most moderns today, this all sounds like so much religious gobbledygook.

But that's only because of the ignorance of some people today, usually people who think they are so smart. But anyway, this contract was what we can only call one-sided.

And that meant all of the effort to fulfill the promise would be on God's part and Abraham effectively didn't even have a part to fulfill.

The burden was on God alone and Abraham had no burden. Actually, more than a contract between two parties, it was rather a promise requiring only the one party, God, to fulfill.

[60 : 51] And the difference was incalculable. Abraham had nothing to do, but believed the promise. And by the way, what in the world does this event in Genesis 15 of 3,000 years ago have to do with Israel becoming a nation and defeating seven of its Arab nations in 1948?

What does it have to do with it? Only everything. That's all. Only everything. Oh, and lest we forget, here's another item that also figures into the whole mix, spanning the thousands of years between Genesis 15 and 1948.

Remember all of those seven Arab nations? Where did they come from? Well, they too came from Abraham. Yep. Read the account in Genesis 16.

Because Abraham's wife Sarah was way past the years of conceiving a child, it was her idea, Sarah's idea, that Abraham impregnate their servant girl, Hagar. What?

Hagar was fertile and conceived a little boy. His name was Ishmael and he became the father of all of those people from the seven Arab nations that attacked Israel in 1948.

[62 : 06] Talk about an ancient soap opera. This is better than anything Hollywood could ever come up with. So let's pursue it. Join me. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 17, A Diversion from the Digression, Part 1.

For lack of a better name, this segment is called A Diversion from the Digression that we were following. So why is this necessary? Well, it's necessary in order to make sense of things, or as we put it, in order to connect the dots.

dots. And when you are dealing with the Bible, be advised, in case you aren't aware of it, everything in the Bible is connected to everything in the Bible.

And when you connect the dots, you get it. But if you don't connect the dots, forget it. You will remain in the dark regarding the best and most wonderful information in the entire world, which, unfortunately, is exactly where most people are, which is precisely why Christianity Clarified came into being.

But, lest we divert further, let's get back to Abraham. The culture of Abraham and Sarah's day considered it perfectly acceptable, even respectful.

[63 : 31] If a man's wife could not produce a baby after seven years of trying, it was culturally, even morally appropriate in everyone's eyes for the husband to impregnate a servant or slave girl who was owned by the family.

Only, none of that procedure called artificial insemination existed back then. The impregnation had to be done the old-fashioned way.

This was man, the master, and owner impregnating the servant or slave girl. Hard as this is for today's wives to accept, it was clearly the suggestion of Sarah, Abraham's wife, that her hubby impregnate Hagar, their servant.

Now, no doubt Abraham, being the gentleman he was, refused, just like any faithful, ordinary husband would. But, when every month rolled around and Sarah knew there would be no conception, she had to notice the depressed, downcast expression on Abraham's face.

After all, she no doubt considered herself at fault, and may have felt guilty for not producing a child with her husband. And we don't know if Abraham and Hagar had a one-night stand, or whether successive efforts were necessary.

[65 : 03] But we do know that eventually it worked, and little Ishmael was born. Who would he be? He would be the father of what would become the Arab world.

Does this mean the father of the Jordanians, the Iraqis, the Syrians, the Lebanese, the Yemenites, the Saudi Arabians? Yet! But wasn't it their descendants that attacked the Jews in Palestine in 1948?

Yep, the same. Like we've been saying, everything in the Bible is connected to everything in the Bible. There is simply one more evidence of that reality, and the question has often been asked, is it true that the Arabs and the Jews are actually related?

Yes, most definitely, they are all family. that's why they fight so much. Believe it or not, and probably neither the Jews or the Arabs do believe it, but they will one day kiss and make up.

But that's another diversion. Now, we need to return to our original diversion, or was it the one before that? Whichever, you join us if you can. Christianity Clarified, volume of 72, track 18, Israel Deserves Abandonment, part 1.

[66 : 31] As referenced earlier, most of the Christian world has been persuaded that when God cast off His previously chosen people, the Jews, He then transferred His care and provision to a new chosen people called the Christian Church.

But such was, and is, one of the most extensive faulty assumptions ever made. one can easily see how that faulty assumption was made.

Merely consider all of the terrible negative events that befell the Jewish people from the second century forward, and the God who had been their protector certainly hadn't provided any protection for them.

The only logical answer seemed to be that God had indeed abandoned them and deservedly so. And for what reason? Well, let us count the ways.

They had repeatedly, over several centuries, forsaken the true God who led them out of Egypt and miraculously sustained them for generations. Yet, they spurned God's care and protection by engaging in every form of national idolatry imaginable.

[68 : 01] And despite the warnings given them by multiple of their own prophets, they gravitated toward the religions of their pagan neighbors and turned their backs on the God who had faithfully preserved them.

Then, in the first century A.D., it appeared that God had had enough when the Jews became co-conspirators in arranging the cruel death of Jesus of Nazareth by crucifixion.

Surely, that would have been the last straw. And added to that faithful crucifixion day event, the sacred curtain in the Jewish temple that separated the holy place from the most holy place was torn in two from the top to the bottom.

This item that was at the very core of the religion of Judaism and precisely at the time of the death of Jesus on the cross, that significant and key event occurred.

No Bible teacher believes that to have been a coincidence. It was a God thing. It had all the appearances of God Himself sending the signal that He was done with the Jews and their idolatries upon their rejection and crucifixion of the very one God had sent to them for their salvation.

[69 : 26] Can anyone who is a casual student of history see this any other way? And apparently no one did. And as for the Jews, the curtain would have come down and God walked away.

And if there could possibly be any doubt, then 40 years later, God would again choose not to intervene but give place to the army of Rome one more time to completely destroy Jerusalem and the beloved temple for which He had given instructions for the building.

Could anyone possibly doubt it really was all over for God being the God of the Jews? Nope. No doubt. Except for one singular event we need to revisit and it makes all the difference.

You will see. Christianity Clarified Volume 72 Track 19 Israel Deserves Abandonment Part 2 One of the most frequently misunderstood utterances of Jesus while hanging on the cross was in His remarkable statement, Father, forgive them.

They know not what they do. Most are taken aback at the gracious gesture of Christ in His amazing attitude toward His executioners. And to be sure, it was that and more.

[70 : 53] But what is most often lost sight of are the consequences of that statement. And the consequence was stunning. What was it? Well, it was forgiveness.

Forgiveness for His executioners. That was the request Jesus made to His Father. And we cannot imagine His request not being granted. And while we assume it was granted, we are confident it is not a faulty assumption.

Proof of that is in the kingdom offered to Israel remaining on the table well into the early years of the book of Acts when the apostles continued their appeals to the nation of Israel.

Israel. It would be their continuing rejection and persecution of the apostles and others of their countrymen that would begin Israel's new accumulation of offenses against the deity.

Nationally, those idolatrous and offenses of corruption would continue apace until once again Israel's unrepentant ways would catch up to them.

[72 : 01] It would be just as Jesus had prophesied. Some 40 years after His crucifixion, His Jewish countrymen would undergo another brutal decimation from Rome.

The catalog of offenses against God and everything righteous had again reached saturated proportions. This time, Israel the nation would not enjoy another blanket of forgiveness like that granted Jesus was on the cross.

This time, their offenses would multiply year after year. Israel, the nation, was destined to undergo an unparalleled time of chastisement from which God would not be the rescuer.

The estrangement between Himself and His covenant people would not only continue but intensify. And through the succeeding centuries, the Jews would be a people without a country, without a temple, without a sacrifice, without everything that meant anything as a special covenant people of God.

They would be pariahs, outcasts, hounded, blamed for any and every woe experienced by anyone on the continent of Europe.

[73 : 28] Whatever anyone and everyone suffered, it was the Jews who were responsible. From the bubonic plague to every adversity one could imagine, the Jews were behind it.

The theme was used well by Hitler, clear into the 1930s. No better ready-made scapegoat for whatever negative came upon anyone in Europe existed that could compare with, it's those dirty Jews.

They're to blame. As irrational as it all was, it did play well in the minds and actions of all too many. In fact, it still does in some places, because ignorance and hatred never go out of style.

Now again, where is God in all of this? Oh, He's watching and stirring. We shall see. Christianity Clarified, Volume 72, Track 20.

Will replacement theology be replaced? As referenced earlier on Christianity Clarified, Segments 14 through 17, we visited ancient Father Abraham noting how he was not only the patriarch of the Jewish people via Isaac and Jacob, but he was, as well, the patriarch of the Arab people via Ishmael.

[74 : 55] But wasn't that all ancient history? Oh, yes, it was. Very ancient. But anyone who assumes that does not greatly impact the present is simply guilty of, yes, you guessed it, a faulty assumption.

A huge faulty assumption. Romans chapter 9 through 11 clearly reveal God's enduring, eternal, inviolable commitment to the nation of Israel.

The most outstanding thing about it is, as was seen earlier, is that the commitment and God's making good on it rests solely upon the integrity of God and His faithfulness in delivering, and not on the faithfulness of Israel in their deservedness.

One may sum it all up by merely reading Romans 9, 10, and 11. Please do. And when and if you do, pay particular attention to verse 29 of chapter 11.

It reads thusly, For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. Did you hear that? The whole context addresses the unfaithfulness and undeservedness of the Jews, contrasted with the faithfulness and integrity of God.

[76 : 21] Israel majored in national fickleness for millennia, and God patiently continued, just as He was and always is, infinitely true and faithful.

And such He proves to be as a father to an erring, spoiled brat of a nation called Israel. God has His ways of taking His beloved children to His thoroughly effective woodshed, if you will.

He knows how to apply the board of education to the seed of knowledge. And God does chasten those whom He loves, the writer of Hebrews tells us.

And Israel has spent a long time in God's woodshed. He even allows the devil's children, Allah, the Nero's, the Hitler's, and the like, to administer severe discipline.

And, as Hebrews says, after the spanking, it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. Israel, as a nation, is not there yet, but they are on the way.

[77 : 35] And still, another setback awaits them, and it will be their greatest yet. Brace yourself, Israel. The Antichrist will surface, and he will be responsible for two-thirds of all Jews now or then living to be annihilated.

In case any Jews are listening, please listen well. The Bible, and yes, including the New Testament, that Jews do not accept, has never yet been wrong in all it predicts, and it won't start now.

While a glorious future lies ahead for Israel, there is one last hurdle to clear, and it will be the worst of all for the Jew. Eventually, Christianity Clarified may get to that, but other issues must be covered first, and they all, all of them are just ahead.